CHAPTER

19

The sociology of the chef: a new theoretical proposition from the open professional kitchen

David Graham

Department of Service Sector Management; Sheffield Hallam University

OUTLINE

Food and Society
https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-811808-5.00019-2

19.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the origins of the traditional western restaurant kitchen and its social construction as a closed place of work typical of the manufacturing economy. This environment is a manifestation of a highly aggressive and masculine world, which contrasts starkly with the open kitchen, where employees are expected to focus on and engage with customers, resulting in a shifting sociology of the chef. The chapter identifies the changing and changed nature of the restaurant kitchen and its emergence into the world of the service economy transforming into the experience economy as it is reorientated from closed to open and the requirements of the chef who work in it.

19.2 The restaurant in the industrial era

Lashley and Morrison (2000) synthesize a number of restaurant definitions to describe a restaurant as a public space for the consumption of food and drink, where, following the service delivery, an exchange of money takes place. As Graham (2017) identifies, a restaurant service space traditionally hides the chef as a production craftsman from the customer, it is a stark contrast to the contemporary open restaurant where the kitchen is designed to be openly viewed from the customer service area, thus adding excitement and value to the customer experience (Frable, 1998). This is reiterated by Strong (2002), who describes the dining room and restaurant as being spatially designed with elaborate and ornate sideboards and separate doors for the servant (waiter) and guest. Professional cooking was seen as a craftsman trade for the wealthy to benefit from, with the practicalities of the production process not being something the customer wanted to view, explore, or understand. The finished item was the narcissism of style, with food displayed on elaborate buffets, often with pillars and carvings to emanate the Baroque style of the times. The age of railway travel brought the grand railway termini, and with this came opulence in hotel building, with the central aim of publicizing the grandeur of the Victorian railway companies (Bradley, 2007). Such hotel and restaurant designs incorporated the hiding away of the kitchen, reinforcing the segregation of working class production from upper class consumption, and reflecting the period of the grand country estate (Hembry, 1997; May 1998). Grand dining palaces required professional chefs with the skills to lead large kitchen brigades and the creativity to produce new and innovative dishes. The newly emerged hotel restaurant industrial cooking emanated the French style, adopting the technological developments of the time, and cast the chef in the grand hotel restaurant as a craftsman. To fill the gap in the "*hard skills*" needed for the new cooking techniques, the recruiting of French chefs became the norm. Alternatively, chefs who had the experience of having worked in France on their curriculum vitae were employed (Mennell, 1996). Demand in Great Britain for this French haute-cuisine was epitomized at the Reform Club, London, a kitchen which was led by Alexis Soyer (Brandon, 2009; Cowen, 2010), a French celebrity chef of the time, who was later eclipsed by Escoffier (1846–1935), who was perhaps the best known early celebrity chef, Escoffier reduced the visible Baroque format of the chef's work by casting aside the traditional grand style of cooking and the ornamented displays introduced by Careme. Who believed in the use of architectural pieces of food in the restaurant, creating "*waves of the sea, waterfalls and rivers with a photographic*

concern for instantaneity" (Weiss, 1998, p. 63). It was during this period that the rich country house estate, the cultural capital owner of dining etiquette, where the cook was below stairs and the butler acted as the dispenser of the food on offer (Powell, 2011), began to lose its power as employment in the grand estate houses shrank. The growing middle classes, the brokers, merchants, civil servants, industrialist, and bankers, with their increased wealth, demanded superior hospitality and fine restaurants that emanated the style of the grand estate, with the food being served by waiting staff and the chef/cook being unseen (Short, 2007).

It was during this period that Escoffier applied his past knowledge and experience to radically challenge and change the manner in which the closed kitchens were operating, recognizing that sections within the kitchen were often replicating work processes. He instilled greater professionalism through the banning of alcohol while at work and introduced a barley drink to be made available to all chefs in the kitchen to quench their thirst in the heat, claiming that it *"was to be healthy and restorative"* (Rossant, 2004, p. 79). Escoffier contended that drunkenness led to bad language, and he did not allow vulgar street language in the kitchen, nor did he permit the kitchen staff to treat the younger members of the kitchen brigade brutally. Escoffier's legacy of traditional French cuisine remained unchanged well into the 1970s. His writings articulated the strict discipline and severity of his French cuisine training and its ongoing usage. The professional kitchen was a microcosm of industrialization, a small world, devoid of the customer, with work rules and norms devised and reiterated by the chefs working within them. This did not wholly reflect the *"industrial values of mechanization, standardisation, and time thrift for food processing"* (Fantasia, 2010, p. 34) as practiced in the factories of Britain but rather the organization of *"male artisans distinct from the female purveyors of domestic cuisine"* (*p. 34*), thus perpetuating the idea that the professional skilled craft job of cooking was a masculine occupation. Escoffier wrote in his diaries that the public had little regard for, or understanding of, the work of the chef. High society still saw themselves and the chefs as being in the master and servant role, with the lavish surroundings and the maître d'hôtel (head waiter) being the center stage of the restaurant and the chef being hidden behind the scenes. However, some did challenge Escoffier's orthodox thinking based on his complex style of cookery, with its use of heavy sauces and lavish presentation on service flats, culminating in food that looked appealing but often lacked flavor. This cookery style was challenged because of the development of nouvelle cuisine, an approach to cooking in the 1970's that emphasizes natural ingredients and the delicate flavors of the food, which is presented on the plate with symmetry and flair. This food movement was led by the progenies of Fernand Point (1897–1955). At this time, *"Careme`s la cuisine modern had become la cuisine classic in light of nouvelle cuisine and the disciples of Paul Bocuse, Pierre Troisgos and Michel Guerard"* (Trubek, 2000, p. 13). As food production systems changed to accommodate nouvelle cuisine, the chef was thrust into the limelight, and with the emergence of the chef as a restaurant celebrity, the role of the waiter diminished.

19.3 The changing orientation of the restaurant

The traditional restaurant had theatrical décor, incorporating marble, mosaics, grand staircases, mirrors, chandeliers, and silk wall coverings, creating opulent and decadent

surroundings as an escape from the reality of the home. At this time, it was felt that observing the practice of cooking would ruin the experience for the customer. Following the traditions of industrialization, the kitchen, (the work place), was a dirty world of masculine production, and the chef, (the worker), was to remain unseen a world recognized by Fine (1996) in his ethnographical study of chefs in the United States of America. The total dining experience depended on the quality and standards of the fixtures and fittings and the staff service and interaction (Wood, 2000; Gillespie, 2001). If food presentation and cooking was to be viewed, it was via the layout of the food on the plate brought from the kitchen to the guest by the service staff, either on grand service flats to be spoon and forked (silver service) or on the elaborate buffet table. The culinary kitchen was still dominated by French cuisine, and those who worked in the kitchen used techniques and cooking terminology that harked back to the era of haute cuisine because many still regarded France as the epicenter of professional cookery. As Grimod (1802 cited in Schehr and Weiss (2001), p. 62) found:

> "Although French cuisine is without contest the best in the world, we think it could be enriched with a great deal of foreign dishes and appropriate them while perfecting them … Similarly, if France has become the supreme arbiter in the art of taste, it is greatly due to the care it has taken to reject foreign discovery."

The chefs who worked in a traditional closed kitchen were so alienated from the customers, never seeing their reactions to, or an appreciation of the dishes created in the kitchen created a certain apathy. This apathy was reinforced by the old traditions of haute cuisine, which involved the chef being shut away and producing dishes in the way they chose, regardless of the needs and desires of the customer. However, the public was now demanding a different kind of cuisine that mirrored new cooking techniques and practices (Kelly, 2003). This lighter cuisine attracted the title of new cooking or "*nouvelle cuisine*," and with it came a restaurant movement centered on smaller and lighter portions arranged on the plate by the chef (Ladenis, 1988) and delivered by waiting staff to the customer.

19.4 The restaurant kitchen in the service economy

The chef orchestrated the presentation of the food served to the customer and due to being central to the process began to influence the orientation of the food service style in the restaurant (Lane, 2014). Ross (1992, p. 100) refers to:

> "…a rich seam of genuinely food-orientated innovation, springing partly from nouvelle cuisine, which returned structure and composition to restaurant food after the shapeless Mediterranean stews of the 1960s, and partly by the new world possibilities that ethnic cuisines brought with them."

A repercussion of nouvelle cuisine, which placed the chef central to the service through the plating of the food, was the deskilling of the waiter as their job now merely involved carrying the completed dish out to the customer. The philosophy of "*a la russe*" silver service, which had been lost, was that the chef was regarded as a production element in relation to food service. The service from the silver flat, cutting and carving at the table, offered a level of theater and gave the customers the opportunity to interact and discuss the food (Cousins et al., 2014). Food service showmanship was a key element of the restaurant theater, and this was

forgotten in the era of nouvelle cuisine in the 1970s. As Sloan (2004, p. 72) states, "*…a 100 and 50 years after Brilliant-Savarin the restaurant is still theater,…*" and as such it required a new vehicle of delivery. The food and the decor became the key attributes that the restaurateur now focused upon. The showmanship of the waiter and the entertainment offered by the head waiter had been a key aspect of the customer's dining experience. The theatrical aspect of dining was resigned to history as the traditions of food service were slowly removed, the essence of the restaurant being forgotten. The dining experience was reduced to a sterile focus on the gastronomic features of the food, with nouvelle cuisine being linked to the plated food arrangements in Japanese cookery, both serving healthy food in small quantities that was exquisitely arranged (Fuller, 1992). So began a battle between the waiters and chefs, with the chefs arguing that the traditional silver service and gueridon service were slow in serving the food to the customer and that the food thus often arrived cold (Graham, 2001). Furthermore, chefs claimed that the manner in which the waiters presented and served the food to the customer did not match the skilled manner in which the chefs had prepared the dish. The nouvelle cuisine food movement was the catalyst for the erosion of the waiting profession and customer service interaction, and with this the chef was beginning to be launched into the restaurant (Graham, 2006; Graham and Dunning, 2011).

19.5 The open kitchen and the questioning of closed kitchen work

Plated food has become the norm for food service delivery, deskilling the waiter's role and thus reducing pay and career prospects (Fuller, 1992). The structural change to the server's job has led to a far greater usage of part time staff, offering the restaurant operation flexibility, reduced server hours, and consequentially greater productivity (Wood, 2000). Although service staff voiced complaint, they were largely ignored as the chef patron and the celebrity chef embraced the concept of food being delivered from the kitchen as a composition on the plate, extracting the server wherever possible.

However, high-profile headwaiters (maître d'hôtel), such as Marjan Lensnik from Claridges, London, did voice concerns in the Caterer and Hotelkeeper (July 1, 1988) cited in (Fuller, 1992, p. 8):

> "He welcomed a further new style, `cuisine moderne` with adaptations that do not detract from the waiters' skill. Commenting on lovely porcelain oval dishes with everything arranged on it beautifully served on the plate by the waiter …. No it won't look such a pretty picture but this is a restaurant not an art gallery."

Marjan Lensnik recognized that the waiters' contribution to the dining experience was the communication between the waiter and customer and the visual showmanship, which together created an experience that was memorable because of its uniqueness. Not until the maturity of nouvelle cuisine plated food would the restaurateur begin to recognize and appreciate that both the food delivery service method and the service staff interaction played a key role in the dining experience and contributed to customer satisfaction (Hansen et al., 2005). The pleasure associated with the dining experience was not solely dependent on the food being produced, but rather on the amalgamation of the various tangible and intangible factors (Wood, 2000) that created the "*servicescape*" (Wakefield and Blodgett, 1996; Lin, 2004),

which chef practitioners had overlooked. The servers created a level of excitement in the restaurant (Mars and Nicod, 1984) as they engaged in a performance that was as central to the restaurant visit as the food (Graham, 2001). A whole generation of seminal restaurant research (Whyte, 1947; Mars and Nicod, 1984) on the importance of the server was forgotten as the chef took center stage and the kitchen was omitted from the performance.

However, some chef patrons and restaurateurs failed to fill the interaction void that plated food service brought and continued to produce food in the traditional closed kitchen in the manner Escoffier had advocated. The social construction of the restaurant remained one of hidden food production, out of sight from the customer. The impression of high-quality food and the chef preparing food in a high-pressure environment could be maintained and fueled by the masculinity of craft employment. Closed kitchens facilitated the concealment of the chef and prevented chef interaction with the customer, with the chefs constantly venting their anger or frustration on the servers while they queued at the hotplate (Mars and Nicod, 1984; Fine, 1996) and the use of "*dirty work*" practices. The continued use of the closed kitchen enabled the waiter and chef aggressive relationships to be confined to the back-of-house environment. The decoupling of the chef from the customer was about to be challenged as the restaurant service evolved into one homogenized service involving artistically plated food emerging from the kitchen. In practice, as a result of nouvelle cuisine food being plated in the kitchen, chefs had inadvertently reorientated themselves closer to the customer. The waiter was, in effect, no longer acting as the sole intermediary food production service worker; the chef had become engaged in food service work through creating the meal on the plate and being put on show when placed in the open kitchen.

19.5.1 The open kitchen or theater kitchen

The open kitchen concept is not a wholly new idea; Italian pizzerias have used this format for many years, and it is a key design feature of the Japanese Teppanyaki kitchen (Fang et al., 2013; Norii, 2015). It is in the evolution of the traditional British and French mid- and upscale restaurant that the greatest growth has been seen in the open kitchen operational style. In the traditional restaurant, it was historically traditional for the chef to enter into the dining area to carve the meat and serve it at the buffet table. As Frable (1998) (p. 5) explains:

> "Exposing food preparation to diners has remained popular for more than fifteen years because it creates culinary and visual excitement for the guest and reduces wasted back-of-the-house space because the pickup area is shared with the dining room circulation."

The development of the open kitchen offers the chef an opportunity to show off his production skill, the freshness of the ingredients, and the cleanliness of the kitchen (Graham, 2006a; Snaith and Pitham, 2006). The open kitchen provides entertainment for the diners through suspense and action, for example, from flashes of fire, the sounds of cooking food, and the chef's chopping skills. "*Now the open kitchen has evolved into entertainment, a frenzy of excitement just a few feet from the table*" (Petrowski, 1999, p. 171). However, the open kitchen is not to everyone's taste. Petrowski (1999) goes on to say that the open kitchen has as much atmosphere as a hospital emergency room. They are loud, bright, and full of odors that can be

good or bad, although some of this can be overcome with sliding glass doors to keep the kitchen noise to a minimum. Sheridan (2001, p. 85) contends that:

> "Open kitchens are a big source of noise. Unless the dining room space is large, keep the kitchen behind closed door, or counsel the cooks to work and speak as quietly as possible."

Open working environments have created a fundamental change in working practice for the chef. For some chefs, working in front of the customer is a way of promoting their talent and skills, and they can get a "*buzz*" from doing it. For others, it can be their worst nightmare as some chefs are customer averse and do not even want to be seen (Graham, 2006). Furthermore, chefs are often renowned for their boisterous and aggressive behavior in the kitchen, in keeping with the masculine identity of the role (Meloury and Signal, 2014) promoted by the celebrity chefs, for whom working with food is a creative art which can only occur when high emotions are involved and displayed (Dorenburg and Page, 1996). Chefs work in an aggressive manner and have a reputation for shouting and swearing, with this persona reinforced through the high-profile celebrity chef. "*Cooks fight with servers. The tales of conflict are myriad, but the causes are common — lack of communication and an ability to empathize*" (Lorenzini and Johnson, 1995, p. 148).

19.5.2 The experience economy and the development of the contemporary open kitchen

A key reason theater cooking was introduced was to meet the growing demand from customers for appetizing presentation of meals alongside restaurant entertainment (Graham, 2001). Mintel (2006), in the study Eating Out: 10 Year Trends, found that the media, with its cooking and food provenance programs and celebrity chefs, has increased the consumers' interest in food. In turn, with a greater number of restaurants designed with open kitchens and the reintroduction of theater into the dining experience, Graham (2006a) argues we have returned to a "*new*" gueridon service (Cousins et al., 2014). Throughout the 1980 and 1990s, with the growth of the celebrity chef, personality, and entertainment, the location of the kitchen has become increasingly important in restaurant design (Pratten and O'Leary, 2007). Rohatsch et al. (2007, p. 135) found that since the early 1990s there has been a growing trend to shift kitchen functions closer to the customers and celebrate food preparation in front of them:

> "Within the restaurant, the design influence is generally based on the market, the demographic of the target consumers, and their expectations along with a belief…
>
> … that dramatizing the service performance is the best way to gain sustainable competitive advantage."
> ***Morgan et al. (2008)*, *p. 111.***

Bruni (2005) notes that one chef believes that the open kitchen has been developed without considering how overimposing it is, arguing that the concept has been overdone, with the driving force being the aim of merely entertaining the customer. Research undertaken by

Chow et al. (2009, p. 101) identified customers who believed that the mystique of cookery was lost with an open kitchen, saying *"you don't want to know how the magician does his trick, you just want to be entertained."* Other respondents raised fears about bad language and communication issues between front and back of house. Even with such negative findings, the overall conclusion is that the benefits of the open kitchen far outweigh the disadvantages cited in the negative responses. However, Baraban and Durocher (2010, p. 12) do offer a word of caution, one that emphasizes the true reason for the success of a restaurant. They say that "*whilst the food may not initially be what brings the customer to a restaurant*," it is the food that will ensure repeat business. Franck (2002, p. 83) confirms this, saying *"no restaurant could lure customers with good dishes alone these days, but it is the food that keeps them coming back."*

The open kitchen has created an experience as part of the customer journey, one that provides lasting memories of something special, with the aim of generating new and retaining old business (Walter et al., 2012). In effect, the open or theater kitchen is being used to enhance the dining experience by bringing the cooking to the front of house and introducing theatrical elements into the cooking process. The chef becomes part of the atmosphere as one of the new service staff and a central part of the entertainment on offer in the restaurant environment adding to the hospitality experience (Lugosi, 2008; 2014). The idea of theater cooking is not new as food service has always *"contained elements of theatrical performance"* (Morgan et al., 2008, p. 112) and *"food paraded"* through the restaurant has been acceptable practice (Alston, 2015, p. 50). For example, gueridon and silver service styles, where food can be, and still is, carved and flambéed in front of the guest, using finishing processes of food preparation and cooking (Graham, 2006a). In food service dining, the quality and the prices of food have been the decisive factors in determining which restaurants have prospered and which have not (Kotler, 1973; Wood, 2000).

The visual and verbal engagement of the chef with the customer adds to the cacophony of stimulating sounds, sights, and smells in such an environment, with the open kitchen chef working in view of the customer taking great care with the visual and audio aspects of cooking (Franck, 2002), thus communicating the restaurant image and values to the guest Bruner (1990). As Katsigris and Thomas (2009, p. 223) note, *"open kitchen, noise levels have become part of the atmosphere to the extent that the open kitchen and associated noise is part of the design and concept."* Anderson and Mossberg (2004), Hansen et al. (2005), Heide and Gronhaug (2006) Morgan et al. (2008), and Katsigris and Thomas (2009) suggest that the tangibles of theater cooking can add to the theatrical nature of the experience, entertaining customers and easing their fears about hygiene. Jennings (2011) believes that as open kitchens have become so common, *"they are no longer about the `wow factor` but rather used as a vehicle to communicate business core values"* (*p. 32*), placing the chef as an actor on the stage to communicate with the customer.

19.6 Emotional labor

Frontline workers are required to display certain types of emotions, such as friendliness, warmth, politeness, confidence, enthusiasm, or cheerfulness, while interacting with the customer (Soares, 2003) and change or control their emotions when interacting with the guest in exchange for a monetary reward (Grandey et al., 2013). This is a new representation which

the chef in the open kitchen will now need to display. An emotional laborer can now be described as someone who interacts with a customer and has to use their emotional skills to provide a positive interaction between themselves and the customer in accordance with the management's job role performance requirements (Cole et al., 1994).

To be classified as an emotional laborer, Haynes and Kleiner (2001) contend that workers must be in an occupation that possess three characteristic: (i) it requires the employee to make face to face or voice to voice contact with the public, (ii) it requires the employee to produce an emotional state in the customer, and (iii) it allows the employer the opportunity to exercise a degree of control over the emotional activities of employees, either through training or supervision. Under these circumstances, as Grandey and Gabriel (2015, p. 324) emphasize, the employee's emotional labor *"is sold for a wage and therefore has exchange value."* The open kitchen chef meets these criteria as an employee who now has to perform for the customer's entertainment in line with the organization's expectations of the chef while on show in the open kitchen. Barsade (2002, p. 646) describes emotions as *"intense but relatively short term reactions to specific stimulus,"* while Vincent (2011, p. 1369) claims that emotions at work can fall into three categories, which are *"feelings we cannot control; feelings that result from our emotional ability to evoke, manipulate and suppress our feelings; and feelings that are affected by morals, values, attitudes and dispositions."* Emotional laborers engage in communication that results from either the expression of felt emotions or a decision to disguise or manage them (Fiebig and Kramer, 1998) so that the customer has a positive engagement with the server. It is deemed by many employers to increase customer satisfaction (the overall feeling of contentment with the interaction) and thus improve revenue and sales, resulting in increased repeat business and financial success (Rafaeli and Sutton, 1987, 1991; Lee and Ok, 2014).

These factors underline how and why employees' emotional displays are twofold: (i) the employees who participate in customer contact are the interface between the guest and the organization and therefore represent the face of the business. Negative interactions from the employee will leave a poor impression of the company; (ii) due to the "*unique*" attributes concerning the nature of the restaurant service engagement, it is necessary that the industry establishes policies, display rules, and procedures to govern the standardization of their product and service (Wong and Mei, 1999; Diefendorff et al., 2005). The behavior of the service deliverer, how they manage the interaction (Gulati, 2007), and how the relationship develops (Parvatiyar and Sheth, 2001; Koopmann-Holm, 2011) strongly determines the customer's perception of the product and service quality (Johnson and Grayson, 2005). Bowen and Schneider (1988) and Brown et al. (1991) suggest that the concept of emotional labor has a particular relevance to service encounters because frontline service personnel are naturally situated at the organization–customer interface and therefore represent the face of the organization to the customer. This performance put on for the customer requires employees *"to produce an emotional state"* (Wharton, 2009, p. 157), suggesting that there are two ways that employees may engage in emotional labor with customers, which are "*surface acting*" and "*deep acting*," through which *"acting occurs when we actually deceive ourselves as much as we deceive others"* (Taylor and Tyler, 2000, p. 77). Hochschild (1983) believes that while both forms are internally false, the motives behind them differ. Employers attempting to control workers interaction (Belanger and Edwards, 2013) can impact on the employees' sense of self, thus creating threats to their identity (Wharton, 2009). When employees smile and

convey friendliness, their apparent emotions can impact on the emotions of the customer, who may associate this with good service. However, this works both ways as a customer's negative emotions can affect the employee's emotions.

19.6.1 Different emotional acting in closed and open environments

According to Ashforth and Humphrey (1993, p. 98), *"emotions are an integral and inseparable part of everyday organisational life."* Putnam and Mumby (1993, p. 39) point out that in organizations, emotions are *"consistently devalued and marginalized while rationality is privileged as an ideal for effective organisational life."* Only a limited range of emotional expressions tend to be socially acceptable in the workplace. An emotional outburst out of sight of the customer might be socially acceptable, but it would be frowned upon in public. Within the open world, displays of negative emotion, such as fear, anxiety, and anger, tend to be unacceptable, as do expressions of intense emotion (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993). These norms of acceptability have directly influenced the craft worker in open environments, who while on view must suppress emotions that would normally show when under pressure. Working practices have had to become more professional in terms of language and communication, production skills, personal hygiene, and personal appearance (*esthetic labor*) (Warhurst and Nickson, 2001).

19.6.2 The current emotional labor literature focus

Customer satisfaction can be described as a customer's overall evaluation of their purchase (Cronin and Taylor, 1992). According to Korczynski (2003, p. 57), customers *"are increasingly seeking service quality."* Delivering service effectively to satisfy customers requires a humanistic intervention and a display of positive emotions by staff in many service occupations (Tsai, 2001). Research undertaken by Bolton and Boyd (2003) found that service organizations require their employees *"to do more than simple surface acting, they need to invest in the performance"* (p. 300). Hochschild (2003) agrees that "*surface acting*" is not sufficient in the contemporary service interaction and authenticity needs to be provided through "*deep acting*" orientations.

Not all customers are positive and engaging toward the server in service organizations, and there is little doubt that service providers have to deal with rude and demanding customers, for whom the scripted engagement process may be inadequate (Bolton and Houlihan, 2005). A customer's mood can affect how they respond to a particular experience, and people's moods can be ameliorated by both social and environmental conditions. It is for the service worker, and in this case the new craft worker, to identify the various customer moods and customer types to engage with the guest accordingly. Barsade (2002) reinforces this when he contends that *customer service jobs may be very stressful, not only because of overt conflict but because of the continuous low-grade effect of catching customers' negative moods.* Bolton and Houlihan (2005) note that customers are like customer-service workers in that they are many-sided, complex, and sophisticated actors who may not always behave socially as they do when they interact with the service provider, believing that the current generation of consumers have much higher expectations than previous generations. While it can be argued that Hochschild (1983) is correct in her argument that the exchange is unequal,

Bolton and Houlihan (2005) findings suggest that customer sovereignty may be mythical as neither producers nor consumers believe it to be true. While consumers can be demanding, this is not due to a sense of divine right or to demean the service worker. The craft service work over the last two decades has had far greater recognition through the media. The greater interest in food and the growth in leisure or hobby cooking has created a mystique around the skill, which when coupled with the interest in the work and craft that the chef deploys has led to a respect for the chef and customers viewing them as being at least their equals (Graham, 2006).

Brook (2009a; 2009b) states that Hochschild has been criticized as customer service interactions are in fact double edged and have the potential to both satisfy and distress the worker. As a school of thought, this partly rejects the notion that having one's emotions commoditized is alienating and uncomfortable for the worker. Contradicting Hochschild (1983) in her original research, which found that cabin crew who put on a service act unconditionally altered themselves for the role, Bolton and Boyd (2003), Sheehan (2012) and Tungtakanpoung and Wyatt (2013) in their studies of cabin crew found that rather than employing *"deep acting"* the workers gave *"empty performances"* to satisfy the targets set by the company without ever *"buying-in"* and that the employees did not need to love or believe in the product to sell it effectively.

Lopez (2010) further extended the work of Jenkins et al. (2010) by putting forward the concept of the triangle of power, which encompasses the worker, manager and customer. Lopez argues that even if companies control their employee's emotions when interacting with customers, some workers still choose to go that extra mile during the service encounter. He asks whether employees go the additional mile for purposes of self-satisfaction or to impress management and whether they make the extra effort because of their personality, upbringing or even education. Jenkins et al. (2010) believe that working with customers is not only about feelings, but also about the physical interaction between humans as social beings.

Further to this, Bolton (2009) argues that although company guidelines are used in the delivery of the service product, within this delivery process the individual server will also be inclined to add their own individual delivery perspective, insisting that skill can be objectively measured across two dimensions, *"task and discretionary content"* (Bolton, 2004, *p. 26)*, and that if a job scores highly on both of these measures, it can be classed as skilled emotional work. This concept of work was adapted from Litter (1982, p. 8) and further developed by Bolton as The Dimensions of Emotional Work, from which a framework was developed, as illustrated in Figs. 19.1.

According to Bolton, box A (Standardised Services) includes the *"emotional proletariat"*, who are described as the workers undertaking *"mundane, routine, low skilled work and most importantly are tightly controlled* via *scripts" (2004, p. 26)*. Within the hospitality industry, these can be identified as the fast food and casual dining restaurant staff, who can be grouped together and described as adhering to the *"have a nice day culture, where niceness is routinely delivered"*. As such, the level of skill that they have in customer interaction is one that is not valued or classed as a skill. The work is so highly scripted that the service encounter cannot always deal effectively with customer uncertainty as it gives the service worker little flexibility. Box C (Specialist Services) comprises, *"call center or the retail and catering style market*

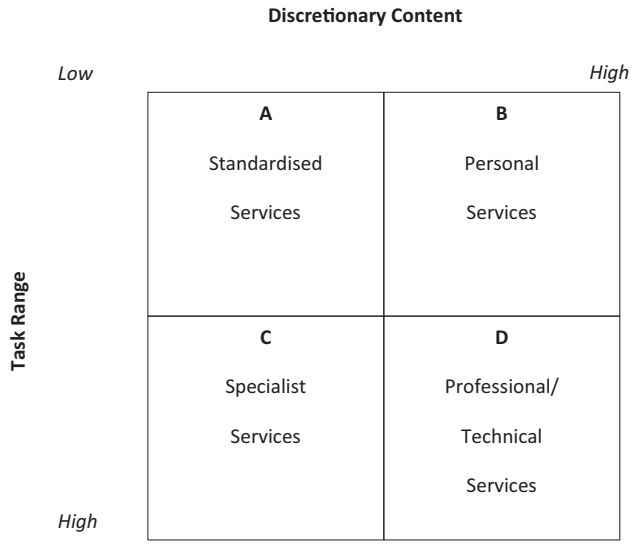

FIGURE 19.1 The dimensions of emotional work. *Source: Bolton, S.C., 2004. Conceptual confusions: emotional work as skilled work. In: Warhurst, C., Grugulis, I., Keep, E. (Eds.), The Skills That Matter. Palgrave MacMillan, Basingstoke, Hampshire, UK, pp. 19–38.*

who may be placed higher in the hierarchy" (p. 26). The work that they undertake involves high levels of technical or specialist knowledge along with a greater component of discretionary content than box A work. Bolton states that such workers have *"limited autonomy as direction is only granted to workers with the right attitude"* and goes on to contend that they can be relied on to express real feelings in the interests of creating the right emotional climate to improve customer service (Bolton, 2004). It is apparent that the skilled craft work of the open kitchen chef does not fit into this box as their work comprises a high task range and a relatively high discretionary content, and as such they generally fit better into box D (Professional/Technical Services). Bolton argues that box B (Personal Services) and D represent those workers with high levels of discretion in the customer interaction. Box B represents personal carers, nursing auxiliaries, child carers, security and distribution services. Those in box D are allowed self-determined interactions, which are determined by the *"professional ethos"* (Bolton, 2004, p. 28) of the job. This is associated with their widely recognised qualifications, which indicate the specialist knowledge in the area in which they engage with the customer. Bolton states that this group of workers is comprised of the medical profession, legal services, education and social services. Arguably, the skilled craft worker as the chef gravitates toward box D, which sets the chef in particular apart from the restaurant server in box C, but it does not wholly identify the reality that a chef is a skilled craftsman with high levels of autonomy and discretionary content.

Building on Bolton's work, Rose and Wright (2005), Grugulis (2007) and Payne (2009) have all noted that referring to emotional Labor as a skill would be difficult to achieve. Payne (2009) argues that there is no denying that many jobs entail emotional Labor and the concept is a fundamental feature of all jobs naturally learnt through one's cultural assimilation. Payne further suggests that skill remains in the eye of the beholder and that by labeling emotional work as skill and paying workers based on their levels of such a skill, there would be no shortage of its applicability to the "*skilled*" emotion work in low end service jobs. It is a challenge to orientate the chef as a skilled craft worker into the categorizations that Bolton (2004, p. 26) puts forward. The chef can arguably be suspended between the personal service or expert service worker and the professional/technical worker. The identification has not been discussed in the literature, and to date, the craftsman has not been identified in the new service role paradigm of customer contact and never defined within these parameters. As a group of employers they have, through operational work design, undertaken a transformation from closed to open work and have only now through this chapter discussion and the authors published work (Graham, 2015, 2017) been identified as emotional Laborers and researched in-line with the integrated three component model (Grandey and Gabriel, 2015).

The existing emotional labor employee types previously identified and researched have not had to undergo the fundamental change in their work form that the chef has, from being hidden in employment in the old world of work to now being exposed to customer contact. The customer is now able to observe these employees as "*back office*" workers and see through a "*window*" into a hidden world, whereas the employee's perception is of being a front office worker. The employee is actually positioned as an "*intermediary*" service worker, on the "*back stage*" for the customer and the "*front stage*" for the employee with the expected requirement to engage in customer interaction. The nature of the craft element and the production interface with the customer actually sets this group of workers apart as a new category of emotional laborer. The debate within the arena of this new transformational worker group type, who can be identified as those whose role is significantly low routine with high levels of craft engagement to create a unique service tangible product (Graham, 2006). In part because this group of employees have traditionally been seen as back-of-house employees and not as front office interactive service workers, they have been overlooked in the current emotional Labor literature and not Identified as a research group who have worked in a private space having transferred into a public viewed space. The employee holds a level of discretionary content and task range but the Laborer is skilled in a craft which is separate from the technical or professional services. This group of workers have facilitated Graham's (2015; 2017) research into a new worker group of emotional Labor in order to understand the transition of the chef and the going "*round these roadblocks*" that Grandey and Gabriel identify (2015, p. 342) and so "*take the road less traveled and drive emotional labor forward*" *(2015, p. 342)* which is at the "crossroads." Furthermore, if one accepts Litter's (1982) claim that the focus of emotional work is simultaneous production and consumption, it becomes clear that the open kitchen chef is a new exemplification of emotional employment, one that the hospitality and generic business literature has to-date omitted.

19.6.3 Esthetic Labor

Esthetic labor is the concept that every frontline service job requires the individual member of staff to *"look good and sound right"* (Warhurst and Nickson, 2001, p. 1; Karlsson, 2011, p. 51) and fit with the organizational values and image. In essence, the worker who is employed in a customer facing role is required to embody the customer's preconception of the worker type and be able to engage with the customer in a manner that they would expect him or her to (Warhurst et al., 2000; Pettinger, 2004). The employee is required to be well groomed, wear a uniform and communicate in a manner that the customer is able to relate to and hence enter into a dialogue with at an identifiable level (Warhurst and Nickson, 2005). The esthetic laboring literature argues that the service worker (p. 4) is the *"mobilization, development and commodification of embodied dispositions"* in that the worker is *"selling"* ones *"class"* or *"taste"* for the corporate good. The service worker is employed by the organization for the way that they sound and the manner in which they effectively communicate (Butler, 2014) along with their physical attributes (Harvey et al., 2014). Examples of this are given by Karlsson (2011), who discusses the manner in which staff employed in an up market retail shop use words such as *"exquisite and luxurious"* and rather prosaic terms such as *"nice and lovely" (p. 54), thus* identifying with the organization (McIntyre, 2014).

Telephone call center workers require language which is complementary to the customer class level that they serve. Clarke (2014) found that for some this creates a barrier to employment, for example in the offshore call centers (Taylor, 2005; Derry et al., 2013). Warhurst et al. (2000) discuss the existence of a *"style labor"* market, which is comprised of the designer retailers, boutique hotels, style bars, cafes and restaurants, where staff are employed to fit the brand. Karlson (2011) found that in some style retail organizations this is taken further; staff are not supplied with a uniform but instead the clothes that they wear for work are expected to fit within the image of the outlet or they select discounted clothes from the current range, which reflects the image of the corporate brand. Witz et al. (2003) underpin this by reporting that even staff who wish to cut their hair or dye it in a drastic manner are expected to discuss their fashion image with their manager first. The use of cosmetics while at work and the manner in which they reflect the values and image of the organization is a concern. Makeup and tattoos are related to the social class and gender of the staff, and (Trimming, 2014) organizations are keen to ensure that these are in line with the social expectations of the customer type they serve (Williams and Connell, 2010). It is argued that labor is no longer performing in the *"experience economy"* (Pine and Gilmore, 1999) but rather in the *"esthetic economy"* (Postrel, 2003) in which the *"the employee's look can be as much a part of the atmosphere as the grain of the furniture or the beat of the background music" (p. 127).*

To enable service staff to be effective in the service encounter, they need to be skilled in approved social attributes. Sheane (2011, p. 147) argues that *"emotional Labor and aesthetic Labor are concepts relying on social, presentational rules that are cultural, situational and learned."* Such employment is linked to a service interaction the laborer feels comfortable in and can relate to (Schaubroeck and Jones, 2000). This is enhanced by the worker customizing the interaction to match the level of the individual guest within an organization that allows *"the laborer to shape the service interaction"* (Warhurst and Nickson, 2007, p. 791). Sheane (2011) puts forward that the emotional and esthetic literature has for too long been focused on the employer–worker relationship and the emphasis should now be on the worker–customer

interaction. As such, *"communication, comes to the forefront and this makes room for an autonomous subject who makes contextual aesthetic and emotional choices based on temporal and situation conditions" (p. 153).* This reiterates Goffman's (1959) claim in his study of hairdressers regarding the significance of self-presentation and the importance of emotions, esthetics, and body techniques, as well as the employer's appreciation of the value of the staff member who is able to interact in a service encounter that fits with the values of the organization. The chef as a traditional craft worker has normally been viewed as a "*back office*" employee, who is employed for skill levels in the production area and not necessarily within a customer service engagement role.

Closed hidden craft employment is changing in the service economy, and the level of emotional and esthetic labor required has increased according to the design of the experience or the esthetic craft environment, and this has been overlooked by the literature. The traditional orientation of the chef employed in a masculine world was one which required a craft skill level for the task, with no regard for customer interaction and with-it limited levels of esthetic or emotional Laboring, which is no longer appropriate. Goffman (1959) asserts that the apprentice or working class employee is left to their own devises in the acquisition of the social and style capital and unless they are able to access the style capital they are unable to access the high-end and better paid jobs. He contends that lower class craft employees have to learn on the job to access the mobility of employment and move up in status through the work outlets (fast food; casual dining; fine dining). Warhurst and Nickson (2007) argue that unless this can be achieved they are unable to swell the ranks of a new labor aristocracy as they are missing the "*soft skills*" that connect them to the customer from higher social class and never take advantage of the democratization between the worker and the customer.

For the chef, production skill is the key to employment in this job role while social skills are an additional enhancement useful in customer engagement. Less training is required in the "*soft skills*," as these skills are already socially instilled. This has led to a greater interest in service staff being recruited from a middle-class background, challenging the employment position of the working-class craftsman. Until the development of the open production area, this was never an employment issue for the craftsman, a worker who was traditionally drawn from the working and lower middle classes, where masculinization of the job identity prevailed, and who was traditionally hidden from view. It can be suggested that the transformation to the new open production area will begin to impact on this group of workers as emotional and esthetic labor skills become a work requirement. In the craft service encounter, this offers the worker in higher status style operations who exhibit a high level of "*soft skill*," the opportunity to assert their knowledge capital and close the gap between the worker and the customer and become the new *"labor aristocracy"* (Warhurst and Nickson, 2007, p. 739).

The craftsman as the chef has not traditionally been subject to this gentrification, in the main due to the closed nature of craft work and societal expectations that closed craft work is still the main stay of the working classes (McIvor, 2013). The new craft service aristocracy is a product of the mechanism of socialization and interaction at work in the open production environment. The craft worker is employed for his skill and handicraft, with customer interaction and social skills not being salient selection criteria. This is reiterated through Goffman's (1959) work, which claimed that staff develop the social skills required for the job in a learning process through interaction with and having to face middle class

customers. Via craft workers in the new open production world experiencing exposure to the customer and engaging with them, they are learning the social skills required for their new role. Warhurst and Nickson (2007, p. 794) conclude that there is today a linkage between occupational change and class, just as there was in the past during the manufacturing era (Goldthorpe et al., 1969). However, a new relationship now exists, with the production craft worker having to engage with the customer in the new service or experience economy as an interactive service worker, one who has not yet been explored through research or discussed in the literature.

19.6.4 The changing masculine identity of the chef through public display

The closed kitchen pertains to the world of the industrial era when production was largely deemed to be a male occupation (Green and Owen, 1998) and a masculine activity (Cook, 1996). The chefs demonstrated this "*macho*" culture in the closed kitchen through laddish activities such as throwing food items and playing practical jokes, enhancing the masculine identity of the trade. Being on the receiving end of the jokes as such appears to have formed part of a rite of passage ritual for the new recruit. Alexander et al. (2012) refer to this in the title of the article "*He just didn't seem to understand the banter; bullying or simply establishing social cohesion?*" and as Bloisi and Hoel (2008) discuss in their review of the literature that it is the socialization process that creates the "*hardness*" (p. 649) required to be able to operate effectively and be successful in a commercial kitchen. It seems this macho behavior was being used to bolster the prevailing belief that household cooking was women's work and that the closed restaurant kitchen was no place for females. Laddish behavior and male-orientated work antics and games appear to have been central in creating and reinforcing the rules (Connell, 1995, 2000) of the masculine culture that prevailed in the closed kitchen (Blauner, 1964) and as such an occupational community (Hill, 1976), a male dominance of space which Robinson and Beesly (2010; Robinson & Barron, Developing a framework for understanding the impact of deskilling and standardisation on the turnover and attrition of chefs, 2007) identify as man's work. These masculine games and rules excluded females, and those women that did enter into the closed world of the kitchen were expected to adopt similar male values and join in (Segal, 1997). The levels of masculinity varied between kitchens, a feature which concurred with the research by Collinson and Hearn (1996) and Watson (2000) on how males reinforce their male identity through differing and increasingly offensive masculine behaviors, leading to the intimidation of women (Sims, 2012), a position which has been an expected part of kitchen culture (Bloisi and Hoel, 2008).

Approaches to work and the entrenchment of these attitudes toward women in other masculine-centered service tasks is discussed by Simonton (1998), who investigated furniture retailing, which is an area where males seem content to take on service roles. Simonton argues that such service roles are attractive to males as they give the employee a relatively high level of power over the customer because of their perceived skills and knowledge. Furthermore, Simonton (1998) contends that males are drawn to such service work as a result of the socially constructed message that furniture is an extension of carpentry, which is perceived as skilled man's work. When aligned with the kitchen environment, this goes some way toward supporting the prevailing idea that an environment that involves "*hard skills*" and dirty work, such as a restaurant "hot" kitchen, must be dominated by males, while

one where "*soft skills*" are needed, such as a restaurant dining room, it is more suited to females (Nixon, 2009). This seems to lead to the self-constructing belief that the chef in the kitchen is of far greater importance than the waiting staff in the dining room and that females are somehow not capable of being chefs (Robinson and Barron, 2007; Bloisi and Hoel, 2008; Robinson, 2008; Robinson and Beesley, 2010). Such a view enabled the male respondents to legitimize their feelings of power and superiority over the female chefs and demonstrate their masculinity through aggressive and controlling behavior, whenever possible banishing the women to the cold kitchen or the pastry section, as Bourdain (2000) states and other celebrity chefs' testify in their biographies (Ladenis, 1988; White and Steen, 2006).

The direct engagement of the customer with the chef has removed the chef from the "*back office*" of service into the "*intermediary*" service space (Grayson, 1998) and with it a reorientation of the work place has occurred. This encroachment of the experience economy into the kitchen has transformed the hitherto closed world of the kitchen from a manufacturing or production arena into a space that is now available for consumption in the same manner as other traditional service experiences. Such a changed orientation has altered perceptions of the chef's role in the wider service industry from simply being a production function to now being directly involved in customer interaction (Bolton, 2004). This shift in the position of the chef to that of a directly accountable service worker has thrust the kitchen into direct customer engagement with the customer and welded together the production and service process (Frable, 1998). This reorientation of the kitchen into an element of direct service delivery is because the customer engagement involved created a "*soft skill*" requirement along with the existing "*hard skills*" already associated with restaurant service production. The "*hard skill*" element of the job role remains but with a new requirement to acquire the "*soft skills*" of hiding emotions (Burns, 1997) and masking aggressive thoughts (Korczynski, 2005, 2013), features which Bolton argues are "*the skills that matter*" in the service economy (Bolton, 2004).

The presence of females in the closed kitchen did not lead to a reduction in the level of masculine behavior and indeed that the male chefs merely further asserted their masculinity (Donkin, 2001; Bunting, 2004). This was a challenging situation for most females as male chefs continued to assert their power in the environment (Nixon, 2009). As Sims (2012) discusses, leading female celebrity chefs have had to overcome this macho male challenge to be accepted and succeed in a society which, since the era of the manufacturing economy, has created a service world in which closed and traditional environments are still socially perceived as being dirty, male occupations (Roper, 1994; Roberts, 2012; McIvor, 2013). Kitchen laboring in such traditional harsh environments of *"working in crappy conditions, in spaces with poor kitchen design for long hours, under significant pressures"* (Robinson, 2008, p. 408), a space which Robinson and Barron (2007, p. 915) discuss as being *"both physical and psychologically straining environments."*

The opening up of the kitchen to public scrutiny has been a key factor in the reducing of macho performances as the chef now has to enter a different world of social acceptability and service work (Fillby, 1992) and is expected to interact with customers using a "*softer skill*" delivery (Bolton, 2004). The open kitchen has begun to erode the traditional masculine kitchen behavior; however, they said that their masculinity and dominance is still retained whenever possible through performing antics which were previously so obvious in the closed kitchen in a more subdued way. The masculinity of the traditional kitchen together with the normative

male dominance behavior continues to be practiced in a far more subtle and potentially subversive manner, in an attempt to continue to exercise domination in the working environment.

This level of masculinity demonstrated in the kitchen has been reduced because of the direct impact of the external environment and the customer observation of male chefs together with increasing numbers of women being attracted to open kitchen work (People 1st, 2014). This suggests a potential change to the traditional male dominance in the kitchen, with hot steamy kitchens no longer being an exclusively male domain and the heavy lifting of pans no longer being seen as man's work. This notion is now clearly being challenged, perhaps as a consequence of the increased level of direct service contact and the need for traditional male work to employ feminized "*soft skills*" (Drucker, 1994; Ashforth et al., 2007). The juxtaposition of the chef and customer in the new open kitchen development in a direct manner was almost never required in the manufacturing economy era.

19.7 Theoretical considerations debated

This discussion has brought to the fore that the concepts of emotional and esthetic labor are actually linked and intertwined with one another and that both of these conceptual structures are mutually inclusive as discussed by Sheane (2011), Grandey and Gabriel (2015), and Warhurst (2015). In particular "*surface acting*" being attributed to stress and burnout leading to job dissatisfaction and the increased levels of labor turnover. The negative consequences of emotional laboring are mitigated by the antecedents and moderators, which reduce the impact that emotional laboring has on the individual employee. The literature reaffirms the contention that emotional laboring draws heavily on the internal feelings of the worker having to mask how they feel to fit in with the expectation of the interaction, a performance expected by the organization in exchange for a wage. The level of emotional labor that the chef in the open kitchen is required to perform is related to their exposure and interaction with the guests, where for the first time in their employment, they have to now be perceptive toward the customers' needs. The amount of acting that was required and the pressure that this placed on the employee was identified as a key reason why some chefs left the open kitchen and why those that remained had to rapidly develop coping strategies, such as set piece conversations, and draw upon their reservoir of "*hard skills*" and technical knowledge to engage in sustainable customer contact. The chefs' internal feelings had to be masked to present a façade of "*looking good and sounding right*" to meet the requirements of the customer.

19.8 Concluding remarks

This chapter has discussed the changing nature of kitchen work with the opening up of the closed kitchen thrusting the chef into public view. As a world of work that has had a fundamental impact on the chef and with this, the employee becomes a true emotional and esthetic labor type. The impact of such working practice has seen the reduction and removing of the traditional masculinity of the kitchen, a social constructed norm which was a manifestation of the manufacturing world and with it the "feminizing" of the work space. A kitchen space, which now requires the employee to have a greater level of interactive customer service skills, complemented with the traditions of hard cooking skill. For some chefs migrating from the

closed to the open kitchen has been a challenge, work practice which has fundamentally shifted, and one that does not necessarily resonate with them. The challenge for employees and educators is to recognize the changing nature of open kitchen work and identify how the individual chef can be trained, developed, and inducted into this new world of work. By effectively doing so, it enables them to remain longer and be more contented in such employment and not to be diverted back into the traditional employment of the closed kitchen and all that it represents. The professional kitchen is witnessing the dawning of a new era in work practice and with it the welcoming of a new generation of female chefs as the old world of masculinity in kitchen work is slowly being dismantled.

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