

# **Tasty, Tasteful Tidbits: A Study of Information Resources and Behaviours Involved in Planning Dinner Parties**

Katherine Policicchio  
Faculty of Information, University of Toronto  
katie.policicchio@mail.utoronto.ca

## **Abstract**

Although throwing parties is considered a leisure activity, dinner party planners' patterns in information gathering, selection and use parallel those of professional exhibition designers. Using the Information Horizon Interview method created by Diane Sonnenwald, Barbara Wildemuth and Gary Harmon (2001), I studied the red thread of information of older women (over the age of thirty) who plan dinner parties. In my research, three threads emerged for how the informants gathered, selected and used information to plan dinner parties – visual learning, family influences and combined information resources. What I discovered was that instead of browsing, informants brought a specific inquiry to information resources and chose information based on if the resources matched their aesthetic vision for the dinner party. The informants often referred family members for feedback but only after consulting online and paper-based information resources, some of which were created by the informants themselves. Contrary to literature critiquing gender roles and pre-Web 2.0 information resources, female dinner party planners do not passively regurgitate information but instead, actively reconstruct it.

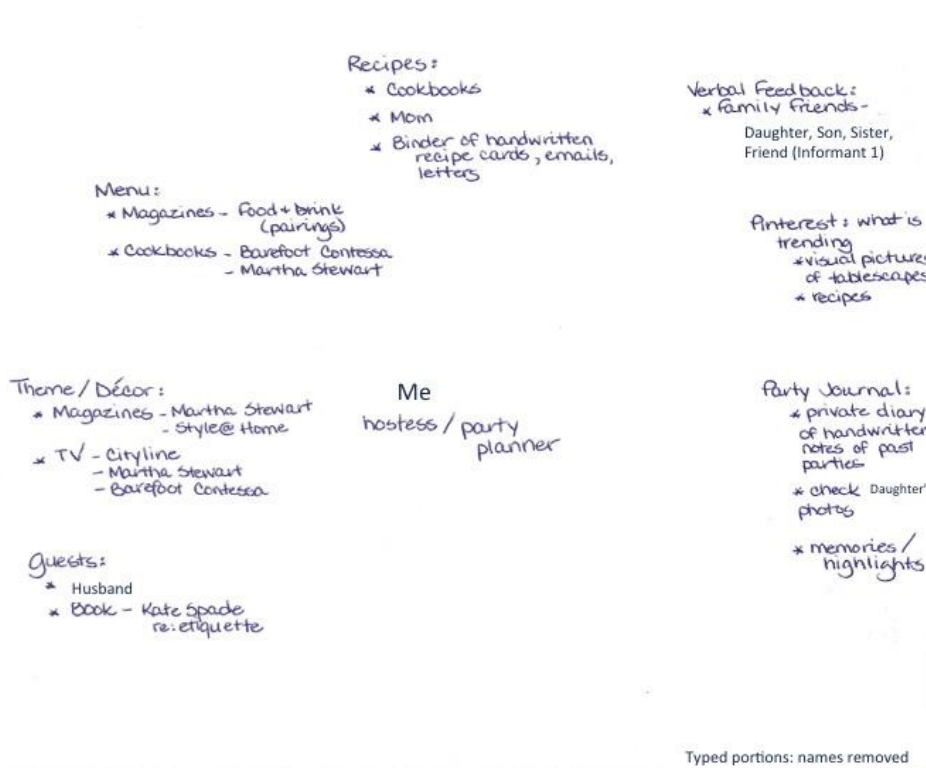
## **AUTHOR'S BIO**

Katherine Policicchio (katie.policicchio@mail.utoronto.ca) is a student at the iSchool at the University of Toronto. She is currently working towards a Masters of Information degree with a double concentration in Library and Information Science and Archives and Records Management. In her free time, she enjoys reading, photography, curating music playlists, visiting art galleries and planning dinner parties.



Typed portions: names removed

Figure 1. Informant 1's Information Horizon Map



Typed portions: names removed

Figure 2. Informant 2's Information Horizon Map

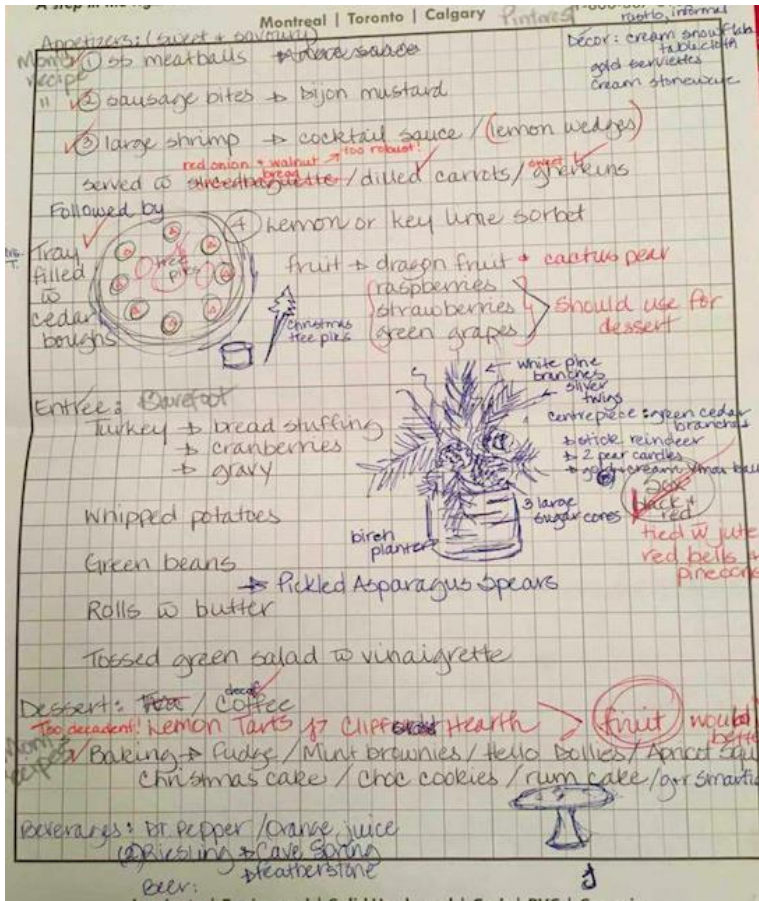
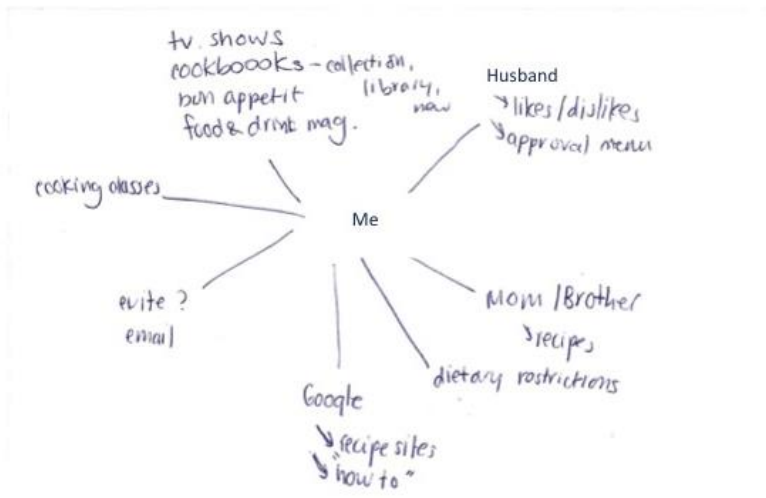


Figure 3. Page in Informant 2's Party Journal



Typed portions: names removed

Figure 4. Informant 3's Information Horizon Map

