Autobiographical Note

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Jenna Hartel is a theorist, methodologist, and historian of Library and Information Studies. Her work is organized around the question: *What is the nature of information in the pleasures of life*? She is investigating this matter through the concatenated study of *serious leisure* realms, which are crossroads of information and enjoyment. Dr. Hartel's empirical research explores the use and structure of leisure information on personal and social levels. Her dissertation is a scientific ethnography of information phenomena in the hobby of gourmet cooking. She practices an interdisciplinary and international approach and maintains close ties with leisure scientists and northern European information scholars. Dr. Hartel hopes to generate basic knowledge about information in the pleasures of life; challenge existing ideas that have largely emerged from academic problem scenarios; establish positive models of organic, flourishing information environments; enliven classrooms with upbeat topics; and enrich the information experience for leisure enthusiasts.

Managing Documents at Home for Serious Leisure:
A Case Study of the Hobby of Gourmet Cooking

KEYWORDS: information behavior, personal information management, documentation, serious leisure, hobbies, ethnography

Abstract

Purpose – This paper describes the way participants in the hobby of gourmet cooking in the United States manage culinary information in their homes.

Design/methodology/approach – The study utilizes domain analysis and serious leisure as a conceptual framework and employs an ethnographic approach. Twenty gourmet cooks in the United States were interviewed at home and then their culinary information collections were documented through a guided tour and photographic inventory. The resulting ethnographic record was analyzed using grounded theory and NVivo software.

Findings – The findings introduce the *personal culinary library* (or PCL): a constellation of cooking-related information resources and information structures in the home of the gourmet

cook, and an associated set of upkeep activities that increase with the collection's size. PCLs are shown to vary in content, scale, distribution in space, and their role in the hobby. The personal libraries are characterized as *small*, *medium* or *large* and case studies of each extreme are presented. Larger PCLs are cast as a *bibliographic pyramid* distributed throughout the home in the form of a *mother lode*, *zone*, *recipe collection*, and *binder.*

Practical implications – Insights are provided into three areas: 1.) scientific ethnography as a methodology, 2.) a theory of documents in the hobby, and 3.) the changing role of information professionals given the increasing prevalence of home-based information collections.

Originality/value – This project provides an original conceptual framework and research method for the study of information in personal spaces such as the home, and describes information phenomena in a popular, serious leisure, hobby setting.

Introduction

Research into information practices (Savolainen, 2008) within leisure is increasing[1] and has included studies of pleasure reading (Ross, 1999), genealogy (Yakel, 2004), knitting (Prigoda and McKenzie, 2007), and rubber-duck collecting (Lee and Trace, 2009), among other activities. The findings from this research display a range of information behaviors associated with leisure. Most studies focus on how enthusiasts seek and use information, while less attention has been given to the ways people collect and manage leisure-related information. However, any avid hobbyist would be likely to attest to happily amassing information about their favorite pursuit.

For instance, Dorene, a 73-year old home-maker from Los Angeles, California, is one of several million North Americans who practice the hobby of gourmet cooking. In her early twenties she began to experiment with the exotic ingredients and advanced culinary techniques that mark this cooking style and it quickly became a passion. She once prepared a Thai-themed feast for several friends, serving more than a dozen home-made delicacies—such as stuffed chicken wings, pad thai, and pineapple ice-cream. As a true hobbyist, Dorene has never worked in the food service industry. Instead, she cherishes gourmet cooking as a creative outlet and means to express affection for others, declaring her philosophy, "When you cook for somebody you are sharing love."

Fruit trees and potted herbs surround her ranch home, belying the information center inside. Stepping into an open-concept living and dining space, a visitor encounters a long wall of ceiling-to-floor shelves holding hundreds of cookbooks, grouped by topic. Culinary magazines arrive in the mail monthly and are displayed on a coffee table, while past issues covering four

decades are kept in the garage. An updated kitchen contains a cabinet-sized card file of several thousand hand-written recipes, and various culinary handbooks are within reach of the stove. In a spare-bedroom-turned office Dorene spends up to two hours a day at her computer, surfing food-themed websites, sorting folders and files of digital recipes, and staying current with hobby-related mailing lists and correspondence. On a regular basis, she culls these materials to identify promising recipes for her next cooking project. If the phone rings, it may be a friend with a cooking crisis that requires her expertise.

This scenario, witnessed during ethnographic fieldwork in 2004, displays an elaborate home-based information environment, cultivated by a non-professional, in the context of a leisure pursuit. Such phenomena are not well documented in information research and invite the questions: Is this typical? What are the features of the phenomenon? How does it work? This paper provides answers by drawing upon an interdisciplinary conceptual framework and ethnographic fieldwork in the homes of 20 gourmet hobby cooks. The findings describe the features of the "personal culinary library," including its contents, scope, prevalence, and management, with special attention to unique information artifacts and structures created by hobbyists. The paper concludes with insights into the research method, a theory of documents in the hobby, and the changing role of information professionals vis-à-vis home-based information collections.

Literature Review

Research into personal information collections, in general, has been sporadic over the past three decades and until recently there has been no consensus on terms and concepts. The process has been coined *personal documentation* (Stibic, 1980) or *desk organization* (Malone, 1983); the settings where information is acquired, cultivated, and organized over time have been called *personal information environments* (Malone, 1983; Kwasnik, 1991), *personal space libraries* (Miksa,1996), *immediate information spaces* (Lee, 2003), or *information collections* (Bruce, 2005). Lee states that research into personal information space is complex and involves consideration of five elements: users, documents, structures, interactions among the first three, and the environment, and she notes a lack of research that integrates these points (2003, p. 421). For sure, personal information collections are fascinating and complex, and have captured the imagination of researchers from different specialties.

One line of inquiry falls under the banner of *personal information management* (PIM), which is about "finding, keeping, organizing, and maintaining information" (Jones, 2007a, p. 5).

Recently, a comprehensive monograph (Jones, 2007a), *ARIST* chapter (Jones, 2007b), and series of workshops at the ASIST Annual Meeting have consolidated research in this area. Jones argues that all people dwell at the center of an "information sea" (2007a, p. 22). *Personal information* exists in all mediums and is distinct as that which is either: 1.) controlled by (owned by) me, 2.) about me, 3.) directed toward me, 4.) sent (posted, provided) by me, 5.) (already) experienced by me, 6.) relevant (useful) to me (p. 34). He names this domain a *personal space of information*, or PSI, which is amorphous, variegated, and contains "islands" of more organized *personal information collections* (PICs) (pp. 46-48). While proposing useful concepts common to all PSIs, Jones does not aim to highlight distinct qualities of personal collections in certain activities or settings, such as leisure or the home.

In the interdiscipline of computer supported cooperative work (CSCW) scholars have examined *the home* as a unique context where information accumulates. This design-oriented, and ethnographically and ethnomethodologically informed line of inquiry offers a more textured and social perspective than those mentioned thus far by acknowledging the home as the nexus of family life. Randall, Harper and Rouncefield (2007, Chapter 9) survey this literature and outline emerging research themes, namely that information and information systems in the home are: contributors to a moral order; artifacts with functional and aesthetic purposes; tailored to individual circumstances; central to the flow of housework; sources of pleasure; and synchronized to the rhythms of life. In one standout investigation, Crabtree and Rodden (2004) map how the processing of daily mail involves sequences of action by various family members that are tied to specific locations within the home. In a very original series of field studies, Taylor and Swan report how families utilize information devices such as lists (2004), organizers and calendars (2005), photo displays (Swan and Taylor, 2008), and even the surfaces of refrigerator doors (Swan and Taylor, 2005) in artful ways to coordinate and express family dynamics. Following ethnomethodology, this stream of CSCW research orients to routine or "mundane" information and communication practices at home, and does not demark leisure as any special category.

From a humanities perspective, the accumulation of information in the home can be seen as instances of *book collecting*, which in its extreme form is called *bibliomania*. According to Walsdorf and Gorman (2004), *bibliophiles* (lovers of books) collect them for education, enjoyment, and/or profit. Casual collectors gather a wide variety of books; more serious bibliomaniacs focus on particular subjects, authors or genres. The essential resources for this pursuit include bibliographies, libraries, booksellers, special collections and archives, specialist

magazines, and other collectors. Belk (1988, cited in Ross, *et al.*, 2006, p. 177) theorizes that possessions such as books help to define the self and reflect "who I am." Hence, one type of research explores the connection between a person and their private library (Manguel, 2006), for instance philosopher Walter Benjamin's, "Unpacking my Library: A Talk about Book Collecting" (1982) or *Hitler's Private Library: The Books that Shaped his Life* (Ryback, 2008).

Finally, a trove of cookbooks and recipes in the home could also be cast as a constellation of *documents*. The document is a longstanding major concept in information science (Otlet, 1934; Briet, 1951; Buckland, 1997) that fell out of fashion following the user-centered research turn of the 1980s (Talja and Hartel, 2007). Recent enterprises such as The Document Academy, a research community and conference series, have attracted renewed interest in documents. Most scholarship in this area examines documents in academic or workplace settings. However, there are stimulating exceptions drawn from everyday life, such as a report on the role of a wedding planning calendar (Davies and McKenzie, in press).

The study at hand adds momentum to research underway in all these areas (PIM, CSCW, book collecting, and documentation) and fills a gap by exploring a home-based, leisure context.

Conceptual Framework

In this project the information science metatheory *domain analysis* (Hjorland and Albrechtsen, 1995; Robinson, 2009) provides a stance towards information; a framework from sociology and leisure science, the *serious leisure perspective* (Stebbins, 2001), defines the leisure context. My prior research into information phenomena in the hobby of gourmet cooking clarifies the place of information collecting and management vis-à-vis five other types of information activity.

Domain analysis posits that information phenomena take shape within communities while members engage in standardized practices. As a social approach to information research, it establishes the unit of analysis as a group and its milieu, and is also referred to as *socio-cognitivism* (Jacob and Shaw, 1998) or *collectivism* (Talja, *et al.*, 2005). Domain analysis upholds a *realist* orientation to observable information activity and artifacts, in contrast to a cognitive focus on behavior, understanding, or meanings. Eleven possible research paths have been identified (Hjorland, 2002), including the study of information behavior and the documents people seek and use. In this vein, my project focuses on hobby-related *information activities*[2], *information resources*[3], and their *structure* in a domestic, leisure context. Thus far domain

analysis has been used in studies of information in professions or academic disciplines (Talja, 2005) and here it sets a foundation to investigate informational patterns in a hobby (Hartel, 2003a, 2005).

The serious leisure perspective (SLP) has been developed over the past thirty years through exploratory research in the fields of sociology and leisure science; it describes the nature of leisure and provides a grounded classification system of leisure activity. According to the SLP, leisure takes three main forms: *serious, casual,* and *project-based,* each containing numerous sub-types. *Serious leisure* is free-time activity centered upon the acquisition of specialized skills, knowledge, or experience (Stebbins, 2001); *hobbies* are the most prevalent sub-type of serious leisure. Casual leisure (such as napping) and project-based leisure (such as taking a road trip) can be ubiquitous, fleeting, and require minimal effort or concentration. Differently, serious leisure enthusiasts (which includes hobbyists) experience a *leisure career* (Stebbins, 2001, pp. 9-10) with turning points and increasing knowledge; hence the propensity for information to accumulate in their lives. Further, serious leisure pursuits form *social worlds* (Strauss, 1978; Unruh, 1980) geographically distributed communities with shared culture and practices which are collectives amenable to domain analysis.

There are many ways to cook, and the gourmet style involves high quality or exotic ingredients and advanced or sophisticated culinary techniques (Wilson, 2003), following in the tradition of French *haute cuisine*. In the United States it is associated with pop culture icon and chef Julia Child, and is featured at white tablecloth (high end) restaurants. The approach entails an elegant and orderly cooking process and celebrates the intrinsic beauty of food (Hartel, 2007, Chapter 5). The hobby often occurs in the context of dinner parties and entertaining, to delight and impress loved ones and friends. As serious leisure, the hobby of gourmet cooking is not to be confused with employment in the food service industry as a chef or cook (which are different social worlds; see Fine, 1996), or the more practical *feeding work* (DeVault, 1991) required for daily sustenance.

My prior research (Hartel, 2006, 2007, Chapter 7; in press) reports six general types of information activity in the hobby, and clarifies the place of information collecting and management. In (1) *living a gourmet lifestyle*, hobbyists pursue (non-documentary) experiences in which they learn about cooking; such as friendships with other cooks, eating out at restaurants, shopping in specialty markets, and traveling to explore new culinary cultures. In (2) *expressing culinary expertise*, gourmet cooks perform the role of authority and share their

culinary know-how with family and friends through informal teaching or kitchen trouble-shooting; they also offer their opinions in online forums or blogs. (3) *Staying informed and inspired* refers to the ongoing consumption of literature and media about cooking, to build background knowledge and to monitor trends. This type of activity includes reading cookbooks, gastronomy, and magazines; surfing culinary websites; or watching food-themed television. (4) *Launching a cooking episode* is a most information-intensive moment in the hobby, when gourmets create a vision and plan to cook; this includes making a work plan, shopping list, and searching for recipes. Finally, during hands-on cooking, hobbyist (5) *use information*, mainly recipes, to determine the proper next step, a process that is quick, deductive, and task-oriented.

The sixth information activity differs from others because it is a meta-activity. The hobbyist is focused on gathering and tending the materials that enable the acquisition of culinary knowledge. Similarly, in describing the dynamics of PIM, Jones (2007, pp. 64-65) calls these "m-level" or "meta-level activities," which refers to *organizing*, *maintaining*, *managing privacy and the flow of information*, *measuring and evaluating*, and *making sense*. This paper places the information activities (1-5) aside to focus attention on (6) *managing a personal culinary library*.

Research Method

Ethnography entails the study of the social world through firsthand involvement in and observation of natural environments, a process known as fieldwork. According to Fetterman (1989, p. 16), ethnographic research can be guided by either an *ideational* or *materialistic* theory. The first orients to mental activity such as cognition, meanings, and language; the second investigates the observable behavior patterns and dynamic with the material world. In line with the realist tenet of domain analysis, this project is the latter approach (materialistic) and focuses on the array of culinary information in cooks' homes and what they do with it.

This study can also be termed *scientific ethnography* (Sandstrom and Sandstrom, 1995), a flavor of ethnography that aims to balance qualitative data-gathering techniques such as interviews, with quantitative methods like photography, mapping, and inventories (all were necessary to document this complex subject). Scientific ethnography aims to reconcile the *emic* perspective of the subject, with the *etic* view of the outside researcher. Thus, this investigation employs multiple data gathering methods to capture the cook's experience of the hobby and its information phenomena, while judiciously bringing to bear relevant concepts and models from

information science.

Gaining Access

As a gourmet hobby cook of more than a decade, I was well versed in its sensibility before entering the field. The mainstay of fieldwork consisted of 20 interviews with gourmet hobby cooks, in their homes, followed by analysis of their cooking-related information collections. The outings occurred in greater Los Angeles, California and Boston, Massachusetts, where I lived at the time. My sampling strategy was *judgmental* (Brewer, 2000, pp. 79-80), meaning, I hand-picked the best candidates and did not strive for representation across socio-demographic variables. I sought articulate, enthusiastic cooks with at least two years of experience in the hobby and no significant tenure in the foodservice industry; no financial incentive was offered to participate.

Though there are millions of gourmet cooks in any large city, it was a challenge to secure interviews. At the beginning I approached potential informants at culinary-themed events such as cookbook signings or public lectures. It was easy to establish rapport, but more difficult to gain access to the cook's home for the on-site interview, probably because I was a stranger. Regrouping, I asked family and friends to provide introductions to gourmet hobby cooks in their lives, a gate-keeping strategy which opened many doors. In the end, my sample consisted largely of women (75%) of all ages, with predominantly professional careers; this profile loosely matched established profiles of the realm as well as demographic data on the readership of *Gourmet* magazine.

Semi-structured Ethnographic Interviews

Since it is fundamental in ethnography to conduct fieldwork in natural environs, the interviews occurred in the cook's home. The semi-structured ethnographic interview (Spradley, 1979), began with descriptive or *grand tour* questions on the hobby and then zeroed in on the information dimension, following a conventional funnel design. First, the informant told me their history as a gourmet cook; second, her or she described a recent or memorable cooking project. Next, turning attention to information, I asked the cook to respond to several common information activities associated with the hobby, such as "How do you select a recipe?" and "How do you follow cooking trends?" Finally, the cook elaborated upon his or her use of various culinary information resources, using a comprehensive list as a memory aid (Appendix A). In all, the interviews were upbeat conversations; the hobbyists enjoyed talking about their craft.

Often the gourmet cooks served foodstuffs they had prepared specially and in three cases actual cooking was underway (these elements enriched the fieldwork).

Narrated Tours and Photographic Inventory

Right after the interview, the gourmet cook took me on a tour[4] of his or her residence, noting key locations in the hobby and describing relevant culinary information in any format. To document the setting I adapted a data-gathering method from the specialty of visual anthropology, called a photographic *cultural inventory* (Collier and Collier, 1986, Chapter 5; Hartel, 2003b). This technique (which I refer to as a *photographic inventory*) is ideal for recording complex, multi-featured environments through still photography. A *shooting guide* (the photographic equivalent of an interview schedule; Appendix B) was used to specify the sequence and type of shots, and organize attention on three levels: 1.) rooms, 2.) information resources, collections, and zones; 3.) items.

The tour was launched with this statement to the informant: "I'd like you to take me through your home, showing me the locations and resources used in the hobby. In particular, please show me the culinary information resources here in the house. Let's start in the kitchen*."* The informant was given the hand-held tape recorder and asked to speak clearly into the microphone as they lead the tour; simultaneously I took photographs per the shooting guide (keeping the informant out of the frame for purposes of confidentiality). When a particularly interesting entity was encountered, I used an *object probe* (DeLeon and Cohen, 2005) such as "What is this?" or "Tell me more about this…" or "How does this work?" At the end of the tour, I sketched a floor diagram of the home, marking concentrations of information resources. The sketch captured the entirety of the setting in a manner not possible via any single photograph or montage, and was helpful in recalling the site and its features during the analysis process.

In visual research, "[the] reality is that total documentation is almost always impossible" (Collier and Collier, 1986, p. 162). So it should be noted that the visual data was necessarily incomplete and varied. The hobby cook (not I) determined what elements of the house and hobby to present. It was not possible to say that every relevant entity was surveyed, or that cooks conducted the tours similarly; information resources that existed outside the home were minimally documented. Another limitation of the approach is that it favored information phenomena in traditional (paper) form, such as cookbooks and recipe cards, while computer or Internet based resources were marginalized. The field outings (interview + tour/photographic inventory) ranged from 90 minutes to 3 hours.

Data Management

In ethnography, the accumulated trail of field data is called the *ethnographic record* and requires diligent, timely management. Soon after the field session I transcribed the interviews and *wrote-up* fieldnotes, meaning, elaborated my rough jottings into detailed descriptions (Emerson, *et al.*, 1995, Chapter 3). Though transcription was labor intensive and time consuming, it generated preliminary insights and often stimulated improvements for later outings. I downloaded and titled the photographs, and then saved them in digital form and printed color copies for safe-keeping and study. I gave each informant an alias and kept their associated data as a "case" in equivalent paper and digital folders. In the end, my ethnographic record of 20 cases consisted of textual *and* visual data, including: several hundred pages of transcripts, almost 500 photographs (an average of 26 per home, based on 18 homes, given two camera malfunctions), as well as fieldnotes and memos written over the course of fieldwork.

Data Analysis

I analyzed and coded the textual materials in my ethnographic record using NVivo software and following guidelines in Emerson, Fretz and Shaw (Chapter 6) and *grounded theory* (Straus and Corbin, 1998). These techniques posit the inductive emergence of findings from the ethnographic record. Yet throughout the process, I was sensitized by my interests, research questions, and concepts from information science. Coding consisted of assigning words or short phrases to concepts that struck me as relevant and recurring in the data, and then sorting these into NVivo folders called *nodes*.

The major node that informs this paper was tentatively titled *Personal Culinary Library,* and contained 70 distinct codes. To bring order to this large set I reflected on inherent properties and then collapsed them into 4 classes: *entities* (27 information-related objects), *features* (14 qualities of the phenomena), *processes* (21 series of actions directed to some end) and *spaces* (8 rooms or places in the home), shown in Table 1. These four dimensions evince my growing sense that the self-provision of culinary information in the home is complex and involves artifacts, behaviors, and a setting that vary in nature and scale, mirroring Lee's point of the multidimensionality of the phenomenon.

Entities	Features	Processes
binders	aesthetics	acquiring materials
bookshelves	cognitive authority	annotating recipes or

catalogues	enclosure	cookbooks
collectibles	evolution	buying
cookbooks	family involvement	cataloging
ephemera	information	collecting
favorites	overload	creating
files	intentions	cutting out
folders	knowledge of	flagging or marking
heritage materials	organization	lending
Internet or technologies	ownership	non-use
journals or notebooks	problems	organizing or organization
keepers	propinquity	photocopying
magazines or serials	scale or scope	printing or typing
misc. records	wear and tear	saving
mother lode		scanning
non-culinary information	<u>Spaces</u>	searching, browsing, looking
non-information	bookstore	selling
personal computer	den or tv room	sharing recipes
recipe card collections	dining room	subscribing
reference materials	kitchen	throwing away
stacks	stairwell/back hall	upkeep or weeding
staging or holding files	storage area	
structures	study or office	
subscriptions	upstairs or	
tools	downstairs	
zones		

Table 1. Codes to describe information phenomena in the home.

Next, I analyzed the visual data (photographs and diagrams), following Collier and Collier's instructions (1986, Chapter 15). First, I placed aside many photographs that were taken impulsively and had minimal bearing on information phenomena. Proceeding on a case by case basis, I assembled images from every home into a photo essay with detailed captions. The photo essays told the stories of 20 unique home-based culinary information collections. As with the transcripts, I studied the visual data for concepts and patterns, which were named as codes. Since my code hierarchies were already well established, the process went quickly. Details pertaining to the types and volume of information resources were summarized in a *matrix* (Miles and Huberman, 1994, Chapter 9) which served as a basis for Table 3 and the section of this paper that quantifies the information collections of hobbyists.

Writing

While analyzing and coding the data in various ways, I wrote more than one hundred *memos* (Emerson, *et al.*, 1995, pp. 155-157). The memos elaborated insights and themes, and served as building blocks for final drafts. Of several types of ethnographic writing this report is a *realist*

tale (Van Maanen, 1988) that focuses on description of information in a setting.

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Findings

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The Personal Culinary Library

Avid hobbyists in this study cultivate what I am coining a *personal culinary library* (PCL): a constellation of information resources based in the home of the gourmet cook, and an associated set of upkeep activities that increase with its size. The PCL supplies information and inspiration for ongoing cooking and is an archive of culinary experiences. PCLs vary in scale, from a small set of cookbooks that are tucked away in a cabinet to larger multimedia collections that are a striking feature of a household. The contents of most PCLs are organized by format, genre, subject, and author, without elaborate bibliographic access mechanisms, and there are often nested sub-collections. Seen holistically and in context, PCLs also contain non-culinary information, housing infrastructure, cooking paraphernalia, and décor. The phrase *personal culinary library* follows Miksa's notion of a "personal space library," and reflects this particular hobby context and the predominance of cookbooks, recipes, and keepsakes, more so than the generic terms *information space* or *information environment*.

Survey of Artifacts

As a starting point, the PCL can be characterized through a survey of its artifacts. By volume, cookbooks are the most prevalent items in the PCL. A cookbook is "a book of cooking directions and recipes" (Merriam-Webster Online, 2009) and there are many types. *Multi-purpose cookbooks* cover the breadth of foodstuffs, from appetizers to desserts. Narrower *subject cookbooks* feature a specific cuisine, cooking style, or food category. Some hobbyists enjoy *professional cookbooks* that focus on fundamentals as taught in culinary schools. Cooks with historical interests own *rare* or *vintage cookbooks* that reveal bygone culinary sensibilities. Decades ago *cookbook series* could be acquired on a subscription basis, delivering a new book and topic each month.

Not all books in a PCL are technically cookbooks. *Culinary reference texts*, such as encyclopedia, dictionaries, or handbooks supply background and details that may be missing from cookbooks and recipes. Also, hobbyists enjoy *gastronomy*, a non-fiction literary genre about cooking and eating lore, and *culinary fiction*, stories that interweave narrative and recipes.

PCLs contain a variety of non-book documents. *Culinary magazines* such as *Gourmet* and *Bon Appetit* are issued on a monthly basis and tuned to seasonal topics and culinary trends. Recent

issues are placed on display for browsing, and back issues are put in storage. Some hobbyists collect *culinary ephemera* such as menus, restaurant reviews, newspaper inserts, brochures, and postcards.

The central genre of gourmet cooking is the *recipe*, a set of instructions for preparing food. Recipes are relatively compact and usually occupy a single page. They can be carried within any of the formats mentioned thus far, or as freestanding documents. Often, recipes exist as index cards, newspaper clippings, or digital files. Cooks group their recipes into *recipe collections* within boxes, folders, or binders; these structures will be discussed further shortly.

Nearly all the PCLs in this study include digital and online resources. Personal computers were used to archive recipes, via word processing programs of special recipe-management software. Recipes in digital formats are easy to save, organize, search, print, or share with others via email. The personal computer is also the gateway to a trove of online sources, namely *recipe databases* (i.e. epicurious.com or foodnetwork.com) and food-themed *websites*. The paper at hand focuses on traditional documentary forms; information age innovations such as "cook through" *blogs*, *micro-recipe tweets* on Twitter, and handy culinary cell phone widgets are changing the information landscape of gourmet cooking and are addressed in Hartel (in press).

Some items in the PCL are *culinary keepsakes*: cookbooks or recipes that have special personal meaning to the cook. These home-made or inherited items imbue the PCL with sentiments and family legacies, enriching it from a functional resource of the hobby to a carrier of life experience and tradition. Most culinary keepsakes are fragile and lovely; distinctive handwriting, yellowed papers, and food stains give them character. Another keepsake is the *culinary diary* where cooks record their musings and cooking adventures. Every cook in this project had culinary keepsakes and Figure 1 shows a sample from the visual data.
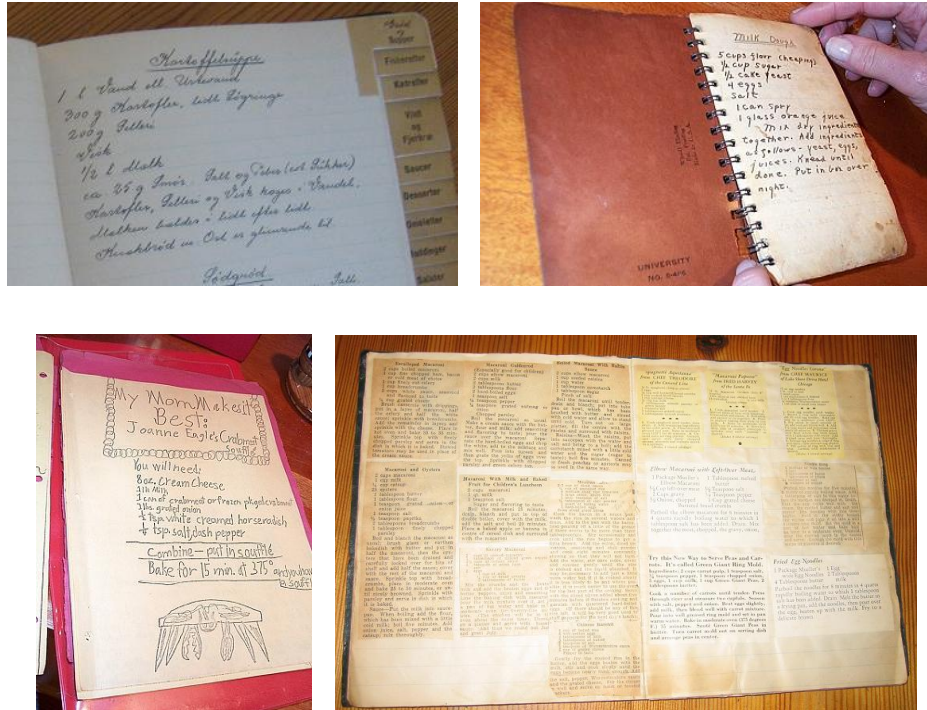
Figure 1. Examples of culinary keepsakes.

A comprehensive material survey of the PCL must include common *non-culinary and non-textual items,* to avoid a rarefied conception. Hobbyists can be nonchalant about the composition of their libraries, and in many cases, culinary information kept close company with unrelated topics, such as phonebooks and old college textbooks. Out of necessity, information resources were kept in *housing* such as bookcases, built-in shelves, file cabinets, desks, countertops, coffee tables, pedestals, bins, boxes, and personal computers. Many PCLs contain *cooking paraphernalia* like utensils, cookware, and ingredients. Finally, *décor* expresses personal style: knickknacks, artwork, and photographs appear throughout t

As summed up in Table 2, the PCL consists of a variety of documentary and digital information resources related to gourmet cooking; the majority are published or publicly available, and some are unique keepsakes. A complete inventory of the PCL also includes non-culinary materials, housing infrastructure, cooking paraphernalia, and décor. Fellow cooks, family, or friends who provide culinary information or communication are human resources of the library, but are placed beyond the scope of this paper. For sure, the 20 PCLs of this study varied in size and scale. Some contain only a few of the elements just mentioned, whereas others contain all. The next section reports the quantities of items in PCLs observed in this study and describes their range.

- **cookbooks**: seminal, professional, subject-themed, historical/rare, series
- **culinary reference texts**: dictionaries, encyclopedias, handbooks
- **culinary serials**: monthly issues, special issues
- **gastronomy**: history, essays, fiction
- **recipes (on paper)**: cards, newspaper clippings, print outs
- **recipes (digital)**: as Microsoft Word files, HTML pages
- **online resources:** websites, recipe databases, blogs, forums
- **culinary ephemera**: menus, brochures, manuals, restaurant reviews, articles
- **culinary keepsakes**: one-of-a-kind recipe books and cookbooks (from family), diaries
- **non-culinary information**: documentary materials on other subjects besides food and cooking
- **cooking paraphernalia**: utensils, foodstuffs, equipment
- **décor**: artworks, photographs, knickknacks
- **support structures**: bookcases, built-in shelves, desks, PCs, networks, etc.

Table 2. Summary list of artifacts observed in the PCLs of this study.

Quantification and Range

PCLs ranged in size and scale from a few dozen documentary items to larger multi-genre and multimedia collections. Correspondingly, some cooks were unconscious or nonchalant about gathering these materials while others were zealous. I have found no single metric for measuring the size and scale of PCLs; all their elements must be considered together. Below, I describe three types of PCLs witnessed in the homes under study. These were coined small, medium, or large, based upon the prevalence of artifacts in the household, associated upkeep tasks, and the role in the hobby:

- The *small* PCL was unobtrusive or imperceptible in the home; its materials were tucked into a cabinet, shelf, or nook. For such a small collection there was no conscious maintenance activities. Cooks in this scenario were not document-oriented, and gained knowledge and inspiration through other means. (These sorts would probably have denied they had a "PCL.")

- The *medium* PCL was a more noticeable, good-sized collection filling, for example, a few bookshelves with cookbooks and magazines. The cook occasionally tended to its composition or organization. These cooks likely consulted their library for every cooking episode and may have read or browsed the materials for pleasure and learning.

- The *large* PCL dominated or permeated a setting. The cook engaged the culinary literature above and beyond what was needed to execute regular episodes. These major sites entailed routine upkeep tasks and the hobbyist performed as a lay information professional.

In a grounded manner, the three classes spanned the smallest to largest PCLs observed during fieldwork, and there were several instances of each type (4 small, 9 medium, 7 large). In the sample of 20, the distribution was slightly skewed toward larger PCLs. (Presumably, during recruiting large libraries were brought to my attention more often than small ones.) Table 3 sums up features related to size and scale of PCLs in this project.

Type of PCL	#	Presence in household	Upkeep tasks	Role in the hobby	# of cookbooks*	The cooks
Small	4	imperceptible, tucked away	none	Not significant (experience and people are preferred)	<30	Vincent, Sara, Mandy, Eric
Medium	9	noticeable, but not striking	some, ad hoc	Consulted for each episode, regular learning/reading	31-99	Nancy, Rose, Claire, Damon, Hanna, Roberta, Camilla, Ken, Anne
Large	7	dominates and/or permeates the household	systematic	Engaged above and beyond episodic cooking	100+	Patty, Dorene, Margaret, Celeste, Roland, Katey, Tom

* This is a rough estimate drawn from the photographic inventory.
Table 3. Summary of characteristics of small, medium, and large PCLs.

Any effort to measure the PCL must consider that it is dynamic and grows over the course of the hobby career. The cooks in this study had been practicing the hobby for 5 to 40 years. Younger cooks with shorter tenures (Mandy, Sara, Hanna, and Damon) unsurprisingly had some of the smaller PCLs; while older cooks (Patty, Dorene, and Margaret) had larger ones. A longitudinal study that tracks the evolution of PCLs over decades would shed more light on this matter.

The range of PCLs are displayed in the following case studies. Vincent serves as an example of a small PCL; Celeste illustrates a large one. A medium PCL can be understood as existing in-between these poles.

Case study of a small PCL: Vincent.

Vincent is a gourmet cook in his mid-40s who lives in a suburb north of Boston. He is married with three young children and works as a business consultant. Raised in a closely knit Italian

family he reports, "All of my most fond memories of childhood revolve around the family and food." His mother went off to work when he was 12 and so he "started futzing around in the kitchen…with little things like scrambled eggs." During college he became increasingly interested in cooking as a hobby in part because it cast him as a more attractive bachelor.

Today, Vincent practices the hobby on a regular basis and favors "mostly American, classic French or Italian." For instance, he recently prepared a special birthday dinner with an appetizer of white bean bruschetta, a first course of tilapia on a warm spinach salad, and an entrée of beef tenderloin in a port wine reduction sauce with risotto. A cornerstone of his social life is cooking and entertaining with his children, extended family, and circle of yuppie friends.

Vincent relies upon his senses when cooking, moreso than documents. He knows how to test steak for doneness by poking it, and uses recipes only as a point of departure for his own creative interpretations. When he does purchase a cookbook he explains, "Well, I try to buy textbook-like cookbooks…like *Joy of Cooking* is more of a textbook about food than a cookbook." To design a meal Vincent would "go to the market and see what's good" instead of resorting to texts or the Internet.

Vincent has a *small* PCL tucked into two built-in shelves of the island at the center of his kitchen. The collection contains 18 cookbooks; sandwiched between the cookbooks is a folder of a few dozen recipes photocopied, torn from magazines, or printed from the Internet. Vincent's attitude toward the collection is nonchalant. He does not subscribe to any culinary serials or accumulate recipes in his house because, "You can get anything by going to epicurious.com."

   Case study of a large PCL: Celeste.
Celeste is a reading teacher in her mid-fifties who lives south of Boston. As a young child she helped her mother cook traditional American "meat and potato" dinners. While a teenager, she took an interest in herbs and recounts, "I remember cooking a lamb dinner when I was in 8th grade, and basting the lamb with vermouth and rosemary and feeling extremely sophisticated." In college, Celeste visited Europe and was thrilled by new foods. Back in the States, she began cooking often and collecting cookbooks.

Today, Celeste's arts and crafts cottage is surrounded by herb beds that she cultivates for her cooking. She exudes a quiet confidence and great range in the hobby. She recently spent an

afternoon making an elaborate vegetable torta, yet she also enjoys rustic preparations: for my interview she prepared a delicious lunch of lentil soup. As she approaches retirement and enjoys free time, financial independence, and a circle of gourmet friends, her culinary hobby is flourishing.

Celeste has a *large* PCL that sprawls throughout her house. In the dining room are two tall bookshelves containing more than 200 cookbooks, a cookbook series, gastronomy, culinary keepsakes, and some family photos. She presently receives *Gourmet* and *Cook's Illustrated*; back issues are stored in her home office. Keepsakes in her collection have been passed through generations, such as her Danish mother-in-law's handwritten recipe notebook and a grandmother's recipe collection. For several years she has kept a diary of food-related ideas and experiences. Celeste reads cookbooks, magazines, and newspapers daily to discover promising recipes; if successful they are archived in a binder and kept at hand in her pantry.

This section has aimed to quantify the complex phenomenon of the PCL, for which there is no single convenient measure. The extent of a PCL was determined by the volume of artifacts in the home, prevalence of associated upkeep tasks, and their role in the hobby. A small PCL, like Vincent's, took up little space in a household and reflected his instinctual, sensual approach to cooking. In contrast, a large personal library, like Celeste's, sprawled throughout a home as a result of a reliance upon and enchantment with culinary documents.

Management and Structure
Larger PCLs are dynamic: materials are acquired, reviewed, and placed into permanent locations. There is regular weeding, re-organization, browsing, and deacquisition of unwanted items. Subscriptions to culinary serials are renewed or cancelled annually; items are loaned to family and friends; and technologies are tested and sometimes implemented. These information meta-activities are interwoven with everyday life routines. For instance, hobbyists surf favorite websites over coffee in the morning, sort recipes on a rainy Sunday afternoon, and browse bookstores while on vacation. There is fluid movement between information meta-activities, the other five information activities of the hobby (see Conceptual Framework, ¶ 5) and hands-on cooking.
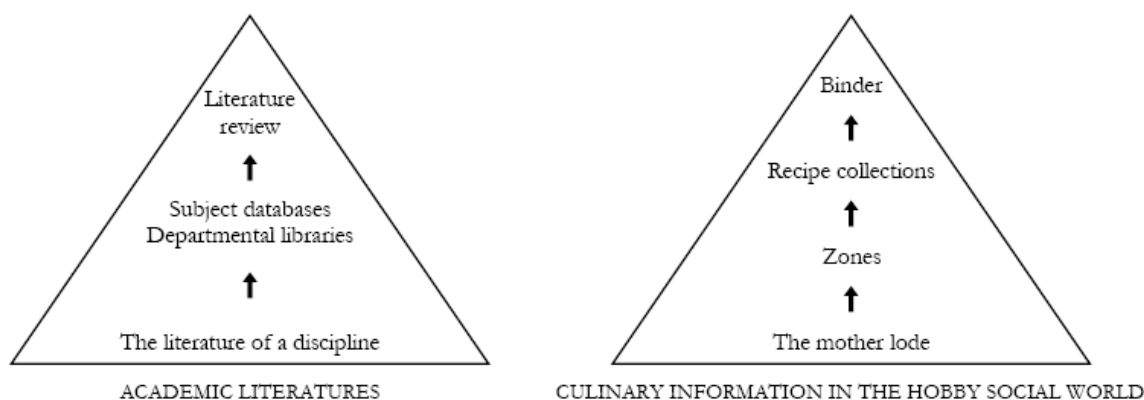
Figure 2. A visual model of Shera and Egan's bibliographic pyramid (left) resembles information management in the personal culinary library (right). ↑ = bibliographic treatment.

From the perspective of library and information science, the PCL resembles a *bibliographic pyramid* (Shera and Egan, 1952, p. 19; Figure 2, left), a concept that explains how the literature of an academic discipline is treated to successive bibliographic processes of identification and distillation. The broad base of the pyramid represents its raw literature in the form of journals, articles, and monographs, acquired by academic and digital libraries. These items are subject to abstracting and indexing and grouped into different repositories to facilitate their use, such as departmental collections or subject databases. In time, a leading scholar surveys and assesses all or a selection of work across the field and produces a literature review – the capstone of the pyramid and its critical navigational aid and reference point. Shera and Egan's idea can be cast to represent the mechanics of the larger personal libraries, illustrated in Figure 2, right and described below.

   Acquisition.

The process is fueled by the steady acquisition of new information from the gourmet cooking social world. The most information-hungry cooks obtain several cookbooks per month from bookstores, online retailers, cookbook clubs or yard sales (known elsewhere as "boot fairs"). Some materials require little or no effort to procure. Culinary serials and newspaper food sections arrive to the cook's doorstep; websites are always only a click or two away. Every cook in this study had received culinary information as gifts, and special culinary keepsakes are simply inherited. Table 4 lists the ways resources are acquired.

> - **purchasing**: from bookstores, grocery stores, department stores, on vacation, online retailers

- **cookbooks clubs**: such as *The Good Cook*
- **bargain hunting**: yard sales/boot fairs, book sales, used book stores
- **fundraisers**: from churches, schools, non-profit groups
- **subscriptions**: serials, newsletters
- **gifts**: at Christmas, for birthdays, at weddings
- **inheritance**: from family and friends
- **the library**: preview for purchase, temporary loan
- **serendipity**: in waiting rooms, at grocery checkout

Table 4. Acquisition strategies and channels that supply a PCL.

The mother lode.

The majority of cookbooks (and other formats of resources) form a *mother lode*: a singular, large, centralized grouping of culinary materials in the residence. This coinage aptly captures its wow factor. Encountering a mother lode for the first time surely invokes a visitor to express, "Wow…you must really love to cook!" Patty's main stash of culinary information wrapped around three walls of her study, while Roland's one-of-a-kind mother lode occupied a back hall and staircase of his Victorian home. The mother lode typically exists adjacent to the kitchen. The kitchen itself is not the favored location because of heat, humidity, food debris, and limited space. Simple organizational principles are applied to the mother lode. Materials are grouped by genre, subject, or author. No cook had a catalogue of items in their mother lode, though a few aspired to one.

Figure 3. The mother lode (clockwise from top left): Dorene's wall of cookbooks; Roland's unique cache in a staircase; a section of the mother lode in Patty's study.

The mother lode plays multiple roles in the hobby. It is one of the first repositories consulted during a berrypicking-style search for recipes (Hartel, 2007, p. 157; Bates, 1989). At the same time, a distinct feature of the mother lode is that most of its materials are rarely if ever *used* (other resources, presented shortly, are more heavily used.) As a cook acquires more and more items, the opportunity for time with any one necessarily decreases; the majority is left untouched for long periods (like most books in the stacks at public or academic libraries). This suggests that hobbyists with medium to large PCLs may be more interested in *owning* culinary information, than using it. Owned books have important symbolic and aesthetic values. They present a snapshot of the cook's experience in the hobby and announce the cook's passion and talent to anyone who enters the home. Further, most collections are beautiful and interesting to behold, adding character and intelligence to the residence and daily life.

Zones.

Apart from the mother lode, larger PCLs contain *zones.* Lee defines a zone as, "a limited area within an information space that contains a related set of materials" (Lee, 2003, p. 43). Zones are nodes within the PCL and exist apart from the mother lode in dens, home offices, kitchens, halls, bedrooms, attics, even bathrooms—any household nook or surface is possible. The contents in a zone are typically one culinary genre with its own classificatory logic. It is separated from the mother lode for a particular purpose, such as:

- *Referencing*. The mother lode is not convenient for finding quick answers during cooking. Instead, a reference zone appears in some kitchens for trouble-shooting during episodes and contains basic information about ingredients and techniques, or oft-used master recipes.

- *Browsing*. Zones for browsing appear near rest spaces, such as on coffee tables or bedside nightstands. Here, items can be picked up and enjoyed during a free moment. These zones often feature recent issues of serials, or the latest cookbook acquisitions.

- *Displaying*. The primary purpose of some zones is aesthetic, for culinary information can be visually pleasing. For instance, Tom prominently displayed a stack of contemporary and vintage cookbooks on a stool in his dining room.

- *Not for cooking*. Some cooks limit their mother lode to cookbooks, and place other sorts of culinary texts such as gastronomy and culinary fiction into zones elsewhere.

- *Deaquisitioning*. Over the years cooks weed their collections and place items aside for deacquisition. Zones of unwanted materials exist until action is taken to get rid of them; these appear in attics, basements, spare rooms, or garages.

Recipe collections.

A special type of zone is a recipe collection, a set of individual recipes of similar provenance and form gathered by the cook and kept altogether. They are typically in the kitchen because they are frequently used, except when space does not allow. Recipe collections entail an additional degree of distillation by the cook and are higher on the pyramid of Figure 2. These recipes are well regarded and deemed worthy of special housing and an accessible locale. Recipe collections come into being over time as the cook repeatedly draws individual recipes that look "good" or "interesting" from other zones, the mother lode, and the social world. Chosen recipes may resonate with a cooking project envisioned in the future, addressing what Bruce (2005) would call a *personal anticipated information need*.

Figure 4. Margaret's three recipe collections (clockwise from top left): A box of recipe cards for her favorites; an accordion file of Chinese recipes; more Chinese recipes in metal file cabinets in a closet.

Cooks with large PCLs may have more than one recipe collection, such as Margaret (Figure 4), who has three. Different collections come about because of the diverse formats of culinary information. A cook may have one recipe collection of clippings from the newspaper, which are irregularly shaped and tucked into a box; while recipes printed from epicurious.com are placed into an accordion file. Another recipe collection may exist on their home computer in the form of Microsoft Word folders. There is some documentary handiwork associated with the more meticulously maintained recipe collections, namely clipping, trimming, photocopying, typing, re-writing, or lamination to extend longevity. All this culinary paperwork happens at irregular intervals during leisure time; no cooks mentioned a firm recipe-processing schedule.

Most recipe collections house the full spectrum of foodstuffs and are organized into sections using broad culinary subject terms in alphabetical order. The headings appear on divider cards or tabs, making it easier to quickly find a desired recipe. Cooks did not express difficulty in creating and employing their own classification schemes. They generate the headings based upon familiarity with the gourmet cooking subject landscape. Since the cook is the sole or primary user and searcher of the collection, there is no need to weigh diverse interpretations of concepts, as for more complex, negotiated, public access classification systems.

Recipe collections may not be classified or ordered at all, such as those shown in Figure 5. Some cooks find the idea of rigorous organization overwhelming and are not concerned about a lack of reliable access to their recipe collections, which are relatively small, familiar, and navigable. Such nonchalance may also exist because gourmet cooking is a form of leisure and the stakes are not so high. Also, if a certain recipe cannot be found in one's PCL it is possible to trace it to its original source for a replacement or find a comparable recipe elsewhere, such as online.
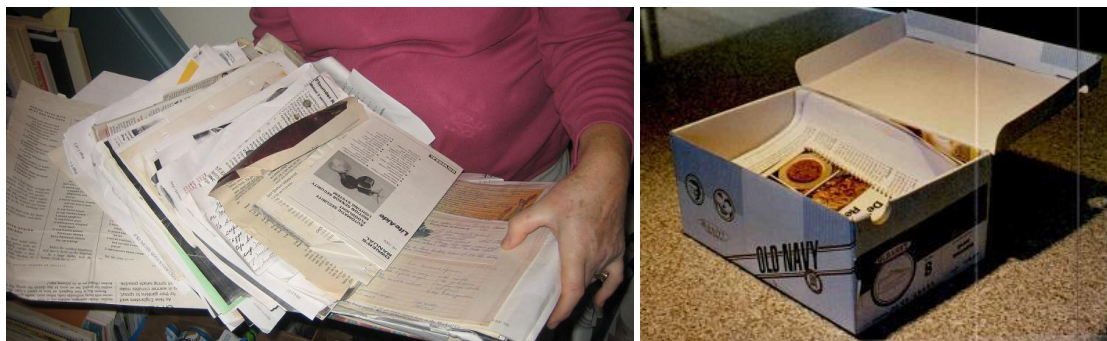

Figure 5. Unclassified recipe collections: In a folder (left); in a shoe box (right).

The binder.

By routinely drawing from the social world and the different structures of the PCL, the cook ends up with a small set of recipes they absolutely love and trust. These are the "keepers" and are staples of the cook's repertoire, family favorites during holidays, and sure-fire winners for impressing guests. All the cooks with large PCLs (and some with medium) placed keepers into a three-ring *binder* that was kept in or near the kitchen.

Figure 6. Examples of the binder (clockwise from top left): Binders by Dorene, Celeste, Patty, and Rose.

One of the primary functions of the larger PCLs is to facilitate the discovery of keepers for addition to the binder. An example of the path of a winning recipe through the system (the bibliographic pyramid) is as follows. A cooking magazine enters the home as a routine monthly acquisition for the mother lode. While new to the collection it is placed on a coffee table, a browsing zone. Soon thereafter, a recipe is flagged as promising, ripped out, and placed in a different zone, a collection of promising recipes. The recipe further piques the cook's interest while planning a cooking episode and is added to the menu of an upcoming cooking project. *If* the recipe delivers great results, then it is tweaked (if necessary) and added to the binder for future re-use. (If the results are not so impressive, the recipe is probably discarded.) In this way, the binder is the capstone of the pyramid and a critical sample and survey akin in many ways to a scholarly literature review. However, unlike a literature review that covers a time span, the binder remains perpetually a work-in-progress underlying the hobby career.

It is striking that the same simple technology of the binder appears across the cases of this study, on both east and west coasts. The four pictures in Figure 5 reveal surprising consistency

of this home-made culinary artifact. Here we see that for practical purposes old-fashioned paper trumps a digital form. A relatively small (1-inch), 3-ring binder houses recipes within plastic sheets for protection against wear and tear. The cook makes the extra effort to standardize recipes onto letter size paper by retyping newspaper clippings or reformatting digital recipes from online sources. Some binders are organized into topical sections via tabs, whereas others are not (since it is a small collection, items are not difficult to find in the binder.) It should be noted that the cook is really the editor of the binder, not its author, since recipes come from a variety of sources.

Above and beyond their practicality, binders carry a lot of personal and family meanings, akin to culinary keepsakes. For the cook they resemble a resume or portfolio, displaying the landmarks of their hobby career. In some cases they play a role in friendships between cooks. Claire was given the binder of her best friend Brenda, also a gourmet cook, when the two settled apart from each other on different coasts. The binders also institutionalize family food traditions. Patty intends to duplicate her holiday binders to pass on to children and grandchildren so that events can be reproduced as she passes on the mantle of family cook.

Discussion

To begin, this study delivers methodological insights. Scientific ethnography places equal emphasis on the informant's story, a hallmark of ethnography, *and* the material features of a setting. To this latter issue, the data gathering techniques of the guided tour coupled with the photographic inventory worked superbly. Gourmet cooks came to life as they lead me through their home and belongings, which served as touchstones for keen insights and detailed recollections. I wrote in my field journal, "The tour produced very rich data, more valuable than the interview alone in understanding how information works in the home. Cooks are more articulate when showing and handling materials, it makes it less abstract."

In particular, the photographic inventory and accompanying floor diagrams generated vivid records of information collections and their surrounds that would be difficult to capture otherwise due to their size and complexity. The visual data revealed: 1.) the types (genres) of culinary information resources, 2.) the number of each item and overall magnitude of the collection, 3.) the spatial relationship of information artifacts to each other and across the home, and, 4.) the aesthetics of personal collections.

However, these same techniques skewed the study towards the information universe in its traditional material formats. Though information artifacts (namely cookbooks and recipes in traditional paper formats) were the focus of the project, the research design left cloudy the role of electronic resources. During the tour it was not possible to explicate the many digital folders and files, bookmarks, websites, blogs, and email correspondence nested within a computer desktop. Studying the digital arena to its full extent would require additional contact time and specialized data-gathering such as screen captures. Similarly, the social information in the hobby paled in the data since it, too, lacked physical form in the household. To capture every dimension of information in this hobby would require multiple field sessions per case and various techniques to capture documentary, digital, and social information phenomena.

The findings are also an opportunity to reflect upon the elements of a theory of the *documents* in this hobby. The relationship between cooks and documents is complex. Individual cooks have a predilection or habitual way of relating to documents. The range can be seen as a continuum with contrasting epistemic approaches, here coined *empirical* and *rational*. The spectrum is *not* a measure of acumen or enthusiasm for cooking. Archetypes at each pole, and gradations in between, can be passionate, highly skilled gourmet cooks.

Empirical cooks rely upon first-hand experience and their senses to acquire culinary knowledge. In the kitchen they are less riveted to recipes. Gourmet cook Eric explains, "I don't follow recipes *per se*, for the most part. I use them as reference points." These cooks are more likely to *listen* for the sound of a soup simmering, *feel* the density of bread dough, *smell* the ripeness of fruit, *look* to assess the thickness of a sauce, and of course *taste* along the way. The perception that culinary knowledge is embodied turns attention away from the documentary domain, resulting in a nonchalant attitude towards the culinary literature and smaller and less significant personal libraries.

In contrast, *rational* cooks favor documents for knowledge acquisition and guidance during hands-on cooking. These sorts execute a recipe *precisely* as written, staying especially true to the ingredients and amounts, and they may not taste their preparations as they go. In describing her cooking process, Rose explains, "The recipe has to be in front of me. I check and double check. Even for those I have done many times, I have it out and check it." This religious devotion to the recipe manifests in a reliance upon culinary documents, an enchantment with the cookery literature, and extensive personal libraries.

A cook's document-related behavior along this continuum is *not* solely an attribute of their brain or personality. An important mediating variable is the cuisine or cooking style that is engaged. Cuisines or cooking styles are conceptual systems, akin to domains per domain analysis, that carry their own epistemological and documentary practices. For instance, French and baking favor detailed written instructions; Iranian and barbecue are more inclined to non-documentary knowledge. When a cook engages any culinary subject or recipe, its associated documentary tradition is impressed upon the experience and can override the cook's innate predilection. An interesting future line of research might examine in greater detail these narrower culinary realms, following domain analytic research that contrasts information phenomena in academic specialisms (Talja and Maula, 2003).

A cook's relationship to documents is also influenced by their stage in the hobby career. Newcomers are more dependent upon written instructions. Advanced cooks with established expertise can often forego recipes and rely upon experience and instincts. This suggests a steady movement *away* from documents over the years and decades. But this trajectory is not guaranteed if the cook avidly engages new cuisines and more complex preparations that entail documents as instructional aids.

Finally, the situational context of any cooking episode likely impacts the dynamic with documents. A cook in a hurry may ignore the culinary literature entirely; given free time they may become immersed. Location matters, too, for a cook on vacation at a summer cottage (or other remote site) would probably engage documents less than in their own home, surrounded by their PCL.

These multiple influences – an empirical or rational sensibility, cuisine or cooking style, hobby career stage, and situational context – make it difficult to propose reliable universal patterns for personal information management and use. At best some of the forces that impact the relationship can be described.

This project also illuminates the multi-dimensionality of documents themselves. A simplified and pragmatic view of documents is that they are tools for getting a job done. Yet most cookbooks and recipes in the PCL are rarely if ever *used* in the kitchen for cooking. Instead, their role is better characterized as having aesthetic, heritage, property, or symbolic properties.

Gourmet cooks aim to create foodstuffs that are striking and lovely to behold (Hartel, 2007, pp. 92-93). This central *aesthetic* of the hobby infuses the documentary universe. Cooks appreciate texts with photographs or illustrations, and take measures to protect these artifacts from wear and tear in the kitchen. Further, personal culinary libraries are sometimes styled to match household décor, and contain visually interesting objects such as photographs and artwork. Taylor and Swan (2005), discovered a similar aesthetic concern in the design of "artful" family organizational calendars. Without a doubt, documents, culinary and otherwise, can be valued for their beauty.

Culinary documents can carry family memories and traditions. This *heritage* dimension is especially present in culinary keepsakes, the recipes and cookbooks passed on through generations. Cooks treasure these items from the past because they transmit the life and culinary practices of ancestors. Many cooks in this study made plans to pass their own culinary collections onto the next generation, so that family traditions around the table are replicated into perpetuity.

And, items in a personal culinary library can be *property* with significant monetary value. Some cooks monitor the cookbook market to purchase collectible and landmark items, rather than borrowing from a friend or library, or using an online resource. Several cooks discussed the price of cookbooks and magazine subscriptions and their budgeting strategies. In short, the personal culinary library is a seen as an investment that is *owned* as well as used.

Finally, numerous *symbolic* values surround culinary documents. Certain cookbooks in a collection, such as classics or the latest best-selling work by a chef-celebrity, convey the aptitude and taste of the cook. Some cooks place these items on display, to broadcast their acumen and refined culinary sensibility. The home-made binder of any cook symbolizes their repertoire and accomplishments, akin to a resume or artist's portfolio, meanings that transcend practical usage.

Conclusion

To review, the *personal culinary library* is a result of a hobbyist's desire to keep culinary information within reach in the home. It supplies ideas and inspiration for ongoing cooking and is an archive of cooking experiences. Some avid cooks do not invest much in a PCL and center their hobby, instead, on past experience and real time sensations. Others appear enchanted

with the culinary information universe, mainly in the form of recipes and cookbooks, and bring it into their households en masse.

The dynamics of larger personal libraries resemble Shera and Egan's bibliographic pyramid. The cook chooses items from the information universe of the social world to add to their PCL, akin to a library's acquisition process. Once inside the home, the majority of items are located in a central spot--the mother lode. Smaller collections are selected for various purposes and grouped into zones around the residence. Along the way, individual recipes with greater potential are culled and kept altogether in recipe collections. Finally, the very best recipes, the keepers, are graduated to a binder, the gourmet cook's version of a literature review, the pyramid's capstone, and a personal and family keepsake.

Miksa (1996) predicts that in the future information institutions will increasingly coalesce on a personal scale, changing the nature of information work. Some next generation information professionals may be roving consultants who help others create, manage, and use their own personal libraries. This shifts the nexus of expertise in information science from large-scale, public information provision and access, to the facilitation of smaller, unique, home or workplace-based repositories. Such work requires an entrepreneurial spirit and familiarity with diverse information domains. Consultants to this realm must be comfortable approaching information amidst the paraphernalia of the everyday life and the complex dynamics of families and work groups. In addition to fluency in published information resources, future expertise may cover precious, unpublished, one-of-a-kind information keepsakes. Given the aesthetic dimensions of many home-based information collections, the sensibility of an interior designer would be apropos. The curriculum of a next generation information degree may be centered on the specialty of personal information management.

The personal libraries in the hobby of gourmet cooking may also exist across the broader class of *making and tinkering* (or craft) hobbies. These pursuits (such as knitting, photography, and model-building, among many others) are enjoyed by tens of millions of people worldwide and demand technical skill and topical knowledge. Systematic study and description of information phenomena in one hobby context is a first step towards understanding broader informational patterns in these upbeat, thriving, information rich realms.

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Appendix A

Memory Aid

Informants were asked to discuss the use of culinary information resources and given this list as a memory aid.

- Cookbooks
- Cooking instructors or educators
- Hands-on experience or experimentation
- Internet mailing lists or newsgroups
- Internet recipe websites (epicurious.com, foodtv.com…)
- Magazines
- Markets or vendors
- People: family, friends or other hobby cooks
- Personal resources (a handbook you made, personal notes…)
- Professional chefs
- Radio
- Restaurants
- Stores (cookware, gourmet, department…)
- Television
- Other: _____

Appendix B

Shooting Guide

A shooting guide provides structure to visual research in the home, and allows systematic comparison between cases/sites.

The hobby cook provides a tour of their home and culinary information resources. The tour is launched after the interview with the statement, *I'd like you to take me through your home, showing me the locations and resources used in the hobby. In particular, please show me the culinary information resources here in the house. Let's start in the kitchen.*

The hobby cook will be given the hand-held tape recorder and asked to speak clearly into the microphone as they lead the tour. When a particularly interesting entity is encountered, an object probe (DeLeon& Cohen, 2005) such as 'What is this?' or 'Tell me more about this...' or 'How does this work?' is used.

15-20 photographs are taken on three levels:

- *Rooms*: The major rooms used in the hobby will be identified. It is likely this will include kitchens, dining rooms, home offices, living rooms, storage spaces, patios.
- *Collections and zones*: The material information resources of the hobby will be investigated. It is anticipated this will consist of volumes of cookbooks and recipes in various forms. Following Lee, this may include collections, '*a group of documents, regardless of format, medium, and ownership*' (Lee, 2003, p. 422).
- *Items*: These may be hand-made assemblages of recipes, recipe kits, surfaces of information (i.e., bulletin boards, refrigerators with recipes), journals, and so on.

Acknowledgements

Endnotes

[1] For a theoretical statement on the topic of leisure in library and information science, see Kari and Hartel (2007), who propose a framework for the study of "the pleasurable and the profound." Reviews of research into information phenomena in leisure appear in Fulton and Vondracek (2009) and Hartel (2010).

[2] In this project, the term *information activities* is adapted from Hektor (1999) and refers to the physical actions directed at the manipulation of information; this definition places attention on what the gourmet cook can be observed to *do*.

[3] Here, *information resources* refers to the language and meaning-bearing artifacts in the gourmet cooking social world, mainly: cookbooks, recipes, recipe collections, culinary serials, etc. (in both paper and digital forms); as well as unique (unpublished) compendiums of the gourmet cook. Non-documentary entities such as people, and experiences of culinary travel, restaurant dining and marketing, and cooking itself serve as "meaning bearing artifacts" of the hobby; such items are noted in this paper but are not its primary focus. The paper places analytical attention on the *documentary* realm of greatest relevance to information science.

[4] The technique of a guided tour features prominently in studies by Malone (1983) and Kwasnik (1991) but otherwise has not been common in information science research.