

**An Exploration of Food Security and Identity Among International Students Studying in
Guelph and Windsor, Ontario, Canada**

By

Erika Stewin

**A Thesis
Presented to
The University of Guelph**

**In partial fulfillment of requirements
for the degree of
Masters of Arts
in
Public Issues Anthropology**

Guelph, Ontario, Canada

© Erika Stewin, May 2013

ABSTRACT

AN EXPLORATION OF FOOD SECURITY AND IDENTITY AMONG INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS STUDYING IN GUELPH AND WINDSOR, ONTARIO, CANADA

Erika Stewin
University of Guelph, 2013

Advisor: Professor Elizabeth Finnis

In this thesis I explore issues of food security and food-identity relationships among international students at the University of Guelph and the University of Windsor. I argue students who attempt to maintain traditional diets are more likely to experience food insecurity than students who explore diverse foods because they are more likely to be negatively affected by food availability, food access and structural barriers. What students eat can also have implications for identity maintenance and identity creation. Thus in this thesis I also explore the relationship between food and identity by considering how identity and food-security can be closely related to preferred food availability and accessibility. I argue that students consume certain foods as a means to maintain and create identities, and as such I suggest that familiar food eaters may experience a sense of losing their identities as their food insecurity increases.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I would like to thank my advisor Dr. Elizabeth Finnis for her constant encouragement, guidance and support which I am deeply grateful for. Dr. Finnis is an amazing person and advisor and without her help I wouldn't have been able to get through the research hurdles I faced during the early organizational stages of my project. The feedback and advice she provided me with throughout the course of my research has not only been incredibly useful but has helped me to remain focused and organized which in turn have allowed me to become a better researcher and writer.

I would also like to express special thanks to my committee member Dr. Alice Hovorka who throughout the course of my project was always willing to answer my questions and provide me with feedback. In particular her feedback during the editing phase of my project helped me to produce a clearer, more well-organized account of my findings. I would also like to thank my external examiner Dr. Satsuki Kawano not only for her presence at my defense, but for her guidance and feedback during the proposal phase of my project. Her contributions played a large role in the successful completion of my proposal which I am very grateful for.

I would also like to thank Dr. Ed Hedican, Dr. Renee Sylvain, Dr. Vivian Shalla and Shelagh Daly for their guidance and support during my time at the University of Guelph. The University of Guelph's Office of Intercultural Affairs, and the University of Windsor's International Student Centre were also very helpful in aiding me with my participant recruitment, as such I would like to express a special thanks to the staff involved.

Finally, I would like to thank my friends, family and PIA colleagues for their encouragement and constant support over the past two-years. A special thanks also goes out to my partner Robert, my sister Jenna and my dear friend Mandi for all of their input, love, and support over the course of my research.

Thank you.

Erika

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: Introduction.....	4
CHAPTER 2: Literature Review.....	10
Overview of Food Security Literature.....	11
Literature on Food Security and International and Post-Secondary Students.....	13
Anthropology of Food Literature.....	16
Anthropological and Multi-Disciplinary Literature on Food and Identity.....	19
Literature on Food, Transnationalism and Sojourner Identity.....	21
Sensory Anthropology, Place-Making and Identity Literature.....	24
CHAPTER 3: Field Location and Methodology.....	28
Windsor.....	28
University of Windsor.....	28
Guelph.....	30
University of Guelph.....	31
Project Rationale.....	32
Methodology.....	34
Individual Semi-Structured Interviews.....	35
Focus Group Sessions.....	38
Free-Listing Exercise.....	39
Participant Observation at University of Guelph Campus Food Bank.....	40
Analysis Techniques.....	44
CHAPTER 4: Barriers Towards Achieving Food Security and Effects on Students.....	45
Overview of International Students' Food Preferences and Priorities Related to Costs, Health and Personal and Financial Circumstances.....	46
Defining Notions of Familiarity: Familiar-Food Eaters' Attitudes Towards, and Experiences With Food.....	49
Adventurous Eaters' Experiences and Attitudes Towards Experimenting with New Foods.....	54
Availability of Foods Preferred Among International Students and Glocalization as an Agent of Food Unavailability.....	57
International Students' Financial Circumstances.....	60
Physical Accessibility of Preferred Foods.....	62
Economic Inaccessibility of Preferred Foods and Effects on International Students.....	62
International Students' Agency, Power and Control Over Food Projects.....	70
Theoretical Discussion and Chapter Conclusion.....	76
CHAPTER 5: Food Choice, and Processes of Identity and Place-Making.....	83
Processes of Place-Making and the Influence of Nostalgia Over Food Preferences.....	84
Socio-cultural Identity Maintenance Through Familiar Food Consumption.....	89
Engaging with Food Sharing, Exchange, and Creolization as Sources of Transnational Identity Building.....	96
Exploratory Eating and Engagement with "Canadian-ness" as Venues for Identity Creation.....	104
Embracing and Consuming Canadian, Food, Drink and Identity.....	107
Theoretical Discussion and Chapter Conclusion.....	115

CHAPTER 6: Conclusion.....	123
REFERENCES.....	129
APPENDIX.....	137

Chapter 1: Introduction

In this thesis, I explore the food experiences of 32 international students living in Guelph and Windsor, Ontario. International students' experiences with food while abroad vary based on their attitudes and personal and financial circumstances in relation to preferred-food availability and accessibility. I argue that international students who choose to maintain a diet consisting of familiar and traditional foods experience increased food insecurity compared to their adventurous counterparts because they are more likely to be affected by availability, accessibility and structural barriers than international students who willingly abandon familiar foods in exchange for new foods. I also demonstrate that familiar food eaters maintain traditional diets as a form of identity maintenance and place-making, while adventurous eaters participate in acts of culinary tourism as a means to engage with the culture and identity of the Canadian other which facilitates the development of new "Canadian", or sojourner identities. Throughout this thesis I use the term identity to refer to students' self-images, and perceptions, which are usually conveyed through their identification as particular types of people, or eaters, or through their processes of accepting and rejecting foods. In this thesis I argue that connections can also be made between food security and identity security. I suggest that students who consume familiar foods as a form of identity maintenance often experience both food and identity insecurity when preferred foods become scarce, while more adventurous students who spoke about creating new selves while in Canada experienced less food and identity insecurity.

Canadian and international students alike are confronted by a number of "routine stressors" including academic pressures, financial difficulties and loneliness in the beginning as well as throughout the course of their university careers (Wilton, 2003, 177). However, international students face a number of unique challenges that their Canadian counterparts do not. These can include inflated tuition costs, as well as difficulties finding familiar food, adjusting to Canadian supermarkets, food packaging, prices and cooking new foods. As such the

primary aim of this research project has been to explore the relationship between international students' preferences, circumstances, and experiences with food availability, access and agency in order to examine their ability to achieve and sustain a food secure state while studying abroad. In order to explore how international students in Canada achieve and maintain food security, which refers to the availability of healthy and preferred foods and individuals' ability to access them in socially acceptable ways, I have considered the following questions; How do international students conceptualize edibility, construct appropriate diets and articulate their attitudes in regards to food and eating? Do international students face any social, cultural, physical or economic barriers in terms of access and availability of foods they consider healthy and preferable? And lastly do attitudes and preferences in relation to barriers affect students' ability to maintain food security and in what ways do they do so?

The literature on food and identity demonstrates that a strong relationship exists between food attitudes, preferences and identities as well as highlights the importance of using both food and identity as a medium to explore and understand each other. For instance Fischler (1988) and Farb and Armelagos (1980) found that food choice revealed information about individual's identities, while Warde (1994) discovered that individuals actively sought to communicate their sense of self through food choice. In other words while food choice and preference reveal elements of identity, discussions of identity or displays of identity enactment may expose one's attitude toward food as well as their food preferences. Therefore who you are and how you identify yourself may say a lot about what you like to eat and why, while the foods you eat may provide insight into who you are as a person. Since I am interested in food preference availability and accessibility in relation to achieving food security it is important to understand why these foods are preferred and the benefits certain foods provide to students on a deeper ontological level. Exploring this relationship will allow me to better understand the importance of consuming preferred foods which will allow me take identities into consideration as part of making

appropriate recommendations for improving food security. Therefore, in order to satisfy my primary research aims and understand this relationship holistically it was also important to explore the links between food and international students' identities by considering the following questions; How are cultural and ideological identities shaped by, as well as shape international students' food choices and preferences? How is food used to convey one's sense of self? And what are the implications for both international students' identities and their ability to maintain a food-secure state, if preferred foods are inaccessible, or unavailable?

One of the most complicated and potentially fraught questions international students ask themselves once they arrive is whether they should negotiate a new diet, or maintain a familiar one. Throughout their time spent in Canada students' decide which foods to keep, to temporarily remove, to try and to incorporate into their diet, although decisions to attempt to maintain a familiar, or traditional diet are usually planned upon arrival, yet are subject to change in some cases. A number of works focusing on newcomers' eating habits and food preferences have sought to confirm the hypothesis that familiar foods are preferred among newcomers due to their ability to cure homesickness and provide comfort (Brown et al., 2010; Collins, 2008; Pederson et al., 2011; 881). Yet these studies often fail to discuss whether familiar foods are available and accessible to newcomers such as international students, and tend to use acculturation¹ as a conceptual tool to explain dietary changes (Edwards et al, 2010; Pan et al., 1999). My research findings in contrast focus on the impact availability, accessibility, and structural barriers have on students' food security and dietary changes rather than acculturative factors such as time spent in Canada and level of interaction and integration within Canadian society. Students acknowledged that they would be returning to their home countries within the next couple of years, and some therefore did not necessarily feel any pressure, or desire to conform to "Canadian" eating habits. Whereas, more adventurous eaters eager to try new foods, embrace "Canadian" culture, and

¹ The process by which individuals adopt, or accept the values, traits and customs of another cultural group, or host country.

establish new identities often experienced dietary change by way of abandoning familiar foods in exchange for new and novel foods.

Considering the continuing diversification of the university student population within as well as outside of Canada, it is becoming vital that universities equip themselves with the necessary services required to appropriately respond to this growth. The field of Public Issues Anthropology, lying at the interface between public issues and anthropological theory and thought, strives to transcend the borders of pure knowledge production by illuminating social issues and offering positive recommendations for change. Engaging with food security as a human rights issue through the lens of public anthropology allows me to not only address social issues, problem solve and apply my insight in the form of recommendations, but give back to those who helped to make this research possible by attempting to foster positive social change between universities and the international student community with my research. This research project can be used to inform universities on the types of challenges that international students face when it comes to transitioning to a new country with new foods and food rules. The results of this study will be useful in informing university policies related to access and availability of food. This information can also be used by campus international students centres and counseling services to familiarize themselves with what international students have had to say and what types of food related information they should consider making more readily available to students. International students experiences may also provide a window into understanding other sojourners, and immigrants struggles and experiences and can help to highlight problems and solutions that may be of use to immigrant and migrant organizations and service brokers. Organizations will not only acquaint themselves with relevant information in the process, but learn more about the types of support international students, immigrants and other sojourners may need to help them during their adjustment process. These findings also impart theoretical contributions in the sense that they provide a greater understanding of international student and

individual food security, as oppose to larger collective-level food security, from a socio-cultural perspective. These findings also expose links between food and identity and the implications this can have for those striving to achieve food security within an unfamiliar environment.

In Chapter 2 of this thesis, I contextualize and situate my research findings within the larger body of literature that explores individuals' food preferences and definitions of edibility as well as work that examines international students and sojourners' experiences of acculturation and dietary transitions. I also discuss the conceptual and theoretical references I use to contextualize and understand my research findings and the practical and theoretical significance of my data. In Chapter 3, I discuss the rationale behind my multi-sited project, and provide an atmospheric description of my fieldsites. In addition, I discuss how research findings were obtained, analyzed and organized, and provide background information on interview and focus group participants.

I begin Chapter 4 by discussing students' food preferences and priorities and describe how internationals' experiences are negotiated within the context of a *constant compromise* framework. I also address students' personal and financial circumstances in relation to their experiences accessing food, and discuss how availability, physical and economic accessibility barriers are experienced differently among familiar and adventurous eaters both on and off-campus.

Finally, in Chapter 5 I discuss students' synesthetic experiences, and nostalgia cuisines' ability to provide students with a sense of emplacement, a familiar sense of place wherein one experiences a feeling of belonging, while abroad. In addition to exploring the consumption of nostalgia cuisine as a form of place-making, I discuss students' attempts at socio-cultural identity maintenance, transnational identity building through food sharing, exchange and creolization, as well as adventurous eaters touristic experiences and identity creation processes. I conclude this chapter with a discussion of the links that can be made between food and identity security in

relation to students' experiences.

In this thesis I incorporate theoretical frameworks derived from the food security, identity and nutrition literature that have been combined with space and place theory to understand and contextualize my findings. Theoretical concepts such as, "flavouring principles" (Farb & Armelagos, 1980), and "synesthesia" (Sutton, 2001) discussed in the sensory anthropology literature will also be considered. In addition to developing a conceptual understanding of the links between food security and identity, I have sought to contribute towards the development of a framework that can be used to understand individual food security, in contrast to macro-levels of food security, from a socio-cultural perspective. This thesis will also be useful in providing an ethnographic understanding of food security among international students in Canada.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In this chapter I situate and contextualize my research findings within the greater body of published literature that explores immigrants, international and post-secondary students' ability to access food as well as related topics including food preferences, dietary transitions and acculturation. I also provide a theoretical overview of other scholars' frameworks, and ideas and demonstrate the ways in which these theories surrounding food, identity, place-making, and food security relate to my research.

When moving to a new country the majority of immigrants and sojourners experience an unavoidable degree of culture shock which can lead to chaos and confusion; completing even the most mundane of tasks, such as fixing a meal, can become a challenge (Brown et al., 2010; Moore and Popadiuk, 2011). The anthropology of food literature emphasizes that "no food is appropriate for everyone, at all times, in all circumstances, in any quantity" (Fischler, 1988, 285), which highlights a key point in the relationship between individuals and food: the importance of dietary restrictions and preferences in relation to the accessibility of familiar foods (Mintz and DuBois, 2005).

The literature on international students and other sojourners, those individuals "living or traveling abroad for temporary periods" (Pederson, et al., 2011, 881), goes into detail on what familiar, and preferred foods represent and provide to displaced sojourners, which can include, nostalgia and emotional attachment, comfort and a sense of belonging (Brown et al., 2010; Collins, 2008). Research on food selection and preferences reveals that immigrants and sojourners may be particularly reluctant to change their eating habits for a number of reasons. These include preferences for familiar flavouring principles (Farb & Armelagos, 1980; Rozin & Rozin, 2007) and meal structures (Douglas, 1971; Strauss, 1968) as well as fears associated with consuming unfamiliar foods such as canned goods (Edwards et al., 2010; Gebhard, 2010; Hartwell et al., 2011; Vahabi et al., 2011), anxiety related to the belief that the consumption of

new foods puts one's sense of self in jeopardy (Brown et al., 2010; Harbottle, 1997; Rozin & Rozin, 2007), risks associated with purchasing new foods one may fail to enjoy and refuse to consume (Harbottle, 1997; Maxwell & Smith, 1992; Steptoe & Pollard, 1995; Warde, 1994), and cultural or religious dietary restrictions that keep individuals from experimenting with unfamiliar foods (Counihan, 1999; Messer, 2007). On the other hand, there is a growing body of research indicating that individuals can experience dietary change as a result of acculturative forces, (Adekunle et al., 2011; Pan et al., 1999) while others willingly alter their diets by way of participating in culinary tourism as a means to experience and interact with otherness (Molz, 2004; Shortridge, 2004), or to change one's identity and experiment with new selves (Rotkovitz, 2004; Rudy, 2004). While there is an extensive body of research that seeks to confirm the hypothesis that sojourners (such as international students), stick to familiar foods when moving to a new country, limited research has been conducted on whether familiar foods are actually available and accessible to international students. This is a significant gap in the literature, and my research begins to address some of these questions.

Overview of Food Security Literature

This thesis explores international students' experiences with food within the context of a food security framework. Although the food security concept has been defined in different ways across various disciplines, the foundation of the concept has been built on the idea that in order to be considered food secure, one must have physical and economic access to healthy and preferred foods that have been obtained through socially acceptable channels to meet their dietary needs (FAO, 1996; McIntyre, 2003; Pottier, 1999). But as Sen (1982) points out, availability does not always guarantee access. Sen's work is widely recognized as the innovative catalyst that changed scholars' understanding of food security and revolutionized a number of academic fields including food security, health and poverty studies as well as economics. His entitlement theory proposed that access, rather than availability, was the primary barrier to

ensuring food security and the leading cause of famine. Yaro (2004), inspired by Sen (1982), suggests that inequality in terms of access to food, results as a consequence of the uneven “distribution of food and opportunities” (24). Like Sen, Yaro argues that food insecurity and hunger come not as a result of insufficient resources, but due to the “inequalities and policies” that prevent individuals from satisfying their needs (2004, 24). Other researchers such as Freedman (2009) have discovered that “local food environments are not created equally” since the variety and quality of products within grocery stores varies based on the demographics of those living near them. He suggests that food environments are both raced and classed and argues that one’s ability to access food is affected by their neighbourhood location. Availability therefore refers to desired foods being at one’s disposal, whereas access considers distance, transportation and socio-economic factors including the cost of both food and transportation in relation to one’s level of purchasing power (Alcock, 2009; Bryceson, 1983; Durrenberger, 2006; Latham and Moffat, 2007; Wright Morton and Blanchard, 2007).

Pinstrup-Andersen (2009) also highlights a key point in his work, writing that by taking preferences into account we acknowledge that access to preferred food rather than simply enough food is paramount to ensuring food security. This is an important point because he implies that individuals with differential food preferences may experience food security at different levels. As Pinstrup-Andersen demonstrates, the roles of preferences, religious, cultural, ethical, and so on, is important to ensuring food security, because they challenge the idea that lack of hunger equates with food security, and acknowledges that it is not just relieving hunger that is important, but doing so in ways where people are consuming the foods they prefer, rather than being forced to eat certain foods due to a lack of other viable options (Dietitians of Canada, 2005; Pinstrup-Andersen, 2009). Obtaining appropriate foods through socially acceptable channels is critical and a concept best illustrated through example. For instance, the stigma

attached to food banks is often cited in the food security literature in order to demonstrate how this form of “aid” can be seen as unjust from a food security standpoint since recipients frequently experience a loss of agency, or control, and experience feelings of distress and embarrassment when food banks do not allow individuals to hand pick the items they would like to take (Riches, 2003; Rideout, 2005; Rock, et al., 2009). Lastly, the health component of the food security definition seeks to flesh out individuals' abilities to access foods they perceive as healthy and good to eat, which is important because it provides individuals with an opportunity to employ personal agency by way of defining their own “good” diet (House et al., 2006).

It is also important to note that food security/insecurity is not a homogeneous phenomenon, as it is differentially experienced at the global, national, community, household and individual levels and can last for varying lengths of time as discussed in detail by Maxwell and Smith (1992). Maxwell and Smith (1992) provide an incredibly useful conceptual review in which they historicize, contextualize and operationalize food security with an emphasis on the household and individual. They write that the term “is used in many different ways”, and experienced at varying levels of severity (1992, 6). For instance, some individuals are affected by chronic food insecurity where their ability to meet their needs is continuously threatened, while others experience temporary food insecurity which is often a short-term situation resulting from unexpected circumstances (1992,15). Maxwell and Smith also make reference to a third type of food insecurity which they refer as transitory food insecurity, an umbrella term that can be further broken down to include both cyclical and temporary food insecurity. To illustrate this concept they borrow terminology from Sen’s work (1982), writing that this type of food insecurity occurs when individuals or households face “a temporary decline in the security of its entitlement and the risk of failure to meet food needs is of short duration” as a result of “intra and inter-annual variations in household food access” (1982,15).

Literature on Food Security and International and Post-Secondary Students

In addition to discussing the literature that focuses specifically on international students' experiences, I think it is important to situate my research within a larger body of work that explores food security among the general post-secondary student population. Research indicates that university student demand for culturally appropriate, organic, and sustainable food is on the rise, however cost, lack of culturally diverse food options, and living in residence were all cited by students as reasons for being un-able to access these preferred foods (Boyle, 2006; House et al., 2006; Marquis, 2005; Riddell et al., 2011; Steptoe and Pollard, 1995). Canadian studies have indicated that post-secondary tuition rates continue to grow, but wages earned from part-time employment and student loans remain inadequate to cover expenses (Hughes et al., 2011; Meldrum, 2006; Rondeau, 2007). Increases in tuition fees consequently pose a particularly high risk to international students who are already paying three to four times the cost of domestic student fees (Laucius & Barber, 2009; Puxley, 2010). Laucius and Barber (2009) write that universities have started to invest in recruiting prospective students from overseas as a means to expand and remain profitable. However, since international student fees remain unregulated within Canada, Laucius and Barber report that international students feel as though they "are being used as cash cows to fund Canada's universities" (2009). Puxley (2010) also points out that although universities are eager to increase international student enrollment on campus, few institutions provide these individuals with financial assistance upon their arrival (3). As a result of the impact of these economic barriers, domestic and international students alike have been cited as at increased risk for experiencing food security (Rondeau, 2007).

Another issue faced by university students living on-campus, and therefore often eating on campus, is the limitations institutionalized meal times and plans inflict upon student's agency. Most students living in residence must purchase a meal plan as they are without proper cooking facilities (Marquis, 2005). The university therefore controls what foods will be served on

campus, and where and when it will be served, which transforms food into a vehicle of power (Counihan, 1992). An anthropological study that evaluated students' food journals discovered that students often ate when they were not hungry, or missed meals resulting from scheduling conflicts between students' responsibilities and institutionalized meal times (Counihan, 1992). This indicates that university rules and policies are also important for understanding food security, at least among students living in residence. Although many internationals may face the same barriers as their domestic counterparts, the literature suggests they encounter distinctive challenges which require separate examination.

Within the social science and health fields, few scholars have examined the relationship between international students and food security, however there are some works that explore similar themes of acculturation, food habits, and dietary changes. These themes evident in the international student literature have allowed me to organize the following examples into social, and cultural categories. In his anthropological analysis on food and eating, Fox (1996) argues that what people eat becomes an important symbol of who they are and that people often come together or distance themselves based on similarities or differences in food preference. In a study done with Asian international students living in the U.K. a common pattern that emerged amongst participants was their preference for Asian food, although they often received complaints from roommates also living in residence that this food smelled (Brown et al., 2010). This pattern was not only common to literature on international students, but articles on other sojourners (Gebhard, 2010). For example, Filipino women working in Hong-Kong were told by their bosses to keep home food outside of the workplace, due to smell (Law, 2001). The literature on recent immigrants and international students also mentions language as a barrier towards accessing food and food related information, which derives in part from newcomers' feelings of anxiety and panic which are experienced when attempting to ask food related questions in a foreign language (Brown, 2008; Skinner, 2010; Vahabi et al., 2011). Affordability

and availability of culturally appropriate and healthy foods were also listed in addition to issues surrounding unfamiliarity, smell and language which act as socio-cultural and economic barriers that divide people on the basis of food, can interfere with one's ability to sustain a food-secure state while studying abroad (Edwards et al., 2010; Kashima & Loh, 2006; Pederson et al., 2011; Perez-Cueto et al., 2009).

The importance of preferred foods is evident and international students' desire to retain home food habits is a common pattern in the literature, which makes the role of availability and accessibility of these foodstuffs important. Most of the literature in this area does not deal directly with analyzing international students' experiences or circumstances with food from a qualitative food security focused approach; instead several works focus on themes of acculturation, food habits, and dietary transitions usually surveyed quantitatively with large samples of participants. Most of these works have used the United Kingdom (Brown, 2008; Hartwell et al., 2011, Ness et al., 2002), United States (Pederson et al., 2011), New Zealand (Collins, 2008) Australia (Kashima & Loh, 2006), and Belgium (Perez-Cueto et al., 2009) as ethnographic field sites rather than Canada. Several of these publications have also been written from the perspectives of those with a background in psychology, economics, service management, and applied nutrition rather than anthropology. This is clearly an area in socio-cultural anthropology that has been understudied, which calls for further investigation of international students' experiences related to food and their ability to achieve and maintain food security.

Anthropology of Food Literature

Anthropology has traditionally operationalized food security in a global, regional, or communal context, focusing on wide scale vulnerability, famine, and global food shortages (see Baro and Deubel, 2006; Maxwell, 1995; Mintz and DuBois, 2005; Pottier, 1999; Shipton, 1990); my research, however, focuses on food security at the individual level by exploring international

students' personal circumstances and experiences. A number of anthropological works explore the concept of edibility as culturally determined, as well as highlight the importance of individual and communal food preferences (see Anderson, 2005; Heldke, 2007; Mintz & DuBois, 2005; Rozin & Rozin 2007, Strauss, 1968; 2007), yet some scholars' do not directly utilize food security as a conceptual tool where it may be of benefit to understanding and contextualizing their findings. For example, Fox (2003) discusses the importance of culturally determined food preferences, customs and etiquette and emphasizes that "people will not just eat anything" in his work (2). He also points out that, "cultures go to great lengths to obtain preferred foods and often ignore valuable food sources close at hand" (2). Yet, he fails to discuss dietary restrictions and preferences in relation to how this may affect individuals', or communities' ability to maintain food security in times of scarcity, or inaccessibility.

Mintz (2006) writes that historically large communities primarily consumed foods grown locally, but with the advent of capitalism, and globalization, the production, distribution and consumption of food has become delocalized, destroying and/or altering culinary diversity, cuisine, the environment and the health of the world's people in the process. Mintz's proposed solution to reversing the effects of globalization in relation to food is to provide not fast, nor slow foods, but what he refers to as "food of moderate speeds" which he defines as "good and healthy food, produced locally, for everybody" (2006, 10). His concept of "food of moderate speeds" and the food security/sovereignty framework are aligned in the sense that they both highlight the importance of morality, equality, and health in relation to food availability and accessibility, yet similar to Fox (2003) he fails to directly incorporate food security and sovereignty as part of his discussion. Pelto and Pelto (1983) also discuss delocalization, yet do so by situating this process within a historical context.

Pelto and Pelto explore the ways in which diets and access to food have evolved over the

past 250 years, and argue that many of these changes can be attributed to delocalization which is the process by which “food varieties, production methods, and consumption patterns are disseminated throughout the world” (1983, 507). The authors suggest that delocalization has contributed to dietary change in three major ways; the circulation and exchange of plants and animals, the spread and expansion of food distribution and processing systems, and the internal and external migration of people. Pelto and Pelto (1983) suggest that these process have resulted in the alteration of food selection, preference, availability and access on a global scale and make it a priority to point out that although this been beneficial for some, it has resulted in disaster for others. The authors write that historically one community’s food supplies and health were rarely compromised when resources became scarce within other areas, yet today this can result in famine and food shortages on a larger and much more severe scale. Transportation and delocalization have improved food accessibility, and although we have started to grow more foods in new places, some foods can only be produced and grown in certain areas making them costly to acquire. Consequently, Pelto and Pelto argue that with global delocalization comes price inflation resulting from processing, packaging, and import/export fees that poor people cannot afford and are thereby reduced to purchasing “a narrower selection of cheaper foods” (1983, 527). What is most relevant about Pelto and Pelto’s research in relation to my findings is the authors' discussion of food and migration. The authors highlight that migrants affect the dietary climate of their new homes and in turn are subsequently affected by the culinary customs of that locale. They suggest that delocalization is beneficial in some ways because it allows migrants to maintain familiar, or traditional diets, and provides non-migrants with opportunities to try new foods. Yet the theme of this article is slightly overly optimistic in the sense that the authors fail to discuss how delocalization creates pockets of food availability and diversity, rather than wide spread, undifferentiated variety on a global scale. Although they discuss the popularity and prestige of French cuisine in relation to the exploratory opportunities it has

provided to the non-French as a delocalization success story, the authors do not discuss in-depth how foreign foods are accepted, rejected, and valued differently in local contexts, and how taste preferences, norms, food standards, size, demographics and population of locales affect what is available and the ways in which delocalization affects food security. Although Pelto and Pelto fail to explore these themes, several works discuss them in-depth (see; Long, 2004; Wilk, 2006), I discuss these works briefly within this literature review and in more detail throughout the thesis.

While these anthropological works provide a useful theoretical foundation to understand international students' experiences, I have expanded the scope of this literature review to include what has been published on food security and international students within the health and nutrition disciplines which contribute to our understandings of what food security means in different contexts.

Anthropological and Multi-Disciplinary Literature on Food and Identity

Food is often used to satisfy a number of needs that lie outside the spectrum of nutrition. Anderson (2005) writes that food not only serves as a communicative tool, but as a medium people can utilize to assert both their individuality and one's place in world. Anderson's holistic body of work, which includes research on food and identity, provides an anthropological lens that can be used to establish a theoretical foundation upon which one can build an understanding of identity maintenance and creation via consumption. Anderson writes, "humans classify their world in order to simplify it", and in that way products and goods get sorted into food and nonfood (2005, 113). This method of categorization not only allows individuals to define themselves in relation to what they will or will not eat, but to identify and make assumptions about other groups based on the same, or variant culinary systems that culturally define parameters of edibility. Anderson argues that food can be used to communicate, reassure and affirm one's beliefs, as well as symbolize, or directly communicate social and cultural messages about the

eater and their socio-cultural group (2005, 62). As such, “one group can try to use food to separate itself, while another is trying to use food to eliminate that separation” (Anderson, 2005, 125).

Bisogni et al’s (2002) work also provides a valuable lens with which to approach and investigate the relationship between food and identity. Bisogni et al define the term identity as, “the mental self-images that a person assigns to herself/himself based on everyday interactions with people, groups and objects” which can reveal many cultural, structural, social and individual meanings (2002, 129). Central to their argument is the idea that food serves as a tool that people can utilize as a means of confirming and reaffirming identity to one’s self, and others (2002, 129). Other food scholars also make similar arguments in their work, for example Heldke (2007), Fischler (1988), and Valentine (1999) argue that food is used to assert one’s established sense of self, while it is also utilized as a medium to experience ‘others’ identities, opening a platform for identity alteration and creation. Warde’s (1994) research provides another interesting perspective on the relationship between consumption and identity. Warde notes, “consumption is deigned central, for commodities are principal for the communication of self-identity”, therefore “all such choices are decisions not only about how to act, but who to be” (1994, 878,880). As such the central theme of his argument is that “consumption is a risky business” since the act of eating what has been culturally, or personally deemed inappropriate may jeopardize or affect one’s self-identity (Warde 1994, 883).

Students’ food preferences are influenced by a number of factors including cultural, religious and ideological beliefs, norms and expectations all of which play a role in processes of self-discovery, identity molding and maintenance (Bisogni et al., 2002; Devine et al., 1999; Sneijder, 2009). While there is limited food and identity research that focuses specifically on students, Counihan’s (1992) anthropological account of American college students’ food experiences sheds some light on this topic. Although Counihan primarily focuses on the

individuality, control and hierarchy of food and food rules in respect to students, she also notes that students define themselves in relation to their abilities to autonomously and independently control their consumption, and discusses the ways in which students utilize food as an expressive medium. She also points out that in addition to providing the body with fuel, eating serves as a “moral behaviour” that allows students’ to construct identities as good or bad individuals based on the quality of the foods they are consuming, and the level of control one has over his or her consumption (1992, 2). In addition to the works I have mentioned, there are a number of other researchers within and outside of the social sciences that have discussed the importance of food preferences in relation to identity (Bordi, 2008 James, 2007; Leitch, 2003; Sutton, 2001). I will discuss the work of these scholars throughout the relevant analysis portion of this thesis.

Literature on Food, Transnationalism and Sojourner Identity

It is also important to note that the amount of literature focusing on the food experiences of international students and sojourners in relation to identity is limited across academia, especially within anthropology. Below I will discuss some of the works that have focused on the food experiences of international students and sojourners, as well as explore the literature on transnationalism and identity which provides a useful theoretical grounding for contextualizing and situating my research findings.

Many works (Collins, 2008; Grieshop, 2006; Ghosh & Wang, 2003) suggest that migrants and sojourners such as international students use food as a medium to connect with their home country by way of creating familiarity and a sense of belonging in their lives. Understanding these relationships through a transnational framework provides a lens for understanding the role food plays in international students' attempts at establishing cross-border identities, which allow them to connect with the people and culture of the country they are in, as well as in their country of origin.

Glick-Schiller et al (2006), Conradson and Latham (2005) and Vertovec (1999) agree that

the term transnationalism, or transnational refers to the multiple connections and ties that link people, organizations and institutions “across the borders of nation-states” (Vertovec, 1999, 447). Conradson and Latham (2005) explore how individuals negotiate lives and identities between borders and the dedication and energy that goes into maintaining transnational lifestyles. Conradson and Latham argue that transnationals such as individuals taking sabbaticals, or students taking “gap years” abroad occupy “middling forms of movement” which are unique from immigration in that the individuals involved plan on returning to their home countries, or are creating homes in multiple nation states in the long-term (2005, 228-229). The authors acknowledge that these “middling forms of movement” have been understudied across academia, and require more attention if we are to understand these complex patterns of mobility. Vertovec (1999) writes that transnationalism as a growing phenomenon has contributed towards creating places and spaces that are no longer bound by a “sense of community or locality”, and can also be held responsible for creating new ethnicities and multiple identities that simultaneously link individuals multiple nations (449-451).

Collins' (2008) work is particularly relevant to understanding and situating my research findings as he also discusses globalization and transnationalism in relation to international students' consumption practices. Collins (2008) examined the relationship between South Korean international students' culinary consumption and the maintenance of national identities and group loyalties. He argues that South Korean international students studying in Auckland, New Zealand, use food as a medium to recreate familiarity in their lives, allowing them to feel a sense of “belonging and attachment”, which is often prioritized over identity reproduction. Although students experimented with new foods, they also longed for the smell, taste and touch of back-home foods such as kimchi, which became a symbol of their homeland providing temporary relief from homesickness. Collins argues that the consumption of kimchi allowed

South Korean international students to “bridge the sensual gap between here and there” (2008; 155) and create a space reminiscent of home while in New Zealand. Although he suggests that familiar food consumption is not necessarily related to identity reproduction, he points out that for some, eating foods like kimchi allowed these students to assert and sustain their ‘Korean-ness’ while abroad. Overall, Collins' (2008) work demonstrates that although these students are living outside of their home countries and engaging with the cultural customs commonplace within New Zealand, they are simultaneously reconnecting with their pre-migration lives through the act of consumption.

Rudy's (2004) work on Mormon missionaries' experiences living and working in various countries is also useful in helping to situate and contextualize my research findings. Although Rudy does not provide an explicit discussion of transnationalism in her article, her work can be incorporated within this body of literature since her research participants, Mormon missionaries can be considered transnational migrants occupying a middling form of movement. Rudy found that missionaries as “extended stay eaters” rather than culinary tourists often explored local culinary food-ways in more depth than short-term tourists, although some refused to alter their diets and embrace unfamiliar foods (2004,132). Rudy suggests that familiar foods can provide comfort to missionaries by allowing them to experience pre-mission life, while experimenting with exotic foods in new spaces and places “integrates the missionary with the mission identity and the host culture” (2004, 134). Rudy suggests that this process of identity reformation is contingent upon one's persistence in maintaining their previous identity which affects one's willingness to explore, experience and recount the food and culinary customs of the host culture. She further points out that those willing to experiment not only change their “familiar identities”, but “embrace wholeheartedly the new food-ways as a sign of their missionary identity” (2004, 135). Overall, Rudy's work highlights that some transnational Mormon missionaries embrace the old, new, familiar and exotic as a means to preserve established identities while embracing and

experiencing new identities and cultures by living within, rather than between worlds, which is also the case for many of the international students I spoke with.

While the majority of works I have discussed focus on the reproduction or creation of socio-cultural and religious identities via the consumption of familiar and unfamiliar foods, researchers have also explored the links between individuals' ethical, environmental and political beliefs and their identities, and how beliefs as part of one's identity are reflected in individuals' preferences for vegan, vegetarian and organic foodstuffs (see; Boyle, 2006; Mooney and Walbourn, 2001; Sneijder and Molder, 2009; Willetts, 1997). Together this body of literature demonstrates the ways in which food preferences are shaped by identities and vice versa, therefore it is essential to acknowledge and understand both how international students enact their identities through consumption, and the implications this has for students' diets, identities, and their abilities to achieve and maintain food security while abroad. It is also important to note that while there are a number of works that focus on the linkages among food, identity, transnationalism, culinary tourism, international students, immigrants and migrants (see Caplan, 1997; Ghosh and Wang, 2003; Grieshop, 2006; Harbottle, 1997; James, 2007; Khan, 2007; Messer, 2007), I have chosen to expand on the ideas presented within these referenced publications in the theoretical discussion sections of my thesis located at the end of each analysis chapter as a means to exhibit the ways in which this larger body of scholarly work can be directly related to my research findings and arguments as well as demonstrate the contributions my research can make within this field of study.

Sensory Anthropology, Place-Making and Identity Literature

In Collins' (2008) article on South Korean international students' experiences living in New Zealand, he suggests that the modification of foods within local contexts transforms these items from familiar to unfamiliar or inauthentic foods that can cause homesickness which prompts nostalgic students to indulge in a serving of authentic Korean food and drink.

Globalization, and glocalization, as widespread and overwhelming processes, often destroy or modify local culinary customs and dishes in the process of travel, and create further change once they reach their destination (Rozin & Rozin, 2007). A number of scholars have demonstrated how foods often lose their authentic tastes, smells and appearance as they become localized, or subjected to creative manipulation among a group of people (Egan, 2006; Laroche, 2008; Matejowsky, 2006; Wilk, 2006; Wilk, 2008; Van Esterik, 2006). Similar to these scholars, I discuss the impacts globalization and glocalization have on international students and the ways in which this affects their ability to maintain food security while studying abroad. These works provide a useful framework for understanding students' experiences which I reference and discuss in more depth throughout chapters three and four.

Collin's (2008) participants also expressed how much they missed Korean foods, and how it has been a struggle to live without it. Preferences for familiar and culturally appropriate food became a common theme across the literature on international students, immigrants and other sojourners (Collins, 2008; Koc and Welsh, 2002; Skinner, 2010). This finding again reinforces what the anthropological literature states about individuals' reluctance to change food habits, which makes availability and access to these foods crucial. However, the importance of eating traditional or familiar foods, often referred to in the literature as 'home food', cannot be solely attributed to the longing for familiar taste, but also to the desire to engage with aspects of one's pre-migration life.

Hand-in-hand with identity reproduction, and creating familiarity in one's life through consumption is the importance of synesthetic experiences in relation to memory and place-making. The field of sensory anthropology explores these linkages and seeks to demonstrate the ways in which individuals' preparation and consumption of familiar or traditional foods are used as tools to build a life evocative of living in a different time, or place, and to recreate memories in an attempt to engage with familiar places, communities, identities and time. Sutton's (2001)

research on the relationship between food and memory on the Island of Kalymnos, Greece provides one of the most comprehensive accounts of identity creation and maintenance and the act of remembering from a sensorial anthropological perspective. Sutton's (2001) work is one of the first of its kind and his eclectic use and application of various theoretical approaches from a number of disciplines is incredibly useful in providing a well-rounded lens with which to consider individuals' sensory experiences and processes of place-making and identity reproduction. Sutton argues that if "we are what we eat" then consequently "we are what we ate" which puts questions regarding nostalgia, and synesthetic experiences on the table (2001, 7). Central to Sutton's argument is the idea that "food's memory power derives in part from synesthesia", which I discuss in more-depth in chapters three and four. He defines synesthesia as the blending of various sensory experiences (i.e. taste, smell, hearing) and uses the term 'prospective memory' to refer to Kalymnians' process of planning in the present to remember past food events which plays a role in their process of what Sutton refers to as 'returning to the whole' (2001, 17). This process of 'returning to whole' involves the consumption of nostalgia foods, and experiencing familiar tastes and smells, and so on as a means of reproducing social identities. This process also provides Kalymnians migrants with an opportunity to assert and engage with their 'Kalymnian-ness' while abroad.

Like Sutton (2001), a number of scholars, primarily within the social sciences, discuss identity, memory and the significance of synesthesia in relation to place-making as a means to contribute towards developing a theoretical framework that can be used to better understand individuals' experiences. For example, Bordi (2008) and Leitch (2003) found that globalization in the form of fast-food expansion and the homogenization of tastes inspired nostalgic individuals to actively resist these changes by way of consuming authentic Mexican or slow-foods as a means to engage with a shared past, cultural identity, and collective political voice. Valentine (1999), Law (2001), Choo (2007), Penman and Omar (2011), Lupton (2007), Caldwell

(2006) and Collins (2008) also explore the connections among identity, memory, nostalgia and sensory aspects of food and highlight that food and its sensory components such as smell act as agents of memory which evoke a sense of nostalgia that prompts individuals to prepare and consume these foods as a way to reconnect with memories, lives, people and emulate a sense of home. They also suggest that nostalgia consumption as a form of place-making has the ability to provide displaced individuals, such as international students, with a temporary sense of emplacement, or belonging which provides opportunities for identity reproduction. I discuss these works in more depth within the analysis portion of this thesis.

As I have demonstrated within this literature review, international students' food security, identities and food related experiences remain understudied within socio-cultural anthropology which calls for further investigation. Understanding international students' food security and the barriers they face towards achieving and maintaining a food-secure state has been the goal of my thesis and will be discussed within chapters four and five. In the following chapter I discuss the details of my field sites and provide an overview of the methodology I used to research, engage and explore this underrepresented field through a socio-cultural perspective.

Chapter 3: Field Location and Methodology

The first part of this chapter provides an atmospheric description of Windsor and Guelph and each city's university campus. I also discuss similarities and differences between campuses. Secondly, I contextualize the rationale behind why I chose to conduct a multi-sited project, as well as provide a detailed overview of the data collection and analysis phase of my project. Lastly, I review my research methods in order to provide insight into how findings were obtained, analyzed, and organized.

Windsor

Windsor, Ontario is a medium sized border city located at the southernmost point of Ontario where it is met by the city of Detroit, Michigan, USA. The population of the city of Windsor is 210,891 and it is considered to be one of the most ethnically diverse cities in Canada. The employment sector is dominated by the automotive industry, as Windsor is home to Ford, General Motors, and Chrysler assembly plants. Although two of my immediate family members are employed in this industry and I worked on the line during the latter half of my undergraduate university career, in recent years the city has lost many employment opportunities due to the collapse of the auto-industry. Windsor also has considerable urban sprawl, and is not particularly walkable, making access to a car, or public transportation a necessity. This overview of the city has been kept brief to make room for an ethnographic description of the university campus and the surrounding area as fieldwork for this project was primarily carried out at the University of Windsor campus.

University of Windsor

The University of Windsor is located in one of the oldest areas of the city, surrounded by low-income neighbourhoods, and running parallel to the scenic Detroit River, which is often regarded by Windsorites as the most beautiful place in the city for its heavily landscaped

riverfront, sprinkled with mixed-medium sculptures made by local artists. The University is a half-century old, small, but consistently expanding campus home to 16,000 students. The main campus is located in the Olde Sandwich Towne region of Windsor, originally established in 1797. As I child, I would get excited to travel to this part of the city to window shop with my mother and younger sister as well as explore the architecture of the still standing historical mill, post office, and Mackenzie hall, which was transformed from a local jail to an events facility. Over time many of the unique, locally-owned businesses closed, resulting in a take-over by mainstream one-stop shops such as Shopper's Drug Mart. However during my first year in university (2007) these shops also began to close. Today, "for rent" signs can be seen in many of these shop windows, with the exception of a small grocery store, drug store and a few other businesses located on Sandwich street. The same is true for the opposite side of the campus. The other end of campus located on Wyandotte street, is where a small hub of Asian grocers and restaurants can be found, in addition to a well-known pizzeria serving the area since 1946. There are a few other fast food establishments and miscellaneous businesses located on this street, however the business turn over within this area is also high. Cured sweet meats and fresh produce could be seen hanging in a shop window one week, and a "for rent" sign the next.

During my first year at the University of Windsor, I lived off-campus in a house with several roommates, a ten-minute walk from campus. For the remaining three years I resided at home with my mother and sister in LaSalle, commuting daily to campus, something that is fairly common for students living in the area. Most of the students living in university residence, or the surrounding campus neighbourhoods were from out of town, or were international students. The campus is fairly small, most buildings are located close together and one could walk across the entire span of the campus within 10 minutes. The importance of the auto-

industry as the backbone of the city is also reflected on campus, as the CAW (Canadian Autoworkers) Centre serves as the heart of the university. The information desk, administrative services, student club offices, and eateries, primarily consisting of fast foods, can all be found within this building. The larger on-campus buildings contain a small coffee-style shop, or a mix of coin-stealing pop machines, and dusty 1970s vending machines filled with vintage tasting snacks. Until last Spring, Vanier hall, a dining hall located in the surrounding community of residence buildings, prepared and sold home-style meals. However, participants noted that Vanier would be closed indefinitely due to its inability to turn a profit. While non-fast food options are limited on-campus, a range of food is available in Windsor's downtown core. When making one's way down the main strip of downtown Windsor, Ouellette Avenue, a variety of cuisines including Thai, Italian, Chinese, and Indian, can be purchased, although Lebanese food has always been particularly popular. While the downtown core serves as a smorgasbord of ethnic restaurants, and small hub for specialty ethnic food stores, this cornucopia of diverse food options is located a 35 minute walk from campus, or a seven to ten minute bus ride.

Guelph

Guelph is also located in Southwestern Ontario, 289 km from Windsor. The historical and charming city of Guelph is fairly small, with a permanent population of 118,000, yet Guelph is often referred to as a 'student town' since it hosts thousands of additional student residents during the academic school year. Guelph is well known for its low unemployment rate and offers many opportunities within the fields of research, education and the agri-food sector. A number of privately owned, and smaller chain restaurants, a No Frills grocery store, and many other businesses are located within the span of a 15-minute walk from the University in an area I have heard many refer to as the "student ghetto". The Stone Road mall, Metro grocery store, fast-food

chains, and a number of other businesses are also located within a 20-25 minute walk, or 3-5 minutes car ride, of the campus. Both of these shopping areas can be accessed by use of Guelph's main Stone Road and Gordon Street. If one takes Gordon Street in the opposite direction of the "student ghetto", downhill past the long stretch of campus, you will arrive at the downtown core within a 5-7 minute car ride, or 35-minute walk.

Trendy clothing boutiques, antique shops, and book stores as well as a small, single theatre, indie cinema occupy the mix of restored and untouched 19th century limestone buildings that line the streets of Guelph's romantic downtown area. Downtown Guelph has escaped the cookie cutter, Tim Horton's at every corner, deja vu landscape characteristic of most urban centres by limiting the number of big box chain stores in the core, resulting in a rare assortment of one-of-a-kind shops owned and operated by local residents. Indian, Asian, and Irish food establishments dominate the downtown eateries. Although a Dutch food shop and Asian grocery store add some diversity, overall downtown Guelph is limited in terms of ethno-cultural food options. However, the city does provide a bountiful assortment of vegan, vegetarian, organic, locally grown, slow-food options for those with more ethically bound food preferences. These food preferences are also reflected on the University of Guelph campus.

University of Guelph

The 150-year-old University of Guelph campus, home to as many squirrels as students, is well known for its Veterinary and Agriculture colleges and reputation as one of the most comprehensive universities in Canada. The University of Guelph, with a population exceeding 20,000 students, is often categorized as a medium sized university, yet an on-site farm, animal holding facility, multiple residence and teaching buildings, cafeterias, a arboretum complete with English and Japanese gardens, bike and walking trails, make it feel as though the campus is a

city within itself. The heart of the campus is the University Centre, or the “UC”, which serves as the hub for administrative and health services, students clubs, fast-food eateries, and two restaurants. Steps from the front doors of the University Centre is Branion Plaza, where an artillery cannon also known as “Old Jeremiah”, a university landmark painted daily with the names and messages of student clubs and charities, serves as a meeting place, marketplace for student-student textbook sales, and is also home to the university’s weekly farmer’s market. Fresh produce grown from the urban organic farm located on-campus is available for purchase usually up until the first frost of the Fall semester. Continuing uphill from Branion Plaza past the university library, and across from the vast campus green space, is Creelman Hall, a beautiful 19th century building with architectural features characteristic of parliament buildings found in Ottawa, rather than a cafeteria. Creelman Hall is decorated with styrofoam vegetables, and soup can props creating the atmosphere of a colourful, outdoor, European marketplace. Creelman, offers a hodgepodge of fruit and salad bars, a pasta station, fresh sandwich and wrap counter, a pizzeria offering fresh pies baked over a wood burning oven, and a dessert table offering a diverse assortment of freshly baked pastries surpassing in variety the dessert tables of most weddings I’ ve attended. While the majority of eateries on campus provide the food that encourages students to gain ‘the freshman 15’, Creelman provides students with the opportunity to resist the fast-food temptation by indulging in healthier, stomach filling, home-style meals.

Project Rationale

Having attended both schools I noted a few similarities in addition to a number of differences between each campus and city. When I arrived at the University of Guelph I was surprised to discover some of the perks associated with being a student. In addition to providing a subsidized bus pass incorporated into students’ tuition, the university provides a campus bike

centre, where students can build or repair a bike at cost. The University of Windsor does not have a bike centre, or subsidized bus pass for students, although the city does offer a minimal bus discount to students. Based on information obtained from an online mapping website, and the hospitality websites of both universities, in addition to personal experience, it quickly became clear that the Guelph campus offers a wider variety of food and is located within shorter walking distance to grocery stores than Windsor. However, Windsor as a city in general has a wider selection of ethnic foods available for purchase, which may come as a result of the city's diverse population. Both campuses also have food banks. The Guelph campus food bank promotes agency by allowing students to decide what they would like to take and the quantity of each item, as well as provides perishable and non-perishable foods. In contrast, the University of Windsor campus food bank operates closer to the traditional food bank model where clients are provided with a pre-organized assortment of non-perishable foods in the form of food hampers. The hours of operation at the University of Windsor food bank are also more limited than Guelph².

Overall, while the city of Windsor provides a wider array of ethnic foods off-campus, the options on campus besides fast-food are limited. Although the University of Guelph does not provide many ethnic foods either, it does cater to those with an alternative set of preferences for fresh, organic, local, slow-foods. It would also seem that since Guelph students are provided with a bike centre, and guaranteed a bus pass, as it is incorporated into tuition with no option to opt-out, they are better equipped with services that keep them mobile, making the city more accessible. These factors, including food availability, accessibility, transportation, and students'

² University of Windsor- Iona College Food Bank Hours, Mondays & Wednesdays 12-2pm, Tuesdays 2-4pm, Thursdays 10am-12pm. (University of Windsor, <http://web4.uwindsor.ca/units/ionacollege/mainv2.nsf/inToc/13FF1064C09350FA85256FF2005854CB?OpenDocument>, 2011.)

² University of Guelph- Central Student Association Website- CSA Food Bank Hours- Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 12-6pm, Tuesday 12-8pm. (http://www.csaonline.ca/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=27&Itemid=44)

individualized circumstances have a big impact on one's ability to achieve and maintain food security. While all university students face the possibility of food insecurity, due to high tuition fees, limited income, lack of food preparation skills and restricted means of transportation, internationals face challenges their domestic counterparts do not, such as inflated tuition costs, finding familiar food, trying new foods, adjusting to Canadian supermarkets, food packaging, prices, and cooking new foods.

The decision was made to conduct fieldwork at the University of Windsor and the University of Guelph since they both are home to high numbers of international students. The University of Windsor has 1743 students, from 94 countries with the majority coming from China, Bangladesh, Ghana, India, Iran, Nigeria, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and the United Kingdom. The international student population at Guelph is less than half the size of Windsor, with 797 students enrolled from 73 countries, the bulk of which have come from China, Saudi Arabia, India, Nigeria, Hong-Kong, and the U.S.A. It is important to note that students coming from countries around the world face differential circumstances, and consequently have distinct experiences. Therefore, the decision to conduct fieldwork at two universities was made with the aim of obtaining data from a range of students facing unique circumstances in order to understand how this impacts their ability to achieve and maintain a food secure state while studying abroad in Canada, rather than to conduct a comparative project.

Methodology

The data collection phase of this project started in late April, upon receiving ethics approval from the University of Guelph and Windsor, and concluded mid-September 2012. Students were recruited through international student listservs, via an email message outlining the purpose of the study, sent out by the University of Guelph's Office of Intercultural Affairs, and the

University of Windsor's International Student Centre. Taking into consideration the near guarantee that fewer students would be in attendance during the summer months, in addition to time restraints, convenience sampling was used to obtain participants. The teaching assistant office in the Mackinnon building at the University of Guelph was used to conduct individual interviews, and a meeting room was booked for focus groups. All interviews and one focus group conducted at the University of Windsor took place in a meeting room located within the International Student Centre. Four methods of data collection in the form of semi-structured interviews, focus groups, participant observation at the Guelph campus food bank and a free-listing exercise were used to collect data. I initially planned on attending international student dinner parties, as well as accompanying them on their grocery shopping trips to gain insight into students' experiences accessing and preparing food. Although a handful of students appeared interested during interview sessions, zero interviewees chose to partake in these exercises.

Individual Semi-Structured Interviews

Prior to the onset of the interview phase of this project, I prepared a semi-structured interview guide, consent form, and emergency food resource sheet. The consent form provided students with information on the purpose of the study, potential risks, benefits, and compensation information. I attached an emergency food resource sheet to the student copy of the consent form, listing the location and contact information for local resources such as food banks, collective kitchens, and subsidized meals that students in need of aid, and food insecurity relief could utilize. My original semi-structured interview guide included 17 questions designed to explore the relationship between international students' circumstances and experiences with food availability, accessibility, and preferences. Questions were designed to collect information on ones' employment status, income, parent's occupation, food preferences availability and access,

dietary restrictions, and means of transportation. An additional goal of this study was to explore how international students' cultural and ideological identities shape food preferences and the implications that arise for students if preferred foods are unavailable or inaccessible. Since identity can be quite abstract and complex, I avoided asking questions in which the word identity was used directly. Instead, I asked students to tell me about their favourite foods, why these foods were their favourite, whether keeping traditional back-home foods in their diet was important and why, if they missed back home foods, as well as their personal, ethical, cultural and religious views on foods as they came up in conversation. Many interviewees began to discuss a wide range of topics not originally present on the initial guide, however these themes continued to become more important over-time. As a result the interview guide became a fluid document where questions were removed, modified and added during the course of the data collection process, a copy of this interview guide can be found in Appendix 1.

The consent form, and interview guide were emailed to each participant 3-5 days before the interview to allow students to review and think about the questions and provide students with potential language competency issues to familiarize themselves with the wording and interview themes. The length of interviews ranged from 20 - 60 minutes, although most were completed in 45 minutes. A total of 21 students, seven women and six men at the University of Guelph and three women and five men at the University of Windsor, participated. This sample included an assortment of lower and upper year students, eleven graduate and ten undergraduates, students living both on and off-campus, who had come from a number of countries and had been living in Canada for ranging periods of time. All participants were given a \$10 gift card which could be used on the campus, yet one student refused to accept a gift-card when he discovered that I would not be reimbursed by the university for the cost of the gift-cards. Students were also

provided with my email address, so they could contact me if they wanted to be notified when the findings would be made available. Interviews were recorded with a digital recorder and files were moved to an encrypted laptop where they were then transcribed verbatim with the use of pseudonyms. A chart listing participant characteristics can be found in Appendix 3.

At the onset of interviews and focus groups students were asked to briefly discuss how they came to the decision to study abroad. The data obtained from interviews indicates that students chose to study abroad in order to “get a degree at an English-speaking university” which would “make it easier to get a job” once they returned home. Students also mentioned that while they had chosen Canada because it is “friendly”, “less racist”, and “safer than the U.S.”, it was also the “best financial option” in comparison to the high costs associated with studying in the United States or Australia. However, students made a point of noting that studying within Canada was also “not cheap”. Since international student tuition rates are deregulated across Canada, internationals generally pay between three to five times the cost of domestic student fees depending on their program and level of study. Some students paying between \$5000-8000.00 per semester stated that these costs were “not a big burden”, while others paying up to \$20,000-30,000 per year were more likely to refer to these costs as “ridiculous” and “disgusting” and mentioned that tuition in addition to living expenses were “hard to balance”. Furthermore, students with siblings also studying abroad feared that a rise in tuition would result in “big problems” for their family.

The bulk of participants identified as middle class, while a few distinguished themselves as “slightly above middle class”, and upper class. Parental occupation and income in relation to the amount of compromises or sacrifices made by the family was used by students to determine their social class position. Participants who had moved to Canada alongside their families or moved in

with family already residing in Canada, noted a drop in social class status upon their arrival which was primarily attributed to an increase in financial hardships. Most self-identified middle and upper class participants noted that their parents could cover their expenses “comfortably”, yet only upper class students said that they could purchase “groceries without looking at the price”. Since the majority of students are unable to independently support themselves, due to a lack of personal income in addition to high tuition costs, their lifestyles and social class positioning are mirrored by that of their parents and dependent upon the level of support they receive from them. With the exception of a few students living with family, the bulk of participants resided off-campus with several roommates. Living costs and tuition fees were primarily covered by parental support although three participants received scholarships which covered all or a portion of their tuition or residence fees. A few students were employed part-time, typically holding a job on campus such as a teaching or research assistantship, however the majority of participants were currently unemployed. A number of participants presently in the process of job hunting, cited being unable to work during their first six months in Canada, and ineligibility for on-campus work-study positions reserved for Canadians as employment barriers. Some students, but by no means all, cited economic difficulties in addition to other socio-cultural obstacles as the source of many hardships while studying abroad.

Focus Group Sessions

Focus group participants were provided with the same consent form and resource sheet as interview participants, and emailed the discussion guide 3-5 days before participating. The discussion guide (Appendix 2) consisted of four questions used to triangulate interview data. During focus groups students were asked about their first food experiences in Guelph and Windsor, what they were expecting, if their expectations differed from their experiences,

whether it is important to keep traditional food in their diets, if they thought the foods they ate said anything about them as a person, and were asked to discuss their understanding of the food security concept. One focus group was conducted at each university using convenience sampling. The first focus group took place in early August at the University of Guelph with 4 women, 2 graduate, and 2 undergraduate participants. The second focus group took place during the first week of September at the University of Windsor with 6 men, and 1 woman, all undergraduate. The Guelph focus group took about 50 minutes to complete whereas the Windsor focus group took 1.25 hours. University of Guelph participants were compensated with a \$5.00 gift-card to a local, coffee shop Planet Bean, and University of Windsor participants were provided with \$5.00 Tim Horton's gift-card. Tea, bottled water, fruit, muffins, and cupcakes were also provided as refreshments during the session. Focus group participants were also provided with my contact information and told to send me an email if they would like be notified when the findings have been made available. Like interviews, focus group sessions were also recorded, and transcribed.

Free-Listing Exercise

The free-listing exercise instructions were sent to students prior to the interview alongside the consent form and interview guide, so as to provide students with the opportunity to put thought into their answers. Students were asked to bring their completed list to the interview. For this exercise students were asked to write down five factors they consider important to keep in mind while grocery shopping. Three example considerations were listed on the instruction sheet: organic, inexpensive, and familiar food nevertheless students were encouraged to come up with their own categories. Students were then asked to order their five considerations from 1, the easiest category to satisfy, to 5, the hardest category to satisfy. For example, if a student listed purchasing inexpensive food as a priority, yet found it difficult to do so he/she might rank this

consideration as a 4, or 5. Alternatively if a student is interested in purchasing organic foods and finds it economically and physically accessible to do so he/she might rank this as a 1 or 2.

Completed lists were discussed with participants to verify that the instructions were interpreted correctly, and to confirm that I understood participants' lists as they were meant to be interpreted.

A few of the first participants did not bring their lists to the interview, and said they would send their completed list via email. Initially this appeared to be the best option since it would provide students with an opportunity to think about their answers rather than complete the list on the spot. However, a few of these initial participants neglected to send their list and did not respond to follow-up emails. As a result remaining students who did not bring their lists to interviews were asked to complete them at the interview location once the interview was complete. Focus group participants were not asked to bring completed lists with them, but were encouraged to grab refreshments and complete the list following the completion of the focus group. Since a few of the initial participants failed to complete the exercise, the free-list results do not include data from every participant. In-depth results will be discussed in the following chapter.

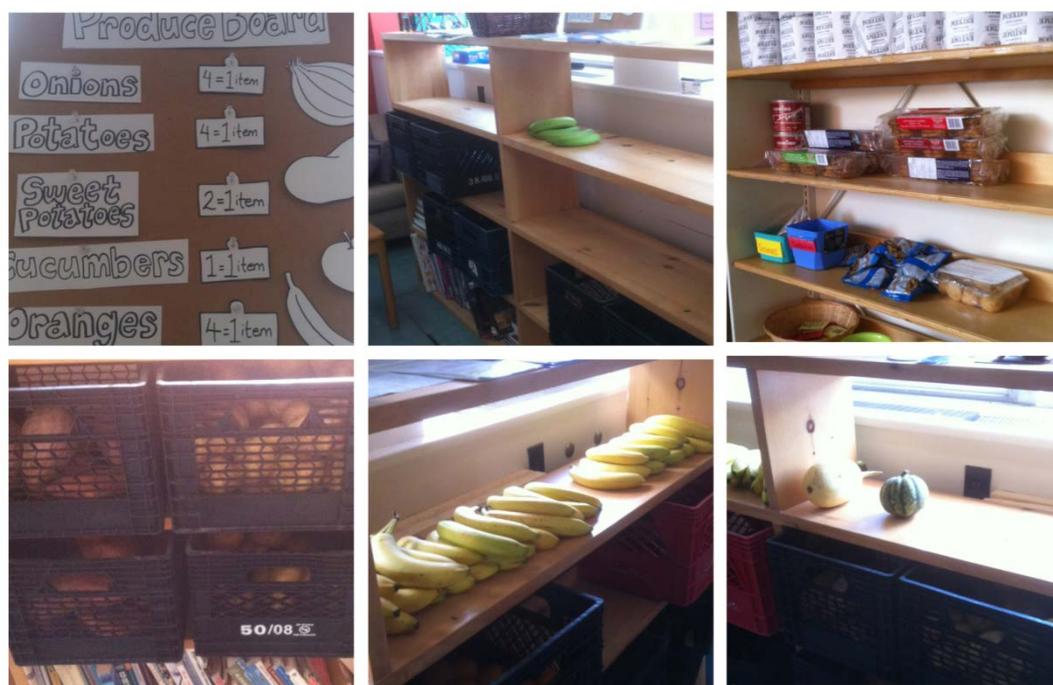
Participant Observation at University of Guelph Campus Food Bank

The University of Guelph Central Student Association (CSA) Food Bank is located in the Federal Annex Building on the far end of the campus where Gordon Street nearly meets Stone Road. I have been a volunteer of the food bank for over a year now, although my participant observation only took place from mid-June to early-October 2012. The sounds of multiple languages being spoken, the tin clang of canned soup and flaked tuna being stocked onto wooden shelves, and the rattling of tools from the neighbouring bike centre fill the walls of the humble

campus food bank. The layout of the food bank is divided into three main spaces: the lobby which includes the checkout desk and produce shelf, the non-perishables room, and the refrigerated and frozen foods room. The main lobby space has a lengthy shelf located below a large window that houses the majority of fruits and vegetables. Sweet potatoes, onions, and bananas are typically always available, however apples, oranges, peppers, and beans are generally hit or miss. Against the left side of the room lies a shelf full of toilet paper, condoms, soap, junk-foods, and other miscellaneous items students can take that do not count against their 30 monthly items. The non-perishables room stores packages of portioned oatmeal, nutri-grain bars, brown and white rice, pasta, spaghetti, couscous, lentils, ramen noodles, vegetable and chicken soup bases, soy sauce, vinegar, apple juice, peanut butter, and canned goods such as tuna, spaghetti sauce, chick peas, soup, and beans. The refrigerated and frozen foods room houses two freezers and refrigerators. The large deep freezer stores frozen loaves of bread, and un-portioned frozen items. The second stand-up freezer holds portioned fish fillets, Jamaican patties, perogies, corn, and vegetables. There are two remaining fridges, one with cartons of cow's milk and one with organic soy milk. Tofu can also sometimes be found, as well as small quantities of miscellaneous vegetables such as beans and mushrooms, however these items deplete quickly. The food bank runs on a mix of foods donated or purchased from a small university and student funded budget set aside to purchase staples such as canned goods, onions, potatoes, bananas, peanut butter, bread, milk, pasta, oatmeal, granola bars, and occasionally eggs. The food bank also receives produce donations from the urban organic campus farm.



Left; Dry foods room, top-left canned goods shelf, top-right portioned pasta and rice. Bottom, condiments shelf. Right; Top middle shows fridge full of 2% cow's milk in refrigerated and frozen foods room. Top-right corner, picture of frozen corn and mixed vegetables. Bottom right middle corner, organic and flax bread donation in deep freezer. Fridge full of Silk organic soy milk located in bottom right corner.



Top-left; Photo of the produce board indicates how many items equals 1 point. Top right; shows shelf full of toilet paper, hot chocolate powder, condoms, spices and cookies. Remaining photos were taken of the produce shelf. The top middle photo was

taken on a day where produce levels were low. The bottom three photos were taken on a day where the produce levels were high.

When students enter the food bank they are greeted by a volunteer who can typically tell if one is a previous visitor or a new client by how long they stare at the check out desk with a slightly confused look on their face. A new client is asked to fill out an intake form that asks for the student's financial information, amount of dependents, reason for accessing the food bank and dietary restrictions. Once a student has completed the form they are provided with a tour, and run-down of the food bank rules. Students are provided with up to 30 items a month, and an additional 30 items per dependent, and can pick what and how much they need of each item with the exception of milk, eggs and bread. A student could take 30 cans of tuna, or 50 bags of oatmeal, but are allowed only one carton of milk, half a dozen eggs, and one loaf of bread per trip. They may take extra if they have dependents. This food bank model is unique and differs from the traditional food bank models in two ways. One, the food bank offers both perishable and non-perishables, and has a budget to purchase staple foods on a regularly rather than relying solely on donations. This differs from a traditional food bank in that it provides complementary items such as peanut butter and bread, cereal and milk, rather than just peanut butter and cereal.

The loosely structured food bank policy provides students with dignity and empowers agency by allowing clients to roam freely and pick and chose the foods they would like to take, decide on an appropriate quantity and tally their items on their own, only asking clients to report the total quantity of items taken to a volunteer on their way out. This model provides students with choices and options and the opportunity to act and make decisions counter to the mainstream 'take-it-or-leave-it' model, utilized by the University of Windsor, that forces needy individuals to accept a pre-organized food hamper, that may contain foods they dislike, or do not feel comfortable eating and are unable to substitute. Although I did not have time to conduct any participant observation at the University of Windsor, I frequently volunteered from 12-2pm on

Thursdays from June to October at the University of Guelph campus food bank where I primarily observed and interacted with students by providing them with tours, listening to their stories, as well as answering clients' questions rather than asking them to answer my own.

Analysis techniques

All recorded interview and focus groups were played back and transcribed (typed) verbatim, without the use of software. After I prepared interview transcripts, I added the data obtained from each students' free-listing exercise to their corresponding transcript, which I then printed and compiled into a binder. During the review process, notes and comments were written onto hardcopies of students' transcripts, and were coded for common themes. Upon reviewing all transcripts, common themes were then used to organize quotes obtained from interviews and focus groups conducted with students. Once data was organized into common themes, analysis of themes and links between themes were used to structure research findings, as well as build the arguments I have made in the following chapters.

In this chapter I have provided a contextual foundation for understanding my research by including a detailed description of each fieldsite, as well as discussing the methods that were central to data collection. In the next chapter, I will discuss students' experiences shopping for and consuming new and familiar food items in relation to their ability to achieve and maintain a food secure state while studying abroad. More specifically I will explore how students' dietary regimes are impacted by their willingness to try and incorporate new foods into their diet, availability of and access to preferred foods, personal financial circumstances, as well as the role the university plays in hindering students' ability to reach and sustain a food secure state.

Chapter 4: Barriers Towards Achieving Food Security and Effects on Students

The central theme within this chapter centres on international students' differential experiences in relation to food availability, and the physical and economic accessibility of healthy and preferred foods. My main argument is that unlike familiar food eaters, adventurous eaters' ability to maintain food security does not hinge upon the availability of familiar foods. Familiar food eaters stick to familiar, or traditional items that can be difficult to find, making these students more vulnerable to food insecurity as a result of being unable to consistently consume culturally, or personally-appropriate food. On the other hand adventurous eaters expressed dietary satisfaction with the exception of those experiencing financial hardship. Since these students willingly incorporated a wide variety of new foods into their diet, I suggest that chances of maintaining a food-secure state can be improved by broadening one's culinary horizon which provides more flexibility and minimizes the impact of availability and accessibility barriers.

I begin this chapter by discussing in a general sense what it is that familiar food eaters and adventurous eaters alike want and need in terms of food. In the following subsection I address students' general preferences for healthy and culturally appropriate foods and discuss non-food priorities such as price and time that students mentioned as important to consider while grocery shopping. By beginning this chapter with an overview of students' preferences and priorities it allows me to demonstrate how my sample of participants as a whole experiences food and eating in Canada. After establishing similarities between participants I then discuss how students' diets and experiences can be categorized into two primary groups based on students' attitudes towards food, or in other words how they define edibility, familiarity and classify foods as acceptable, or unacceptable. In the remainder of this chapter I explore the interaction between food availability, physical and economic accessibility, or affordability, students' agency and students' attitudes towards and experiences with food in order to better understand the barriers

that keep some international students from achieving and maintaining food security while abroad.

To contextualize my findings and argument I also incorporate various approaches to food preferences and food security frameworks derived from the anthropology of food, geography and nutrition literature. I also discuss theoretical ideas from scholars who have focused on the concept of edibility as culturally determined, glocalization, culinary tourism, and sensory anthropology in their work.

“I’m always in the constant compromise.”³ Overview of International Students’ Food Preferences and Priorities Related to Cost, Health and Personal and Financial Circumstances

“I have to make a compromise between health, nutritional values and time, but a really good balance of health, price and taste that's the ideal meal.” This undergraduate from India, provides a concise summary of the five factors, nutrition, health, time, price, and taste, that throughout the research emerged as central to international students defining their preferences and shopping priorities. Comments regarding making compromises, living on a strict budget, and maintaining a frugal lifestyle were expressed as part of a financial reality experienced by a number of international students in addition to the greater part of the Canadian post-secondary population.

Participants also spoke of health as an important factor to keep in mind while grocery shopping. Fruits, leafy vegetables, milk, brown rice, bread, eggs and real fruit juice were commonly classified as “healthy”, in contrast to cheese, chocolate, chips, processed, fried, oily, and “chemically injected” foods which were considered “unhealthy” and generally avoided. Students generally held preferences for “quick” and “good quality, good tasting foods” which could be purchased for a “reasonable price”. In terms of on-campus food, fast-food establishments such as Subway and Tim Hortons were favoured because they were “cheap and

³ This was said by an engineering undergraduate from India.

convenient” and “somewhat healthy”. Since students frequently prioritized their studies over time-consuming tasks such as cooking, preferences for convenience foods became an important topic during interviews and focus groups. In an effort to make the best use of his time one student implemented the following strategy:

“Pasta is really convenient I just need to boil the pasta and then make some sauce. I cook over the weekend and pack it up for the rest of the week. It’s a way of managing time or giving myself a thing to do in a limited time... kind of binding myself to the little time.” [*Undergraduate Engineering student from Nigeria studying at the University of Windsor*]

For this student, and others who took the weekend to prepare batches of food, time became an important consideration. Although this participant acknowledged during the interview that pasta was not the healthiest option, its low price point, in addition to the “convenience factor” made it accessible and preferable. In an effort to create a quick and healthy meal another student said,

“Every morning I cook the oat and I will add sometimes milk and sometimes cheese. I do not cook cheese in China, but I add the cheese in the oatmeal every morning here. It does not always taste so good to add the cheese to the oats, but it has protein that provides the health, and it is quick and good because it provides the calcium and protein and the oat provides me with the fibre and the starch and protein, but it’s not so delicious it’s just to save the time.” [*Food Science PhD Student from China at the University of Guelph*]

Although the student made reference to three food related priorities, health, convenience and taste, only two, health and convenience, could be satisfied during the preparation of this meal. During our interview she also said, “cheese is not a big thing in China”, and described her daily bowl of oatmeal as a platform to combine a familiar breakfast food item with a new “Western” staple. These quotes suggest that in addition to health, nutrition, price, taste, and convenience, familiar food preferences and new food interests also play a role in “the constant compromise”.

In the next subsection I categorize students as familiar, adventurous and extra adventurous eaters, based on their shared experiences and their self-identification as a particular types of eaters. Out of the 32 individuals I interviewed I have classified 14/32 participants as familiar food eaters, 11/32 participants as adventurous eaters, and 7/32 participants as extra-

adventurous eaters. However, it is important to note that there was plenty of variation within these categories and their purpose is to serve as more of an organizational framework, than a rigid system of classification. For instance, out of the eleven students I categorized as adventurous eaters I would consider only half of that group to be fully adventurous. Although all participants within this category are adventurous, half really valued the importance of maintaining a balanced diet consisting of familiar and new foods, while the remainder did not take maintaining a balanced diet as seriously. The majority of extra-adventurous eaters abandoned their traditional food-ways in order to experience Canadian food-ways, although two students still kept a fair bit of familiar foods in their diet. In contrast almost all familiar food eaters demonstrated similar eating habits in that they often preferred to consume familiar foods and avoided experimenting with new foods. Many students who were reluctant to try new foods described themselves as "unadventurous", or "back-home food" eaters, whereas students who regularly ate new foods referred to themselves as "open", "flexible" and "adventurous". The majority of students were most interested in discussing their favourite foods and the type of eater they saw themselves as in the present, rather than the transitional process that lead them to become a particular type of eater. Most said that they continued to consume familiar foods so as to avoid risk, save money, preserve identities, or did not see a point in making dietary transitions while abroad since they would be returning to their home countries. Adventurous and extra adventurous eaters embraced dietary change because they felt that it was important to experience Canada via culinary tourism, build and experience new identities; sometimes they were bored with their current diets. The primary difference between adventurous and extra adventurous eaters is that adventurous eaters usually maintain a stricter balance between back-home and new foods, whereas extra adventurous eaters do not appear to be concerned with this balance. In the bulk of this thesis I use the words adventurous and familiar food eaters primarily to make distinctions between those that will and will not try new foods. However, it is important to note

that this terminology is used to reflect upon students' current eating habits, and is not necessarily linked to their willingness to explore.

As I will discuss, some focus on familiar foods as a precaution because they do not want to risk purchasing new foods they may dislike while on a strict budget. Therefore, students' decisions and experiences are not necessarily about completely accepting, or excluding foods. Rather, preferences reflect students' priorities such as saving money, engaging with Canadian customs, preserving established identities and creating new ones. One may identify as an adventurous eater, yet discuss a time when they consumed nothing, but back-home food during a temporary bout of homesickness; therefore, transitioning between eating styles is possible. Students priorities and preferences shift over-time and in this sense one's diet and identification as a certain type of eater may also shift. That said, in this thesis I primarily focus on students' eating experiences in the present and I discuss these experiences based on the ways in which students describe their personal preferences and how they define themselves as particular types of eaters. Although the transitional process was briefly discussed by some students and is succinctly discussed in this thesis, it is not the primary focus, as an in-depth longitudinal analysis would be needed in order to fully understand this process.

“If I don’t know it, then I won’t buy it.” Defining Notions of Familiarity : Familiar-Food Eaters’ Attitudes Towards, and Experiences With Food

The general philosophy held among familiar food eaters who maintain familiar diets while abroad, in contrast to adventurous students who embrace new food regimes by integrating unfamiliar foods into their diets, can be accurately summarized in the following quote provided by a student from India, “If I don’t know it, then I won’t buy it”. Students’ decisions to maintain familiar diets are influenced by a number of factors including time, risk, financial situation and taste preferences and are heavily shaped by existing cultural and religious identities. The following excerpt provides a glimpse into this multifaceted decision making process.

“It’s more like unfamiliarity, like how the things will be out there, how it tastes and is it halal, since my Muslim religion is important to me. The second thing is, I do not have time to think oh what is this? What do Canadians have? What is the nutrition info? I don’t have time and I’m use to this and I know what is good in my country, at least 60% I know what is good to eat, my food. So I prefer not wasting time on this.”[*Undergraduate Psychology major from Bangladesh studying at the University of Windsor*]

Similar to this student many familiar food eaters shared in a fear of the unknown and often expressed a preference for foods that they had tried before, grown comfortable with and were knowledgeable of. Some students also mentioned that they did not have time to dedicate towards investigating new foods, or were motivated to maintain a familiar diet because they would be returning home in a matter of months, or years and did not see any reason to adapt to local food-ways in the meantime. Students also rejected new foods that fell outside the parameters of what they considered to be ‘good to think’, because they disliked the smell or mentioned that eating new foods made them feel “sick”. In addition, I argue that several students continue to consume familiar or traditional foods in an attempt to assert and sustain their distinctive identities while abroad. Individuals are defined in part by what they eat, in the sense that one can articulate their eating habits, food preferences, and their reasoning for accepting and rejecting foods through the act of consumption. For example, identifying as a healthy eater says something not only about the types of food that person enjoys, but values and beliefs they consider to be of personal importance in relation to food. In an effort to distinguish oneself from other ethnic groups students, including the participant quoted above, often made distinctions between “Canadian” food, and food they considered to be personally, or culturally appropriate. These students also refrained from experimenting with new food, with the exception of some novelty items, to avoid jeopardizing identities which are reinforced by the consumption of particular foods which I will discuss in more depth in Chapter 5.

“It’s not spicy and I just can’t eat the food and I thought, “Oh this is the food I’m going to be eating all these days”, and then I find my friends and got my back-home food and ate it and I felt comfortable.” *[Engineering Masters student from India studying at the University of Windsor]*

“Like if you ask any Indian they will first mention the spices because that's what gives it the taste, I mean we don’t prefer bland food... if it’s not spicy we don’t eat it.” *[Undergraduate Engineering student from India, studying at the University of Guelph]*

“It’s mostly the taste, the only difference between the food here and back home is the spice used. Here everything is much more spicier than I’m used to.” *[Masters student from Argentina, studying Plant Agriculture at the University of Guelph]*

These excerpts suggest that the presence of too little, or too much spice, plays a role in students’ process of classifying food as familiar. The use of familiar flavouring principles, defined as “a sensory experience produced by the mixtures of specific flavouring ingredients that are customarily added to a staple during its preparation” (Farb & Armelagos, 1980, 185) can be used to understand students’ preferences for familiar foods. An example of a flavouring principle is curry, a combination of traditional Indian spices such as garlic, cumin, ginger, turmeric, coriander, cardamom, and pepper which are used to create the cuisine’s identity (Farb & Armelagos, 1980). Foods were classified as “authentic” based on the presence of traditional ingredient combinations which serve as markers of “familiarity”. Yet, the search for familiar foods within Canada was not always an easy one.

“There are some Chinese foods here, but it’s not as real as back home. It’s still Chinese food, but it’s not really good. Here just because you cook food from that country or cook those type of foods we assume it’s food from that country, but it’s not the right taste.” *[Undergraduate microbiology major from China, studying at the University of Guelph]*

“Like the day I went to Vanier [University of Windsor cafeteria] and I saw they had African rice I was like “Oh my god, yes”, but it was just boring it wasn’t authentic... it tasted terrible, I won’t even buy anything they call African again.” *[Undergraduate biology major from Nigeria, studying at the University of Windsor]*

“Like sausages, pizza and pickles which I found tasted totally different. Like usually the pizza from back home even if it’s from the same company they have

some kinds here that I don't like at all. Like I stopped eating pizza and the pickles are made differently. Like they have to have a typical taste, and they don't have it here. Even if they should be the same they are not. Like sausage, the fresh sausages that you put on the barbecue they are totally different. Like no one would ever think to put pineapple with sausage or I don't know whatever they have here, not typical." *[PhD student from Germany, studying poultry science at the University of Guelph]*

These quotes show that although familiar foods may be available in Canada, the flavour of these foods vary from what students are accustomed to and their past eating experiences that have set the tone for establishing food expectations and preferences. While familiar food eaters continue to search for familiar foods they face obstacles when they find said foods, but are unable to locate that "typical taste". The excerpts within this subsection, including the one below, provide insight into how notions of familiarity and unfamiliarity in relation to food are constructed among students as well as demonstrate students' attitudes towards trying familiar foods in unfamiliar forms while abroad.

Researcher: Is there a particular meal or food item that is special to you in anyway?

Participant: "Rice, a meal is never complete without rice. If I have rice only once in a day then it feels good to me. Rice along with pulses and curd [yoghurt] and then with butter chicken on that, it tastes and smells so good, it's peerrrfect."

Researcher: Can you describe how rice completes the meal, and why it is important to eat on a daily basis?

Participant: "It's about food and conditioning. I am Indian and I have lived in India for a long time, so it has influenced my mindset. When I first arrived in Canada I was nervous because I could not find my food for weeks, but then I found some and things were ok. Though I can change it [diet], it makes me uncomfortable, I don't know why, I just don't want to be without those things." *[Undergraduate Engineering student from India, studying at the University of Windsor]*

Here the participant uses the term "conditioning" to refer to the structured pattern of eating he has become accustomed to. The structure of this meal is characterized by the presence of familiar synesthetic experiences, taste and smell and staples such as rice, pulses, curd (yoghurt) and butter chicken. While pulses, curd and butter chicken are interchangeable items that can be added

or subtracted from the meal equation, or structure in exchange for other items, rice, the structural foundation of the meal, must be present in order for the meal to be considered complete and edible. As Strauss (1968) argues, food must be both good to eat, and good to think, in other words, meals as social constructs must satisfy cultural expectations in addition to nutrition and health standards. The culinary system individuals follow which is based on their idea of what is “good to think” and “eat” can also be referred to as a regime. Fischler (1988) argues that a regime provides individuals with “a set of rules to be followed, a pattern of life” which not only allows individuals to assert and maintain their identity, but provides them with the opportunity to exercise control over their bodies (290). The student quoted above said he “feels good” when he consumes rice, yet begins to feel “uncomfortable”, or “nervous” when he is unable to access rice, and other familiar foods regularly. When we deviate from regimes “we are left without rules for meal-taking, we are left norm less, without guidance” in a state Fischler (1979) refers to as ‘gastro-anomie’ (cited in Caplan, 1997, 33). Individuals, stripped of their personal agency, or their ability to make autonomous decisions, may feel “uncomfortable”, or “nervous” when they are forced to diverge from their food regime and experiment with the unfamiliar, like the undergraduate quoted above who was unable to locate familiar foods during his first few weeks in Canada.

Incorporating new foods into one’s diet was also avoided because it became associated with financial risks. One cash-strapped student from Bangladesh said, “it costs money to buy new foods, and I don’t have a lot of money, so if I don’t like it and have to throw it away then I’m wasting money”; similar comments were made by other participants. While financial risks play a role in limiting some students’ ability to try new foods, financial risk was rarely noted as an independent barrier.

In this subsection it has been my goal to demonstrate how some international students as familiar-food eaters construct notions of familiarity and unfamiliarity and how these

constructions paired with food attitudes affect consumption. Here I have shown that students classify foods as familiar based on the presence of expected, or anticipated synesthetic elements such as taste, smell and appearance of food in addition to meal structure and accurate ingredient incorporation. Experimenting with unfamiliar foods not only requires time, but it also implies a certain level of risk. When confronted with new foods familiar food eaters question the ingredient and nutritional content of foods and wonder how each item will taste and if it will make them sick, or conflict with their personal, or socio-cultural beliefs and identities. The prospect of trying new foods also prompts students to ask themselves whether they have the time to investigate these foods and how they will feel about wasting both money and food in the event that they dislike the item. For many, unfamiliarity and the questions that go along with it can manifest in feelings of discomfort which arise when students' are forced to deviate from their dietary regimes, or have had a negative experience willingly trying new foods. Others are simply uncomfortable with the idea of culinary exploration which results in a preference for familiar foods. Familiarity among familiar food eaters comes to represent what is appropriate, healthy, tasty, and what will keep one from becoming "sick" and allow them to maintain functional identities, while unfamiliarity connotes potential illness, disgust, fear, financial hardship, and identity loss. However, not all students hold these same attitudes towards new foods. Many students are open and excited with the prospect of culinary tourism, and use their time abroad to actively engage with Canadian culture and experience new foods and flavours. I discuss these students' experiences and attitudes towards consumption in the following subsection.

"Pumpkin pie, it smells, it tastes like a surprise, it is not taste by the tongue, you use your nose to feel it." Adventurous Eaters' Experiences and Attitudes Towards Experimenting with New Foods

Several students revealed during interviews and focus groups that they wanted to spend their time in Canada "living as a Canadian", by way of adopting "Canadian" traits, norms, routines and identities. Students who self-identified as "open", "flexible" or "adventurous" eaters

often consumed “back-home” and “Canadian” foods, or temporarily abandoned their traditional preferences so as to embrace “Canadian culture”. Although a few students mentioned that the limited availability of familiar foods originally encouraged them to try new foods, most choose to consume unfamiliar foods because they were simply no longer interested in the foods “they have been eating since childhood”.

“I’ve been having those for twenty years, so I don’t think I need to have more of those now. I moved off to university when I was 19, or 20, so for the past 20 years I’ve been eating the same food which is like Indian food, it becomes monotonous. Every once and while you want to go back to that and I can cook that myself, so that’s about it, but it’s not something that I would want to have on a daily basis... I’m just bored of that.” [*Engineering Masters student from India, studying at the University of Windsor*]

“No, not really...I don’t really miss the Sri Lankan cuisine. I’ve been eating that since the first day of my life, so why not try something different.” [*Biological Sciences major from Sri Lanka, studying at the University of Guelph*]

The data obtained from these interviews indicate that adventurous eaters long for new experiences, and distance themselves from the culinary mainstream they have come to see as “boring”, and “monotonous”. For example a Master’s student from China told me about her first time consuming pumpkin pie stating that, “it smells, it tastes like a surprise, it is not taste by the tongue, you use your nose to feel it”. Besides satisfying curiosity and relieving boredom, students noted that it was critical to consume new foods in the name of becoming “Canadian”, and “important to taste in order to experience Canadian culture”. Long (2004) argues that individuals, or “active agents” become culinary tourists when new foods are consumed “voluntarily” in order to experience “new cultures and ways of being”, or “an unfamiliar way of life” (1, 20). Since many adventurous eaters participate in exploratory eating as a medium to engage with “Canadian” culture, an “unfamiliar way of life”, Long’s work provides a valuable framework with which to consider their eating experiences and culinary tourism as a by-product of long-term stays.

While some incorporated new foods into their diet as a result of being unable to access

familiar foods, their continued exploration of exotic foods became a personal decision, rather than a response to hardships. Exploratory eating provides students with an opportunity to embrace new foods, and establish identities by way of experiencing 'otherness'. Long (2004) states that, "we must think of a food as being somehow different, new, or exotic in order to think of exploring it" (22). Although most students struggled to pinpoint a range of "Canadian" foods, they did identify Tim Horton's goods, "fusion foods", and "multicultural dishes" as representative of "Canadian" cuisine. Students described the average Canadian as someone who leads a "go, go, go" lifestyle, drinks a "to-go coffee" every day, and enjoys coffee, baked goods, maple syrup, poutine and hockey. Long suggests that culinary tourists gravitate towards foods, or restaurants that clearly display national identities. For example the Tim Hortons franchise, created by Canadian hockey legend Tim Horton, became a touristic hub for internationals. Since Tim Hortons encompasses all but one of the traits students have identified as distinctly Canadian, the chain became synonymous with "Canadian food". In addition to developing an interest in hockey, coffee, muffins, and donuts became new dietary staples for students, because these items are inexpensive and served as medium to engage with "Canadian-ness".

Rudy (2004) argues that distinctions can be made between short-term culinary tourists and extended stay eaters. While culinary tourists are usually only exposed to novelty foods, extended stay eaters "enter relationships and encounter institutions that the tourist may never discover" (132). For instance, international students were often invited into the homes of Canadians where they were served a variety of home-made "multicultural dishes". Students were also more likely to shop for food and prepare meals than dine out. The extended stay thereby has the ability to provide students with a better understanding of Canadian food-ways.

"When I got here I saw Tim Hortons everywhere and I had never saw it before, so I knew it was Canadian, but that was it. So when I came to Canada I asked people what is Canadian food? They would laugh and say, "it's Kraft Dinner man", but there is a large variation of food in Canada, it is multicultural, there's a lot of people with different backgrounds... especially when I compare this to my

hometown, it is a multicultural environment. Many of the dishes have been mixed like Vietnamese and Indian, or Italian with German, so Canadian food becomes a mix of all foods.” [*Undergraduate Engineering student from Pakistan, University of Windsor*]

The extended stay provides students with an opportunity to diversify and expand their diets and culinary knowledge by investigating food-ways in-depth. Adventurous eaters who engaged in culinary tourism realized that “Canadian” cuisine has been shaped and re-defined by the country’s multicultural population, and came to identify “Canadian” cuisine as a product of this multicultural milieu, defined by the presence of eclectic combinations.

Unlike familiar eaters, adventurous eaters wholeheartedly embraced unfamiliarity and found it to be an essential component of the culinary tourist, or extended stay eaters’ diet. Adventurous eaters defined their diets and selves as open, flexible, diverse and exciting, these qualities were subsequently reflected in their eating habits and desire to explore “Canadian” food-ways while abroad. In this subsection it has been my goal to demonstrate how students define and experience adventurousness as well as explore how their attitudes towards food and eating differ from familiar food eaters. Distinguishing between the characteristics of each group in these above subsections has allowed me to provide a clearer picture in regards to how each group differential experiences the barriers that affect food security achievement and maintenance which I discuss in the remainder of the chapter.

“That is something I really miss.”: Availability of Foods Preferred Among International Students and Glocalization as an Agent of Food Unavailability

In the following subsections, I discuss the relationship between international students’ circumstances experiences, preferences and attitudes towards food within the context of a food security framework. Since its conception in the early 1970s, the term food security has been defined and used in a number of ways across disciplines. Originally, the concept was utilized as a tool to understand global food shortages and famine resulting from natural and economic disasters, yet today the concept focuses more extensively on accessibility as a principal barrier to

food security rather than availability. The most comprehensive and widely accepted definition of this concept reads, “Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (World Food Summit, 1996).

When it comes to food availability, familiar food eaters often faced the biggest challenges since they were most comfortable consuming traditional or familiar foods that were not always consistently available in Canada. For example foods that are not typically associated with the Canadian culinary mainstream such as sourdough bread, strong “mountain” cheeses, surf clam, cow’s tongue and ox’s tail, were often unavailable, or “not worth buying” because they were not as “fresh as back-home”. Familiar food eaters and adventurous eaters alike considered ethnic stores to be a “big help”, although lack of variety, and inconsistent stock became a prolonged source of frustration. In an ongoing search for familiar foods some students travelled to nearby cities such as Detroit, Sarnia, Kitchener, Toronto and Mississauga, to access familiar and traditional preferred foods. This strategy only provided students with a short-term opportunity to remedy dietary monotony, since it became challenging for students to travel to these locations on a regular basis. As a result, these students often became susceptible to bouts of temporary food insecurity - a transient drop in one’s ability to access an adequate amount of food (Alcock, 2009).

Familiar food eaters who refused to incorporate new foods into their diets, with the exception of the occasional novelty item, expressed more dissatisfaction with their diets than adventurous eaters and attributed the source of this dissatisfaction to monotony and the lack of food options in Canada.

“After two, three months we’re feeling really bad because it’s like the same stuff. We cook like one vegetable every day, like five a week, so we feel it is like a chain, so we feel a little bad from eating the same thing.” [*Undergraduate engineering student from India*]

In order to cope with food unavailability many familiar food eaters and some adventurous eaters brought food items back to Canada after visiting their home countries, while others relied on friends and family to send food and spice packages upon request.

“My grandma sends me peppers, scotch bonnet peppers, and seasoning, normal, typical seasoning. I can find it here, but because I’m so use to getting it from Jamaica, it’s more authentic. Here it’s kind of diluted, it’s not the real thing, it’s not authentic.” [*Undergraduate political science major from Jamaica, studying at the University of Windsor*]

“That was one of the first experiences I had here, cheese is crazy expensive if you want a good variety. You can buy cheddar, or you have to pay a lot of money. Cheese is a really big thing back-home, so I was used to, and it’s cheap too, so it’s nice to have a big selection for not that much money, so when I came over here I had to adjust to just eating cheddar (Laughs). When we get visitors, or I go back, I bring back cheese, so last time we brought back 5.5 kilos of cheese, so that lasted for a while, but that is something I really miss.” [*Master’s student from Germany, studying History at the University of Guelph*]

These parcels provide temporary and limited amounts of sustenance, and cannot be seen as a sustainable or reliable method of ensuring food security, although they do provide students with an opportunity to stay connected with their home countries. Students also sent parcels so as to share their experiences with those back home, which I will discuss in the following chapter.

As I previously pointed out, structure of meals and proper use of flavouring principles play a large role in students’ processes of classifying foods as familiar, or unfamiliar. When known foods were presented in new ways, familiar food eaters, including the student quoted above, often rejected these items because they considered them to be inauthentic and inedible, while adventurous eaters were interested in tasting these “reworked” or new dishes. Comments regarding inauthenticity and atypicality suggest that glocalization may partially be the source of food unavailability. Glocalization generally refers to the ways in which “globally traded goods” like food are reconstructed or indigenized within local settings (Mohring, 2008,129). A quote provided by one of my participants serves as an exceptional illustration of this concept.

“It’s a different type of food, in China the North part and the South part has different food it’s really customized to the city. The South prefers spicy foods, so

in the South if you order something they'll give you spicy sauce, but if you order the same thing in the North they don't have that, because they don't eat that much spicy food. So even in the same country they really customize to their local target people, so it's very different from here. Like I would never buy a muffin at McDonalds, I don't think they serve that, but here they serve that. And the burger is similar, but they have more cheese here back home we don't have a lot of cheese. I think people just like different things. Like back home people don't like cheese, like my parents never eat cheese because we don't have a lot of cheese at the supermarket. But we have different tastes, and we all eat different food.”
[PhD Student from China studying Food Science at the University of Guelph]

This student uses a classic example of ‘McDonaldization’ as ‘glocalization’ to illustrate her experience consuming ‘glocalized’ foods in Canada and China. Her explanation of glocalization exhibits how foods are altered to suit local palates as well as demonstrates that while specific foods are offered in some areas, they remain absent in others. Another student who spoke to me about his recent dining experience at a Indian restaurant in Guelph said;

“I don't try new food. I tried once recently and I went there and their food is, it's a lot of Canadian, it's not Indian, it's not spicy and it's not tasty.” *[Undergraduate Engineering student from India studying at the University of Guelph]*

These quotes suggest that while staple foods remain the same, preferred flavouring principles, have been modified, or ‘glocalized’ to suit the “Canadian” palate. While most adventurous eaters are comfortable and in some cases prefer these changes, familiar food eaters view familiar foods that have been seasoned in a different way as unfamiliar. Like food, spices, condiments and other ingredients popular in one part of the world are not always available on a global scale, as such unavailability of these products became just as big of an issue as lack of food availability.

Together, the lack of preferred foods, limited availability of foods that have been prepared or seasoned “properly”, and the scarcity of traditional spices and condiments became a problem for adventurous eaters in search of “tastes from home” and an even bigger issue for familiar food eaters who heavily rely on these foods. Since familiar food eaters were frequently unable to purchase a wide variety of traditional or familiar foodstuffs they often suffered from dietary

monotony as a result.

When familiar foods are inaccessible, desperate students apply familiar preparation guidelines, or schemas, “generalizable procedures applied in the enactment/reproduction of social life”, in creative ways to unfamiliar dishes (Sewell, 1992, 8). In other words, in an attempt to combat monotony and food insecurity a few occasionally use familiar flavouring principles to season unfamiliar foods, such as penne noodles, and minute rice instead of the traditional noodles and rice offered back-home. A few considered this to be an effective coping strategy since, as one student from Bangladesh said “the food changes, but the food groups don’t”, although most preferred the “real thing”. Food availability varied depending on students' preferences, however availability did not always guarantee access. Foods considered commonplace in students' home countries are often classified as ‘specialties’ in Canada resulting in inflated prices. Limited availability in addition to economic barriers often became problematic for familiar food eaters who were already “missing many foods”.

“I can’t because I don’t have the money.”: International Students’ Financial Circumstances

The international student experience is generally only available to the privileged few who can afford it, with the exception of students receiving grants or scholarships. Since international tuition fees within Canada remain unregulated, international students often pay between two to four times the cost of domestic student fees. Students from self-identified upper class families, and a few from middle class families noted that tuition and living expenses were “not a big burden”, while others felt that these costs were “expensive”, “unaffordable”, “disgusting”, and “hard to balance”. Since most students were unable to support themselves independently, tuition and living costs are primarily covered by parental support, although three participants received scholarships which covered all or a portion of their tuition or residence fees. A few students were employed part-time, however the majority of participants were unemployed. Participants

presently in the process of job hunting cited being unable to work during their first six months in Canada, and ineligibility for on-campus work-study positions reserved for Canadian students, as employment barriers. One student who was looking to supplement the funds he received from his parents said, “I’m in a little frustrated period trying to find a job” because he had applied to over 40 positions and had yet to hear a response, which made it “kind of hard to balance everything [tuition and living expenses] out”. Interviews with students indicated that although many come from financially stable families, some are unable to maintain the lifestyle they were accustomed to in their home countries.

A number of international and domestic students must maintain a “frugal” lifestyle while pursuing post-secondary education in order to cover tuition and living expenses. When students were asked if they had trouble affording anything and what they had trouble affording a number of students, familiar food eaters in particular, provided variations of the following comments;

“Because I’m not working right now I would say I have trouble doing all of that [covering tuition and living expenses].” *[Undergraduate student from Japan studying Engineering at the University of Guelph]*

“Food because I like to eat a lot, but it’s expensive here, so I have to cut down on what I buy because I have to watch the money for the food. Also clothing I have to watch that, I have to buy clothes, but I can’t because I don’t have the money.” *[Undergraduate Psychology student from Bangladesh studying at the University of Windsor]*

“Tuition is number one, and food is second. For the clothing it’s not bad because we just have enough clothing to survive on that, but the food becomes second because I feel like it is expensive here especially the natural foodstuffs.” *[Undergraduate Engineering student from Kuwait studying at the University of Windsor]*

“Not all of us can afford because like it is hard for some people to decide whether to pay for your tuition versus pay for your food, and I don’t think anyone should have to make that choice because it’s an essential and everyone should have the right to food.” *[Undergraduate Microbiology student from Peru studying at the University of Guelph]*

“If money is a concern, you don’t want to spend it all on food.” *[Undergraduate Engineering student from India studying at the University of Guelph]*

These excerpts clearly demonstrate that international students organize their expenses hierarchically. Tuition is seen as a fixed and pressing expense and is thereby ranked “number one”, while flexible expenses, such as food and clothing, which can be changed, or eliminated are ranked second. This system through which students prioritize tuition over basic necessities is particularly disturbing and problematic because it suggests that students are sacrificing imperative needs in order to pay their tuition. Students also mentioned that food in Canada is expensive, which suggests that their ability maintain food security while abroad is impacted by the availability and economic accessibility of healthy and preferred foods.

It is pretty easy to get to the grocery store.” Physical Accessibility of Preferred Foods

The majority of international students in my study, excluding those living on-campus, live within an 8-10 minute walk of their designated campus. Grocery stores and farmers’ markets were also located within walking distance, or were accessible by bus. Most students considered public transportation to be affordable, yet a few Windsor students noted that the recent rise in bus ticket costs made them “somewhat unaffordable”. Overall, grocery store and ethnic shop locations as well as transportation costs did not interfere with students’ abilities to physically access food, however economic inaccessibility of foods offered at these food retailers became an issue for many students.

“If you find back-home foods, they are so expensive that we can’t buy it.” Economic Inaccessibility of Preferred Foods and Effects on International Students

A number of students indicated that several employment barriers kept them from entering the workforce, as a result they frequently experienced economic shortfalls. This suggests that in addition to food costs, students’ food security is also affected by their employment status, illuminating a link between economic accessibility and purchasing power. Edwards & Meiselman (2003), Meldrum & Willows (2006), Ness et al, (2002), Hughes et al, (2011) found similar results and have identified post-secondary students and other low-income groups as

vulnerable populations.

During interview and focus groups students pointed out that food prices in Canada were more expensive, approximately two to four times the cost of foodstuffs back home.

“If you find it they are so expensive that we can’t buy it. Like mangos here are three mangos for \$10.00 (Laughs), and papaya and everything, and watermelon too. I used to eat a lot of watermelon, but here it’s only this much [makes a size gesture by using her hands to form a small triangle] for five dollars, it’s so expensive.” *[Undergraduate Microbiology student from India studying at the University of Guelph]*

“They do have something like the Japanese salad, but ...like recently I found a little section for the Japanese food at the grocery store right...like Japanese noodles and ucons and miso soups, yah these are pretty accessible, but not all the time affordable. It’s much more expensive than what you can get back over there in Japan.” *[Undergraduate Engineering student from Japan studying at the University of Guelph]*

“The curry goat is very expensive, so every two times per month I will buy and eat it cause it’s really expensive.” *[Undergraduate Political Science student from Jamaica studying at the University of Guelph]*

Participant: “At the end of the month I’ll usually be really low on budget, but I always find a way. I can go for days without eating...I haven’t eaten since 10am yesterday.”

Researcher: *Aren’t you hungry?*

Participant: “Yes, but food is expensive, food in Canada is expensive.”

Researcher: *Do you have any funds to purchase any food?*

Participant: “After this [interview] I will.” *[Undergraduate Microbiology student from Peru studying at the University of Guelph]*

These segments demonstrate that although familiar foods may be available they are not always affordable. For example, a Master’s student from Germany said during our interview, “\$55 a kilo, Jesus I’m not going to pay that much” in reference to the exorbitant price of cheese in Canada. As a result, students’ diets are impacted and transformed by the economic accessibility of preferred foods. Accessibility and availability vary depending on students’ preferences and attitudes towards food, while some are able to maintain culturally-appropriate, familiar, and new

food diets with little to no issues others are only able to purchase preferred foods a few times a month and were likely to consume the same “inexpensive back-home foods” on a more regular basis. For instance one Nigerian student said that she now eats “rice and beans” everyday because they are the two “most affordable” familiar foods available for purchase in Windsor. As noted in the quote above, another student had not eaten in over 24 hours, and the gift card he would be receiving as compensation for his participation would allow him to purchase a meal⁴. Limited availability of preferred foods in addition to economic inaccessibility becomes problematic for adventurous and familiar food eaters alike when they are facing financial hardships while abroad.

During an interview with a student from Japan I was told that Japanese foods such as miso soup and udon noodles were “pretty accessible, but not all the time affordable”. What this student meant to say was that although some Japanese foods were available they were not always affordable, making them economically inaccessible. This example highlights the relationship between availability and accessibility of food in relation to students’ food security.

Availability of and access to preferred food was a larger issue for students maintaining familiar diets than those willing to experiment, since more adventurous eaters who were open to trying new foods had more flexibility in terms of what they purchased and how much they spent. Familiar food eaters often referred to certain fruits and vegetables commonly grown for domestic consumption as “backyard foods” including mangos, yams and bitter leaf, which were frequently cited as “hard to find” or too expensive to purchase. The charts below provide a visual summary of students’ responses collected during free-listing exercise. Responses reveal that a combination of availability and accessibility barriers kept students from eating the foods they want to. Overall, while students mentioned that inexpensive and new foods were considerations that were

⁴ This was the only student who expressed facing severe food restrictions where he was unable to purchase food of any kind. In this instance I went over the list of emergency food resources in detail and allowed him to ask me questions about the services provided. I encouraged him to hold on to the resource sheet for future reference, and advised him that I would be happy to help with answering any of his questions should he have any post-interview. I then provided him with my contact information.

easy to somewhat difficult to access, or fulfill, traditional familiar foods particularly halal and fresh foods were consistently unavailable or the most difficult to access.

Table 4.1 Categories listed as easy, or easiest to fulfill

*Numbers surrounding each graph indicate number of responses per category.

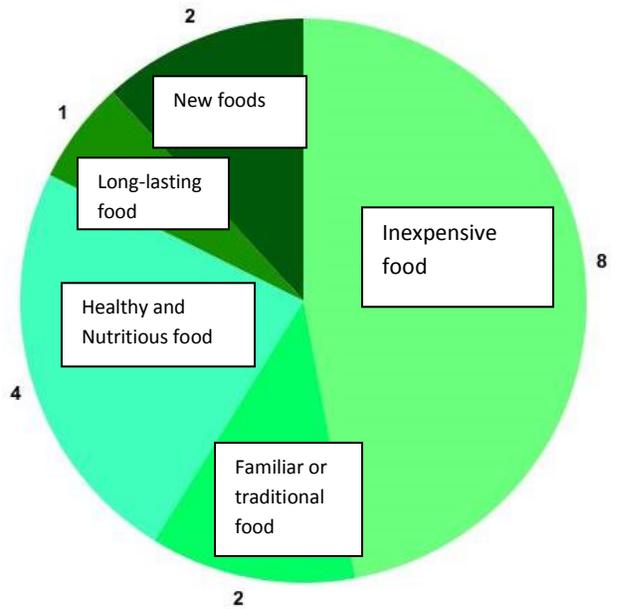


Table 4.2 Categories listed as somewhat easy/somewhat difficult to fulfill

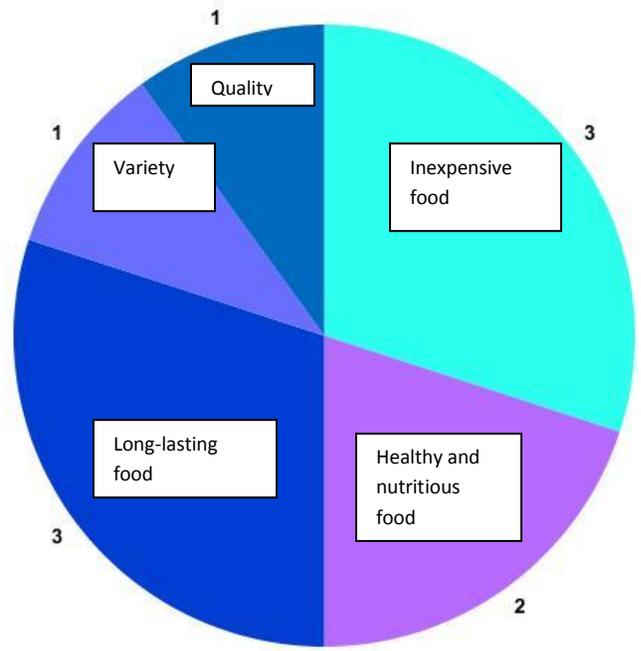
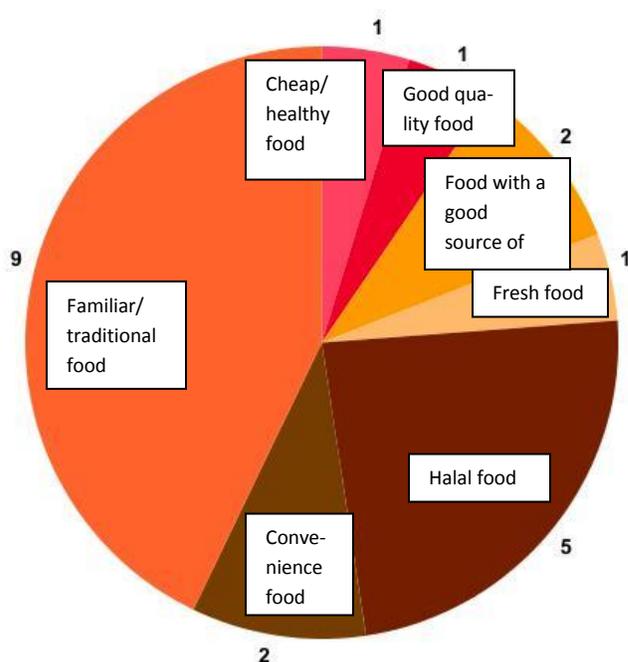


Table 4.3 Categories listed as difficult to fulfill

Since several students spend most of their time attending classes and studying on-campus it is also important to consider availability and access to food on university grounds. Hospitality services were primarily used by on-campus residents, commuting students, and those “too busy to cook”. Others preferred to bring their own meals to school, and only occasionally ate on campus. When I asked students what they looked for when purchasing an on-campus meal I received a variety of responses including, “healthy”, “cheap”, “inexpensive”, “quick”, “convenient” and “similar to back-home” food. Students who preferred healthy foods complained that the campus offered “lots of junk”, while students who prioritized studying over cooking, stressed the importance of access to convenience foods. Students demonstrated a preference for “homemade and wholesome meals”, that could be purchased on-campus in a pre-made format allowing students to save time. However convenience foods are sold for premium prices on-campus which made them unaffordable and inaccessible to some, as a result cash-strapped students spending the day on campus often “go without” food until they return home.

“If you feel like buying one apple on-campus it’s over a dollar.” *[University of Guelph Master’s of History student from Germany]*

“\$8.00 for a salad, that’s the price of a proper meal, it should be like \$3, or 4.00 for a side dish.” *[University of Windsor Human Kinetics undergraduate from Kuwait]*

“They are so expensive! The salad bar and the nuts you want to buy them, but you can’t so you have to put it back.” *[University of Windsor undeclared major from Bangladesh]*

Limited access to a “variety of cultural cuisine” and halal foods was also cited as a barrier, although the most frequent complaint specified by students was the economic inaccessibility of foods on-campus. Students also spoke out about the irony of on-campus markups. One undergrad from India who completed a price comparison between on and off-campus vendors said, “if you want to get a sub from Subway at school it will cost you \$8.00, but you can get the same thing at Stone Road Mall for \$5.00, but it doesn’t make sense because students have very little money to spend.” Students also noticed a disconnect between the prices and quality of on-campus food, and suggested that it should “taste better” for the price they are paying.

“I felt I paid a lot compared to what I got, it was crazy especially in terms of food. I think I paid \$3500.00 and I had to top it up. I mean that’s fair if that’s the cost I’ll pay it, but the quality of the food...it was garbage. If you go off-campus and pay \$8.00 you get a lot of food, but paying \$10.00 on-campus doesn’t even get your stomach full, so I kind of hated that part.” *[University of Windsor Engineering undergraduate from Kuwait]*

In this quote this student summarizes the concerns of the international student community by way of illuminated some of the issues, price and quality, associated with campus food. Another upset student noted, “it’s \$12.00 if you want a burger on-campus, but you could get something at McDonalds that probably tastes better for \$7-8, so why are they charging more here? The campus charges a lot for really greasy substandard foods”. It is unrealistic to suggest that the university alter its prices, so as to compete with factory-like fast-food chains, however it is problematic for universities to be providing “substandard” and unaffordable food to its students, especially those residing on-campus. Students’ descriptions of on-campus foods as

economically inaccessible and nutritionally bankrupt suggest that campus cafeterias can be better understood as food deserts, rather than full service food outlets. The term food desert is frequently used to refer to a geographical location where one “must drive more than 10 miles” (Wright Morton & Blanchard, 2007,1) in order to access the closest grocery store, however it can also be used to refer to an area where “healthy food is either non-existent, or too expensive” (Reynolds, 2005, 40).

While conducting participant observation at the Guelph campus food bank I spoke to a total of seven self-identified international students, and four interview participants, two from each university about their food bank use and experiences purchasing food in Canada. Guelph users said that they utilized the food bank in order to access foods that were “too expensive” to purchase, including soy and cow’s milk, eggs, bread, and produce. It is important to note that I observed these perishable resources deplete fairly quickly upon delivery, as a result these items we’re not always available when students needed them especially eggs and fresh produce. An overview chart displaying the product stock frequency at the University of Guelph campus food bank can be found in Appendix 4.

Windsor students noted that it was difficult to purchase “expensive” perishables, nevertheless they could not rely on food bank aid to meet these needs. Unlike Guelph, the Windsor campus food bank only provides a limited variety of non-perishables and little to no perishables. One Windsor participant said, “the food bank only provides cheap, long-lasting foods like cereal and peanut butter, they don’t provide the complementary items we need, the milk and the bread”. Since the Windsor food bank does not provide “complementary items” students noted that they only used the food bank as a “last resort”. Most participants said that they did not need to utilize the food bank because they were “financially stable enough” to

satisfy their needs on their own⁵. While those that identified as food bank users, or noted that they were facing financial hardships, often had “trouble” covering their expenses as a result of inadequate income deriving in part by students’ inability to acquire gainful employment.

In an effort to make the best use of their limited purchasing power, students described utilizing a variety of budgeting strategies. The vast majority of students “take and look through the weekly flyers” and purchase their groceries from “wherever’s cheapest”, usually discount grocery stores including Food Basics, No Frills, Fresh Co. and Price Chopper. Students who used the term “research” to refer to this process of comparing flyers, noted that two months of initial flyer analysis during their first few months in Canada revealed that No Frills, and Price Chopper were consistently least expensive. As a result, these students have made these stores their primary shopping locations, eliminating the need to consult flyers on a weekly basis. In addition to offering the “best value” Price Chopper and No Frills were also preferred in both cities because they were “close” and offered the “most variety”. In addition to reviewing flyers, students also performed more elaborate money-saving strategies, or “rituals” which allowed them to purchase the foods they “need” without sacrificing nutritional value in the process.

“One of the things I do when I go to the grocery store, a shopping ritual I guess you could call it (Laughs)...well first of all it has to be cheap, I can’t really spend too much money on food, so what I do is if I need bread I go to the bread section and I see what’s available. First I look at the cheapest value and look at the nutritional value to see if that’s what I need, and if it doesn’t have what I need then I go to the second cheapest and work my way up until I’m satisfied with both the price and the nutritional value.” *[Undergraduate Psychology student from Kuwait studying at the University of Windsor]*

Risk avoidance also became a central theme during budgeting discussions. Since “it costs money to try new foods” students avoided purchasing new foods, even if they were interested in trying them, in order to maintain food security. Steptoe and Pollard (1995) argue that when

⁵ Some students were unfamiliar with the term ‘food bank’ and requested that I provide them with the definition before answering the question, *have you ever used any community resources available on-campus such as the CSA food bank?*

financial resources are scarce individuals stick to the foods they “know they’ll like”, while those with more stable incomes are likely to take “greater risks with food selection” (281-282). Maxwell and Smith (1992) write, “households may allocate their resources over time in way which optimize the adequacy of food access without sacrificing stability in that access” which highlights an intimate connection between food security and risk avoidance (15). Students noted that they could not afford to purchase new, or preferred foods, because they “might not be good”, or were too “expensive” making them a risky investment. Although budgeting helps students to allocate scarce resources in such a way that they are able to cover their tuition it is not always enough to alleviate food insecurity and allow students to eat the foods they would like to eat.

Although familiar foods may be available in Canada, when items become so expensive that they can no longer be purchased, this can often have the same effect on students’ diets as if they were absent from the marketplace. Familiar food eaters who had no choice but to purchase the same, small assortment of foods they considered affordable, familiar and good to eat and adventurous or familiar food eaters who could not purchase familiar or preferred foods because they were “too expensive” also came to develop monotonous diets. Therefore, what is key to establishing and protecting international students’ food security is ensuring that preferred foods are both available and economically accessible to all.

“You’re forced to eat whatever they want you to eat.”: International Students’ Agency, Power and Control Over Food Projects

Although agency is not often specified as a component of food security I believe it is an important concept to discuss in order to fully understand how students experience food security/insecurity. Ortner (2001) defines agency as “people’s projects in the world and their ability to both formulate and enact them” (78). She also describes agency as a form of power, arguing that to exercise agency is to have some level of control over the development and manifestation of circumstances, events and actions such as eating and cooking. Ortner’s definitions of agency will be used throughout this thesis to explore students’ food projects as a medium to control their own

consumption and achieve and sustain food security while studying abroad (2001, 78).

Familiar food eaters and adventurous eaters alike develop and maintain their own distinct attitudes towards food which serves as part of their process of defining and establishing their own good diets or food projects. Grocery shopping, meal preparation, and private and public consumption serve as elements of food projects that allow international students to execute agency by putting “their own stamp, their own twist” on these projects, although the external factors I have mentioned in addition to university policies may prohibit this (Ortner, 2001,79). For instance, adventurous eaters define themselves as open and flexible eaters and believe that a good diet is one that welcomes diversity. Dining out at a “Canadian” restaurant allowed adventurous eaters to experience something “different” by way of consuming familiar meals in an unfamiliar format. This experience also provided students with an opportunity to express their individuality through customizing their own meals.

“I remember the first time I went to a restaurant for breakfast, the waitress was standing there waiting for my order, she was asking me “what kind of eggs, what kind of toast?”, it’s different, you get a lot of choices here. But it’s not just breakfast, but everything you order. If you get a burger it’s like, whole wheat bun, or white bun, veggie, or meat patty, and sauces...whatever it’s a lot of choices. If I was to get an item on the menu back home, the menu says what it is and then you order that, you don’t get a choice.” [*Masters student from Argentina, studying Plant Agriculture at University of Guelph*]

Based on the information presented in this excerpt meals as they appear on a “Canadian” menu can be better understood as a list of unfinished projects, or templates rather than a catalogue of final projects. In other words, meals as unfinished projects allow students to exercise agency over these projects and experience something “different” by way of customizing meals to suit personal preferences, whereas meals as finished products do not.

While adventurous eaters may use dining out as a venue to assert personal agency and explore culinary food-ways, familiar food eaters often stay “in control” and exert agency by refusing to conform to the “Canadian” culinary mainstream by way of maintaining a familiar

food diet in an environment where it is sometimes difficult to do so. International students as actors enact and explore these options and venues as part of their project in different ways depending on their individualized circumstances which may or may not allow these projects to be executed in a preferable way if at all. Since I previously discussed how unavailability and inaccessibility of foods can keep students from eating the foods they would prefer to, in this section I will focus on how structures such as university policies in relation to on-campus availability and accessibility may keep individuals from accessing preferred foods, limiting both their ability to act and maintain food security.

Students living on-campus as well as those with former experience living on-campus commonly referred to their meal plan as a “contract” that “forced” them to consume food on-campus. It is important to note that all students living in dormitories must purchase a meal plan, with the exception of those living in buildings equipped with kitchens. Although the decision to live on-campus is one made independently, students with experience living on-campus, as well as students currently living on-campus noted that they felt as though they had been “tricked”, or “manipulated” by the university to move into on-campus residence during the university recruitment process.

“When the recruiter came to my school she said there would be lots of our food for us to eat on-campus and that the \$3500.00 meal plan would be enough, but it wasn’t. It’s like whatever the university decides we eat. So technically they tricked us, there isn’t any back-home food and we don’t have any rights, or freedom to eat what we like, it’s just what the university brings...that’s what we eat. At first I thought it would be easier to live on-campus and have my meals prepared, but the university never asked, or did a polling system to ask what kind of food would you like on campus. So basically they decide what we're gonna eat. So I kind of hated that. I would love to see more of what students want.”

[Undergraduate Engineering student from Kuwait studying at the University of Windsor]

“One bad thing about living on-campus is that there’s none of my food, so you’re forced to eat whatever they want you to eat. I expected there would be more Indian food on campus, but there’s a limited set of foods and you can’t have Subway every day, maybe if they had some kind of Indian restaurant, that might

really work for us.” [*Undergraduate Engineering student from India studying at the University of Windsor*]

The student from Kuwait was motivated to move into residence because he believed that it would reduce stress and free up his schedule. He was also comforted by the reassurance he received from the recruiter who guaranteed that “back-home food” would be available on-campus. However, the data obtained from these interviews indicate that students’ pre-move expectations regarding on-campus food, differs largely from students’ lived experiences. Students’ access to preferred foods was restricted by availability of said foods, as well as university policies regarding meal times. Students at both universities noted that standardized meal times were incompatible with their schedule, although this created particular challenges for Windsor participants. International students living on-campus in Windsor mentioned that on numerous occasions they were unable to purchase breakfast and lunch, since campus food services, other than Tim Hortons, did not open until the evening on weekends. Although Guelph participants also complained about the lack of weekend options, this rarely led to missing meals since a cafeteria was open on the weekend during all meal times. However, Guelph students often complained about the policy that prohibits students from using their meal cards before 2 pm at the University Centre. Although there are other food outlets on campus, the University Centre contains a range of vendors, offering specific foods that cannot be purchased elsewhere on-campus and for some may also be the closest place to get food between classes. Students affected by this policy described feeling “angry” because they were unable to consume the foods they wanted to eat, when they wanted to eat them. Students described meal times and meals as being dictated by university policies rather than directed by the schedules and preferences of the students themselves.

In an effort to combat disempowering policies, financially stable participants purchased hot plates, and utilized the shared residence kitchen as a means to regain agency and control by personally preparing meals.

“Because I have the on-campus meal plan, I am always going to some sort of cafeteria to get the food, their food. But when I cook something myself I know it’s going to be healthy, and I can control the spices, so eventually you get to a frustrated point where you would rather make your own eggs, than go eat someone else’s eggs.” [*Undergraduate Political Science student from Jamaica studying at the University of Windsor*]

Cooking allowed this student to regain control over her own dietary regime by manipulating the flavour and nutritional content of her meal to suit her personal health and taste preferences which are typically ignored by the university. Consuming personally prepared foods in contrast to purchasing on-campus foods provides students with a sense of empowerment and control within a disempowering environment. However, the luxury of grocery shopping and cooking is only available to students equipped with the financial resources needed to access food outside of their meal plans. One student who self-identified as “broke” said,

“I spoke with my parents and I’m like “we don’t get it [halal food] that much”, so my parents were like, “god is going to forgive you because you don’t have any other option.” Most of the time I use to go for it because I have to survive right? I have to live, so although there was no option, I use to eat non-halal even though I felt really guilty. Because let’s say after your birth you have been eating in a different way, or under a different practice and all of the sudden you kind of like change, so it kind of like personally feels bad.”

For this Kuwaiti Muslim student, and several other Muslim students, locating halal food became a constant struggle while living on-campus. As a result he was forced to temporarily abandon his religious customs in order to “survive”. During our interview he noted that although halal foods were available at a nearby grocery store he was unable to purchase them due to the high costs associated with his pre-paid meal plan. He also mentioned that he “wouldn’t have moved into residence” if he had known that the availability of halal foods on-campus would be scarce. This student also uses the words “guilty” and “bad” when referring to his new eating habits, highlighting the importance of his Muslim identity which is repeatedly jeopardized by the consumption of non-halal foods. This excerpt also highlights a relationship between food and identity and the interconnectivity between food security and identity which are central themes I

discuss in the following chapter.

Inaccessibility of on-campus food also raises questions regarding whether the university has an obligation to provide affordable and healthy food to its students. One opinionated on-campus resident said;

“I would say that the university should understand what the students need. If we need for example, more Indian foods, considering we have a lot of Indian students at the university, I would think that the university should respect our needs because we are paying a lot to stay here, so if we don’t feel comfortable it’s not worth it. The university should respect what we need, or what we want.”

[Undergraduate Engineering student from India studying at the University of Windsor]

A number of students suggested that the university was using them as an income source, a Master’s student from Bangladesh said that international students “are like the university’s cash cows, we have dollar signs on our hats”. Referring to one’s self as a ‘cash-cow’ was fairly common among angry students who felt that they were being exploited by the university, however it is important to note that some students were angrier than others. Although the majority of students expressed that international tuition fees were too high, five students felt that the price they were paying to study within Canada was fair. Yet in general, students felt that their needs were being neglected by the university which resulted in a multitude of negative consequences which placed students’ food security at risk. On-campus eaters also described losing weight and experiencing “confusion” during their first couple months in Canada as a result of food inaccessibility.

Researcher: *Did the university provide you with any information in regards to grocery store locations, or on-campus food services when you first arrived in Canada?*

Participant: “NOTHING, NOTHING, they didn’t even tell me where the food services were on-campus, or how to use a meal card. So it was a life of chaos and confusion at least during the first few weeks. I remember for two days I didn’t eat anything except cookies and biscuits which I had brought from back-home because I didn’t even know where to get food because it doesn’t say anywhere “this is food services.” *[Undergraduate Engineering student from Kuwait studying at the University of Windsor]*

Participant: “In the beginning I didn’t use to eat and was losing a lot of weight. My parents were worried so they said, “just look for something that's close to our food.” I remember seeing this food they call it African rice, but it wasn’t African rice at all (Laughs) terrible.” [*Undergraduate Economics student from Nigeria studying at the University of Windsor*]

Counihan (1992) argues that, “food becomes a vehicle of power” in the sense that “some have control over access to food; others do not” (55). These ideas provide a valuable lens through which to consider students’ ability to express their individuality by way of defining and managing autonomous dietary regimes. Limited access to information restrains students’ agency by minimizing their capacity to make decisions regarding consumption, which hinders their abilities to maintain control over their own bodies. University food policies as restrictive and inhibiting structures frequently emerged as a common theme throughout interview and focus groups. Some students implied that they felt as though this was simply a case of casual neglect on behalf of the university, while others felt that the university intentionally ignored their needs and refused to listen to and consider their suggestions. Lack of information as a source of disempowerment manifests itself in hunger and weight loss, and can prohibit students, from achieving and sustaining a food secure state.

Theoretical Discussion and Chapter Conclusion

I conclude this chapter by providing a summary of my findings and arguments while relating them to relevant theoretical literature. I started this chapter with an overview of students’ general preferences and priorities as a whole then continued with a discussion of adventurous and familiar food eaters’ attitudes towards food. I also explained how these attitudes differ and are reflected in what students desire to eat. I pointed out that familiar food eaters preferred to consume foods they had grown comfortable with and frequently rejected unfamiliar foods. Notions of familiarity were constructed around the use of traditional flavouring principles and known meal structures and combinations.

Douglas (1971) argues that “a meal stays in the category of meal only insofar as it carries

the structure which allows the part to recall the whole” (67). In other words, meals become analogous to systems composed of individual parts which can only be understood in relation to one another. Anderson explains that Douglas’ work suggests that individuals’ consume in structured, or “sentence-like” ways in the sense that meals composed of canonical combinations are consumed within a particular order (Anderson, 2005, 110). Sutton (2001) writes that Douglas’ insights can be used to understand how Greeks living on the Island of Kalymnos “use one meal to recall another” (103). Sutton combines Douglas’ work with ideas derived from sensory anthropology, to explore the relationship between food and memory. Sutton argues that synesthesia, or the blending of synesthetic experiences provides individuals, such as Kalymnian migrants, with an opportunity to return to whole. In other words, taste, sight, smell, texture, and colour, as well as sounds associated with food preparation, can trigger memories of food experiences past, while memory sets food preference parameters based on these experiences. Many students identify familiar foods based on the presence of familiar structures, and known synesthetic qualities, therefore both of these perspectives provide a valuable lens with which to contextualize students’ eating experiences.

In addition to a preference for traditional flavouring combinations and meal structures, familiar food eaters favoured familiar foods because they had no time, did not see the point in investigating new food-ways, or avoided new foods because they smelt bad, made them sick, or conflicted with their beliefs and identity maintenance projects. While some adventurous eaters defined familiarity in the same way, they saw familiar foods or dishes prepared in a similar fashion as familiar enough to consume, or new, exciting and worth trying, whereas most familiar food eaters viewed these dishes as “atypical” “unfamiliar” and ultimately inedible. New foods familiar food eaters had never tried were often treated in the same way.

Adventurous eaters value diversity, openness, and flexibility and frequently spoke of their time abroad as an opportunity to live as a Canadian and expand their palates through

exploratory eating. One of the ways in which students were able to engage with “Canadian-ness” was by way of purchasing and consuming multi-cultural and fusion foods as well as foods that were deemed distinctly Canadian, such as Tim Hortons. Since adventurous eaters expressed that they were bored with the old, yet intrigued by the new, students’ diets reflected a balance of “back-home” and new foods, or primarily consisted of new foods and the occasional familiar food item.

While some students mentioned that they could find all, or the majority of foods they needed, others stressed that lack of variety of preferred foods often kept them from eating the foods they wanted to. Since familiar food eaters had stricter definitions of edibility that they were often reluctant to change, they became more susceptible to food insecurity. As I discussed previously in addition to flavouring principles, and traditional meal structure, students’ conceptions of familiarity, and definitions of authenticity also determined which foods were deemed fit for consumption. Consequently when ingredients are altered or omitted from foods and dishes to satisfy the local palate, this can change how they are perceived among non-locals. Globalized foods were often deemed inedible, and I suggest that globalization contributes to food unavailability among those who do not recognize these foods to be edible.

Similar to my findings, Molz (2004) explored the culinary authenticity of meals served at Thai restaurants within the U.S. and found that the menus of self-proclaimed authentic Thai restaurants were “self-contradictory, claiming authenticity on one hand, but adapting to the Western parameters of culinary acceptability on the other” (57). According to Molz, elements of authenticity were sometimes removed in an attempt to cater to the palate of the locale; for example she notes that the fried egg that customarily sits atop a typical bowl of fried rice was eliminated since Westerners rarely found this to be an appealing combination. Bentley’s (2004) research on the expansion and regionalized of Southwestern cuisine throughout the U.S. also highlights similar findings. Bentley’s research has a dual purpose. She argues that foods have

been ‘glocalized’ through a process of cultural appropriation where the U.S. has “taken what is compelling (foods, lands, other natural resources)” and “altered it to their own tastes” (2004, 215). She points out that globalization does not occur in a vacuum, the spread of Southwestern cuisine is met by the agency of those in each region who modify dishes to suit local preferences. Bentley notes that Californian Southwestern dishes incorporate more sour cream and avocado sprouts whereas in Arizona they use cactus fruit, fry bread and mutton stew (2004, 211). She also highlights the negative implications that can arise as a result of globalization, noting that the spread of Taco Bell as synonymous with Southwestern cuisine serves as an unfit imitation of Mexican food that Mexican citizens and immigrants to the U.S. considered to be a “very bad adaptation of Mexican food made just for Americans” (2004, 219). In contrast to Bentley and Molz, who expose the ways in which cuisines are modified in the West to suit the local palate, researchers such as Wilk (2006), James et al (2006), Van Esterik (2006), and Matejowsky (2006), demonstrate how ‘Western’ cuisine begins to lose its “authentic” taste when it becomes localized in non-Western areas. Since it is primarily the spices and condiments that are omitted during the globalization process rather than the food itself, it is important to note that for international students the availability of familiar condiments becomes just as important as, or even more important than, the availability of the food itself.

In this chapter I have also discussed that while some students considered their financial situations to be “stable”, exorbitant tuition fees, lack of funding, and limited employment opportunities created financial hardships for less fortunate students. Although physical accessibility did not appear to be an issue for the majority of students, economic accessibility became a challenge for some since available foods were not always affordable. Several adventurous and familiar food eaters alike complained that they did not have enough funds to

purchase preferred foods and mentioned that employment barriers kept them from supplementing their income. This suggests that in addition to food costs, students' food security is also affected by employment status, illuminating a link between economic accessibility and purchasing power.

Sen's (1981) work is widely recognizing for revolutionizing the term food security by encouraging the field to take accessibility into consideration. Sen's idea that access to food could not be guaranteed by availability became the foundation upon which his entitlement framework was built. Sen argues that one's entitlement or ability to access food is affected by one's purchasing power which is determined by a range of socio-economic factors including food prices, unemployment, financial capital and adequacy of wages. In other words, individuals experience entitlement fulfillment (food security), or entitlement failure (food insecurity, hunger) depending on the adequacy of one's income in relation to food costs. International students' inability to maintain food security can thereby be partially attributed to their lack of purchasing power which derives in part by their inability to secure gainful employment.

For some, lack of purchasing power resulted in consuming large quantities of the same, "cheap" foods several times a week. Although some mentioned that food diversity on-campus was low, students were most frustrated with the cost of campus foods. In both instances this often became more challenging for familiar food eaters with strict dietary preferences, than adventurous eaters who were able to exercise flexibility both in terms of what they bought and how much they spent.

Lastly, I discussed agency as a component of food security and explored how university policies limit students' ability to make decisions in regards to consumption. As I have shown there are many ways that students can enact agency such as by dining out, or refusing to eat unfamiliar foods, these practices as part of students' food projects allow students to control their diets and at least partially ensure their own food security. Meal plan contracts, and institutionalized meal times as I have argued often act as restrictive structures that prohibit

students from eating what they want when they want. Counihan's (1992) work provides an example of how food "as a vehicle of power" limits students' ability to maintain control over personal consumption (55).

Counihan (1992) argues that universities restrain students' newfound autonomy in the sense that although students' eating habits are no longer controlled by their parents, they are affected by a new set of university rules. Similar to my own findings, Counihan's study reveals that institutionalized meal times fail to mesh with students' schedules, which resulted in students missing meals, eating when they were not hungry, or consuming more junk food. Although the students in my sample were more likely to be affected by the unavailability of preferred foods than by meals times, possibly because they are international rather than domestic students, they were just as likely as Counihan's sample to experience a loss of control when it came to regulating consumption. As I discussed in the analysis portion of my thesis, cooking and consuming personally prepared foods became a venue for regaining agency and control among international students living in residence, but did not guarantee relief from food insecurity.

The primary goal of this chapter has been to highlight the barriers that students face in terms of achieving and maintaining food security. I argue that food insecurity is more prevalent among familiar food eaters because they are more heavily affected by barriers including, lack of preferred food availability, economic inaccessibility, and restrictive policies that limit agency. Food security exists when "all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life" (World Food Summit, 1996). Since familiar foods were not consistently available or affordable many familiar food eaters experienced regular, or temporary periods where they were unable to eat the foods they wanted to. Familiar food eaters were also more likely than adventurous eaters to prefer back-home foods often considered to be specialties in Canada making them costly and unaffordable in some cases. Residence life for familiar food

eaters was also challenging since diverse ethnic food options were limited. While adventurous and familiar food eaters both experienced food insecurity because preferred foods were unavailable, or too expensive to purchase, familiar food eaters with stricter diets and less flexibility did not consistently have access to the healthy and preferred foods they needed which kept them from achieving a food-secure state. As such it became clear that by incorporating new foods into one's diet, and broadening one's culinary horizon students can minimize the impacts of barriers and improve their chances of maintaining food security.

In this chapter I have focused on the relationship among students' food attitudes, preferences and external factors such as food availability, accessibility and structure and agency in order to better understand how food security among international students' is achieved, and lost. Given that socio-cultural and religious identities also play a role in shaping food choice and preferences, it is important to explore this relationship in order to fully understand how food security/insecurity is experienced. This is my goal in the following chapter.

Chapter 5 : Food Choice, and Processes of Identity and Place-Making

In this chapter I analyze the interface between food and identity by exploring the ways in which identity shapes and is shaped by food choice, preference and experiences and vice versa. Throughout this chapter when I reference identity I am referring to students' perceptions of themselves, and their self-identification as particular types of eaters and people. As I will discuss throughout this chapter, some students referred to themselves as healthy eaters, or junk-food eaters which said a lot about how they viewed themselves and what they consumed. Instead of identifying as a particular type of eater, others discussed their identification as different types of people such as an international, a transnational, a Canadian, a Chinese student and so on. By identifying as a certain type of person or eater students, saw themselves as somehow possessing the traits, beliefs, thoughts and eating habits characteristic of that particular group. Therefore, I use students' discussions of identity and identification as particular types of people and eaters to better understand food choice, attitudes and preferences, while also using students' retellings of food experiences as a lens through which to explore notions of identity and processes of place-making. I also explore students' desire to create a sense of familiarity and emplacement in their lives and the influence this has over food choice and preferences. Lastly, in this chapter I tie both analysis units together by discussing how the barriers outlined in Chapter Four, including food unavailability, inaccessibility and limitations on agency, interact with and impact students' identity maintenance and creation projects as well as food security.

As previously discussed, familiar food eaters primarily consumed familiar foods, while others eager to engage with "Canadian culture" often either entirely or partially abandoned many of their traditional food-ways while abroad in exchange for new ones. In this chapter, I argue that the consumption of "back-home food" provides familiar eaters with an opportunity to remain "in tune" with their culture, beliefs, and pre-established identities whereas the consumption of new foods is often characterized by the renegotiation of one's sense of self. I also assert that familiar

eaters “use food to separate” themselves from the ‘other’, as a means to assert established identities, while adventurous eaters use food “to eliminate that separation” (Anderson, 2005,125). It is important to note that although students desired to maintain identities or create new ones, this was not always done in the same way, or to the same extent. For example, some students who established new identities heavily engaged with “Canadian-ness” everyday throughout the full duration of their time abroad, while others regularly engaged with “Canadian-ness” through consumption, but not on a daily basis. Although both types of students saw themselves as embracing new identities, student viewed themselves as more, or less Canadian depending on their rotating level of engagement with Canadian food. As such some students saw themselves as more or less Canadian throughout different phases of their stay. Furthermore I discuss the processual development of students’ identities by analyzing how students maintain identities and create transnational, “Canadian”, and sojourner identities through the consumption of familiar and unfamiliar food. I begin by discussing how familiar foods are used to recreate a familiar sense of place as well as reproduce social, cultural and religious identities.

“I don’t have that anymore, I want to have that.” Processes of Place-Making and the Influence of Nostalgia Over Food Preferences

For most international students traveling home is a coveted, yet rare opportunity. Due to high travel costs, most are unable to visit their home countries on a regular basis. One student from Kuwait said, “I’ve been missing my place very badly, actually I want to go, but I don’t have money now”. This student cites lack of funds as the primary barrier to traveling, and highlights the importance of “place” in relation to its ability to cause as well as cure homesickness. Since physical travel is not always a viable option, students engage in acts of time or memory travel through consumption which provides them with a temporary sense of emplacement and relief from homesickness. Shopping at ethnic stores, and preparing and consuming traditional cuisine allows students to maintain a connection with their home countries, recreate a familiar sense of place, and sustain a familiar sense of self.

Students who identified as familiar food eaters preferred to consume foods that were classified as “authentic”, “predictable”, and “consistent” based on the presence of a “typical taste” that is usually associated with a particular food-way. The term ‘food-way’ is generally used to refer to “the network of behaviours, traditions, and beliefs concerning food and involves all the activities surrounding a food item and its consumption, including the procurement, preservation, preparation, presentation and performance of that food” (Long, 2004, 8). Food-ways are typically organized by religious and cultural rules and are encoded with messages and emotional significance that remind one of who they were, or are, where they are from, and where they are in relation to where they want to be (Anderson, 2005). Lupton (2007) explains that during meal preparation one may begin to remember and feel emotions experienced during past food events in the present. Within this subsection I argue that students’ desire to experience a time, or place reminiscent of home encourages them to consume traditional, or familiar foods that allow displaced international students to experience a temporary sense of emplacement, which for some is also interconnected with the maintenance of identities.

“I grew up in a culture in my country Senegal. Consumption generally consisted of rice, so I feel like I need to be eating rice not on a daily basis, but at least three times a week, since that’s how I grew up eating. So I would definitely put down rice and bread, I love my bread. It also gives me that sense of keeping a personal connection to my country. I’m still not forgetting where I came from, who I am. I’m having that personal connection with my country while eating rice, the taste and smell, it brings back many memories, very nostalgic. I know it’s weird to say that about food, but that’s how I think about rice.”

This biology undergrad from Senegal makes reference to three themes that I will discuss in this chapter: food as an agent of memory, identity maintenance, and the recreation of familiar spaces and places. In the above excerpt this student identifies rice as the staple food within her cultural food-way, and although she does not feel a need to consume it “on a daily basis” she must eat it “at least three times a week” so as to maintain her Senegalese identity and maintain a “personal connection” with her country. She also notes that “eating rice” keeps her from

“forgetting”, and allows her to preserve her regional identity rooted in Senegal. In the last lines she states that the “taste and the smell” of rice bring back “many memories” which make her “very nostalgic” for home, these synesthetic qualities of rice evoke memories of past eating experiences which transport her to a familiar time and place where she can experience a sense of belonging. Sutton (2001) places an emphasis on identity maintenance and the recreation of familiar places, asserting that, “if we are what we eat then we are what we ate”; as such he argues that synesthetic experiences evoke memories that allow individuals to recreate familiarity and preserve identities, or ‘return to whole’ (7).

Homesickness and habit initially prompt students to consume familiar foods that remind them of their home countries. The smells and sounds that fill one’s kitchen when preparing a “back-home dish” create an atmosphere reminiscent of home which provides stability and comfort to many students. Below I discuss several students’ experiences utilizing food as a tool to build a life evocative of home.

“Well it’s just something, like I have that feeling like you are at home and usually my mom cooked those things on a regular basis, maybe every two weeks or something, so since I don’t have that anymore, I want to have that. If I cook very traditional I also invite people to my house to experience it with me, like they get to know me and the different food. Because I didn’t use to cook that back home because my mom always did that and I didn’t have the need to do it, and so now I feel the need to do it, and call my mom.” [*Food Science PhD student from Germany studying at the University of Guelph*]

Throughout the interview and within this excerpt, this student highlights the importance of maintaining her German identity which is made possible through the continued consumption of “traditional” meals. She also uses food sharing as a means to assert and share her cultural identity. She notes that because she no longer has access to homemade meals, it makes her “want to have that”, in other words lack of access makes her nostalgic. By cooking these meals while talking to her mother she is able to satisfy her “need” to eat these foods, build skills and a familiar sense of place as well as maintain an intimate relationship with her mother while abroad.

“Noodles, you see them in the African store, it’s the same brand, but it’s a different kind of flavour, my mom used to make it and it tastes different. Sometimes we can’t find the one our mother makes, so if I’m craving something and my mom sends the food then I know that it is always there.” *[Engineering undergraduate student from Nigeria studying at the University of Windsor]*

This student points out that although familiar foods are available they have a “different kind of flavour”, than what is available back home. Students mentioned that manufacturing location, distance and amount of time spent importing played a role changing food’s flavour. In the second line he says, “we can’t find the one our mother makes”, his use of the word 'our' suggests that an imagined community is being referenced in regards to purchasing and eating. His identification with this cultural group implies that he uses food to reinforce his collective or social sense of identity. He also highlights the importance of food parcels and their ability to provide comfort to international students.

“There are some foods, like biryani, and chicken tikka and there are so many desserts that make you feel good, and it reminds you of back home, your mother. Like our mom used to cook for us, so when we eat that we are reminded of how our mom use to cook these things.” *[Engineering Masters student from India studying at the University of Windsor]*

The term “common cuisine” was used by Mintz to refer to a close-knit community that consumes alike food items with enough knowledge and training to be considered masters of that cuisine (1996, 96). “They all believe, and care that they believe that they know what it consists of, how it is made and how it should taste” (Mintz, 1996, 96). The student quoted above also makes reference to a imagined community through the use of the words “us”, “we” and “our”. He suggests that all Indian mothers cook the same foods that all Indian people eat, however he is making assumptions about food in India, and using foods like Chicken Tikka to refer to an entire nation when in actuality he is referring to a particular subset of Indian cuisine and citizens within a specific part of India. He also illuminates comfort food’s enchanting ability to both “make you feel good” and remind you of “back home”. When I asked another Indian student to name a few of his favourite foods, he responded with a list of dishes he preferred to consume depending on

his mood.

“It depends on my mood, I like chicken bryani, and really spicy beef curry, and sometimes chicken curry and home cooked vegetables and lentil soup because that's what my mom use to cook, and I've been eating it since I was a kid, so I have a habit and memory to eating those, so it just kind of took over me, that's why I like that.” [*Engineering undergraduate student from India studying at the University of Guelph*]

Traditional food evokes fond memories that allow him to relieve past food experiences he shared with his family back home. A similar experience was also shared by a student from South Africa, who said,

“Bread and eggs for breakfast I've liked it since I was a child. I have two eggs and some toasted bread and a cup of tea, rooibos tea. It's nothing special when I'm home I get that all the time, but it is kind of nice to go back in a way when I have it. The one thing I do enjoy is my rooibos tea, because it smells and tastes really great, it's what I would call a South African specialty. It's something I use to drink back home, so that kind of sends me home on a Sunday afternoon when I just sit around sipping tea.”

This quote most clearly demonstrates how food is used as a medium to recreate familiar places. Throughout our interview this student from South Africa noted that he rarely had the time to prepare a traditional South African meal since he was a working student. He points out that although a South African breakfast is “nothing special” in his home country, this mundane meal is transformed into a rare and exciting experience as sipping an aromatic cup of rooibos tea provided him with an opportunity to metaphorically travel home every Sunday. Yet, what is most interesting about these quotes are the commonalities between them, each student either made reference to their mother, or childhood when discussing their favourite foods. It is possible that students' references to their childhoods and mothers relate back to a time of being nurtured and nourished, a time and place where students felt safe, secure, supported and comfortable within their own homes. In a foreign environment, comfort foods provide displaced students with a sense of emplacement, an opportunity to assert and reproduce social identities and reconnect with people and life back home.

For some the occasional consumption of home food served as nothing more than an attempt at recreating familiarity in one's life and was in no way linked to identity reproduction.

“I've been having those [Indian foods] for twenty years, so I don't think I need to have more of those now. I moved off to university when I was 19, or 20, so for the past 20 years I've been eating the same food which is like Indian food, it becomes monotonous. Every once and while you want to go back to that and I can cook that myself, so that's about it, but it's not something that I would want to have on a daily basis... I'm just bored of that.” [*Engineering Masters student from India, studying at the University of Windsor*]

During our interview this student pointed out that he had been living in Canada for several years without visiting home and could no longer relate to Indian culture. As a result, his consumption of Indian food was no longer motivated by his desire to maintain his former cultural identity. He also emphasized that although he has grown “bored” of Indian food, he still enjoys it occasionally because they reminded him of back home. A Nigerian student in a similar situation said, “rice and beans makes me remember home, because I use to eat a lot of beans and rice”. However when I asked her if it was important to keep Nigerian food in her diet, and if she felt as though her identity was connected to the consumption of these foods she laughed and said, “No, maybe because I left home a long time ago, so not so much”. I suggest that although the consumption of these foods no longer provides students with identity affirmation, it does afford them an opportunity to relive past experiences and engage with life back home without physically returning home.

As I have demonstrated, a nostalgic desire among international students to engage with life back-home influences consumption choices and in most cases is also used to awaken and communicate one's sense of self, yet is not always linked to the maintenance of pre-established identities. In the remainder of this chapter I discuss familiar food eaters' experiences reproducing and enacting identities via the consumption of familiar food as well as students' willingness to try new foods so as to create new and hybridized identities while abroad.

“It would be like going a day without water for me, when I don’t eat my traditional meal.” Socio-Cultural Identity Maintenance Through Familiar Food Consumption

Several glasses of water a day allow individuals to maintain a functional body; in a similar way, the consumption of traditional food allows people to sustain functional personal, cultural and religious identities. Fischler writes that, “food is central to our sense of identity, the way any given human group eats helps it asserts its diversity, hierarchy, organizations and at the same time both its oneness and the otherness of whoever eats differently” (1988, 275). Within this subsection and those below it I discuss the relationship between food choice, preferences and identity, “the mental self-images that a person assigns to herself/himself based on everyday interactions with people, groups and objects” (Bisogni, et al., 2002,129), and the cyclical influence they have over each other. More specifically within this section I argue that familiar food eaters’ devotion to remaining “in tune” with their pre-established identities, and/or desires to define themselves in opposition to their Canadian counterparts encouraged them to reject new foods and maintain familiar food based diets, with the exception of the occasional novelty item. As such the continued consumption of familiar foods allowed students to maintain personal, cultural and religious identities while abroad. However these desires and goals are primarily expressed and realized through students’ retellings of past food experiences which provide insight into how notions of identity are constructed in relation to food.

As several scholarly works (Leitch, 2003; Rotkowitz, 2004; Rudy, 2004; Warde, 1994; Wilson, 2004) reveal, to incorporate new foods into one’s diet is to incorporate all or some of the attributes associated with the identity of that food. When I asked a student from Jamaica to describe her first food memory in Canada she said, “Cheese bread and lasanga that was wonderful”. During our interview it became clear that although she had tried a few Canadian meals she continued to hold a preference for Jamaican dishes such as, curry goat, and fish and crackers. She said she did not enjoy Canadian foods because they are greasy, fatty, and cheesy, unlike “healthy foods from back home” that made her feel “good and happy” and “in tune” with

her culture when she consumed them. In these quotes, she not only makes a distinction between healthy and unhealthy foods, but healthy, Jamaican, and unhealthy, Canadian, eaters. During the interview she also said, “I think I’m lactose intolerant, because I feel sick when I eat pizza or pasta, like cheesy Canadian foods, you know?”, yet she later listed cheesecake as her favourite food. When I asked her if she also felt sick when she consumed lasagna, cheese bread and cheesecake, she said no. Since she described both consuming and rejecting dairy-based foods, it is possible that the source of her discomfort derives in part from the threat the consumption of cheese as fatty and greasy Canadian food poses to her cultural and personal identity as a “healthy-back home food” eater, rather than an inability to digest lactose. Fox (2003) and Harbottle (1997) also found that sojourners and migrants who strived to maintain social, and religious and other identities were reluctant to incorporate new foods into their diets since unfamiliar food posed a potential threat to one’s identity.

I suggest that when one’s sense of self is under threat, food also serves as a source of identity revitalization for international students living in a new environment, yet in a more individualized way. For some, Canada is seen as a threatening environment that prompts students to consume familiar foods in an effort to assert and maintain identities and interact with a shared past, or group of people. However, adventurous eaters are more likely to view their time abroad as a touristic opportunity, a chance to experience new foods and flavours, embrace new cultures, and create new identities.

During interviews and focus groups students who stressed the importance of maintaining socio-cultural and religious identities tended to define themselves in opposition to, or categorically separate ‘their’ food from “other people’s food” in an effort to distinguish themselves and their food-ways from the Canadian culinary mainstream. When I asked one German student whether it was important to keep German food in her diet she said,

“Yes, just to keep that alive, the culture, who I am. We didn’t find that there is much typical Canadian food that I would say, “this is typical for Canada, this is

Canadian people food”, I don’t know. Maybe poutine, otherwise there is no typical Canadian food.”

In this quote this student explicitly states that her continued consumption of German food keeps her culture and sense of self “alive”. In other words, consuming German food while abroad allows her to maintain her cultural identity. As I discussed on page 10 of my thesis, Warde asserts that consumption is a risky activity in the sense that eating unsuitable items may “impair personal ontological security” (1994, 883). Fischler also writes that, “if one does not know what one is eating, one is liable to lose the awareness of certainty of what one is oneself” (1988, 290). In other words, eaters as agents, or consumers exercising choice communicate their sense of self through consumption, however one’s identity is simultaneously threatened by the consumption of goods that lie outside the parameters of personal preferences. I suggest that for the above student, who partially defines herself in relation to food, the consumption of German food provided her with an enriched sense of cultural identity within a threatening identity-less place lacking in “typical Canadian food”. Adopting parts of a “Canadian” identity, was an option dismissed by familiar food eaters who felt that ‘multicultural’ Canada had lost its cuisine and unified national identity. For some students the consumption of unfamiliar “multicultural” foods implies a possible loss of identity since “Canadian foods” “do not exist” and the consumption of “multicultural” foods would result in a fragmented identity. As such, the consumption of familiar and traditional food serves as a tool with which to repair and sustain one’s “personal ontological security” (Warde, 2004, 883).

Since this student defines herself in relation to traditional German food I also suggest that her and several other students’ identities and level of food security are intimately connected to the consumption of these foods. Throughout our interview this student said, “I can’t be myself”, and that she felt sad when she was unable to access traditional foods including sourdough bread and mountain cheeses. As a result she felt forced to consume cheaper foods such as processed cheddar instead of Limburger and Swiss which she “didn’t really like the taste of” and “got

really bored of”. These excerpts suggest that limited access to authentic German food kept this student from eating preferred foods and hindered her ability to be herself. Therefore availability and access of food preferences affects both food security and identity maintenance.

“Generally we usually like rice, without rice we can’t feel like we’ve completed our dinner, or lunch. From the childhood we’ve grown into the same culture, our culture it’s like from the childhood and we follow it, we are to follow it, the tradition of our people which is different from Canadian tradition.”

This undergraduate from India identifies rice as the staple food within his cultural food-way. He asserts that his culture’s food rules dictate to him what he can and cannot eat, as well as communicate to himself and others who he is, and who he is not. In this excerpt he also makes a distinction between Indians and Canadians, however unlike the German student quoted above he acknowledges that Canadians have eating traditions, although they are different from his own. By referencing a larger group of Indians through the use of the word “we”, this student reconnects with the practices of his culture, as well as reaffirms his socio-cultural identity. For this student, rice both completes the meal and provides him with security and reassurance that he is living up to, and preserving his cultural identity.

“I mentioned earlier because of being Hindu we worship the cow. That’s why Hindus, I’m Hindu, that’s why Hindus don’t eat it like Canadians. Culturally, religiously and I think it’s a personal reason as well.”

Although culture and religion have shaped this microbiology major’s way of eating and thinking about food, she notes that it was a personal choice to continue to live by these rules back home as well as abroad. In this excerpt she explicitly asserts her religious identity as a Hindu by defining herself in relation to the Hindu community and in opposition to Canadians. A student from Kuwait also spoke about the effect religious food rules have on his consumption.

“ Halal food... I can’t just go to the store and get any type of chicken, so that affects my shopping and what I can eat. I have to be careful with what I eat. I can’t just eat any chicken, like other people, so that restricts what I can eat. Like I said it’s important because it defines who I am, and what I can’t do which I like. Some of my friends think I pay too much attention to it, but that is what I’m used

to, this is who I am. I have to check the ingredients, because there are some stuffs that aren't halal and I have to be sure.”

Messer (2007) writes by consuming, processing and organizing rigid food-ways while avoiding or dismissing other foods items, individuals associate themselves with a specific social class, and way of life as well as define themselves as “a particular kind of human being” (53). This Muslim student highlights the importance of consuming foods he finds to be both personally and culturally appropriate and acknowledges that his religion defines who he is and what he can eat. He notes that he “can't just eat any chicken” which affects his shopping, making him vulnerable to both food and identity insecurity. He acknowledged that he must check the ingredients of each item so as to ensure that it is halal; to ignore the ingredients list, or consume non-halal food would be to put his religious identity in jeopardy. Since halal foods are often unaffordable, or unavailable in wide varieties, individuals' identities can also be affected by the availability and accessibility of these preferred foods which I discuss below.

Thus far, I have used a variety of excerpts to demonstrate how international students make distinctions between and define themselves in opposition to Canadians. In the remainder of this section I discuss how students use food to communicate their identities, independently rather than in contrast to other groups, and explore how students' ability to maintain their identity is interconnected with their ability to achieve and sustain food security.

When students were asked if they felt like it was important to keep familiar foods in their diet and why it was important to do so I received a range of similar responses including, “that food reminds me of who I am and what my foundation is”, “I'm a Muslim and I love my religion a lot as I believe it defines who I am, so that's why I eat halal”, “if it isn't halal then it isn't for me, and I believe that”. As these statements show many maintain familiar diets so as to sustain their identities. For some the fact that they would be returning home someday to the people, food and customs of their home countries became a salient motivation for keeping these foods in their

lives. Following cultural and religious food rules provided students with an opportunity to sustain identities, as well as engage with life back home in preparation for “going back one day”.

The experiences of one Nigerian student echoes those of other participants. She said, “I grew up eating these kinds of foods, so being deprived of them would kind of feel weird, it would be like going a day without water for me when I don’t eat my traditional meal”. Humans as omnivores can subsist on a wide range of foods, yet research has shown that food’s edibility is culturally determined, and therefore, “no food is appropriate for everyone, at all times, in all circumstances in any quantity (Fischler, 1988, 285; Strauss, 1968). This student’s reference to the consumption of “traditional” meals as a biological need, rather than a cultural preference, highlights familiar foods’ crucial role in restoring, and preserving one’s sense of self while satisfying hunger in a way that is both ‘good to eat’ and ‘think’. One student described this equilibrium in terms of feeling “in tune” with her culture when she consumed traditional meals and “out of tune” with her culture and identity when she was deprived of these foods while a Nigerian student had a similar response;

“Granola submerged in strawberry yoghurt, I would say it’s more than a taste preference, it reminds me of home, like who I was back then, and then who I am now.”

Researcher; Do you feel like you’ve changed much since the move?

Participant: “Yah, yah a lot like I’m starting to pick up a lot of characteristics here, and I’m losing my accent and it’s really hard to find food from back home here, so I am not happy. I went back home in December and my friends were just like utterly disappointed because I haven’t been eating the right things and I lost some of my accent [sighs]. It’s like my identity is just fading away.”

All participants from African countries noted that it was particularly difficult to find African food in both cities, and pointed out that the limited available was often incredibly expensive. Granola and strawberry yoghurt served as this student's saving grace since he had difficulty locating familiar foods. The consumption of granola and yoghurt, readily accessible and affordable in both Canada and Nigeria, provided this student with a sense of emplacement and

allowed him to partially preserve his cultural identity. In other words, the consumption of this snack as an unchanging, everyday occurrence provided stability and comfort to him during the process of adapting to life in Canada. Although this snack provided him with an opportunity to reconnect with home and sustain his cultural identity while abroad, and therefore “who I was back then and who I am now”, the consumption of this one dish was not enough to keep his accent and identity from “fading”. This experience provides a clear example of how availability and accessibility affects food and identity security. Not only did his inability to consume the right foods lead to a food insecurity, but it has also kept him from maintaining his cultural identity and sustaining group loyalties. His reference to his peers’ disappointment back home suggests that his ability to maintain social ties and a social identity hinges upon his level of engagement with the shared practices characteristic of his socio-cultural group. His consumption of the wrong foods and the loss of his accent made him somewhat of an outsider among his peers which also serves as a source of his unhappiness. Another student also described feeling unhappy because he was unable to locate halal foods and preserve his religious identity.

“Yes there is one restriction, pork. We eat halal foods, but we’re not allowed to eat pork because we have one religious book and this is Qu’ran, so whatever it says in that we follow. It says that being a Muslim, or being a human being you have to be restricted from that...it says specifically this animal, so were not allowed to eat that. Since everything is so clear in our book nobody finds any good reason to go against it. One reason is that the meat it tastes like the taste of humans, so if we started eating that too it would become like we like to eat everything. When I got here “I spoke with my parents and I’m like “we don’t get it [halal food] that much”, so my parents were like, “god is going to forgive you because you don’t have any other option.” So most of the time I use to go for it because I have to survive right? I have to live, so although there was no option, I used to eat non-halal stuff even though I felt really guilty. Because let’s say after your birth you have been eating in a different way, or under a different practice and all of the sudden you kind of like change, so it kind of like personally feels bad.”

It is made clear in this excerpt that this Kuwaiti student’s Muslim identity is important to him. Although he would have preferred to maintain a halal diet while abroad he realized that adjustments would have to be made in order to “survive.” During our interview he pointed out

that he primarily subsisted off vegetables to avoid going against his religion, but when he felt protein was needed he strayed from his vegetarian diet to satisfy his needs. His ability to employ agency by way of purchasing preferred foods was severely limited, since his choices were now negotiated within the parameters of a life or death situation. His feelings of discomfort stem from his inability to follow the rules outlined in the Qu'ran keeping him from connecting to his religion and maintaining his Muslim identity.

“They are both a part of my life now and both a part of me.” Engaging with Food Sharing, Exchange, and Creolization as Sources of Transnational Identity Building

Although many students strive to maintain formerly established identities, others are more open to creating hybridized, and transnational identities or forging completely new identities for themselves. The term transnationalism commonly refers to, “multiple ties and interactions linking people or institutions across the borders of nation-states” (Vertovec, 1999, 447). Transnationals often sustain a number of socio-cultural, economic, political, familial and religious relationships across borders that allow them to “feel a belonging to several cultural realities simultaneously” (Holliday, 2010,175; Schiller et al., 2006). In this section I discuss how international students use food as a medium to maintain transnational connections and create hybridized identities, as well as explore how a desire to adopt a transnational identity can influence food choices and preferences. Students who were reluctant to leave familiar foods behind, yet were intrigued by the thought of trying new foods occupied a middling ground, where Canada and back-home became equal parts of their lives and selves. In an effort to establish a transnational identity, students consumed a combination of familiar and unfamiliar foods as a means to express their new identity in relation to their former self. Students uncomfortable with mixing ‘the old with the new’ rotated eating styles between meals, or days of the week. Others mixed back-home foods with Canadian foods to create one creolized dish that symbolizes students’ willingness to embrace a transnational life. During a bout of homesickness these students often phoned family members to ask them to send food packages. In exchange,

students returned home with Canadian, or Western foods in order to prepare new dishes for friends and family. A number of students strived to maintain a balanced diet consisting of home food and Canadian food because, as one student from China said, “they are both a part of my life now and both apart of me”. By continuing to consume familiar food and incorporating new foods into one’s diet while abroad, students believe that they can become at least partially Canadian while simultaneously maintaining their established sense of self. The same student quoted above also said,

“My diet for sure has changed. I think I drink more dairy and caffeine and eat more pasta like the Western tradition. Like all the things at the market I think okay they are part of my life now. I still keep Asian food in my life, but I won’t say I will only eat Asian food, because Canadian food is also in my life and I will eat it.”

In the first excerpt this student notes that China and Canada are both a part of her life now and both apart of her identity. Her continued consumption of Asian foods allow her to maintain her Chinese identity, while her consumption of Canadian food demonstrates her willingness to adapt and create a new sense of identity.

Khan defines ‘creolization’ as “the forms and dynamics of cultural change that occur over time as phenotypically, religiously, and culturally heterogeneous peoples come into what is commonly known as ‘culture contact’ and undergo the acculturation that it engenders or demands” (2007, 653). Since each student has unique ideas about mixing it is not my intention to lump students’ experiences into one uniform category. Although I have sorted students’ experiences into subgroups for organizational purposes, it is important to note that individuals exercise individuality (and agency) in different ways. Some reproduce familiar identities, and others strive to create something new by using food as a vehicle of change. Transnational identities are enacted, reproduced and created in a variety of unique ways. Some create creolized dishes to symbolize their mixed status, while others engage in food sharing so as to share their cultural identity with others as well as absorb elements of the ‘other’ during the process. Identity

maintenance and creation is somewhat of a pick and choose process, or project fueled by imagination and creativity and molded by actors.

The creation of creolized meals symbolizes one's willingness to embrace new identities and experiment with unfamiliar foods. Some mixed Canadian foods such as maple syrup, or Canadian and Western foods like Kraft Dinner and cheese with staples characteristic of their cultural food-ways. A history major from Japan said that he substituted the sugar in his teriyaki sauce recipe with maple syrup when making Japanese-Canadian food. He noted that this allowed him to engage with both cultures and "be two people" at once. Another student mentioned that in an attempt to embrace "Canadian culture" he "explored rice and Kraft Dinner together" and then topped it off with beef stew. Stew as described by all African participants is a term used to refer to a sauce containing a variety of spices, vegetables and sometimes meat and is much thicker than the soupy Canadian version. This student noted that the meal he created with these foods "wasn't totally disastrous, but something new". In other words, destruction by way of modifying traditional food rules becomes a form of meal and identity creation.

James explores creolization as a platform for identity creation and asks "what forms of identity might we be confronting through the recent appearance" of the "Chinese Pizza"⁶ (2007, 373). James' work does not provide conclusive answers, but rather is food for thought. On one hand, she is receptive to the idea that creolized foods serve as a source of identity transformation, while on the other she argues that creolized tastes and cuisines may arise as a result of authentic ingredient unavailability. As I pointed out although a few students occasionally used familiar flavouring principles to season unfamiliar foods, most familiar food eaters avoided these all together even if they suffered from monotony as a result, whereas more adventurous eaters generally preferred to experiment with new foods or pre-creolized dishes rather than attempt to

⁶ James (2007) does not explain what she means by the term Chinese Pizza, but implies that foods such as pizza that have been subjected to foreign influence, are often modified to produce something new through the process of mixing various culturally-bound culinary styles and flavouring principles together.

make due with similar ingredients. For the most part, the rejection of inauthentic ingredients was related to the desire to maintain one's identity, or explore a new one. Students open to experimenting with new foods did not fear that the consumption of unfamiliar foods would lead to the destruction of their identity since there was enough back-home foods available. Students felt that because they were in Canada they should make it a priority to engage with the customs, traditions and practices of Canadians, so as to "become Canadian", but not at the expense of losing their own formerly established sense of self.

Many students felt it was important to "taste in order to experience Canadian culture", but noted that their level of culinary exploration must be somewhat balanced with their consumption of familiar foods in order to create new identities while retaining old ones. One Nigerian student said, "I wouldn't eat wild animals, snakes or even pork" because it was against her cultural beliefs, yet she mentioned that she tried pork in Canada and was now "in love with pork". Yet, she refused to cook pork because her "mom never cooked it", although she enjoyed consuming it with fellow international and Canadian students. She noted that in Nigeria the decision regarding whether the family will eat pork is made by the father of the household, and since her father refused to consume it the rest of the family was also prohibited from consuming pork. Pork as a former food taboo became a touristic experience for this student while abroad. Consuming pork outside of the home with her Canadian friends allowed her to assert her Canadian identity and experience something new, whereas the consumption of pork within her own home jeopardized, or as she said "disrespects" her cultural identity. Messer (2007, 56) writes that "when eating away from home, people may follow the culinary custom without complaint, but will never collect, prepare or eat species classified as not eaten in the home-hearth context". She argues that this "reasoning is cultural and contextual, they eat them we don't" (Messer 2007, 56).

In an attempt to maintain balance between creating new and retaining established

identities students who embraced a transnational lifestyle occasional requested parcels primarily consisting of spices and other condiments. These students were comfortable consuming new foods, yet began to feel “uncomfortable” and “out of tune” when they had not consumed enough back-home food. In contrast, familiar food eaters’ reluctant to embrace new identities feared that eating too much unfamiliar food would affect their ability to retain identities and requested parcels more frequently. In other cases parcel foods were requested simply because they were most preferred.

On page 58, I provide a quote from a Jamaican student who frequently placed requests with her grandma to send peppers and “typical seasoning.” For this student this transnational act was not correlated with the creation of a salient transnational identity. As I outlined above the consumption of greasy, fatty, Canadian foods conflicted with her identity as a “healthy back-home food” eater. Therefore transnational acts are not always synonymous with the creation of a hyphenated identity. Some use parcels as a dietary supplement, and often faced monotony when parcels were not delivered on time, or could not be delivered at all. A student from South Africa said, “I can live without it, but I miss it, I need some of it”. This student later acknowledged that although it was important to consume new foods, it was also important to eat traditional foods, “so I still have my South African identity”. He noted that parcels, and purchasing traditional foods when he could afford them, provided comfort and reminded him of who he is, and what his “foundation is”. The primary difference between students willing to create hybridized selves through the consumption of new foods, and those who reject unfamiliar foods so as to assert and maintain established socio-cultural identities, is that the former can “live without it” although they prefer to keep some familiar foods in their diet. Regardless of students' attitudes toward new foods, some students from both groups, familiar food eaters in particular, noted that they often felt “in tune” with their culture when they consumed parcel foods, yet became “out of tune” or felt as though their identity was beginning to “fade” when parcel and familiar foods in general

were unavailable. As I mentioned previously, although some listed becoming Canadian as a priority, this could not be achieved at the expense of sacrificing one's established identity. In other words, although some students were receptive to embracing "Canadian-ness", they did not want to lose their "Nigerian-ness", or "Chinese-ness" and so on, in the process. Transnational food exchange is also used among students as a means to share their abroad experiences with those back home. Some chose to send novel foods to their friends and family, as well as returned home with foods they had planned on preparing and sharing.

Food sharing plays an important role in reproducing and articulating students' identities. Initiating a food share provided participants with an opportunity to assert and share their identity and culture with other students, while being on the receiving end of a food share allowed students to experience and embrace new identities and cultures. One student said that he enjoyed "tasting Canada" and experiencing new cultures with his friends, however in addition to embracing "Canadian life" by experimenting with new foods he noted that it was equally important to share his South African identity. One way in which he chose to share his identity was by introducing his friends to his "love for rooibos tea". When I asked him why he felt it was important to introduce his friends to this type of tea he said;

"Maybe because of my love for it, it has such a good flavour and it's just like a South African identity kind of thing... like I mean everyone shares the culture here, it's a multicultural country, so I thought I might as well. I know a bunch of tea drinkers and some of them had already tasted rooibos, but some of them hadn't."

For this student rooibos tea serves as an identity marker, or a "South African identity kind of thing". By providing his friends with a cup of rooibos he not only introduces them to a new flavour of tea, but his South African cultural identity. He also points out that, "everyone shares the culture here", therefore to embrace Canadian-ness is to participate in Canadian customs such as food sharing. Food sharing thereby provided this student with an opportunity to embrace Canadian-ness, by way of sharing and articulating his South-African-ness.

One Nigerian student mentioned that she preferred to be on the receiving end of a food share, so she could learn to prepare “other kinds of food” in hopes of sharing these dishes with her family back home who expected her to “learn and try new stuff”. She also noted that upon arrival she realized that “it would be too expensive” to cook African food daily. When I asked her what kind of meals she typically cooks for her family when visiting she said, “noodles, it’s more I show them new food I eat by bringing them back”. At first she noted that familial expectations motivated her to try new foods, yet later points out that it is also important to show her family the new foods she has tried and the changes she has made rather than simply provide them with a culinary touristic experience. A student from China also mentioned that she was interested in learning to cook “Canadian” foods and build culinary skills.

“Sometimes I just look around because there’s so much canned stuff and just like different stuff sometimes. Like we don’t really eat pasta back home, so I try different shaped pasta and different sauce because we don’t have this back home. So when I come here I try different pasta and different sauce and at ...back home I try to teach them how to cook that. Pasta and sauce is very common in Canadians’ life, so I try to eat this too. Back home we didn’t do this, my family doesn’t have a stove, we don’t do this kind of thing, so when I come to Canada, to be Canadian I got a stove and pasta became a part of my life, and also the oven crescents. So when I go home in two years, I’ll probably need the oven and the toaster, but my parents they never use that because they don’t need that.”

In this quote she articulates her cultural identity by distinguishing her eating habits from and defining herself, and her cultural group, “we” in opposition to what she considers to be “Canadian”. However, she also discusses her willingness to try new food as a means toward becoming Canadian which suggests that she is looking to establish a new identity. Fox (2003) writes that, “not knowing how to eat properly is universally a sign of outsider status, proper eating includes the kind of food used, the way of preparing it, the manner of serving it and the way of eating it”, therefore anyone wanting to integrate themselves must learn to do it that way (3). When I asked her how often she cooked new foods she said that she purchased at least one new item per shopping trip and utilized Youtube tutorials to learn how to prepare meals. In the

above excerpt she not only discusses the type of eater she would like to be in the present, but the person she aspires to be in the future. She also highlighted how her abroad experience has changed her and created differences between her, her parents and the greater Chinese community back home. She no longer solely identifies as Chinese since Canadian culture has become a part of her life and self. She notes that when she returns home she tries to teach friends and family how to cook new foods. In teaching friends and family back home how to cook new foods, she is sharing and communicating elements of her new “Canadian” identity. Her plan to purchase a stove [oven] and toaster following her move back home indicates that her abroad experience has changed her life in the long-term, and suggests that she will try to maintain elements of her new-found Canadian-ness once returning home.

Participation in transnational acts was more common among familiar food eaters and those that identified as having a ‘mixed’ identity than student who chose to abandon familiar eating habits and identities in exchange for something new. Extra adventurous students who mentioned that they had both grown bored of familiar foods, and wanted to “experience life as a Canadian” rarely requested packages, and were more likely to be on the receiving, rather than the distributing end of a food share.

“To be part of the culture, to unite and be together, it’s definitely important to taste to be part of Canada.” Exploratory Eating and Engagement with “Canadian-ness” as Venues for Identity Creation

Similar to transnational internationals, extra adventurous students in search of something “completely new” believe it is critical to consume unfamiliar foods in the name of becoming Canadian. Both groups desired to distance themselves from their own boring food-ways, although transnational internationals were more likely to keep familiar foods in their lives than extra adventurous students. Exploratory eating provides students with an opportunity to experience difference, and for some to establish new identities by way of experiencing ‘otherness’. Familiar food eaters keen on maintaining their personal, cultural and religious

identities were likely to occasionally experiment with novel foods such as pizza and bagels, yet were reluctant to incorporate these foods as staples in their diet and embrace ‘otherness’ on a deeper ontological level. In contrast adventurous (transnational) and extra adventurous eaters expressed that consuming unfamiliar “Canadian” foods, and engaging with Canadian customs allowed them to experience Canada, and what “it is like to live as a Canadian”. The primary difference between what I have deemed as adventurous and extra adventurous eaters is that the former engage with Canadian-ness only to the extent that it does not affect their formerly established sense of self, while the later do not appear to be concerned with this risk.

Extra adventurous eaters mentioned that they had temporarily abandoned their familiar or traditional diets in an attempt to make the most of their “international experience”. Molz (2004) writes that, “by participating in a food system, the culinary tourist is expressing and reinforcing his or her own identity while exploring the identity of the other that is represented by that food system” (66). Adventurous eaters were equally interested in expressing and exploring new and old identities, while extra adventurous eaters appeared to be keen on exploring, absorbing, and building new identities rather than sharing established ones. Extra adventurous eaters expressed interest in trying as many new foods as they could while abroad. As mentioned, “one group can try to use food to separate itself, while another is trying to use food to eliminate that separation”(Anderson, 2005,125). Extra adventurous eaters, in contrast to familiar food eaters, desired to be included, or “become Canadian” while abroad, so as to remove this separation, while familiar food eaters maintained familiar diets in an attempt to distinguish themselves from Canadians. In other words, where familiar food eaters see risk, adventurous eaters see opportunity.

Fischler (1988) writes that the consumption of particular foods incorporates the eater into both the culinary system and cultural group that abides by it, consequently, “incorporation implies not only a risk, but also a chance and a hope- of becoming more what one is, or what one

would like to be” (281-282). Like Fischler (1988) and Anderson (2005), I argue that the incorporation of new foods eliminates self-perceived differences between internationals and Canadians, and provides students with an opportunity to become more of what or who they would like to be during their stay. It is important to note that identity maintenance and creation are constantly evolving, multifaceted processes, for extra adventurous eaters exploratory eating served as an outlet for embracing “Canadian-ness”, while expressing one’s adventurous-ness. One participant from India demonstrates his openness and willingness to explore by stating, “I’m a person that loves to learn new things, new techniques, meet new people and understand and embrace their culture”. He also said, “Canada is an environment where we support and live together with many cultures, so to be a part of this culture, to unite and be together its important to taste to be a part of Canada”. His use of the word “we” indicates that he now sees himself as a member of Canadian society, a goal achieved in part through exploratory eating.

According to Bisogni et al., (2002), “people manage their multiple identities by assigning greater importance to some identities rather than others and by enacting different identities in different situations” (129). In other words, individuals construct their own identities in such a way that it is possible to have more than one. Individuals constantly redefine and enact various self-images as individuals’ obligations, relations and roles evolve and in this sense individuals’ identities become fluid (Bisogni et al., 2002). It is important to note that although some students strive to embrace a sojourner identity, this does not mean that they completely abandon their established values, beliefs and identities, rather, they are “enacting different identities in different situations” (Bisogni et al., 2002,129). International students in particular actively construct and alter their identities so as to reflect and express what is important to them in the present. In other words, extra adventurous eaters’ cultivation of a new identity can be thought of as a transient sense of self that reflects who the student wants to be while abroad. This does not necessarily mean that they have discarded their former cultural identity; rather, it is simply not as salient as it

was prior to moving to Canada.

During interviews I asked students to tell me about their experiences purchasing, tasting and preparing unfamiliar foods. The majority of students told me that at first they struggled to identify quintessential “Canadian” foods, yet over time a few students realized that “Canadian” cuisine had been shaped and re-defined by the country’s multicultural population.

“Obviously there is more diversity here. So when I came here I was being introduced to Guacamole, and I ate it and I was like, “Wow this is a Canadian food?, and they’re like “no it’s Mexican.” When it comes to food you have so many options. There is a large variation of food in Canada, it is multicultural, there’s a lot of people with different backgrounds... especially when I compare this to my hometown, it is a multicultural environment. Many of the dishes have been mixed like Vietnamese and Indian, or Italian with German, so Canadian food becomes a mix of all foods.” [*Undergraduate engineering student studying at the University of Windsor from Pakistan*]

On page 53, I used Rudy’s (2004) work distinguishing between culinary tourists and extended stay eaters to contextualize international students’ experiences. While a tourist may travel to Canada for a week and conclude that Canada has failed to develop its own cuisine, international students as long-term travelers with more insight into Canadian food-ways discover that “Canadian” cuisine may be “Indian” or “Italian”, or a combination of both. Although a few students mentioned that to “be Canadian” was to eat a variety of ethnic, and “fusion” foods, most preferred to consume foods they considered to be distinctly Canadian which usually came in the form of fast-foods. Although Subway and Pizza Pizza were listed as Canadian, Tim Hortons became the most popular response and was discussed by nearly every participant. Almost all familiar, adventurous and extra adventurous eaters discussed at least one instance where they patronized Tim Hortons. For some, eating at Tim Hortons was a “one time thing”, while for others it became a convenient and accessible medium to engage with “Canadian-ness”.

“It’s a Canadian thing, Tim Hortons.” Embracing and Consuming Canadian Food, Drink and Identity

Participants described the average Canadian as someone who leads a “fast, fast, fast”, “go, go, go” lifestyle, drinks a “to-go coffee” every morning, as well as enjoys baked goods, maple syrup, poutine and hockey. Upon arrival students expressed that they were overwhelmed by the number of “coffee shops and coffee drinkers” in Canada. Although coffee was accessible back home, students pointed out that it was generally consumed every once and a while socially in restaurants rather than habitually consumed on a solitary basis, or within particular shops. Others mentioned that Tim Hortons was the first coffee shop they had ever patronized since “there weren’t very many places to buy coffee back home.” Students referred to Tim Hortons as a “Canadian thing”, and held the chain responsible for creating a “coffee shop culture” within Canada. Participants argued that Canadians “love their Tim Hortons” because it is “Canadian and cheap” and offers “good food.” Occasional coffee drinkers and coffee shop virgins alike confessed that they began to drink more coffee, hot beverages and consume “Canadian foods” like bagels, muffins, and donuts following their arrival. They also believed that dining at, and consuming Tim Horton’s foods played a role in “changing” and allowing them to become a part of Canada. Since “the idea of a coffee shop isn’t familiar” for most of these students, I suggest that the patronization of coffee shops can be understood as a touristic opportunity where students explore “Canadian” food and drink as well as engage with the “coffee shop culture” of the other. These touristic experiences integrate students within the Canadian and post-secondary student culture that facilitates the development of new identities and self-images.

The ads, products and signage of your average Tim Horton’s store are decorated with the national red and white colours as they appear on the Canadian flag, although the white is sometimes replaced with pale yellow. As you approach the cashier you spot a variety of donuts, including two types seasoned with maple syrup fondant, the maple dip and the Canadian maple donut. On holidays such as Canada Day, donuts are covered with red and white sprinkles, or red

sprinkles shaped like maple leaves. If you choose to ‘dine in’ you will notice that the dining room of most Tim Hortons is sparsely decorated with ads, plastic plants and the occasional framed picture. Cultural markers of Canadian identity including the maple leaf, snow, hockey, and sports equipment occasionally appear in these pictures and ads, although they are most likely to be found on gift-cards, cups and within television commercials. In the past, seasonal cups have displayed hazy blue snowscape scenes with children playing hockey, and figure skating. Gift-cards depict similar scenes, although this year cards were printed with an image of a snowman wearing a red hat and scarf.

One of the 2012 Tim Horton’s commercials filmed in a hockey arena that the narrator refers to as a theatre, classroom, and town hall depicts children learning to skate while their parents sit in the stands, cheer and talk politics over a cup of Tim Horton’s coffee. As NHL player Sidney Crosby skates onto the ice font appears on the screen that reads, “Timbits player since 1993.” As the scene begins to fade the narrator says “Tim Hortons celebrates hockey as it brings together all Canadians”. The mention of Crosby’s start in hockey as a Timbits player suggests that Tim Hortons has the ability to play a role in bettering communities and the lives of youth through its Timbits Minor Sports Program. The commercial suggests that Crosby is where he is today in part because of this sponsorship program. Therefore by facilitating the continued success of hockey this commercial implies that Tim Hortons also “brings together all Canadians” by way of celebrating and sponsoring the game that brings them together.

Students noted that they were surprised by the number of Tim Hortons locations they saw in Guelph, Windsor and other parts of Canada, and pointed out that “Tim Hortons is everywhere, so you can get it whenever you want”. The nationwide inhabitation of Tim Hortons, and its commonplace presence play a large role in its identification as a “Canadian food” distributor. Since “Tim Hortons is everywhere” students concluded that it must be “Canadian”. This finding comes as no surprise considering the number of Tim Hortons locations in Guelph and Windsor.

Table 5.1 below contains a list of restaurants, noting on- and off-campus location numbers, frequently classified as “Canadian” by international students.

Table 5.1

<u>Restaurant</u>	<u>Guelph</u>	<u>Windsor</u>
Tim Hortons	11(off-campus)3 (on-campus)	34(off-campus) 2(on-campus)
Pizza Pizza	4(off-campus) 1(on-campus)	4(off-campus) 1(on-campus)
Subway	15(off-campus) 1 (on-campus)	27(off-campus)
McDonalds	4(off-campus)	14(off-campus)

As can be seen, Tim Hortons is the most populous chain within Windsor, yet in Guelph it is slightly less numerous than Subway although it is much more populous than Pizza Pizza, or McDonalds. Three students mentioned Tim Hortons commercials and ads they had seen, and made a point of noting the disappointment they felt when advertised products and promotions weren't applicable, or available on-campus. Long (2004) writes that restaurants use strategies where food is utilized as a tool to “sell their histories and to construct marketable and publicly attractive identities” (20). Tim Hortons' commercials, which can be viewed online, provide a window into how this chain uses food to construct a marketable Canadian identity awaiting consumption.

One commercial stars a middle-aged black man, who in the first scene is staring at a photo of who we later learn is his wife and daughter. In this based on a true story commercial, the man is shown driving to the airport, and purchasing Tim Horton's coffee once he arrives. After greeting his family, who are new immigrants to Canada, he hands his wife a coffee and says “Welcome to Canada.” In this commercial it is almost as if a cup of Tim Hortons coffee serves as a component of a welcoming ritual, the passing of coffee from one new “Canadian” to another, and the consumption of this coffee symbolizes one's new identity and home in Canada.

Another based on a true story commercial depicts a Canadian international student's attempt at creating a sense of home while in Scotland. In the commercial a young, white man hangs a Canadian flag, leans hockey sticks against his living room wall, and hangs a sign in his window that reads, "Caribou house", yet post-redecoration he said the room "still didn't feel completely Canadian" and begins writing a letter to Tim Hortons asking "for a little help". After what appeared to be days later he walks downstairs to find his friends sipping coffee from the coffee maker sent to him from Tim Hortons. As the commercial ends he says, "you know there are some things that just say home". This commercial markets Tim Hortons as a distinctly Canadian company, and demonstrates its coffee's ability to provide a sense of emplacement to displaced Canadians. In the last commercial, a variety of employees from locations across Canada were featured stressing that "it could be 7am, or 10 at night", "in Chilliwack BC, or St.Petersburgh Nova Scotia, from Newfoundland and Labrador to Vancouver Island, Tim Hortons... a coffee all our own". Tim Hortons emphasizes that not only are they everywhere, but they are always open. The phrase, "a coffee all our own" implies that it is the nation's coffee, although it is individualized in the sense that some prefer a double double, while others enjoy three creams, no sugar, yet the company implies that pre-additive, the plain coffee serves as the foundation that brings Canadians together. It is clear that within these commercials Tim Hortons strives to advertise itself as a distinctive Canadian company with the ability to cater to Canadians and newcomers from all walks of life.

Tim Hortons strives to create authenticity, or a sense of "Canadian-ness" in its ads, and within its restaurants by identifying with other elements of "Canadian-ness" like hockey, maple syrup, and the maple leaf. Although only a few students mentioned commercials, since most students noted that they enjoyed Tim Hortons it is more than likely that these students have also encountered and been influenced by these images. Since students described Canadians as people who lead on- the-go lifestyles, drink coffee, and enjoy baked goods, maple syrup and ice hockey,

they may also come to associate Tim Hortons with Canadian cuisine as a result of the “Canadian-ness” that is portrayed in these ads. Seeing as Tim Horton’s is a Canadian company and these images are being posted within Canada, it is likely that they are geared towards Canadians rather than produced with the intention of targeting tourists. Yet, it appears that there is no need for Tim Horton’s to advertise itself as a unique Canadian establishment to tourists, or a touristic experience one must participate in while in Canada, since their customers do this for them. Students mentioned that when they arrived in Canada they “saw everyone eating and drinking Tim Hortons”, seeing this consumption as a part of Canadian’s daily routine students desired to participate in what they saw as a Canadian tradition.

“I don’t drink coffee a lot, but after I came here I drink coffee, but after I came here and became Canadian I wanted to, I drink it every single day. Everyone buys coffee here, but at home you don’t always buy that. There’s more coffee shops ...coffee here is like a culture of Canada, you have the coffee places, the Tim Hortons and you have a coffee whether you’re walking around the town, or doing anything, it’s just part of the culture. I didn’t drink it that much at home, but I drink a lot here. It’s not just the coffee, but the muffin and donut too, it’s like when you go and get a coffee there are so many choices, so people usually get one of them...it’s like a culture here.”

In this quote this PhD student from China emphasized that she did not start drinking a lot of coffee until she came to Canada and in her mind “became Canadian”. She points out that Canadians are always drinking coffee and snacking on muffins, or donuts and mentioned during our interview that she had never seen these Western and Canadian foods before. She also noted that eating Tim Horton’s products played a role in her identity building, and culinary exploration.

A similar comment was made by Sri Lankan student,

“Also coffee, before I didn’t drink a lot, but before I came to Canada like most of the time in school I might have an instant coffee to wake me up, but at home no one really drinks that much coffee at my house, so I don’t really drink it. But I came here and even like I was doing my undergraduate study back home, you don’t find a lot of coffee restaurant, or coffee place around, so you don’t really have a lot of places to buy coffee. But when I came here, it’s everywhere, so I got use to buying coffee almost every day since. Back home our people don’t really want coffee for themselves, they just don’t do that. We don’t have Tim Horton’s back home, it’s a Canadian thing Tim Hortons.”

Like the student quoted above, this undergraduate from Sri Lanka also mentioned that he did not begin to consume coffee on a daily until he arrived in Canada. This student also points out that in Canada there are more coffee shops and drinkers than back-home. In both excerpts these students mentioned coffee, and Tim Hortons which this student has classified as a “Canadian thing”.

Another student from Nigeria also mentioned that he had made “big changes” since arriving to Canada. When I asked him what they were he said,

“I’m starting to change my love of sports, I like hockey a lot more [laughs] and I never use to drink hot beverages a lot and stuff in Nigeria, maybe because I was always hot there. So I’m starting to fade into that Canadian coffee shop culture, also with the bagels and what not. So in a sense yah I’m changing. Back-home, coffee shops isn’t a common thing. If you wake up in the morning and you need to get breakfast, you make breakfast, if you had to buy something you would go to a grocery store and buy drinks, or sandwiches or whatever. But coffee shops, the idea behind a coffee shop isn’t familiar back home, but here everyone loves Tim Horton’s, everyone goes to Tim Hortons. Tim Horton’s is Canadian and cheap, so you kind of fade into that way of starting your morning. So I guess that’s the reason why Canadians love their coffee shops, loooovvvveeee their coffee shops... you begin to become a part of this.”

During our interview this student pointed out that prior to moving he had never seen a bagel, his new favourite food. When I asked him to tell me about the first time he had one he began to laugh and said that Tim Hortons was where he “fell in love with cinnamon raisin bagels”. He expressed that purchasing a cinnamon raisin bagel with strawberry cream cheese became “really exciting” because bagels and coffee shops were not commonplace back-home. Toward the end of our interview he began to discuss his time living in residence. I asked him what his favourite place to eat on campus was and he said, “Tim Hortons was my breakfast, lunch and dinner, because I love Tim Hortons”. He attributes the personal changes he has made since his arrival to his increased consumption of Tim Hortons products as well as his newfound enjoyment with hockey. Like the other students, he highlights the importance of Tim Hortons to the Canadian masses, and claims that he has also started “to fade into the Canadian coffee shop culture”.

In addition to being distinctly Canadian this student attributes Tim Hortons' popularity to

the affordability of its products. In addition to consuming Tim Hortons' products as a means to engage with “Canadian-ness” students preferred these foods because they offered “good quality food for a reasonable price”. Some argued that living on a limited income was part of the student lifestyle, or culture. Convenience was also cited as a prerequisite for any meal, by “busy” students who prioritized their studies over cooking. Since Tim Hortons lies at the apex of cheap and convenient options, these foods quickly became a staple in student’s diets. In addition to associating Tim Hortons with “Canada” some students also came to associate these products with Canadian student lifestyle because they regularly saw Canadian students with these products and noticed that they were widely available on-campus. One student from Bangladesh mentioned that it was important to consume Tim Hortons products daily not only because it was cheaper, but because they provided her with energy and refreshment. She told me that she purchased an iced cappuccino daily and rotated between donuts, croissants and bagels as a snack because attending morning classes was a “really hard job” and once the class was complete she did not “have any energy left”. When I asked her why it was important to eat these foods she said, “I buy the ice cap, to refresh myself and after eating that and the donut I feel so refreshed and I can work in Leddy [University of Windsor library] for my studies, so it’s kind of important for students to drink”. Another student said in a joking tone,

“I have always been a breakfast food junkie and the fact that Tim Hortons has bread, tea and those biscuit things, it’s heaven. It’s me now, it’s my new home, my love on the planet, I wish I could live there forever, but obviously I can’t they’ll kick me out of CAW [University of Windsor central food services building], they’ll kick me out of school.”

This cheerful undergraduate from Kuwait states that not only has Tim Hortons become her “new home”, but it has also become a part of her, “it’s me now”. Yet her identification as a “breakfast food junkie” suggests that her preference for these foods have always been a part of her, yet are now a part of her in a different way. She also told me that she recently heard that they have started to open Tim Hortons locations in Kuwait and that she was excited to return home and tell

everyone that she was familiar with this chain and had been consuming it in Canada.

Fischler (1988) writes that some consume in hopes of “becoming more what one is” while others eat to become “what one would like to be” (281-282). While some Canadians may consume these products as a form of identity reproduction, international students consume these products as a form of identity creation. Although extended stays provide the eater with opportunities that the tourist may never discover, it is difficult for international students to question the “Canadian-ness” of Tim Hortons when it is so populous across Canada (Rudy, 2004). Sales ploys are continuously conditioning people to accept Tim Hortons culture as a form of “Canadian-ness”, yet while not all Tim Horton’s patrons may identify with the other visual and culinary markers of Canadian-ness the franchise pairs itself with, even after years in Canada it is difficult for international students to question the authenticity of Tim Hortons as “Canadian food” when they have never encountered these products that are now being consumed all around them by “Canadians”.

Molz (2004) makes reference to Cohen (1988) and Urry’s (1990) use of the ‘post-tourist’ concept and writes that “the novelty and variety of experience is paramount to concerns over authenticity” (71). Extra adventurous international students fit the model of the post-tourist in that they consume Tim Hortons items, products advertised as Canadian, and ethnic foods as a means to explore and expand their palates as well as assert one’s adventurousness. Although Subway, and McDonalds are American companies, students refer to them as Canadian likely because Canada was the first place they saw them. They were not concerned with the origin of these chains seeing as regardless of their company ownership eating these foods provided students with touristic opportunities. Whether they were eating Tim Horton’s bagels, or McDonald’s hamburgers, students felt that they were becoming Canadian by consuming “Canadian food”, or embracing “Canadian-ness” by engaging in non-discriminatory consumption, or adventurous eating in the same way that Canadians do. Although experimenting

with new foods and dining out at restaurants such as Tim Hortons began as a touristic practice, over time the unfamiliar was transformed into the familiar as students began to incorporate these items as dietary staples. What began as culinary tourism became a method of identity creation and reproduction. Engagement with “Canadian-ness” provided students with an opportunity to formulate their own unique sojourner identities while abroad independent of formerly established identities.

Theoretical Discussion and Chapter Conclusion

In this section I provide a summary of my findings and main arguments as well as discuss concepts and frameworks derived from the sensory anthropology, geography and food and memory literature in order to explain and contextualize my findings. I began this chapter by discussing how students’ financial circumstances prohibit them from traveling home on a regular basis. I argued that in attempt to relieve homesickness and experience life back home students purchased and consumed familiar back-home foods that allowed them to engage with known synesthetic experiences, i.e. smells and tastes, which provided them with a sense of comfort and belonging or emplacement. Caldwell’s (2006) research on the culinary touristic experiences of those living in Post-Soviet Russia also revealed similar findings.

Caldwell argues that consuming too many new foods as a form of “food travel” evoked a homesick sensation that could be cured by consuming nostalgia cuisine (2006, 97-98). Caldwell demonstrates that these findings serve as an example of ‘geogastronomia’ illustrating “the symbolic and actual power of cuisines and tastes to constitute meaningful geographies”, and provide insight into how place-making is both created and experienced (2006, 103). Similar to Caldwell, I argue that nostalgia food consumption has the ability to replace physical travel, and relieve discomfort and homesickness by allowing students to create a place reminiscent of home. This argument is also similar to Penman's work, which explored the role commodities play in the lives of international students, finding that familiar music, clothing and food provided students

with stability during times of change, and “a sense of emplacement and connection to the place of origin” (2011, 340, 343).

Working to recreate familiarity in one’s life also provided students with an opportunity to retain identities, yet for some the occasional consumption of back-home food served as nothing more than a part of one’s locating process. Collins' (2008) work on South Korean students living in New Zealand helps to contextualize my findings regarding students who held place-making goals that were unrelated to identity maintenance. Collins found that international students within his sample use familiar food as “part of the process of regrounding lives that have been uprooted in the process of migration” (2008, 155). He argues that familiar food allows students to engage with known sights, sounds, smells, and tastes which provides them with a sense of emplacement. According to Collins, consumption choices do not necessarily relate back to “group loyalties” or identity maintenance, but rather invite students to experience life pre-migration (2008, 151).

Similar to a dietary regime, identity and agency can also be thought of as a constantly evolving project. Anderson writes that, “food is available for management as a way of showing the world many things about the eater” (2005, 124). His use of the word ‘management’ restores agency to the eater by highlighting the individual's ability to shape eating habits so as to articulate elements of identity (2005,124). Similar to Ortner (2001), Caplan defines agency in reference to a constantly evolving, self-reflexive, project subject to constant moulding (1997). According to Bisogni et al., individuals’ enactment of identity is often interconnected with and reflected in the personal modification of one’s food environment which symbolizes one’s “commitment” to sustain socio-cultural identities (2002,134). Similarly, Caplan uses Foucault’s and Lupton’s work on agency to contextualize her idea that “practices”, meal preparation, or dining out for example, “inscribe, or write on the body which is then ‘read’ or interpreted by others” (1997, 16). Some students adjusted their consumption patterns, or refused to make

changes in order to produce, or reproduce particular identities, while for others this may be a less conscious process of identity-formation, or can simply be seen as an opportunity to experiment with unfamiliar foods.

Nutzenadel and Trentmann (2008) write that as our bodies begin to break down food, the nutrients derived from these foods are “absorbed by our bodies, our organs, and tissues”, and as a consequence food becomes a fragment of one’s self and identity (2). Across the anthropological literature on food and identity it is stressed that, “what we eat becomes a powerful symbol of who we are” (Fox, 2003, 2) and “acts as a marker of cultural identity” (James, 2007, 373-374). In this chapter I discussed how the consumption of familiar foods allowed students to maintain pre-established identities, and how the desire to maintain said identities in turn influenced students’ decisions to maintain familiar food diets. Discussions of identity and students’ identification as particular types of eaters provided insight into why certain foods were consumed, or rejected, while retellings of food experiences also revealed elements of students’ identities including beliefs, values and backgrounds.

Fischler (1988) and Farb and Armelagos (1980) argue that since unfamiliar foods and flavours connote danger or risk, acts of food avoidance, or food neophobia can reveal elements of identity since one is defined in part by what he/she eats or refuses to eat. Furthermore, they argue that the act of incorporating food into one’s diet can be risky, or dangerous because this “action is both banal and fraught with potentially irreversible consequences” (Fischler, 1988, 279). Warde (1994) also writes that, “consumption is deigned central, for commodities are principal for the communication of self-identity” and as such he deems consumption a “risky activity” (877-878). Warde analyzes Beck, Giddens and Zygmunt’s theories on agency and identity in order to locate the commonalities between them, which he identifies as the idea that “people define themselves through the messages they transmit to others through the goods and practices that they possess and display” (1994, 878). While Fischler (1988) and Farb and

Armelagos (1980) argue that food choice can reveal information about individuals' identities, Warde asserts that individuals' self-images and identities are intentionally revealed through food choice. Both of these approaches help to contextualize my findings regarding familiar food eaters reluctance to incorporate new foods into their diets since this may pose a threat to the maintenance of pre-established identities. These works also demonstrate how food choice and identity are connected.

Rudy (2004) found that some Mormon missionaries like familiar food eaters refuse to consume new foods while abroad in order to maintain familiar identities. Other missionaries, "use the exploration of food-ways during their extended stay to familiarize themselves with the exotic, to change their familiar identities, and to embrace wholeheartedly new food-ways as a sign of their missionary identity", in a way that is similar to how adventurous eaters embrace Canadian, or sojourner identities (2004, 135). Other scholars have also explored individuals' desires and abilities to create and communicate new identities through consumption. According to Wilson the countercultural movements in the late 1960's created a demand for new diets, and food became a medium baby-boomers manipulated as a form of political expression and activism. She writes that "for countercultural youth eager to shed their WASP cultural identity" both ethnic restaurants and stores provided cheap and simple foods that allowed baby-boomers to identify with "peasant culture" rather than that of mainstream America (2004, 248). Similarly Bentley (2004) argues that chili contests, barbecue cook-offs and comparable rituals primarily composed of male participants serves as a stage for participants to perform and engage with "stereotyped notions" of Mexican and Latin machismo culture and identity as well as provides a venue for individuals to assert their maleness (213).

I have argued that embracing transnationalism by way of consuming both familiar and new foods allows individuals to adopt new identities while retaining old ones. The desire to become Canadian while still maintaining a familiar sense of self encourages students to maintain

a balanced diet consisting of both back-home and new foods. Retellings of food experiences by students, such as those involving food creolization experiments and food sharing, symbolize students' willingness to embrace transnational identities. Ghosh and Wang (2003) share their own experiences as international students living in Canada to illustrate the significance of transnational acts as identity performance; in doing so, they provide a particularly useful lens that can be used to better understand how some students uniquely maintain this balance between their old and new lives. The authors noted that “one common insecurity” they encountered was the risk of losing their “respective cultural identities” (2003, 275). Ghosh and Wang found that they were able to build “homes in two localities”, and adopt “hyphenated selves”, by embracing Canadian identities in public, while maintaining a more traditional way of life in private (2003, 276). Both acknowledged that they enjoyed exploring and exchanging opinions and past events related to food and the arts with new friends, yet within their own homes they consumed traditional meals, wore culturally-appropriate attire and listened to the musical stylings of artists from their home countries. Like Ghosh and Wang (2003), some international students also maintained public and private identities, or embraced mixed identities while abroad.

In this chapter, I also argued that some international students use food parcels to help to maintain a balance between back-home and new foods within their diets. Grieshop's work also includes research on food parcels, or “cultural remittances” which he defines as parcels that are shipped from a migrant's country of origin to their current location (2006, 400). Grieshop found, during his time in Oaxaca, Mexico, that the people of the San Pablo Huixtepec used parcels to maintain ties with migrants, and vice versa. Food became a symbol of Oaxaca, to be consumed by those who wished to remember life back home and to keep individuals from completely conforming to new foodways. Grieshop's findings are useful in contextualizing my own, since I suggest that international students use and consume these parcels in a similar way.

As mentioned extra adventurous eaters, in contrast to familiar food eaters, desired to be

included, or “become Canadian” while abroad, and remove the separation between Canadian and non-Canadian, while familiar food eaters maintained familiar diets in an attempt to distinguish themselves from Canadians. Extra adventurous eaters who defined themselves as “open” “adventurous” and newly Canadian were heavily driven towards exploratory eating by a strong desire to experience the new and unfamiliar. Students who spoke about their eating experiences, instead of defining oneself as a particular type of eater, revealed through their retellings of food experiences that they explored new food-ways and Canadian foods, such as Tim Horton’s products, in an effort to become Canadian. Similarly, Rotkowitz found that Pre-1993 observant Jews consumed an “inferior knock-off of the Oreo”, in an attempt to integrate themselves within mainstream society. The emergence of kosher Oreos symbolized the inclusion of observant Jews, and allowed them to “explore and to understand what it is other Americans prize”, as well as absorb the ‘all American’ identity of this cookie” (2004, 180).

I have suggested that among international students, Tim Horton’s products have become synonymous with Canadian food because the franchise pairs itself with other elements students have defined as uniquely Canadian including, to-go coffees, hot beverages, and hockey. Molz’s (2004) research on the culinary authenticity of Thai restaurants within the U.S. provides a useful framework for approaching culinary tourism, cultural representations, and identity. Molz argues that Thai restaurants strive to create authentic atmospheres by adorning restaurants with Thai artwork, decorations and music in addition to claiming to serve “authentic” food. She explains that these “visual and culinary markers of Thai culture” ultimately “served to create an atmosphere of Thai-ness” (2004, 59). Like Molz I argue that these “visual and culinary markers” (2004, 59) of Canadian identity are showcased in an attempt to create a brand and space reflective of the Canadian environment and its people.

Molz (2004) also investigates how authenticity is interpreted by diners and argues that authenticity is often determined by social experiences including past travel experience, exposure

to other restaurants, and media images which diners utilize to establish criteria for assessing authenticity. Students noted that they were surprised by the number of Tim Hortons locations they saw in Guelph, Windsor and other parts of Canada, and pointed out that “Tim Hortons is everywhere, so you can get it whenever you want”. The nationwide inhabitation of Tim Hortons, and its commonplace presence play a large role in its identification as a “Canadian food” distributor. As such a desire to become Canadian, or maintain one’s newfound Canadian-ness was reflected in students’ preferences for these foods. The consumption of these foods thereby became a medium through which to embrace and sustain new identities.

As Long (2004) writes “there will always be some individuals who are more conservative in their tastes than others, just as there are individuals who will 'push the palate'" (37). This division between conservative and adventurous, and among new and old and exotic and familiar separates students’ experiences. Students who have willingly crossed this line and engaged in culinary tourism tend to experience less food insecurity than their adventurous counterparts. Although food choices are affected by other factors in addition to identity, students identity maintenance and creation goals affect food choice and provide a rationale for understanding food choice. Exploring food choice and identity as interdependent factors has helped to provide insight into the types of foods students need to remain not only food secure, but “happy”. Familiar food eaters unable to consume preferred foods described feeling “out of tune” with their culture, or felt as though their identity was beginning to fade, which was also associated with food insecurity, while more flexible eaters were less likely to experience food and identity insecurity due to their willingness to “push the palate” and embrace otherness on an ontological level. Mintz (2006) argues that what the world needs is not fast or slow-food, but “food at moderate speeds” that is accessible, “good and healthy” and preferably produced locally (10). As part of my conclusion, I argue that universities should strive to provide satisfactory food, and greater access to food related information both for the sake of students’ food security, and for

their happiness. In other words, what international students need is access to preferable foods at moderate speeds.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

In this thesis I have explored the food experiences of 32 international students living in Guelph and Windsor, Ontario within the context of a food security framework, and demonstrated the ways in which students' experiences vary based on their circumstances, attitudes, and identity and place-making goals in relation to preferred food availability and accessibility. As I have discussed, there is an extensive body of research that seeks to confirm the hypothesis that sojourners, including international students, stick to familiar foods when moving to a new country. However, limited research has explored individuals differential levels of access to these foods, and this is a body of literature that I have attempted to build on with my research.

Within this thesis, I have discussed students' experiences of traveling in order to locate familiar foods, customizing meals when dining out, experimenting with food, creating creolized dishes, and entirely changing one's diet as part of individualized food projects which are both formulated and enacted independently and in different ways. Students' food preferences, priorities, identities and decisions regarding what to incorporate, reject and maintain, as part of these food projects were discussed in an attempt to contextualize students' experiences and demonstrate the ways in which all of these factors are negotiated within a *constant compromise* framework. As previously mentioned, post-secondary tuition rates continue to grow, yet wages earned from part-time employment and student loans remain inadequate to cover students' expenses. However, increases in fees pose a particularly high risk to international students who are already paying three to five times the cost of domestic student tuition fees. Although many international students face the same barriers as their domestic counterparts, my findings, as well as the literature on this topic, suggest that international students encounter distinctive challenges requiring separate examination. In addition to barriers associated with inflated tuition costs, and universities' use of international students as "cash cows", international students also experience

difficulties finding familiar food, adjusting to Canadian supermarkets, food packaging, and prices, and cooking new foods.

Food security is differentially experienced among international students, yet this is an area of sociocultural anthropology that has been understudied and requires further research in order to further understand students' complex and differential experiences. I have argued that familiar food provides many international students with comfort, emplacement and a sense of belonging while abroad. For some, the fact that they would be returning home to the people, food, and customs of their home countries also became a salient motivation for keeping these foods in their lives, while for others factors including identity maintenance, financial hardship and food neophobia played a role in their decision to continue to consume familiar foods while abroad. While conducting research I found that one of the biggest obstacles faced by familiar food eaters was their inability to locate foods with a "typical taste"; I discussed that glocalization of foods may be part of the problem. Since the consumption of familiar foods as nostalgia cuisine replaces physical travel and provides students with relief from discomfort and homesickness as well as allowing them to maintain social, cultural and religious identities, it is crucial that these foods be made available in order to ensure that students are able to maintain food and identity security.

I have argued that international students who choose to maintain a diet consisting of familiar and traditional foods experience more food insecurity than their adventurous counterparts because they are more likely to be affected by availability, accessibility and structural barriers. These barriers restrain students' agency by minimizing their capacity to make decisions as well as hinders their ability to maintain control over the own bodies. Essentially, familiar food eaters become more vulnerable to food insecurity because they prefer foods that are sometimes difficult to find, or purchase due to cost, or lack of supply. Lack of food related

information as a source of disempowerment manifesting itself in hunger and weight loss, and prohibited students, familiar food eaters in particular, from achieving food security. To be food-secure one must have access to healthy and preferred foods at all times, however since some familiar food eaters are unable to purchase the foods they want and need on a consistent basis, they become food insecure for prolonged or temporary periods of time. It is important to note that it is much easier to purchase local, or “Canadian” foods than back-home specialities because the former are more affordable. This provides adventurous eaters willing to try new foods with a lot more flexibility which decreases the impact of the barriers I have mentioned.

As I have argued in the second half of this thesis, it is important to note that an intimate link exists between food insecurity and functional identity maintenance or identity security. I have argued that students who consume familiar foods as a form of identity maintenance often experienced food and identity insecurity as their dietary satisfaction and identities began to “fade” and fall “out of tune” when preferred foods became scarce.

There are some limitations to my findings. For this project I choose to explore the food experiences of international students from a range of countries. This approach was useful in helping provide me with an understanding of the range of challenges international students face in achieving and maintaining food security. Yet, exploring a particular group of student experiences from the same country or ethnic group would have been useful in helping to provide an in-depth account of students’ experiences, and issues highlighting foods in particular they have trouble finding. Therefore, one of the limitations of this study is that by interviewing a wide range of students from multiple countries, I was unable to get as much detail as I would have been able to collect had I focused on one ethnic or national group. On a related note, some interviews may have been more detailed had I conducted them off-campus. Towards the end of

the data collection process I increasingly felt that conducting interviews within a formal office space gave students the impression that I was focused on collecting succinct, and straight-forward answers. Had I conducted interviews off-campus in a more neutral space it is possible that students would have opened up more and offered more in-depth stories of their experiences with foods. However, conducting interviews and focus groups on-campus did have its benefits in that it was familiar and convenient. Students were comfortable and familiar with the campus layout and had no trouble finding the interview location.

In this thesis I discussed how exploring identity and place-making goals help to understand how food choice is influenced as well as provides insight into what it is that students need food-wise. My findings demonstrate that select foods are not only purchased for their taste, or price, but for what they can offer on a more personal level. I have argued that familiar food eaters maintain familiar diets as a form of social, cultural, and religious identity maintenance, while adventurous eaters participate in culinary tourism as a means to engage with the culture and identity of the “Canadian” other which facilitates the development of new “Canadian” or sojourner identities. Some students use food as a medium to maintain transnational connections, and preserve established identities while simultaneously embracing and experiencing new identities and cultures by living within, rather than between worlds. Understanding food choice and identity as interconnected is beneficial not only because it shows how food choice is negotiated, but it provides reasons beyond taste and appearance preferences why imitations, or globalized foods do not always help to improve food security. Understanding this relationship in many ways helps to provide a more holistic picture of students’ experiences which can be used to influence and create better food security improvement strategies for international students by not only taking their taste preferences into account, but their personal goals and needs as well.

Within this analysis I have also raised questions about what level of responsibility or obligation universities have to the international students they recruit and accept. In other words, we can ask, “Do universities have a responsibility to feed their 'cash cows' well?” I have attempted to highlight some of the challenges and issues international students struggle with when it comes to maintaining food security while abroad. As I have shown, some students are unable to consume the foods they would like to eat because they are unable to secure employment, are ineligible for funding and scholarships, or prioritize paying exorbitant tuition fees over the purchase of healthy and preferable foods. While some barriers lie outside of universities’ realm of control, universities can change and improve students’ access to food by providing a variety of healthy and affordable foods, and by altering campus food policies so that they are in tune with students’ wants and needs.

Since the university student population within as well as outside of Canada continues to diversify, it is vital that universities equip themselves with the necessary services required to appropriately respond to this growth, and international students’ differential needs. I am hopeful that the results of my research can be used to inform universities of these types of challenges international students face in accessing healthy, affordable and preferable foods. More specifically, I believe that these results will be of use to campus international student centres and counseling services who can use these findings to familiarize themselves with the key issues international students face and the types of food related services, programs and information they should consider making more readily available to students. The results of my research may also be of use to immigrant and newcomer organizations as these students’ stories and experiences likely provide insight into other sojourner and immigrants’ experiences. These findings also help to provide insight in respect to the cultural context in which food choices are made and can be

used to promote cultural sensitivity in nutrition education and dietary counseling services.

In addition to developing a conceptual understanding of the links between food security and identity security, I have sought to contribute towards the development of a framework which can be used to understand individual food security in contrast to macro-levels of food security from a socio-cultural perspective. This framework primarily calls for a consideration of individuals' personal and financial circumstances, identity creation and maintenance priorities, social, cultural and religiously defined food preferences, and purchasing power in relation to food availability and the ability to access food. In addition to contributing towards the study of food security from the perspective of the individual, I have also provided an ethnographic understanding of food security among international students studying abroad in Canada. Yet, as I pointed out, food security is differentially experienced among international students and has been understudied across academia. Therefore it is important to note that if we are to understand these students' experiences in-depth and perhaps from a bio-cultural approach, further qualitative and quantitative research, including longitudinal, and nutritional intake studies will need to be completed. The future role for public issues anthropologists is rooted in their continuing to address injustices such as food insecurity which will not only create a platform for change, but will also increase anthropology's relevance within as well as outside of academia.

Although I have suggested that by expanding one's culinary horizons he or she may improve his or her chances of achieving food security, this should be presented as an option rather than a standard students should be expected to conform to while studying abroad. When needed foods are unaffordable, unavailable, or out of reach as a result of university policies, this undermines students' agency and freedom to be who they are, and eat what they want when they want. In the concluding paragraph of the previous chapter I suggested that what international

students need is “food at moderate speeds” which Mintz defines as “good and healthy food produced locally, for everyone” (2006, 10). I interpret “good” to mean both good to eat and think, meaning that students should be entitled to nutritious and personally preferable food. If universities were to make “food of moderate speeds” accessible to all students, it would surely help those international students who are frustrated by the limited ethnic, and affordable foods available on-campus. By improving students’ access to preferable foods, and thereby by improving students’ chances of maintaining a food secure state, universities can also ensure that their students no longer have to make the choice between eating to live, and eating to remain happy and to maintain functional social, cultural and religious identities.

References

- Adekunle, B., Filson, G., Sethuratnam, S., & Cidro, D. (2011). Acculturation and consumption: Examining the consumption behaviour of people of Afro-Caribbean descent in Canada. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems and Community Development*, 2(1): 297-313.
- Alcock, R. (2009). Speaking Food: A Discourse Analytic Study of Food Security. *University of Bristol Working Paper, No. 07-09*: 1-61.
- Anderson, E.N. (2005). *Everyone Eats: Understanding Food and Culture*. New York, NY : New York University Press.
- Bentley, A. (2004). From Culinary Other to Mainstream America: Meanings and Uses of Southwestern Cuisine. In L. Long (Ed.). *Culinary Tourism* (pp. 209-225). Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky.
- Bisogni, C.A., Connors, M., Devine, C.M., & Sobal, J. (2002). Who We Are and How We Eat: A Qualitative Study of Identities in Food Choice. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behaviour*, 34: 128-139.
- Bordi, I.V. (2008). The “Authentic” Taco and Peasant Women: Nostalgic Consumption in the Era of Globalization. *Culture & Agriculture*, 28(2): 97-107.
- Boyle, T. (2006). More university students call for organic ‘sustainable’ food. *USA Today*: 1-3.
- Brown, L. (2008). Language and anxiety: an ethnographic study of international postgraduate students. *Evaluation and Research in Education*, 21(2): 75-95.
- Brown, L., Edwards, J., Hartwell, H. (2010). A taste of the unfamiliar. Understanding the meanings attached to food by international postgraduate students in England. *Appetite*, 54(1): 202-207.
- Bryceson, D.F. (1983). Food and Urban Purchasing Power: The Case of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. *African Affairs*, 84(337): 499-522.
- Caldwell, M.L. (2006). Tasting the Worlds of Yesterday and Today: Culinary Tourism and Nostalgia Foods in Post-Soviet Russia. In R. Wilk (Ed.), *Fast Food/ Slow Food : The Cultural Economy of the Global Food System* (pp.97-112). Lanham, MD: Altamira Press.
- Caplan, P. (1997). *Food, Health and Identity*. Oxon, OX: Routledge.
- Choo, S. (2007). Eating Satay Babi: sensory perception of transnational movement. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 25(3): 203-213.
- Collins, F.L. (2008). Of kimchi and coffee: globalization, transnationalism and familiarity in culinary consumption, *Social and Cultural Geography*, 9(2): 151-169.

- Conradson, D. & Latham, A. (2005). Transnational urbanism: Attending to everyday practices and mobilities. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 31(2): 227-233.
- Counihan, C.M. (1992). Food Rules in the United States: Individualism, Control and Hierarchy. *Anthropological Quarterly*, 65(2) : 55-66.
- Counihan, C.M. (1999). *The Anthropology of Food and Body: Gender, Meaning and Power*. New York, NY : Routledge.
- Devine, C.M., Sobal, J., Bisogni, C.A., and Connors, M. (1999). Food Choices in Three Ethnic Groups: Interactions of Ideals, Identities and Roles. *Journal of Nutrition Education*, 31(2): 86-93.
- Dietitians of Canada. (1991). Hunger and Food Security in Canada: Official Position of the Canadian Dietetic Association. *Journal of the Canadian Dietetic Association*, 52(3): 139-140.
- Dietitians of Canada. (2005). Individual and Household Food Insecurity in Canada: Position of Dietitians of Canada. *Dietitians of Canada*, 1-17.
- Edwards, J.S.A. & Meiselman, H.L. (2003). Changes in dietary habits during the first year at university. *British Nutrition Foundation Nutrition Bulletin*, 28: 21-34.
- Edwards, J.S.A., Hartwell, H.L., & Brown, L. (2010). Changes in food neophobia and dietary habits of international students. *Journal of Human Nutrition & Dietetics*, 23(2): 301-311.
- Egan, J.A., Burton, M.L., Nero, K.L. (2006). Building Lives with Food: Production, Circulation, and Consumption of Food in Yap. In R.Wilk (Ed.), *Fast Food/Slow Food: The Cultural Economy of the Global Food System* (pp. 31-47). Lanham, MD: Altamira Press.
- Farb, P., & Armelagos, G. (1980). *Consuming Passions: The Anthropology of Eating* (1st ed.). Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Fischler, C. (1988). Food, self and identity. *Social Science Information*, 27(2) : 275-292.
- Fox, R. (2003). Food and Eating: An Anthropological Perspective. *Social Issues Research Centre*, 1-21.
- Freedman, D.A. (2009). Local Food Environments: They're All Stocked Differently. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 44(3-4): 382-393.
- Gebhard, J.G. (2010). *What Do International Students Think and Feel?* Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Ghosh, S., & Wang, L. (2003). Transnationalism and identity: a tale of two faces and multiple

- lives. *The Canadian Geographer*, 47(3): 269-282.
- Glick-Schiller, N., Basch, L., & Blanc Szanton, C. (2006). Towards a definition of transnationalism - Introductory remarks and research questions. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 645: ix-xiv.
- Grieshop, J.I. (2006). The Envios of San Pablo Huixtepec, Oaxaca: Food, Home, and Transnationalism. *Human Organization*, 65(4): 400-406.
- Harbottle, L. (1997). Fast food/ spoiled identity: Iranian migrants in the British catering trade. In P Caplan (Ed.). *Food, Health and Identity*. (pp. 87-110). Oxon, OX: Routledge.
- Hartwell, H.J., Edwards, J.S.A., Brown, L. (2011). Acculturation and food habits: lessons to be learned. *British Food Journal*, 113(11): 1393-1405.
- Heldke, L. (2007). But is it Authentic?: Culinary Travel and the Search for the “Genuine Article.” In C. Korsmeyer (Ed.). *The Taste and Culture Reader: Experiencing Food and Drink*. (pp. 385-394). New York, NY : Bloomsbury Academic.
- Holliday, A. (2010). Complexity in Cultural Identity. *Language and Intercultural Communications*, 10(2) : 165-177.
- House, J., Su, J. & Levy-Milne, R. (2006). Definitions of healthy eating among university students. *Canadian Journal of Dietetic Practice and Research*, 67(1): 14-18.
- Hughes, R., Serebryanikova, I., Donaldson, K. & Leveritt, M. (2011). Student food insecurity: The skeleton in the university closet. *Nutrition & Dietetics*, 68: 27-32.
- James, A. (1997). How British is British Food? In. P Caplan (Ed.). *Food, Health and Identity*. (pp. 71-86). Oxon, OX: Routledge.
- James, A. (2007). Identity and the Global Stew. In C. Korsmeyer (Ed.). *The Taste and Culture Reader: Experiencing Food and Drink*. (pp. 372-384). New York, NY : Bloomsbury Academic.
- Kashima, E.S. & Loh, E.(2006). International students’ acculturation: Effects of international, conational, and local ties and need for closure. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 30(4): 471-485.
- Khan, A. (2007). Good to Think? Creolization, Optimism and Agency, *Current Anthropology*, 48(5) : 653-673.
- Laroche, M., Kim, C., and Tomiuk, M.A. (1998). Italian ethnic identity and its relative impact on the consumption of convenience and traditional foods. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 15(2) : 125-151.

- Latham, J., & Moffat, T. (2007). Determinants of Variation in Food Costs and Availability in two Socio-economically Contrasting Neighbourhoods of Hamilton Ontario, Canada. *Health & Place*, 13 :273-287.
- Laucius, J., & Barber, M. (2009). Canadian Universities Are Increasingly Setting Their Sights on Attracting International Students. *Canwest News Service*. Retrieved from http://www.amren.com/news/2009/09/canadian_univer/.
- Law, L. (2001). Home Cooking: Filipino Women and Geographies of the Senses in Hong Kong. *Cultural Geographies*, 8(3): 264-283.
- Leitch, A. (2003). Slow Food and the Politics of Pork Fat: Italian Food and European Identity. *Ethnos*, 68(4): 437-462.
- Long, L. (2004). *Culinary Tourism*. Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky.
- Lupton, D. (2007). Food and Emotion. In C. Korsmeyer (Ed.). *The Taste and Culture Reader: Experiencing Food and Drink*. (pp. 317-324). New York, NY : Bloomsbury Academic.
- Marquis, M. (2005). Exploring convenience orientation as a food motivation for college students living in residence halls. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 29(1): 55-63.
- Maxwell, S. & Smith, M. (1992). Household Food Security: A Conceptual Review. *Household Food Security: Concepts, Indicators, Measurements*, 1-72.
- McIntyre, L. (2003). Food Security: More than a determinant of health. *Policy Options*: 46-51.
- Meldrum, L.A. & Willows, ND. (2006). Food insecurity in university students receiving financial aid. *Canadian Journal of Dietetic Practice and Research*, 67(1): 43-46.
- Messer, E. (2007). Food Definitions and Boundaries : Eating constraints and human identities. In J. Macclancy, *Consuming the Inedible: Neglected Dimensions of Food Choices*. (pp.53 - 65). New York, NY : Berghahn Books.
- Mintz, S.W. & DuBois, C.M. (2002). The Anthropology of Food and Eating. *Annual Review Anthropology*, 39: 99-119.
- Mohring, M. (2008). Transnational Food Migration and the Internalization of Food Consumption: Ethnic Cuisine in West Germany. In A. Nutzenadel & F.Trentmann (Eds.). *Food and Globalization: Consumptions, Markets, and Politics in the Modern World* (pp.129-150).
- Molz, J.G. (2004). Tasting an Imagined Thailand: Authenticity and Culinary Tourism in Thai Restaurants. In L. Long (Ed.), *Culinary Tourism* (pp.53-75). Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky.

- Mooney, K.M. & Walbourn, L. (2001). When college students reject food: not just a matter of taste. *Appetite*, 36(1): 41-50.
- Moore, L. & Popadiuk, N. (2011). Positive Aspects of International Student Transitions: A Qualitative Inquiry. *Journal of College Student Development*, 52(3): 291-306.
- Nelson, M.C. and Story, M. (2009). Food environments in university dorms: 20,000 Calories per dorm room and counting. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 36(6): 523-526.
- Ness, M., Gorton, M., & Kuznesof, S. (2002). The student food shopper: Segmentation on the basis of attitudes to store features and shopping behaviour. *British Food Journal*, 104(7): 506-525.
- Nutzenadel, A. & Trentmann, F. (2008). *Food and Globalization: Consumption, Markets and Politics in the Modern World*. New York, NY: Berg.
- Ortner, S. (2001). Specifying Agency the Comaroffs and their Critics. *Interventions*, 3(1) : 76-84.
- Pan, X.L., Dixon, Z., Himburg, S., and Huffman, F. (1999). Asian students change their eating patterns after living in the United States. *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*, 99(1): 54-57.
- Pedersen, E.R., Neighbors, C., Larimer, M.E., & Lee, C.M. (2011). Measuring Sojourner Adjustment among American students studying abroad. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 35(6): 881-889.
- Pelto, G.H. & Pelto, P.J. (1983). Diet and Delocalization : Dietary Changes since 1750. *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 14(2): 507-528.
- Penman, C. & Omar, M. (2011). Figuring home: the role of commodities in the transnational experience. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 11(4): 338-350.
- Perez-Cueto, F., Verbeke, W., Lachat, C., Remaut-De Winter, A.M. (2009). Changes in dietary habits following temporal migration. The case of international students in Belgium. *Appetite*, 52: 83-88.
- Pinstrup-Andersen, P. (2009). Food Security: definition and measurement. *Springer Original Paper* : 5-7.
- Pottier, J. (1999). *Anthropology of Food: The Social Dynamics of Food Security*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

- Puxley, C. (2010). Lucrative international students flock to Canada, pay triple to study here. *The Canadian Press*: Retrieved from, <http://search.proquest.com/docview/338475419?accountid=11233>.
- Reynolds, J. (2005). Are you living in a Food Desert? *The Ecologist* : 40-43.
- Riches, G. (2003). Food Banks and Food Security: Welfare Reform, Human Rights and Social Policy. Lessons from Canada?, *Social Policy & Administration*, 36(6): 648-663.
- Riddell, L.J., Ang, B., Keast, R.S.J. & Hunter, W. (2011). Impact of living arrangements and nationality on food habits and nutrient intakes in young adults. *Appetite*, 56(3): 726-731.
- Rideout, K., Graham, R., Ostry, A., Buckingham, D., & MacRae, R. (2007). Bringing home the right to food in Canada: challenges and possibilities for achieving food security. *Public Health Nutrition*, 10(6): 566-573.
- Rondeau, K. (2007). Hunger on Campus: Understanding Food Insecurity in Post-Secondary Students. *The Alberta Centre for Active Living is the Canadian Health Network*, 14(2): 1.
- Rotkowitz, M. (2004). Kashering the Melting Pot: Oreos, Sushi Restaurants, “Kosher Treif,” and the Observant American Jew. In L. Long (Eds.). *Culinary Tourism* (pp. 157-185). Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky.
- Rozin, E. & Rozin, P. (2007). Culinary Themes and Variations. In C. Korsmeyer (Ed). *The Taste Culture Reader: Experiencing Food and Drink*. (pp. 34-41). New York, NY : Bloomsbury Academic.
- Sewell, W. J. (1992). A Theory of Structure : Duality, Agency and Transformation. *American Journal of Sociology*, 98(1): 1-29.
- Shortridge, B.G. (2004). Ethnic Heritage Food in Lindsborg, Kansas, and New Glarus, Wisconsin. In L. Long (Ed.). *Culinary Tourism* (pp. 268-296). Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky.
- Skinner, B. (2010). Online Discussion Can it Help International Students Ease Into British University Life? *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 14(4): 335-354.
- Sneijder, P. & Molder, H.T. (2009). Normalizing ideological food choice and eating practices. Identity work in online discussions on veganism. *Appetite*, 52 : 621-630.
- Stefanikova, Z., Sevcikova, L., Jurkovicova, J., Sobotova, L. & Aghova, L. (2006). Positive and negative trends in university students’ food intake. *Bratislava Medical Journal- Bratislavske Lekarske Listy*, 107(5): 217-220.
- Stephoe, A., & Pollard, T.M. (1995). Development of a measure of the motives underlying the selection of food: the food choice questionnaire. *Appetite*, 25(3): 267-284.

- Sutton, D.E. (2001). *Materializing Culture Remembrance of Repasts: An Anthropology of Food and Memory*. New York, NY : Berg.
- Terry Rudy, J. (2004). "Of Course in Guatemala, Bananas are Better.": Exotic and Familiar Eating Experiences of Mormon Missionaries. In L. Long (Ed.), *Culinary Tourism* (pp. 131-156). Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky.
- Vahabi, M., Damba, C., Rocha, C., & Montoya, E.C. (2011). Food Insecurity Among Latin American Recent Immigrants in Toronto. *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health*, 13(5): 929-939.
- Valentine, G. (1999). Eating In: home, consumption and identity. *The Sociological Review*, 491-523.
- Van Esterik, P. (2006). From Hunger Foods to Heritage Foods: Challenges to Food Localization in Lao PDR. In R. Wilk (Ed.). *Fast Food/ Slow Food: The Cultural Economy of the Global Food System* (pp. 83-96). Lanham, MD: Altamira Press.
- Vertovec, S. (1999). Conceiving and researching transnationalism. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 22(2): 447-461.
- Warde, A. (1994). Consumption, Identity-Formation and Uncertainty. *Sociology*, 28(4) : 877-898.
- Webb, P., Coates, J., Frongillo, E.A., Rogers, B.L., Swindale, A., & Bilinsky, P. (2006) Measuring Household Food Insecurity: Why It's So Important and Yet So Difficult to Do. *The Journal of Nutrition*, 136(5): 14045-14085.
- Wilk, R. (2008). A Taste of Home: The Cultural and Economic Significance of European Food Exports to the Colonies. In A. Nutzenadel & F. Trentmann (Eds.). *Food and Globalization: Consumption, Markets, and Politics in the Modern World* (pp. 93-108). New York, NY : Berg.
- Willetts, A. (1997). 'Bacon sandwiches got the better of me': meat-eating and vegetarianism in South-East London. In P. Caplan (Ed.). *Food, Health and Identity*. (pp.87-110). Oxon, OX : Routledge.
- Wilton, L., & Constantine, M.G. (2003). Length of Residence, Cultural Adjustment Difficulties, and Psychological Distress Symptoms in Asian and Latin American International College Students. *Journal of College Counselling*, 6(2): 177-186.
- Wright Morton, L. & Blanchard, T.C. (2007). Rural Realities. Starved for Access: Life in Rural America's Food Deserts. *Rural Sociological Society*, 1(4): 1-10.

Yaro, J.A. (2004). Theorizing food security: building a livelihood vulnerability framework for researching food insecurity. *Norwegian Journal of Geography*, 58: 23-27.

Appendix 1: Semi-Structured Interview Guide

- 1.) Which country did you move to Canada from?
 - When you were living in _____, were you living in an urban or rural area?
 - How long have you been living in Canada?
 - What area of Guelph/Windsor are you currently living in?
 - Do you live with any roommates or family members?
 - How did you come to the decision to move to Canada, and attend the University of Guelph/Windsor?

- 2.) What program and year of schooling are you in currently?

- 3.) Are you working in Guelph/Windsor?
 - If you don't mind me asking, were you awarded any scholarships this year? Do you rely on your parents for financial support or have you taken out any student loans?
 - If you don't mind me asking what do your parents do for a living?
 - How would you define your family's class status?
 - Are you able to cover all of your expenses with the funds you receive from your parents, job, scholarship etc?
 - Are your parents able to pay for all of your expenses comfortably?

- 4.) Were you able to travel home this summer? Why did you? Why weren't you able to?

- 5.) What are some of your favourite foods?
 - Why are they your favourite?

- 6.) Are there any foods you think are important to eat on a daily, or weekly basis?
 - Why is it important to eat them regularly?

- 7.) Is there a particular food or meal that is special, or important to you in any way?
 - How do you feel when you eat these foods/meal?
 - Is it important for you to keep ex. Chinese/Indian etc food in your diet?
 - Why is it important for you to keep these foods in your diet?
 - or Why isn't it?

- 8.) What types of foods do you consider to be healthy?
 - Why are these healthy?

- 9.) What types of foods do you consider to be unhealthy?
 - Why are these unhealthy?

- 10.) Are there any foods from back-home that you miss?
 - Have you been able to find anything similar in Canada?

- 11.) Are there any foods in particular that you need and have trouble affording?

- 12.) Do you enjoy trying new foods?

- Why is it important for you to try new foods while abroad?
 - Have any new foods you have tried in Canada become a staple in your diet?
 - Why did you chose to incorporate them into your diet?
 - Have you come across any new foods that you haven't been willing to try?
 - Have you made any other changes to your diet since arriving in Canada?
- 13.) Are all the food you want to eat available at the grocery store?
- What foods do you have trouble finding?
 - How does it make you feel when you have trouble accessing these foods?
 - Where do you do the majority of your grocery shopping?
 - Why do you prefer shopping at _____?
 - How do you normally get to the grocery store?
 - Are transportation costs affordable?
 - Were you able to eat preferred foods while living in residence?
- 14.) What do you think about the food that is available on-campus?
- What kind of foods would you like to see more of on-campus?
 - What did you do when preferred foods were unavailable, or inaccessible on-campus?
 - Were cooking facilities available?
- 15.) Did you or your family grow any fruits or vegetables back-home?
- Do you still grow any fruits or vegetables now that you're living in Canada?
 - Even though you no longer grow fruits/veg do you still eat the same amount of produce? More/less?
- 16.) Are you able to cook the same meals as back-home?
- Is it important to you to cook your own meals?
 - You mentioned that you live with roommates/family members...do you eat the same foods as the rest of your family/household?
- 17.) Have you ever used any community resources such as a community kitchen, garden, or local food bank?
- Why did you decide to use the _____?
 - How do you feel about accessing food from the _____?
 - Do they have most of the foods you need at the _____?
- 18.) When you arrived at the University of Guelph/Windsor were you provided with any information on campus food services, and grocery store locations?

Appendix 2: Semi-Structured Focus Guide Question Guide

- 1.) Can you tell me about some of your first food memories from when you arrived in Canada, or the University of Windsor/Guelph?
 - What were you expecting?
 - How did your experience differ from what you were expecting?

- 2.) Is it important for you to keep traditional foods or foods from back-home in your diet?
 - Why is important for you to keep these foods in your diet?
 - Is it also important to you to try new foods? Why is this important?

- 3.) Do you think your diet, or the foods you eat say anything about you as a person? Are there any specific personal qualities that affect your eating habits?

- 4.) What is your understanding of the term food security?
 - Do you think that it is challenging to maintain a food-secure state?
 - How do you think food security among international students can be improved?

Appendix 3: Participant Demographics

Country of Origin	Time spent in Canada	Degree	Means of Financial Support	Dietary Restriction	Former Community Region	Current Community Region
Argentina (1)	7 months (3)	Masters of Engineering (6)	Parental Support(10)	Hindu (Beef & Pork) (6)	Urban (16)	Currently on-campus (6)
Bangladesh (2)	8 months (1)	Undergrad Biological Sci. (4)	Part-time job and parental support(3)	Muslim (Halal foods) (6)	Semi-urban (3)	Currently-off campus (14)
Brazil (1)	9 months (1)	Undergrad Microbiology (2)	RA-ship and Scholarship (2)		Rural (2)	Milton (1)
China (3)	10 months (2)	PhD Food Science (1)	Part-time job, OSAP, parents (1)			
Germany (2)	1 year (4)	PhD History (1)	Uncle (1)			
India (10)	2 years (3)	Undergrad Biochemistry (4)	RA-ship (1)			
Japan (1)	2.5 years (1)	Undergrad Nutrition (2)	RA-ship and parental support (1)			
Jamaica (1)	3 years (2)	Undergrad Psychology (2)	Parental support and Scholarship (1)			
Kuwait (2)	4 years (3)	Masters of Food, agriculture and economics (1)	Parental support and foreign loan (1)			
Nigeria (4)	6 years (1)	Masters Plant Agriculture(1)				
Pakistan (2)		Undergrad Political Science (1)				
Peru (1)		Undergrad Economics (1)				
South Africa (1)		Undergrad Engineering (6)				
Sri Lanka (1)						

(x) – Number of responses per category

-Does not include data from all participants, as time spent in Canada, means of financial support, former and current community region were not discussed during focus groups.

Appendix 4: Food Bank Product Stock Chart

Overview of University of Guelph Campus Food Bank product stock frequency.

Frequently In-Stock	Variable-Stock	Rarely In-stock
<p>Frozen: Hamburgers, fish fillets</p> <p>Dry: Oatmeal packets, pasta, rice, cornmeal, peanut butter</p> <p>Fresh produce: Potatoes and onions</p> <p>Canned goods: Chickpeas, green beans, chicken soup, mandarin oranges, black turtle beans, dark red kidney beans</p> <p>Other: Toilet paper</p>	<p>Frozen:Bread, corn and veggies, perogies</p> <p>Dry:Vinegar, soy sauce, flour, sugar</p> <p>Fresh produce:Oranges, bananas, soy and cow's milk</p> <p>Canned goods:Apple juice</p> <p>Other: Feminine products, soap, food coupons</p>	<p>Refrigerated: Tofu</p> <p>Dry: Baby food</p> <p>Fresh produce: Tomatoes, eggs, lettuce, mushrooms</p> <p>Only available once, or twice during the course of participant observation: Green peppers, kiwi, cheese, halal peanut butter</p> <p>Other: Shampoo and conditioner</p>