Special Issue Proposal on the topic of

Digital Eating

Journal of Cultural Economy

Guest editors:

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Background:

Eating is being reinvented as food production, distribution and consumption become caught up in processes of digitalisation, datafication and platformisation and in the varied values and logics of care, choice and expertise which they articulate (see Mol 2008). While food delivery services emphasise choice and convenience, surplus food redistribution apps promote care for sustainability by redirecting and revaluing the excess of conventional food commerce. Meanwhile, digital platforms and devices offer eaters empowerment through expertise: supply chain transparency platforms promise to demystify the provenance and wholesomeness of food through aggregating data sourced from across the globe, while dietary tracking devices afford novel forms of digitised (self-)knowledge and modes of dietary intervention. Novel habits of consumption, circuits of exchange, modes of valuation and repertoires of signification emerge as actors from marketers to eaters and from chefs to activists engage with these elaborate assemblages of people, capital, software and devices. **This gives rise to distinctive *digital eating* practices in which digital technologies become central to the knowledges which guide reflection on and contestation of the ethics and politics of eating, economies of food choice, and the cultural practices through which eating subjects are crafted** (Schneider and Eli 2021).

Literature review:

As researchers from disciplines including sociology, science and technology studies (STS), anthropology, and human geography have long argued, eating is at once a social (f)act, an economic transaction and a socio-technical practice shaped by technologies and the material cultures which underlie their creation and use. Far from being a simple act of bodily ingestion, eating is always implicated in complex cultures of discernment and distinction, economies of

exchange and expectation, and global logistical infrastructures of agricultural production and food provisioning (Carolan 2011, Mol 2021). Yet these assemblages are changing rapidly, if unevenly, as eating practices are brought into conformity (or at least compatibility) with the conventions and requirements of new digital infrastructures (Lewis and Phillipov 2018, Lupton 2018a, Schneider *et al.* 2018a). As such, contemporary cultures and economies of eating embody the digital technologies among and through which they take place, even as contemporary digital infrastructures adapt to the material demands of particular eating practices (Schneider *et al.* 2018b). **This special issue explores what becomes of eating – as a material cultural practice which mediates relations between the economic and the social – when it is caught up in digital assemblages. It also explores what becomes of the digital when it is entangled in processes of eating.**

Through posing these questions and examining digital eating we aim to enrich and expand three hitherto largely separate bodies of interdisciplinary scholarship associated with eating in the digital era. One rapidly growing literature examines the novel logistical economies and culinary labour processes – from takeaway meal delivery to social media marketing – precipitated by the digitalization of eating, and investigates the forms of entrepreneurial agency and exploitation associated with them (e.g. Cant 2019, Griesbach et al 2019, Richardson 2019, Barratt et al 2020, van Doorn and Badger 2020, Gregory and Sadowski 2021). This literature highlights and often critiques the novel logics of capital accumulation, labour relations and processes of value extraction which condense around digital food commerce. Another strand of scholarship builds on STS studies of information infrastructures to examine how data resources generated through the digitalisation of food (e.g. Schneider et al 2018a, Lewis 2020, Lupton and Feldman 2020) and agriculture (e.g. Bronson and Knezevic 2016, Carolan 2017a) are appropriated, enclosed and

exploited. Through reflecting critically on the political economies of agri-food data, such research sheds light on emerging intersections between the digital mediation and monitoring of food production and purchasing, power relations within agri-food systems and the politics of food sovereignty (Carolan 2018a, Fraser 2018, 2019). In so doing, it reveals how digital technologies of sensing, tracking and data analysis transform the rationalities of biopolitical optimization which regulate objects of government ranging from the health and productivity of livestock populations (e.g. Bear and Holloway 2019) to the diets of self-tracking human individuals (e.g. Ruckenstein 2015, Lupton 2018b). A third body of work focuses on the digital representation of food and eating, employing critical analyses of digital media from Instagram posts to Youtube videos and wellness blogs to examine how they articulate novel consumer identities and food subcultures, and configure debate over what constitutes good or bad food and eating. In so doing, this literature attends to the cultural politics of food's digitalization, seeking to unpack the persistence of enduring (and often problematic) narratives, norms and ideologies amid the novel modes of cultural production, communication and imitation furnished by digital media (Rousseau 2012, Lavis 2017, Lupton 2018b, Kirkwood 2018, Goodman and Jaworska 2020, Feldman and Goodman 2021).

In contrast to these tendencies to approach the platformization of culinary labour, the datafication of agriculture and food commerce, and the digital mediation of food culture as discrete processes, our special issue argues that the information infrastructures of precision agriculture and the platform economies of food delivery are designed to sustain or foster particular cultures of consumption. As such, they are generated in response to and situated within specific eating practices, the orchestration of which elicits (and increasingly presupposes) the generation of particular kinds of data (Carolan 2017b, Richardson 2019). Meanwhile, food cultures

increasingly take shape among digital infrastructures shaped by specific techno-economic imperatives and expectations, from the monopolistic tendencies of platform capitalism to the attention economies of social media and the promissory practices of venture capital fundraising (see Middha 2018, Bissell 2020, Boztepe and Berg, 2020, Cochoy et al 2020). **In focusing on *digital eating practices*, we aim to move beyond this analytical separation between digital food economies and digital food cultures through focusing instead on the ways in which commerce, culture and critique intertwine within technologies and processes of digital food exchange, consumption and evaluation.** In so doing, we aim to understand what values and logics might animate digital food infrastructures and economies, to explain socio-technical transformations in contemporary food systems and to investigate critically what the social, cultural and political ramifications of these changes might be.

Special issue's contribution:

Our special issue contributes to and expands upon long-standing research on how eating cultures take shape through their entanglements with technologies, with a focus on contemporary digital media and infrastructures and platform economies.

Consequently, this special issue's constituent papers examine how digital food marketplaces, reviewing platforms and advertisements mobilize and reshape cultural conventions of trustworthiness, taste and quality and how digital apparatuses of consumer choice shape preferences and apportion economic value. They focus in particular on how both of these processes precipitate **new knowledges and in so doing configure new forms of expertise, choice and care** (Eli *et al*. 2015, Kornberger *et al*. 2017, Plantin *et al*. 2018). In addressing these processes, this special issue aims to be the first to trace, explore and investigate how digital

assemblages co-construct key ethico-political engagements in everyday eating practices. Through this, we highlight the ongoing dialogue between digital infrastructures (platforms and devices), non-human actors (plants, animals and food products) and human agents of change in the food landscape (e.g., developers, investors, bloggers, online reviewers, delivery workers, social media marketers, chefs and consumers)

To facilitate exploration of the new (or sustained) relations fostered through digital eating while interrogating the logics which underpin, guide and govern the digitalisation, datafication and platformisation of food, this special issue sets out to address the overarching research question: *What new forms of choice, care and expertise emerge from the encounter of digitalisation and eating?*

Our special issue explores these engagements along three strands:

1) **Expertise:** The platformisation of eating has given rise to new cultures, disciplines and economies of food expertise, from the professional knowledges of specialist social media marketers to the critical evaluations and judgements of taste performed by online restaurant reviewers, which have hitherto rarely been studied (Kobez 2018, Onorati and Giardullo 2020). Rapid changes in food distribution and consumption, which have accelerated in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, increasingly implicate digital infrastructures of food expertise in decisions about matters ranging from the safety and quality of restaurants to the ethics of caring for one's own (and others') dietary health and the political 'goodness' of foodstuffs. Drawing such developments into dialogue with multi-disciplinary literature on the constitution, authority and

politics of knowledge, this special issue aims to shed light on how digital infrastructures reconfigure expertise (Schneider et al. 2019).

2) **Choice:** Although digital eating practices are situated within varied ecosystems of devices designed to help consumers to make 'informed' or 'good' choices – from price comparison websites to consumer reviews (Carolan 2018b, Schwarz 2018, Kotliar, 2020) – research into such arrangements remains largely separate from work examining the ethics and politics of food consumption. This special issue will deepen understanding of the ways in which digital assemblages politicise (or depoliticise) eating by bringing together these two hitherto largely separate literatures. Building on previous contributions in the *Journal of Cultural Economy* (Soutjis 2019, Sörum 2020), it will examine how the technologies of comparison, expertise and evaluation embedded within digital platforms and devices configure and respond to conventions and practices of ethical, safe and sustainable food consumption. In so doing, we examine how apparatuses of digital eating configure spaces of choice and choosing subjects, and we ask how these arrangements might enfold political issues into economic calculation as matters of consumer choice – or displace them into other repertoires of action such as practices of care or of digital food activism.

3) **Care:** In recent years, the food studies and STS literatures have turned their attention to concepts of care as they influence eating and feeding practices (Mol *et al*. 2010, Abbots *et al*. 2015, Puig dela Bellacasa 2017). However, while our earlier work on digital food activism has suggested that digital media facilitate a novel form of careful consumption (Eli *et al*. 2015, p. 189), few other studies have considered care

in relation to sociotechnical food engagements. Through introducing an analytic lens of care to explorations of digital eating, this special issue will investigate how making, choosing, and eating food online implicates relationships between infrastructures, the eating self and the often-unseen others who co-produce digitally-mediated food practices and experiences.

<u>Why *Journal of Cultural Economy*?</u>

We are eager to have this collection considered for publication as a special issue of the *Journal of Cultural Economy* for several reasons. First, in approaching digital eating as a collection of material cultural practices which mediate relations between the economic, the cultural, and the technological, the special issue's constituent articles speak directly to the concerns outlined in the journal's aims and scope. Second, our theme of digital eating draws together and builds upon existing scholarship within this journal concerned with online food reviewing (Kim and Velthuis 2021), platform capitalism and food delivery labour (Gregory and Sadowski 2021), taste and food expertise (Mol 2009) and ethical consumption apps and food social media (Soutjis 2019, Sörum 2020). Particularly, we build upon previous work in this journal concerned with digital consumption (as exemplified in the special issue on 'Digitalizing Consumer Society' by Cochoy *et al*. 2020). We also extend previous work by bringing attention to one common and often highly routinised everyday practice, eating, to understand how logics and values of digitalisation unpin and are enmeshed in everyday life, and how mundane practices complicate digitalisation. Third, the interdisciplinary stance of the proposed special issue, which aims to stimulate engagements across disciplines with sociotechnical assemblages in the digital age, aligns with the *Journal of Cultural Economy*'s aim of providing an interdisciplinary forum across the social

sciences and humanities. Thus, we consider the *Journal of Cultural Economy* the ideal fit for our special issue.

<u>Contributions to the special issue:</u>

Building on our 2020 EASST/4S conference panel on 'Emerging Worlds of Eating' five authors have revised their conference abstracts and submitted them for consideration as part of our proposed special issue. We have also solicited two additional contributions to balance the thematic, conceptual and methodological focus of the special issue. All contributions address global digital technologies, media or infrastructures and their articulation with specific local eating practices. In so doing, the contributors to this special issue explore how the conventions, constraints and accumulation strategies of digital platforms, of data-driven innovation and of those invested in them both enact food futures and participate in ordering present day food cultures, materialities and practices.

1) Is it Vegan? Ethical enrolment and exclusion in digital food systems

Eva Haifa Giraud (University of Sheffield)

Over the past decade, possibilities for ethical food practice to serve as a lever for systemic change have been eroded: as illustrated by the popularization of veganism. In western Europe, vegan practice has shifted from something marginal into the mainstream, with fast-food franchises offering vegan options and supermarket chains dubbing 'flexitarianism' the future of food. Yet what are the implications of radical expressions of food politics becoming enrolled into infrastructural arrangements they have historically lain at odds with? Feminist STS elucidates that when publics move from being non-users of socio-technical systems to being enrolled by these systems, it can become difficult to explore whether oppressive norms and standards could

be 'otherwise'. Interviews with long-term vegans and analysis of vegan digital media ecologies (including social media platforms, commercial food ordering systems and apps such as 'is it vegan') illustrate these tensions. As large food manufacturers and restaurant chains have adapted their ordering systems, technical organisation, and supply-lines to accommodate plant-based options, vegan practice has become more accessible. At the same time, possibilities for maintaining connections between veganism and other social justice issues – particularly environmental and labour politics – are being foreclosed. While digital food infrastructures enrol users by appearing to cater to a range of moral (as well as technical) requirements, in practice the onus is on consumers to be more ethically flexible and fit with infrastructural norms that enact more limited understandings of what veganism is and means. The ethical dimensions of enrolment require elaboration to conceptualize these developments

Keywords: veganism; enrolment; feminist science studies; infrastructure; media ecologies; flexitarianism

2) Bodies and mothers as measures: performativities of trust in app-based food ordering in urban India

Pallavi Laxmikanth (The University of Adelaide)

In urban India the metaphorical demarcation of the 'home' as safe and familiar and the 'outside' as dangerous and strange (Anjaria 2009) influences colloquial maxims that position 'homemade' food as healthy and 'outside' food as responsible for deteriorating metabolic health (Solomon 2016, Pathak 2019). Despite this, over the last 8 years, ordering 'outside' food from nearby eateries through app-based delivery services has become a common practice. In his highly

influential article Chakrabarty (1992) takes the *bazaar* as paradigmatic of the outside, a confluence of strangers where vendors and buyers meet and enact logics of familiarity and kinship to mediate trust and enable purchase. Forms of intersubjective familiarity remain important to transactions in post-liberalization India's digital food marketplaces, where users enact trust through privileging a bodily attention 'to and with' (Csordas 1993); a calibrative process of 'embodied knowing' that seeks qualitative resonance with food, data, gendered personhood (Mol 2009), reputation and intentions of the food's maker. Exemplars of trust and safety were foods made by 'someone like your mother', a performative rhetoric and logic of 'sponsorship' (Lambek 2013) used by apps to evoke the love and self-sacrificial care of the Indian mothers to sell 'healthy' and 'homely' food. By mobilizing gendered imaginaries of care to induce new modalities of relational trust apps make homes and mothers virtually visible in the marketplace, enabling the outside to flow inside through logics of embodied resonance with foods and, more importantly, the makers of foods.

Keywords: mothers; India; embodiment; trust; food-delivery; apps

3) Platforming pickiness: The digitally mediated enactment of childhood eating

Joe Deville (Lancaster University)

Steve Woolgar has argued that science and technology studies is a prime place for studying the relationship between children and consumption (2012, p. 37). Partly this is because of its ability to shed new light on essentialisms such as 'children', or 'decision', or, he notes, 'healthy food'. Yet this is a project that remains largely unfulfilled, mirroring the broader absence of children as a serious object of study in the discipline. This absence extends to the analysis of childhood

eating. So-called 'picky' eating, also termed 'avoidant' eating is a particular form of childhood eating involving varying degrees of food refusal, which is often experienced by parents and carers as highly distressing, with them often feeling as if they are failing in a fundamental parental duty: providing appropriate nutrition. In response, many parents are turning to a range of digital platforms for support. An analysis of some of these platforms, combined with an autoethnography of the author's own digitally-mediated practices of seeking different forms of support and expertise, reveals that these platforms intervene in ontological experiments with food, children and daily life, in which feeding, parenting, and care are differentially articulated and performed. These experiments parallel those associated with forms of digital food activism (Schneider *et al*. 2018a). These digital platforms in turn are active participants in an emerging scientific controversy between a dominant behaviouralist approach, centring on rewarding children for trying new foods, and a newer child-centred model, in which parents are provided with strategies for redistributing socio-technical agencies around eating.

Keywords: picky eating; children; behaviouralism; care; parenting; controversy

4) Social media and emerging patterns of taste: Insights into the digitalisation of eating out

Maria Giovanna Onorati and Gino Gabriel Bonetti (University of Gastronomic Sciences)

The widespread use of travel social media is transforming taste and gastronomy standards. User-generated ratings and reviews give life to new forms of experiential consumerism and food activism, challenging established gastronomic expertise and relying on spreadable and reputational dynamics (Onorati and Giardullo, 2020). By engaging users in community-based activism, social media lead to a 'tribalization' (Cova and Cova, 2002) of both the values

underlying judgement and the standards of evaluation. Appreciation for 'good food' follows a logic that is less rooted in the rules of the restaurant or food and beverage market than in those of the virtual community (Feldman 2021). This is especially true for consumer communities with ethical or value-based claims, such as vegan platforms, where sharing reviews is a strong source of identity (Greenebaum 2012, Gummerus *et al.* 2015).

By analyzing approximately 4500 user-generated reviews on a popular travel social media dedicated to vegan restaurants, this article offers insights into the logics of digitization, datafication, and platformization that shape new patterns of taste, organized through collective lay expertise (see Eli *et al*. 2018) and tribalized consumption. The data show a shift from professional judgement to personal experience (see also Kobez 2018, 2020), highlighting an increasingly close intertwining between food activism and digital activism (Schneider *et al*. 2018b). Of note, the data collected during the Covid-19 pandemic show that consumers have new concerns and dimensions of evaluation that blend with the logic of digitized dining, thus adding new elements of judgement to food expertise. Despite this fluidity, gaps remain in the apparent democratization of "exclusive" consumption practices in participatory media (Johnston and Baumann 2007, 2010), with new forms of social discernment fostered and reinforced by user-generated evaluations.

Keywords: social media; food-related practices; taste; gastronomic standards; datafication of experience; neo-tribal consumption; democratization

5) Curating good choice: Digital marketplace platforms and the framing of eating

Jeremy Brice (University of Oxford)

Digital platforms increasingly mediate the purchasing and provisioning of food through providing interfaces which enable shoppers to browse and compare foodstuffs offered by many different sellers, and rating systems which evaluate and rank them against multiple criteria. In assembling digital marketplaces which coordinate food commerce and consumption, such platforms are becoming key sites for the formatting of digital eating and the problematization of consumer choice. Notably, in addressing concerns about the safety and quality of food sold via digital platforms the firms which administer them are forced to confront complex questions about what it might mean to choose well amid the abundance of goods furnished by digital marketplace technologies.

Analysis of interviews with operators of digital food marketplaces reveals that they frequently portray such issues in terms of curation, which they conceptualize as a process of creating environments within which choice may be exercised well through screening out substandard or unsuitable goods. Arguing that idioms of curation articulate ways of caring for choice which operate through the 'framing' of markets (Callon 1998, Richardson 2019), I identify two contrasting curatorial logics. While operators of 'curated' marketplaces demonstrate care for shoppers by admitting only foodstuffs which have already been qualified as 'good' to their marketplaces, 'uncurated' marketplaces seek to maximise consumer choice and competition in the name of caring for food sellers. Tracing out these differing curatorial logics discloses that different orientations towards marketplace curation precipitate contrasting ways both of framing and regulating markets and of caring for (and through) choice.

Keywords: platform; market; curation; choice; food; digital

6) More of the same? How digital food platforms reinforce prevailing eating practices

Aline Stehrenberger, Giada Danesi and Tanja Schneider (University of St. Gallen)

Scholarship on eating in the digital era spanning sociology, anthropology, human geography and Science and Technology Studies has started to explore digital food platforms such as mobile apps (including dietary tracking), blogs and social media. This growing interdisciplinary body of literature suggests that these platforms contribute to eaters' re-conceptualisation of food and eating (Eli *et al*. 2015, Abbots and Attala 2017, Lavis 2017. Schneider *et al*. 2018, Lupton and Feldman 2020). The aim of our article is to further investigate consumers' entanglements with digital food platforms and the effect of these entanglements on their conceptualisation of 'eating well' and their eating practices. To do so, we have conducted the first large-scale survey on digital eating practices to date (n = 449). Our representative survey of the Swiss population examines participants' understanding of eating well, broadly defined, and, relatedly, the uptake and use of food apps and eating-focused blogs and social media.

Our cluster analysis revealed six distinct clusters in how survey participants conceptualise eating well (Stehrenberger *et al.* in preparation) and we found that participants of each cluster engage with a different set of apps, blogs and social media platforms with limited overlap in media use between the clusters. Moreover, each cluster's engagement with selected digital food platforms responds to and supports their prevailing eating practices and goals (e.g. dieting). Our study contributes to existing scholarship on digital food and digital eating by highlighting that eaters (per cluster) seek out digital food platforms to have 'more of the same', thus reinforcing existing eating interests and practices (e.g. cooking, dieting). Ultimately, our results lead us to

problematize techno-optimistic promises that digital platforms can unilaterally alter eaters' established diets towards eating well (e.g., eating healthier or more sustainable diets). Yet, we see room for variation within clusters with pre-existing interest in eating well based on their engagement with digital food platforms.

Keywords: eating practices, digital food platforms, expertise, survey, Switzerland

7) **Unravelling consumer configurations: Why digital platforms fail to produce ethical eaters**

Christian Fuentes (University of Borås and Lund University)

Newly launched digital food platforms promise consumers both convenience and the possibility to be "ethical" by reducing food waste, following vegan diets or eating ecological foods. Both marketing campaigns and digital platforms are designed to capture and configure consumers, enticing them to break with their often highly routinized food practices and become loyal customers thereby stabilizing the platform-consumer relationship. Previous studies, however, suggest that these efforts commonly fail. The aim of this paper is to advance our understanding of digitalized food consumption by empirically examining and conceptualizing the digital food platforms' failure to produce stable ethical consumer configurations. We make use of concepts from Science and Technology Studies (STS) and market studies to conceptualize how market devices – in this case digital food platforms - work to configure consumers in different ways and to different degrees. Empirically, the analysis draws on an ethnographic study of 15 households

in Sweden that signed up to meal box schemes. The study combines ethnographic interviewing, on-site kitchen observations, digital walkthroughs, and close readings of digital devices.

The analysis shows that while the digital food platforms of Meal box providers are socio-materially scripted to capture, educate, enable, and constrain consumers thereby producing loyal ethical food consumers, these efforts often fall short as the consumers in our study are seldom loyal to any one meal box provider. This failure, we contend, can be explained by the complexity of households and food consumption – which makes it difficult to stabilise specific ethical food consumer configurations – and the digital marketing efforts of the Meal box companies - which in their efforts to capture, construct, and retain customers end up unravelling consumer configuration. This process not only produces "disloyal" meal box consumers but also leads to de-stabilization of ethical consumption.

Key words: digital food platform, meal box, consumer configurations, ethical eating practices, choice and care

Bios of co-editors

Jeremy Brice is a postdoctoral researcher at Oxford University, where his current research examines how the environmental, ethical and public health issues surrounding meat and livestock production are problematized within financial markets and governed through responsible investment practices. He also holds a Visiting Fellowship in Economic Sociology at the London School of Economics and Political Science. His work examines the politics of valuation and the governing of futures within markets for food and agricultural products, and is

positioned at the interface between economic sociology, human geography and science and technology studies (STS). Jeremy has published in highly regarded journals across these disciplines including *Economy and Society, Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, Social & Cultural Geography, Dialogues in Human Geography*, and *Environmental Humanities.* He is also the lead editor of *Unknowing Geographies: Situating Ignorance, Inattention and Inscrutability* – a forthcoming special issue of *Environment and Planning F: Philosophy, Theory, Models, Methods and Practice* which will draw geographies of science into conversation with interdisciplinary ignorance studies for the first time.

Karin Eli is a medical anthropologist with expertise in eating disorders, childhood obesity, and the digitalisation of food and eating. Karin is a Senior Research Fellow at the University of Warwick. She is also a Research Affiliate at the University of Oxford's School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography, where she serves as Deputy Director of the Unit for Biocultural Variation and Obesity, and a Research Affiliate at Uppsala University's Department of Food Studies, Nutrition and Dietetics. Karin has co-edited the field-defining special issue *Anthropological Perspectives on Eating Disorders* (2018, *Transcultural Psychiatry*), and is the co-editor of two volumes: *Obesity, Eating Disorders and the Media* (2014, Ashgate) and *Digital Food Activism* (2018, Routledge). She has published extensively in highly regarded interdisciplinary and anthropological journals, including *Information, Communication & Society; Geoforum; Sociology of Health and Illness; Social Science and Medicine; Appetite; Health; Cultural Politics; Food, Culture, and Society; Anthropology & Medicine;* and *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry*, among others.

Tanja Schneider is Associate Professor of Technology Studies at the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of St. Gallen, and Research Affiliate at the Institute for Science, Innovation & Society (InSIS) at the University of Oxford. Her teaching and research is situated at the intersections of science and technology studies (STS), economic sociology, and critical food studies. She is first editor of *Digital Food Activism* (2018), a groundbreaking edited volume that investigates how digital media technologies are transforming food activism and consumers' engagements with food, eating, and food systems, which has contributed significantly to initiating a new subfield of food studies – digital food studies. Previous research centred on a) the production of knowledge about consumers in (neuro)market(ing) research from a science and technology studies perspective leading, for instance, to a co-edited special issue on 'Neuroscience beyond the laboratory: Neuro knowledges, technologies and markets' in the journal *BioSocieties* and b) the gender and kinship displays in popular media and advertising published as a special issue on 'Families and Food: Marketing, Consuming and Managing' in the *European Journal of Marketing*. Her research has been published in *Science, Technology & Human Values; Science as Culture; BioSocieties; Information, Communication & Society; Geoforum; Journal of Consumer Culture; Consumption, Markets & Culture; Health Sociology Review; European Journal of Marketing;* and *Journal of Marketing Management*. Her current research focuses on processes of financialisation, digitalisation and interventions, which she explores in two research projects: *Venture Food*, an investigation of the nature and dynamics of the uptake of venture capital in food and food-related settings and *Food Coach*, a Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) supported, interdisciplinary research study on the societal implications of dietary monitoring.

Bios of contributors

Gino Gabriel Bonetti is a candidate for the final thesis of the Master's Degree in 'Food Innovation and Management' at the University of Gastronomic Sciences in Pollenzo, under the supervision of special issue contributor Maria Giovanna Onorati. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Social Sciences and Communication and works as a marketing manager in the luxury food and beverage sector.

Giada Danesi obtained a PhD in social sciences at the School of Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences in 2013. She currently works as senior researcher in Technology Studies at the University of St. Gallen and is associate researcher at the STS Lab, University of Lausanne. Her research focuses on knowledge production and circulation, (self-)care practices and digital health technologies in the fields of chronic diseases and food and eating. She conducts research using ethnographic and qualitative methodology. Her work has been published in journals such as *Social Studies of Science*, *Learning, Culture and Social Interactions*, *Cambridge Journal of Education*, *Children and Society*, *Anthropology of Food*.

Joe Deville is a Senior Lecturer at Lancaster University, based jointly in the Department of Sociology and the Department of Organisation, Work and Technology. His research interests include the micropolitics of childhood eating, the everyday life of debt, the ethics of autonomous systems, and Open Access and the politics of scholarly knowledge production. He has published widely in journals including *Socio-Economic Review, British Journal of Sociology*, *Consumption Markets and Culture*, *Journal of Cultural Economy*, and *Cultural Studies*. He is also a co-founder and co-editor of Mattering Press, an Open Access book publisher and UK-registered charity focusing on work within the field of Science and Technology Studies.

Christian Fuentes is a Professor of Digital Retail at the University of Borås and an Associate Professor at Lund University. His research focuses on the reconfiguration of everyday consumption practices and the role that marketing work and market devices play in this. He has conducted research on ethical consumption, alternative food markets, sustainable consumption, mobile shopping, and the digitalization of retail. His work has been published in journals such as *European Journal of Marketing, Consumption Markets and Culture, Journal of Marketing Management,* and *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*.

Eva Haifa Giraud is a Senior Lecture in Media at the University of Sheffield, UK. Her research has two strands: contemporary non-anthropocentric theoretical work (as broadly construed) and understanding how frictions that arise in the relationships between activism, political ideals, and digital media technologies are negotiated. She has published on these themes in journals including *Social Studies of Science, Theory, Culture & Society* and *New Media & Society* as well as her monographs *What Comes After Entanglement?* (Duke University Press, 2019) and *Veganism* (Bloomsbury, 2021).

Pallavi Laxmikanth is a PhD student in Medical Anthropology and Gender Studies at the University of Adelaide. Her research focuses on the food-medicine market for type 2 diabetes in urban India, where she studies household practices, foods and food products, businesses and initiatives geared at mitigating or managing metabolic disease. Her interest in the intersection between food and health, is inspired by her previous work experience in the food industry in India.

Maria Giovanna Onorati is an Associate Professor of Sociology of Culture and Communication at the Pollenzo University of Gastronomic Sciences. Her research activities are primarily focused on the analysis of food as a factor of cultural identification and social differentiation and as a possible driver of cultural integration and social inclusion. She pays particular attention to the relationship between participatory media, social networks, changing patterns of taste, and food-related practices, with reference to the sphere of eating out and restaurant reviews.

Aline Stehrenberger is a PhD candidate and research assistant within the Technology Studies team at the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of St. Gallen (SHSS-HSG). She focuses in her research on Science and Technology Studies, whereby she draws on lab studies and practices of valuation in the fields of digital food cultures, sustainability, and app studies. Her PhD project is an ethnography of the development and growth phase of food waste intervention apps.

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