

Spring 2013

Fresh Perspectives

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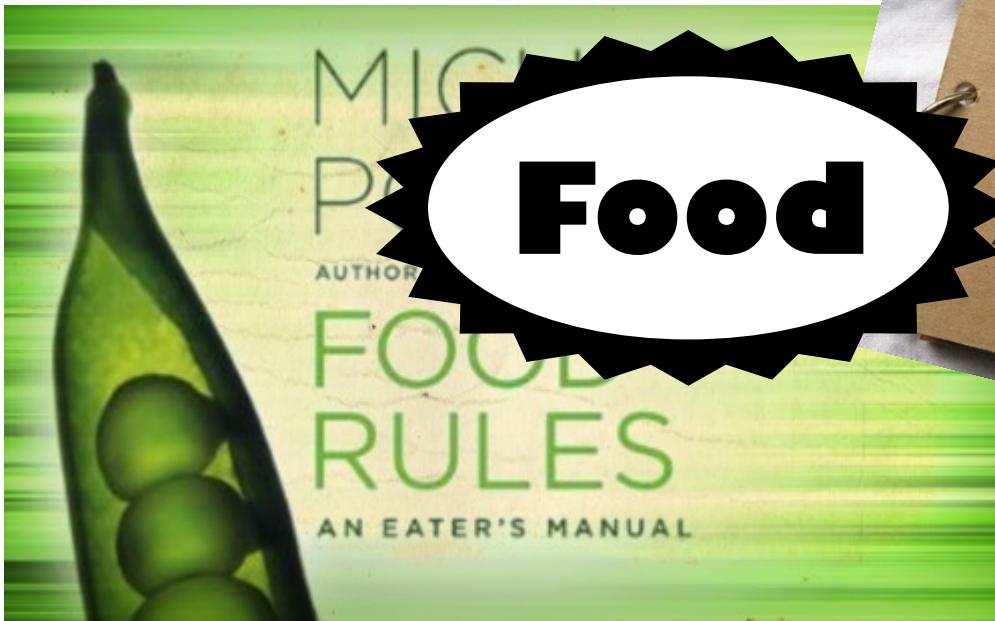
Spring 2013





Film

&



Food



On The Waterfront: A New Ending by Charni-jah Clarke

The 1954 film *On the Waterfront* still manages to move audiences several decades later, but the ending needs work. Directed by Elia Kazan, *On the Waterfront* shines light on the merciless conditions dockworkers faced because of their corrupt union run by the mob. The workers received low compensation, and if they bad mouthed the mob, they were killed. In this film, Terry Malloy, a dockworker who is affiliated with the mob, “rats” on Johnny Friendly, the mob boss, in court and gets away with it. In the final scene, Terry survives a beating from the gangsters and goes back to work as if the mob would have taken snitching politely in real life. Given that this is not a fantasy, the ending undermines the realism of *On the Waterfront*. Movie critic Robert Ebert says, “Today the ending of ‘On the Waterfront’ feels too stagy and upbeat.” An updated, more realistic ending is justified because it will meet the audience’s expectation of how *On the Waterfront* should have ended.



In the revised ending of *On the Waterfront*, a revolution occurs after the dockworkers witness Johnny Friendly kill Terry. In the middle of Terry walking up to the hangar, Johnny Friendly appears several feet behind him and fires three times – twice in his back and once in his head. In slow motion, Terry falls to the ground. For a split second there is an awkward silence amongst the dockworkers that baffles the audience and leaves them questioning what will happen next.

Eddie Doyle breaks the awkward silence when she screams, “Oh my Terry! Oh Terry! Not you... Oh noooooo,” as a river of tears flows down her face. She attempts to run up to Terry, but Father Barry grabs her. In serious tone he says, “Eddie, go back home. Something terrible is going to happen.” Saddened by what she has just witnessed, Eddie listens to Father Barry and runs home crying. Her father, Pop Doyle, attempts to go after her, but fears that he will end up just like Terry; thus he stops in his tracks. Then, a local dockworker jumps on Johnny Friendly’s back to get the gun. They fight for a few moments until another local dockworker helps his peer retrieve the gun. After watching this, a couple of the gangsters help Johnny Friendly. During this fight, shots are fired, and the dockworkers lose two more men.

In hopes that what the dockworkers just witnessed will motivate them to always obey the mob, Johnny Friendly says, “Now go back to work, or all of you will end up on the floor.” However they do not go back to work. Instead, one dockworker challenges Johnny Friendly and says, “Never,” which results in a collective response from the other workers saying, “Yea, never!” Angered by what is going on, Johnny Friendly orders his men to physically force these men to go to work, but again, they refuse. In fact, this pushes the men to fight the

mob with their fists. Distraught by what is happening, Father Barry tries to break up this brawl, but he fails miserably. The dockworkers and the mob gangsters are fighting. There is blood everywhere, and some men are lying on the ground unconscious. A couple of minutes into this bloody revolt, policemen come to break it up. At the end of this revolution, several men are injured, and the mob family – including Johnny Friendly – are brutally beaten and taken into custody.

Despite the bloody battle between dockworkers and mob gangsters, things began to look up for victims of the mob. In the second part of the ending, there will be a series of 30 second scenes with no dialogue. The characters will be speaking, but the only thing the audience will hear is a joyful soundtrack. These short scenes will show how miserable the mob gangsters are in prison, and then a subtitle will appear on the screen stating how long they have been sentenced. [. . .] The audience will also see Edie teaching at a local elementary school on the waterfront. The essence of these short scenes serves to illustrate what happened after the revolution over a year's span.

Then another subtitle will appear in the final scene stating "One year later," as Father Barry says a prayer on the dock before hundreds of dockworkers. Father Barry says, "Thank you Lord for bringing justice on the docks. It was a long horrible process, but we could not have done it without you. Please continue to watch over the dock and let peace be still." Subsequently, the audience will see the dockworkers cheer. Then, the camera will zoom in on Father Barry's face; a couple of tears will run down his cheeks as he smiles, moved by the grace of God.

Terry's death and the subsequent revolution would create a stronger ending for numerous reasons. For starters, the soundtrack at the end of the film falsely advertises that something unfortunate is going to happen to Terry, but nothing does, which is confusing to the audience. Even though the audience does not want to witness Terry die, his death would have made sense in context of the historical background and depressing soundtrack. Moreover, the revolution the dockworkers engage in is satisfying because they suffer too much while under the mob's control for them to not fight back. In other words, even though Pop Doyle pushes Johnny Friendly into the river, this act of revenge is not enough because the mob does not truly suffer. Therefore, when the dockworkers collectively stick up for what they believe in, the audience will get to see the revenge the mob deserved, a butt whooping. In addition, the revolution is important because the audience will observe the development of the dockworkers' identity. They go from being obedient, scared individuals to being determined, courageous men, who fought back the antagonists.

[. . .] A revised ending is needed because the original ending fails to add to the film. It is ambiguous, and too good to be true. Due to the fact that *On the Waterfront* is based on a true story, it should have ended more realistically. This modified, bitter-sweet ending will make this film stronger because the protagonist's death encourages positive change on the dock. [. . .] My revised ending will fulfill the audience's appetite of "What happens next?" as they watch how life on the waterfront changes for several characters.

Works Cited

Ebert, Robert. "On the Water Front (1954)." Rev. of *On the Waterfront*, dir. by Elia Kazan. *Rogerebert.suntimes.com*. Rogerbert.com, 1999. Web. 16 Mar. 2013.

Terry Conquers All by Toni Starks

Would you enjoy a movie that contained no clear resolution of the conflicts that occurred in the plot? In *On the Waterfront*, Terry, Edie, and other characters on the waterfront overcome many different obstacles so that things can change. Terry testifies against the union, which proves that he has changed as a person. However the social environment around him has not. Everyone is still worried about looking like a snitch instead of thinking about the positive results they could have accomplished. In the end, there is little to nothing to show for Terry's bravery; this is why I am proposing a more satisfying ending to *On the Waterfront*.

The first plot element that I am changing is that Terry beats up Johnny Friendly on the waterfront. Because Terry is the "good guy," he should not get kicked down by mobsters. Instead, he should be picked up by his community, which he is fighting for. When Terry confronts Johnny Friendly on the docks, he will have the support of all of the workers. This confrontation will set off an all-out brawl between Johnny's men and the workers. It will not be an easy fight, but in the end, the workers will come out on top. My ending is superior to the original because it represents hard work paying off: something the people in the Waterfront community have never seen before. This would make the movie more enjoyable because life is all about living, learning, and growing.

Other themes that I can make more satisfying at the film's conclusion are ones that concern revenge. Edie's father, Pop Doyle, should have helped Terry because he is standing up to Johnny Friendly, the man who killed his son. Even though Edie's father did push Johnny Friendly into the water, he could have done more. One thing he could have done is support Terry from the beginning, when Terry is having a hard time because he was in the process of going to court against Johnny Friendly. This would have set off a chain reaction that would have encouraged others to speak out because when people see other's speaking out, they become less afraid to do the same. In my opinion, doing anything you possibly can to achieve justice for a family member is something anyone in any family would do because there is no better revenge than seeing the one that made you hurt suffer.

Sometimes having a complete sense of revenge helps one to progress. In the original ending, the dock workers going to work with Terry do not prove anything will change because they still are working for Johnny Friendly. The dock workers do refuse to work if Terry is not allowed to work also. In my revised ending, however, the dock workers will come to a more full realization of the power they would have if they stopped working for Johnny Friendly altogether. They will show they understand that Johnny Friendly will lose his power if he has no one to work on the ships that are coming to the docks. Instead of walking into the warehouse like they do in the original ending, they will destroy Johnny and his gang, forcing the mob boss to flee to another community. The flight of Johnny Friendly will force the community to vote for a new union president to take over and run things properly. These changes represent social



mobility and the notion of being able to work hard and be rewarded. My final scene will show development and that things can get better after all the dreadful things that have occurred.

Perhaps growth does not always result from bad things happening but I feel that my changes to the original ending of *On the Waterfront* are satisfying. My changes are satisfying because Terry is the person who is doing the right thing, so he should be the one who comes out on top. Terry was not only the only character who shows growth over the course of the film. Pops Doyle is another character who should have shown more growth.

No movie should end the same way it started.

Is Eddie Truly the Hero of *On the Waterfront*? By Paola Vargas

A hero. How is a hero defined in today's modern society? What are the images that flood everyone's minds when the word "hero" is spelled out? According to the dictionary, the term "hero" is defined as "a man of distinguished courage or ability, admired for his brave deeds and noble qualities." When we hear the word hero, especially in films, we generally tend to associate it with characters like Superman, Batman, the Hawk or perhaps Cat Woman or Ms. Smith. All these characters have one thing in common; they all project a physical and psychological strength that make them react more intellectually and brave than everyone else, which is consequently what grants them the hero role on the film. However, in the film *On the Waterfront*, the word hero takes on a whole new set of meanings. Edie Doyle is portrayed as physically weak and does not seem, at first, to fit the definition of a stereotypical hero. On the contrary, when we first meet Eddie, she appears to possess characteristics opposite of the ones described above. Edie is first shown as a sweet, tender girl who plays the stereotypical passive female role. However, as the film progresses, we realize she is the real hero of *On the Waterfront*.

On the Waterfront takes on real life events. The story line focuses on how the mob controlled the dockworkers and the poverty their dictatorship created in Hoboken and the area surrounding the waterfront. The main characters are Terry Malloy, the brother of the mob's accountant, "Charley The Gent," and Edie Doyle. Edie Doyle, whose brother has been assassinated by the mob, later decides that enough is enough and encourages the dockworkers to stand up for themselves and talk to the authorities. Throughout the film, Edie stirs Terry Malloy to talk to the authorities because he knows all that goes on inside the mob. However, in Edie's hopes of getting Terry to speak up, she instead is called a "fruit cake" by Terry himself as a way of underestimating and discrediting her pure intentions towards people. Yet due to her persistence and encouragement, Terry eventually decides to stand up and testify against the mob.

Many viewers will argue that Edie does not fit the regiments of a stereotypical film hero. She instead is portrayed as a weak, very feminine and oblivious girl that believes that people generally have good intentions and life is what gets in between doing was wrong and right. Some critics might even go as far as to state the only thing she achieves throughout the movie is a role as an impatient character, who just stands around waiting for anyone to stand up to the mob. Even in the script evidence can be found of the moviemaker's intentions to portray Edie as vulnerable. In the first scene Eddie makes her appearance in the film, the script directions read, "Joey's sister, a fresh-faced, sensitive young Irish girl who has been kneeling over the body. She looks up and around at the Father in bitter grief." It is apparent that the intention of the scriptwriter is to portray Eddie as an innocent, sweet young woman, who will not be expected to do much



but grieve. Yet, right from the start we see something completely different in Edie. Edie's first lines are: "Time and faith... My brother's dead and you stand there talking drivel about time and faith." This shows Edie right from the beginning of the movie as a fighter, it shows her hunger and desire for the truth and justice and her antipathy for a community full of conformists.

Another piece of evidence that supports that Edie's role as the film's hero is the fact that she gets Father Barry to take action. Edie is the first one to stand up and speak her mind right from the start, no matter who is around her and who may hear her. She certainly did not fear anyone, but God and the truth of who is responsible for her brother's death. In the scene where she is first shown hugging her brother's dead body and the priest tries to console her and tells her he will be in the church, Edie does something unexpected. She shouts at the priest, feeling incompetent and acting out of desperation: "In the church when you need me. Was there ever a saint who hid in the Church?" [. . .]

Most viewers will argue that Terry Malloy is the real hero because he makes the decision to talk and stand up after his brother's death. However, Edie gets through to Terry as well. She shows him that she cares, such as during the scene where they discuss their childhood memories and how Terry was always getting in trouble in school. Eddie says Terry: "With a little more patience and kindness. That's what makes people mean and difficult. Nobody cares enough about them." This is the moment in the film where I believe she breaks right through Terry. She shows him that she cares, and that she would have done otherwise and treated him better and been more patient with him than the nuns were. [. . .]

In the end, to a certain extent I do agree Eddie is portrayed as a fragile, sensitive female. Yet, this appearance works to her advantage because it helps her to influence the men in the community [. . .] Throughout the movie, we see that she is sweet and kind and these are the reasons people trust her, especially Terry. Ultimately, Edie shows that she also has a very smart, determined personality, making her successful. Moreover, the fact that she seemed fragile and is not portrayed as your stereotypical "hero" is what makes her plans so successful. No one in the mob ever suspects Edie, sweet, feminine Eddie. All this makes her an outstanding hero.

A Real Hero by Kerry Kamrudin



Would you rather have more power by standing with the corrupt men of society or become a nobody by doing the morally right thing and snitching against them? The movie *On the Waterfront* shows the power struggle between the corrupt mob that runs the waterfront and the innocent dockworkers who have no choice but to work for them. The movie follows Terry, the protagonist, and portrays him as the hero who gets justice for the workers on the waterfront. However, there are always heroes who go unrecognized or are never given enough credit. In this case, Edie should be seen as the film's real hero.

At first glance, Terry appears to be the hero because he testifies against the mob boss, Johnny Friendly. In the courtroom on the day of the trial, after Terry speaks, the prosecutor says to Terry, "Thank you, Mr. Malloy, you've done more than to break the case of Joey Doyle, you have held up a lamp of truth in the dark cave of waterfront crime. You may step down now." Terry is the only person willing to testify and stand up to Johnny Friendly. All the dockworkers are too scared to, in fear of what might happen to them if they did. At first, no one stands by Terry's side after the trial. It takes Terry fighting Johnny Friendly for all the dockworkers to see Terry as a hero. The dockworkers are impressed because no one has ever dared to hit Johnny Friendly.

However, getting physical isn't the only thing that makes a person a hero. A hero is a person who is also seeking social change and looking out for the greater good of all people, not just for themselves. Likewise, a hero should never back down, no matter how hopeless a situation may seem. A hero will always find a way to get justice.

Edie has all the characteristics of a hero. Edie is the one who starts the investigation when her brother Joey Doyle is killed. As she holds her dead brother in her arms, she yells to Father Barry and all those that surround her dead brother, "Don't turn away! Look at it! You're in this too—don't you see, don't you see? You're in this too, Father." At first, Edie just wants justice for her brother, but throughout the movie, Edie fights for justice for all the dockworkers on the waterfront. During this time, men controlled the waterfront, and women had no business working there. Edie breaks through the barriers that were placed around women at that time. Edie is not scared to stand up to the mob and speak her mind about pursuing her brother's murderer.

Not only is Edie is courageous, she is also selfless. She never once thinks about herself. Terry, on the other hand, thinks about how going against the mob will affect him. He says, "Edie down here its everyman for himself. It's keepin

alive! It's standin in with the right people so you keep a little loose change jinglin in your pockets." While Terry does eventually risk his life, Edie sacrifices even more. Edie has the option of leaving and continuing her education the way her father wants her to, but she remains in Hoboken in order to show Terry the reality of what is going on and to fight for justice.

Edie is an inspirational woman who is the reason behind Terry's testifying against Johnny Friendly. If it weren't for Edie, Terry would have continued to work under Johnny Friendly and kept his mouth shut. Before Terry met Edie, and the investigators came to question him about the deaths happening on the waterfront, Terry says, " Listen, I don't know nothing, I didn't see nothing, I ain't saying nothing. So why don't you and your girlfriend get lost?" There is no hesitation or doubt in Terry's voice. After meeting Edie, Terry starts to fall in love with her, and he then realizes that the right thing to do is speak against Johnny Friendly. Edie opens Terry's eyes to all the evil things that Johnny Friendly is doing. He finally sees that by keeping quiet he will be condoning all the things that Johnny Friendly and the mob have done to innocent men like himself.

Women are usually stereotyped as being too fragile or soft to make difficult decisions. In fact, in the beginning of the movie Edie looks like an innocent twelve-year old girl with no backbone. However, by the end, Edie is an assertive, strong young woman. More women need to be shown as strong characters in films.

TERRY RECEIVES A WARNING

Starring: Dalton Crowe, Tyler Montalvo, and Jessica Gomez

FADE IN: Church/Before Mass - Early Sunday Morning

Charley decides to meet Terry at the church to question him. Charley, 35, a concerned member of the mob, asks Terry, 27, about his relationship with Edie, 24, and his loyalty to the mob.

While Terry is being questioned Edie approaches them. She starts to question what they are talking about and whether it has to do with Joey's death.



CHARLEY

Mornin' Terry, how goes?

TERRY

(Flustered) Doin' fine. You?

CHARLEY

You look nervous, what's goin' on?

TERRY

I don't like these questions Edie is asking me.

CHARLEY

Better keep playin' deaf and dumb; she's only trouble.

TERRY

I ain't gon' squeal. I don't know why you guys had to go n' get me involved.

CHARLEY

If you sing like a canary their gon' fix you.

TERRY

I hate bein' caught up in this secret. You don't understand. I coulda had class. I coulda been a contender. I coulda been someone, instead of a bum, which is what I am, let's face it... it was you, Charley.

(Edie Approaches)

CHARLEY

(Whispers) Get it together, remember who your real family is.

EDIE

Whats goin' on Terry?...Charley *(Nods)*

TERRY

(Surprised/Worried) Oh! Hey Edie, what ya doin around here?

EDIE

I was gonna' ask you the same thing.

CHARLEY

I was just catchin' up with Terry boy here, my brother.

TERRY

Edie wanna step outside with me? I need a cigarette.

EDIE

That's fine you and Charley seem like you need more time to catch up...see ya later

(Edie walks away angrily)

(Terry hesitates after her, but Charley presence holds him back)

CHARLEY

You really like this girl don't you? You better watch yourself.

END

ONE NIGHT AT THE BAR



Starring: Image Beato, Angelo Dimatteo, Jesus Bonilla, and Gabriel Dilone

FADE IN:

Johnny Friendly is having a few beers at a bar. He seems to have a lot in his mind like an aching migraine. Gripping his skull, slowly rocking back and forth. He stares blow him and enters Father Barry. Father Barry sees a man in misery, and approaches Johnny with a beer in his hand and his eyes glued to the ground.

FATHER BARRY

(Concerned) You see Johnny, I told you this was going to happen to you. *Father Barry places one arm around Johnny's shoulder, but Johnny aggressively removes his arm.*

JOHNNY FRIENDLY

Mind your own business Father. Do you have any idea who you are talking to?

FATHER BARRY

Yes Johnny. I am talking to one of God's children who has sinned over and over again and is looking for his help.

JOHNNY FRIENDLY

I don't need you, and I don't need God, I don't need anyone. I am Johnny Friendly. Do you know what that means!? None of this would have even happened if that rat didn't snitch on me for Doyle.

FATHER BARRY

(Offended) You don't need God? Then tell me Mr. Friendly what is that supposed to mean? Don't you dare put this on the boy. He did the right thing, and even if he did not "snitch" on you, eventually it was bound to happen. For God could not let you sin much longer.

JOHNNY FRIENDLY

(Laughs) I am just as powerful like God. I am the leader of everything that goes on around here. I run this waterfront, therefore I do whatever the heck I want.

FATHER BARRY

(Raises voice) No Mr. Friendly, you ran the waterfront. Your time here is over. Maybe it is time you put this all behind you and start fresh here in Hoboken. You need god to get you through this, start to heal you sins, apologize to Pop Doyle for all you have done

to him and his family.

In walks Pop Doyle who sits as far away from Johnny Friendly as possible, and is sulking in the corner of the bar alone.

POP DOYLE

(Yells) Hey, Father Barry can I have a moment?

Father Barry walks over to Pop Doyle and sits next to him.

POP DOYLE

(Miserably) Father, I need your help, I cannot move on without my son. Every day at work I am forced to see that bastard Friendly, and I refuse to put up with it any longer. I know he is coming after Terry for being “rat.” You have to help stop this man.

FATHER BARRY

(Fiercely) Everyone around here is convinced that honesty is a sin. Lying is the sin, and letting a lie cause distress to others and their families is an even worse sin. Terry testifying against Friendly saved the waterfront.

POP DOYLE

(Negatively) It doesn’t matter what is right and wrong. in Friendly’s eyes he is a rat, and those are the types of people he goes after.

FATHER BARRY

Pop Doyle, you have to believe me. There is no way Friendly can or will go after Terry; all of the workers on the waterfront will not let this happen, after all Friendly has done to them.

POP DOYLE

(Sadly) Father, Friendly runs the waterfront, he owns the town, you know he can get away with anything he wants.

FATHER BARRY

(Sentimentally) Believe me my son, his time here is over he has no power. God will protect you.

POP DOYLE

(Smiles) I hope you are right Father, please watch over us.

FATHER BARRY

(Smiles) Don’t you worry my son, may God bless you all.
Pop Doyle slowly strolls out of the bar without even one look in Friendly’s direction.

END

POP DOYLE'S REVENGE

Starring: Kylie Francis, Kyle Honey and Pedro Jimenez

FADE IN:

INT. BAR - HAPPY HOUR

A sullen Pop Doyle walks into the bar and notices Johnny Friendly talking to Father Barry. After ordering a drink Pop Doyle walks over to their table and joins them with bad intentions.



JOHNNY FRIENDLY

So Father I've heard you've been asking about the mistreatment of the workers on the water front.

FATHER BARRY

And who might I ask have you heard this from?

JOHNNY FRIENDLY

A real man never snitches on...

[Pop Doyle walks in and interrupts the conversation]

POP DOYLE

So what are you guys doing here at this hour?

FATHER BARRY

It's been a long day so I stopped in to get a drink, and that's when I ran into Johnny Friendly.

JOHNNY FRIENDLY

Father Barry and I were just talking about...

FATHER BARRY

He's trying to get me to falsely admit that I was getting information about the workers on the waterfront.

POP DOYLE

Father do you know what I've been hearing about the waterfront?

FATHER BARRY

Yes, Pop, I would love to hear what know because Johnny Friendly's been lying to me about what's been going on.

POP DOYLE

Well... The union is very corrupt, and workers are out of jobs multiple days a week and their families are suffering.

JOHNNY FRIENDLY

What do you know about family suffering?

[Pop Doyle takes a swing at Jonny Friendly and misses]

[Followed by his swing Johnny Friendly swings his right hand and catches Pop Doyle right in the kisser.]

FATHER BARRY

Please! In the name of Christ stop this nonsense!

POP DOYLE

Christ isn't going to save Johnny Friendly's face!

[Pop Doyle says as he hits Johnny Friendly directly in the face, breaking his nose]

END

JOHNNY FRIENDLY'S FINAL VICTORY



JOHNNY FRIENDLY'S FINAL VICTORY

Starring: Duilio Bini, Stephanie Nunez, and Natalie Reynoso

Hoboken Correctional facility – Dusk

Johnny Friendly is sentenced to the electric chair after a very intensive court case. A priest is sent to give Johnny Friendly his final blessing. Father Barry is the priest and he brings along Tommy. Tommy is now a member of Friendly's union. Father Barry enters the cell and talks to Johnny Friendly, right before he is taken to the chair.

FATHER BARRY

How do you feel about the sins you have committed?

JOHNNY FRIENDLY

I have nothing to regret. All that I have done has benefited the community.

FATHER BARRY

Do you think the death of innocent people has benefited the community?

JOHNNY FRIENDLY

I die with pride, knowing that my actions were done for the well-being of the waterfront.

FATHER BARRY

Burn in hell you foul demon! May God not rescue your soul.

JOHNNY FRIENDLY

You turned-around-collar potato-eating pig! I don't need your salvation. Leave at once; you are banished from here.

FATHER BARRY

Okay as you wish. Rot in hell.

Father Barry slams the holy book on his hand and abruptly leaves the room. Tommy enters and greets his boss.

TOMMY

That good for nothing Terry. That pigeon should be the one on the chair not you.

JOHNNY FRIENDLY

That snitch will get his due. Karma's a bitch.

TOMMY

I'll make sure he dies just like his dirty pigeons.

JOHNNY FRIENDLY

I'll make sure you get the position on the waterfront that you deserve.

Tommy kneels over and kisses Johnny Friendly's ring hand. Johnny takes off his ring and hands it over to Tommy.

JOHNNY FRIENDLY (CONT'D)

With that ring you will take control of the Waterfront and have the respect from all of the workers.

TOMMY

It will be my pleasure. I'll make sure the waterfront union stays alive under my control.
Father Barry re-enters the room and is disappointed at what he sees.

FATHER BARRY

Tommy no. Tommy no. Don't fall in to his trap. You had class, you could have been something better.

TOMMY

I'm sorry Father, but the future is set.
They all leave the prison, going their separate ways.

END

JOHNNY FRIENDLY'S CONFESSION



Starring: John Patino, Malanna Spencer, and Indira Larancuent

Characters: Johnny Friendly, Pop Doyle, Fr. Barry

Background: Pop Doyle and Johnny Friendly both head to the church with the same intentions, to have their sins forgiven. Pop Doyle wants his sins forgiven for the sake of working for somebody that killed his son, and Johnny wants to be forgiven since he has murdered Charlie Doyle. After Johnny goes into confessional with Father Barry the topic of “snitching” and how it relates to Johnny’s life comes up. Johnny tries to justify his actions by saying Pop Doyle’s son was nothing more than a cowardly snitch.

Setting: The scene begins with Father Barry praying at the altar with his hands clenched tightly together and him deep in thought. He is interrupted by the sound of two men arguing loudly as they enter the church. The two men are Johnny Friendly and Pop Doyle, both storming in with the intention of having their sins forgiven. Father Barry is surprised. Father Barry approaches both men.

Lights up on Father Barry (*praying at the altar with his hands clenched tightly together and deep in thought. He is interrupted by the sound of two men arguing loudly as they enter the church.*)

Lights up on Johnny Friendly and Pop Doyle (*as they storm in with the intention of having their sins forgiven, Father Barry approaches them to settle the argument.*)

JOHNNY FRIENDLY AND POP DOYLE

(Enter church)(Murmuring)

FATHER BARRY

(Turns around) Jh.. Jh Johnny? Is that you? Never did I think that I would see you in Church (Smiles)

JOHNNY FRIENDLY

(Ignores Father Barry, continues to argue with Pop Doyle)

POP DOYLE

Of course you’re surprised that he is here, he’s a sinner! He killed my son! I’m surprised he didn’t burst into flames as he walked into God’s Temple.

FATHER BARRY

God’s Temple accepts everybody Pops. *(Touches Pops shoulder.)*
But Johnny, you still haven’t answered my question.

JOHNNY FRIENDLY

Well, there's something that I needed to talk to you about. DEEP things, (*open eyes wide*) things that cannot be said around small-minded people. (*Nudges his head towards Pops*)

POP DOYLE

(*laughs*) Small minded? Please... At least, I don't have to live with my conscience in such a bad state, you good for nothing, scum bag.

FATHER BARRY

Pop Doyle! (*Screams*) Don't you dare use such foul language in God's house. Now, Johnny Friendly how important is this matter to you?

JOHNNY FRIENDLY

(*Takes off his hat and looks at priest straight in the eyes*) Its important enough for me to come to a place that I have never been before.

FATHER BARRY

(*clears throat*) Well, Pop Doyle can you give us a minute?

POP DOYLE

Even if he clarifies his sins, that doesn't make him any better. What was done is done; no scum bag like him will be seen as pure in the eyes of God (*points to statue of Jesus*) But for you Father, I'll give you two privacy. (*Takes seat at the bench, before the door.*) (*Walks away mumblin.g*)

Bastard.

Father Barry and Johnny Friendly go into the confessional room. The moment is intense. As Johnny Friendly sweats vigorously holding his hat, he confesses.

JOHNNY FRIENDLY

As I grew up, I didn't have anything and now that I have power. If I see anybody taking it, I'll take them off the map. Joey Doyle snitched on me and he deserved everything he got that night when he died. I was scared he was going to take a little (*Exaggerates*) power.

FATHER BARRY

(*Coughs*) Little...?

JOHNNY FRIENDLY

Excuse me father, I'm talking... There's a lot of competition out there and I don't like that. I didn't have attention when I was little, so I make it my everyday goal to have as much power and attention as I can. But I've realized the way I think is not always right, so forgive my father for I have sinned. I've come here to tell you (*swallows saliva*). . . I.. murdered. . .
(*silence*)

FATHER BARRY

Well...?

JOHNNY

Charlie Doyle. But that was only because he deserved it. He's a pigeon.

FATHER BARRY

(sighs)

Well, I have always known that you were behind this murder, but I would have never thought that you would come to me and confess. I must commend you for your action today. This is the first time I have seen you take man-like actions. I didn't think I would have lived to see this moment. *(Takes a deep breath and wipes forehead)* I need a drink.

JOHNNY

What? I thought you would be the last person to judge me, but I was young. All of this was a mistake—

FATHER BARRY

Wait, no don't underst—

JOHNNY

No it's alright, I must go; I knew I should never show my soft side because BUMS like you would take advantage. You're taking my kindness for weakness. And by the way, I always knew that I was a man and I don't need you "Father" to tell me otherwise. *(Both of them stand up)*

FATHER BARRY

But Johnny...

JOHNNY

I am leaving, but this conversation shall not be talked about with others. You know my power, Father Barry and I am not scared to use it, especially on pigeons. *(Johnny storms out.)*

POP DOYLE

What's wrong with him?

FATHER BARRY

A lot, but I don't think God will be his savior.

POP DOYLE

WHAT?!?! The devil is his very savior, as much as he tries to purify his sins that devil's advocate has no place in heaven!!!

FATHER BARRY

Everyone deserves to be forgiven.

POP DOYLE

Yes, humans but that animal is nothing close to us human beings. But Father may I have a talk with you?

FATHER BARRY

Yes my son, walk into the confessional with me.

Pop Doyle and Father Barry go into confessional...

(Murmuring)

END



TERRY AND EDIE VISIT THE MARRIAGE COUNSELOR

Starring: Unique Airall, Alexa Francese, and Adjoa Ghansah

Counselor's office. Day one.

Terry and Edie have been married for almost two years, and today they are coming to see Dr. Phil Good about some conflicts that Edie thinks they have in their marriage.

While they wait, Terry is impatient because he feels like they do not need counseling.

Edie sits there patiently with her legs crossed waiting to be called.

RECEPTIONIST:

Mr. and Mrs. Malloy, Dr. Phil Good is ready to see you now.

The couple stands up and walk through Dr. Phil Good's office doors. He greets them and offers them a seat.

DR. PHIL GOOD

So tell me what's going on?

EDIE

We both want children, but I don't think it's the right time for us because I want to be a teacher.

TERRY

I feel like we really don't need to be here. We just started our marriage and we don't need a counselor's help.

DR. PHIL GOOD

Mr. Malloy, how do you feel about what your wife is saying?

TERRY

I know for a fact that work is hard to find.

EDIE

Exactly why we shouldn't start a family because we would need money to support our future children.

TERRY

I am the man! And I would make enough to support us.

DR. PHIL GOOD

Ok! Let's calm down and start from the beginning. So Terry, Why don't you believe in your wife or support her dreams? Edie, why would you ignore this man's desire to start a family? What compromise can you both come up with to solve your situation?

TERRY

The fact that you need a job, makes me feel less of a man. I do believe in your dreams, but I want to be the man Edie.

EDIE

My intention wasn't to make you feel any less of a man. I just want to pursue my dream of becoming a teacher. I would love have children, but that will require me to put aside my dream even longer than I planned.

DR. PHIL GOOD

Alright. Well since you are finished with your education Edie, you can set aside about two years to having a child, and then after some time, you can start working. This will make you and your husband happy. Does this seem fair to both of you?

EDIE

That's fine with me.

TERRY

That's fine with me too. Can I take my wife home now?

DR. PHIL GOOD

Great. See you next month!

EDIE AND TERRY

Bye.

END

John Q Review by Stephanie Fernandez

John Q (2002) is a heartwarming film about a father who goes to extreme measures to save his son's life. Many critics disliked this film and gave it a 23 percent approval rating. For example, James Rocci from *Netflix* states, "Socially conscious Denzel Washington's thriller wants to tackle tough questions—but settles for easy answers." Despite what critics like Rocci have written, *John Q* is a great movie. Not only is the plot entertaining, but the actors also portray convincing emotion and the script brings attention to societal issues. Along with the soundtrack, all of these elements give audiences a thrilling film.

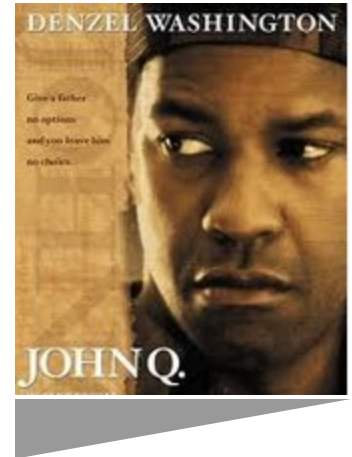
John Q conveys that the society we live in is unjust when it comes to the working class and how, with determination, all is possible. When the film begins, the audience gets an understanding of John's financial situation. John demonstrates that he has economic problems. His wife's car is towed away because he was not able to pay the insurance. In spite of their financial circumstances, the family is supportive of each other and united. The young son, Mike, says, "When I grow up, I'll be so strong no one will ever take nothing from us."

Unfortunately, Mike is not as strong as he wants to be. During a baseball game, he collapses and later on is discovered to have a heart condition. Mike is in need of a heart transplant, but the doctors tell John that, "the operation you're looking at costs two-hundred and fifty-thousand dollars minimum." At that moment, John is heartbroken at the preposterous price of the surgery, but he knows he is going to save his son's life: by all means possible.

This healthcare crisis is a situation that can occur in real life, yet critics still undermine the movie. "Waste in the health care system is deplorable, but waste on the movie screen isn't so great either," says Mark Caro from *The Chicago Tribune*. However, most ordinary audiences plead to differ with Mr. Caro's harsh criticism, giving *John Q* approval ratings of 83 percent ("John Q").

A movie with such positive ratings from an audience must have good acting. Denzel Washington plays an intense role and adapts to the intense script well, transitioning from a honest working man to a desperate father who takes extreme measures. John attempts to gather funds in honest ways by selling everything in his household and getting offerings from the church he attends, as well as by trying to utilize his work insurance. These means are not enough, and as John keeps seeking funds from legitimate sources, he keeps getting declined. Because of this predicament, he feels the need to make drastic measures because he wants Michael to live. John then thinks of the outlandish idea of holding hostages in the hospital that, because of his lack of money, refuses to operate on his son.

An actor who can transition from playing the role of a factory worker and church-goer to someone who would commit a crime to save his son must be a good one. Denzel Washington convincingly plays the role of a loving father and offers the audience opportunities to sympathize with him, regardless of what he



John Q; Nick Cassavetes; 2002

Main Actors: Denzel Washington, Daniel E. Smith, and Kimberly Elise

2002 BMI Film Music Award and 2003 Image Award

***** Out of *****

does to save his son. In the scene where John speaks to his son for the last time on the phone, he reassures Mike in a nurturing way. The way Denzel delivers the line: “Hey, what good would the world be without you? Without you, there is no world” is emotive and captivates the audience’s attention. Through his superior acting skills, Denzel’s character comes alive and makes the script complete.

The soundtrack complements the dialogue and imagery and enhances the scenes. “Justice of the Heart” by Stevie Wonder has especially powerful lines that relate significantly to the script:

Somewhere there’s got to be someone that can hear my deepest plead /

Sometimes it feels like I am standing alone against the raging time making me do things that I never do.

This song plays over a montage of key images in which John is struggling to get funds to save his son’s life. This is the feeling John portrays. Even after all the doors kept closing on him, he lives up to the sentiments of the song.

John Q is an entertaining film that illustrates a circumstance that can happen at any time. The acting and plot are exceptional. *John Q* sends a message that with love and determination, anything is possible. John does not let his son die because of the lack of money; instead he risks his life without hesitation. Even though this film was released in the 2002, it still is relevant today. I would highly recommend those who have not seen it to do so.

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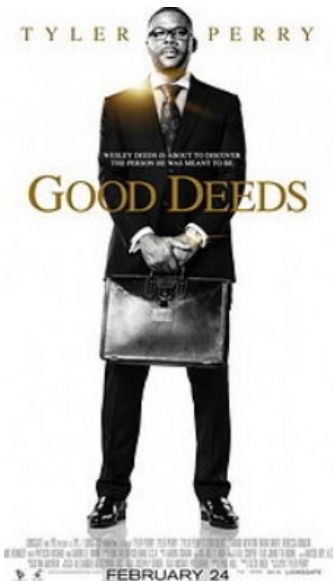
Good Deeds (2012) by Kylie Francis

“I don’t know what is out there, or what is waiting for me, but whatever it is I am going to find it,” says Wesley Deeds the main character of *Good Deeds* at the end of the movie when he finally figures out what his goal in life really is. Wesley Deeds (Tyler Perry) realizes that he does not need to make others happy; he needs to understand that his happiness comes first. Throughout the movie, he struggles between pleasing his mother and helping a poor, single mother (Thandie Newton) put a roof over her and her young daughter’s (Jordenn Thompson) heads. The main message of this movie is relatable to many people, and the director does a great job getting it across with the techniques he uses. However, many critics disagree with me for various reasons; such critics are David Dewitt and Joe Leydon who both write for prestigious periodicals such as *The New York Times* and *Variety*. In spite of their negative criticism, *Good Deeds* is a wonderful romantic drama/comedy, and it never fails to provoke powerful emotions. This movie instills in our minds that there are people who are truly selfless.

David Dewitt first criticizes *Good Deeds* by comparing it to *Pretty Woman* (1990), and moves on to bash its acting and plot. Dewitt states that the idea of *Good Deeds* has been done before when people from two different worlds meet, and they end up falling in love. He places *Pretty Woman* on a very high pedestal. David Dewitt claims that in *Good Deeds* there was very little humor and the movie had a predictable fairy tale ending. He states that, “*Good Deeds* honors goodness, which isn’t at all a bad thing, and it’s not without moments of genuine feeling.” He admits that *Good Deeds* does have genuine feeling because of the actors. David Dewitt makes a joke claiming, “If only Mr. Perry the director had encouraged Mr. Perry the actor to flavor his performance with anything beyond on-the-nose gravity.” This makes people think about how the actor is portraying the character, and since the actor and the director are the same, no one is able to change it if the acting is “horrible.”

Writer Joe Leydon also criticizes the plot of *Good Deeds*. He claims that the film takes forever to reveal a predictable ending. He has a theory that *Good Deeds* might not appeal many people; however, according to Rotten Tomatoes more than three-fourths of the people who went to see the movie enjoyed it, but for the movie critics, the percentage was less than half. Leydon continues to say that the film is very melodramatic and it is unintentionally comical. Starting off his review, he refers to Tyler Perry as Madea, a comic character that Perry often plays in other movies. Joe Leydon believes that the acting is not up to par and people will just be wasting their precious time going to see this movie. He believes that the movie would have been better had Madea “shown up and simply slapped some sense into these people.”

I highly disagree with both Dewitt’s and Leydon’s (movie) reviews. Tyler Perry’s *Good Deeds* is by far the best romance/drama/comedy that I have ever seen. Dewitt and Leydon also both failed to acknowledge the score for



PG-13 1 hr. 49 min.
Drama, Romance, Comedy
Directed By: Tyler Perry
Written By: Tyler Perry
In Theaters: Feb 24, 2012
On DVD: Jun 12, 2012

Good Deeds, which is on track with the emotions that the characters feel. Because of the score, one can always be certain what they are feeling through the music and the expression on the actors' faces. Although this film may have had a predictable and "fairytale" ending, it gives people hope. [. . .]

One critic who agrees with me is Kam Williams, who believes that "the plot is not only perfectly plausible but remains refreshingly grounded in reality from start to finish." Tyler Perry is fantastic. He acts nonchalantly at first, but when he realizes that the single mother (Thandie Newton) needs his help, he becomes a husband figure. Tyler Perry sets the pace for other actors as well. The viewers can tell by the look on the little girl's face (Jordann Thompson) that she was comfortable in front of the camera. The plot of *Good Deeds* clearly and effectively communicates a message: you don't realize what matters most until you have been pushed to realize your strengths.

For the hour and a half that I was in the movie theater, I put myself in the characters' shoes wondering what I would have done if I were in their position. [. . .] This movie is a must see and it can change your perspective about a lot of things if you go into it with an open mind.

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You Should be Taken by *Taken* by Audrey Lavilette

Taken is a thrilling, suspenseful movie that everyone should watch because of its amazing action, cast, and plot. This action-thriller first came out in 2008 in France and a year later was released in the US. Directed by the French director Pierre Morel, the film is great to watch. While action-thrillers are not my favorite movies, *Taken* is my favorite of this genre. My first impression of the film was that the plot was amazing, and in fact, I watched it more than once. The movie has numerous good aspects, and the strongest are the acting and plot. Other viewers like *Taken* also, and I don't understand why so many critics disliked the film. Clearly, *Taken* is underrated.

Set in Paris, *Taken* is the story of a retired CIA agent named Bryan Mills (Liam Neeson), who is trying to find his teenage daughter Kim (Maggie Grace). A gang of sex traffickers abducts Kim and her friend during their trip to Paris. Bryan Mills has retired in order to have a better relationship with his daughter Kim, since she lives with his ex-wife Lenore (Famke Janssen). Mills searches for Kim in France, using the skills he acquired from being a special agent. French officials told Bryan that Kim was taken by an Albanian gang, and according to statistics, he has only 96 hours to find her alive. Bryan fights and kills everyone who is in his path, including some French civilians and several Albanian gangsters.

Its plot is one of the main reasons why I like *Taken*. The plot is intense, and the ending suspenseful because we do not know whether Bryan Mills will find Kim alive. According to top critic Roger Ebert, however, *Taken*'s plot is unrealistic. He argues that if it were real, Mills would have used his contacts to find his daughter, and says, "If CIA agents in general were as skilled as Bryan Mills in particular, Osama bin Laden would have been an American prisoner since late September 2001." Ebert also calls the film names, such as "high-quality trash" and says, "On the other hand, it's preposterous." I strongly disagree with Ebert. While watching the movie, I believed in the action, characters and plot. I later did some research and discovered that experiences like being abducted abroad are, in fact, true and can happen to anyone, anywhere.

Another great aspect of *Taken* is the credible acting from Liam Neeson and Maggie Grace. Brian Mills is played by Liam Neeson, who is one of the greatest actors of the century. Neeson has proven his talent with his performances in great movies such as *Schindler's List*. According to James Berardinelli, however, Neeson tries too hard to prove that he can be a good action movie star at the age of sixty, and the action scenes lack some originality. In his review, Berardinelli says, "Liam Neeson replaced Kiefer Sutherland from the TV show *24*; Neeson's Bryan Mills uses nearly all the Jack Bauer tactics, including torture, bone-crunching, and bloodletting. He gets involved in car chases, shoot-outs, and brings a gun to a knife fight." I disagree with Berardinelli because Liam Neeson's performance as Bryan Mills is fascinating. He is believable in his character of an ex-CIA agent and determined father trying to find his daughter.



Taken

Release Dates: France, 2008/USA, 2009

Director: Pierre Morel

Main Actors: Liam Neeson, Maggie Grace, Famke Janssen

He was able to perform the stunts so well, that after watching the movie, I found it hard to believe that Neeson was fifty-six years old while this movie was filmed. The other amazing actor, Maggie Grace, who is barely seen throughout the film, also plays her role of being a victim of sex trafficking very well. It is surprising how she played a vulnerable seventeen-year-old girl while being twenty-six years old.

I also find the film *Taken* interesting because of the world-wide problem of human trafficking it exposes. After watching the film, I took a minute to think about how many women in the world go through what Kim goes through in the movie. Sex trafficking is a hot topic and a serious matter in the world. Many of the scenes vividly expose how women can be kidnapped, drugged and later sold as sex slaves. I was shocked and horrified when I saw how these women were being treated. What surprised me the most is that Kim is found alive, especially when Bryan Mills first finds her friend, who later dies of a drug overdose.

The only reason why I gave *Taken* 4 stars out of 5 is because, although the script is good, I found some parts of the film to be too violent for a PG-13 movie. There are scenes where Mills builds an electric chair to torture a member of the Albanian gang who knows about Kim's whereabouts. In addition, Bryan kills many people in order to find his daughter. This mass killing of gangsters leads to a sequel to *Taken* that is all about revenge. These actions are, however, justified because it is Bryan's way to find Kim alive and he does.

Taken is filled with unexpected actions and it never gets boring. It is 90 minutes of excitement. If you haven't seen this movie, you should definitely watch it!

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Pistol Shot by Nadine Oquendo [Midterm]

This poem by Czeslaw Milosz is quite accurate. This quote proves itself true in the two films *In the Time Of The Butterflies* and *On The Waterfront*, which are both inspired by events in history. In both films, society goes along with the “silence” until someone speaks and sounds like a “pistol.” And, when a pistol is shot in a room of silence, people react.

In the film *The Time Of The Butterflies* Minerva is raised in the Dominican Republic with her family, under the rule of a dictator, Trujillo. Women are not given the opportunity to go to law school, but growing up, that is all Minerva wants, and people are captured and tortured for reasons we would consider unjust. However, no one in the society complains or fights back against their dictator and that can be considered society’s “room of silence.” Throughout the movie, Minerva speaks up for what she believes in. Her voice, her words, her actions “of truth” are the sound of a pistol.

Eventually in the film she finds a way to go to law school, and she becomes the first woman to attend. While attending, she joins an activist group, and she speaks out about the wrongs of Trujillo, and the group becomes known as The Butterflies. They put up signs around the town one night to inform people about Trujillo and how he is unjust. These flyers were the sound of her pistol and, as a result, the town became aroused. Her words even aroused the dictator himself as he sent out the military to find The Butterflies in response to the pistol shot in silence.

When Minerva and her sisters are arrested at their home and sent to the prison, everyone in society at that point knew that she was part of the Butterflies. And, one day in prison her sister looked out a window from the jail cell and saw the symbol of The Butterflies. This meant that the truth she spoke, the pistol sound she had made, was breaking the silence of society. And, it meant that there were still people out there trying to make a difference in their unjust society.

In the film *On The Waterfront*, the mob controls the waterfront dockworkers. People are frightened by them. This control and fear created the “silence.” But when Edie’s brother is murdered by the mob, she wants to know who is responsible for her brother’s death. She soon meets Terry, a dockworker, whose brother happens to be affiliated with the mob. In an attempt to solve the murder, the policemen try to talk to the dockworkers to see who will spill valuable information. However, the dockworkers are silent—that is, until several “pistol shots” are fired from different people in their society.

At one point in the film, a dockworker, Dugan is actually ready to talk to the police and word of him getting ready to talk gets around. One day at work in an “accident” he dies. The priest, Father Barry, gives a long speech to the workers, telling them the truth. He tells them how the mob is able to control them with fear. This is Father Barry’s “pistol shot.” And, despite the fact there are those in the crowd of workers who don’t want to listen, there are also those that do.



*In a room where
people unanimously maintain
a conspiracy of silence,
one word of truth
sounds like a pistol shot.*

—Czeslaw Milosz

Another scene occurs at the end, after Terry testifies against the mob. On the docks, all the workers just stare at him. And, members of the mob beat him up at the dock. As he is getting beaten, the other workers are pretty much just standing by until one shouts “C’mon!” in attempt to help Terry. The workers begin to move forward to save Terry but are stopped by another mob member, even though they outnumber the mob. However, the workers still stepped forward. The “silence” has been broken because of Terry’s “pistol shot,” which was his coming clean and telling the truth about the mob.

The quote by Czeslaw Milosz proves true in both of the films. But, as we can see in these films, justice is not just about breaking the silence with one’s pistol—the truth—but it is also about getting a reaction from society by the sound of the pistol.

Use Your Voice by Ana Morel [Midterm]

In a room where
people unanimously maintain
a conspiracy of silence,
one word of truth
sounds like a pistol shot.
— Czesław Miłosz

In order to find a solution to a problem, people must first recognize that there is a problem at hand. Once that is done, it is up to the people whether or not they want to take the first step in the direction of change. Miłosz's poem above sums up the truth about how to break a conspiracy, a dictatorship, and how to start a movement.

A word of truth can act as a pistol shot because, like a pistol shot, the truth scares people. When the truth is spoken in the midst of controversy and adversity, it is going to scare those around it and grab their attention as well. In the movie *On The Waterfront*, Terry is faced with the choice of speaking the truth about what the mob boss, Johnny Friendly, is doing. He is obviously afraid of speaking out against a mob boss. When it comes to conspiracy or dictatorships, the person in power is very rarely, if ever, doing the right thing. Although the people under the dictator's power know that what is going on is unjust, many people do not have the courage to stand up for what is right all due to fear. However, Terry makes the decision to speak the truth and expose Johnny, which as a result, causes the rest of the dock workers to do the same.

This poem also describes the film *in the Time of the Butterflies*. The people in a room maintaining a conspiracy of silence are basically the citizens of the Dominican Republic while they were under the dictatorship of Trujillo. The one word of truth which sounded like a pistol shot was the movement, partially started by Minerva Mirabal, which exposed Trujillo's crimes against the people. People often do not realize the power that they have when facing oppression. The fear which is instilled in them clouds their judgment and reasoning. If the people realized that a dictator is nothing without his/her followers and took action, then change would come about. But like I previously stated, fear can cloud judgment, thus preventing positive change.

This poem has a lot to do with standing up to oppression and when standing up to someone or something that everyone is afraid of, inevitably you are viewed as a hero. This was the case for Terry and the Mirabal sisters in their respective films, *On the Waterfront* and *In the Time of the Butterflies*. Although Terry was a fictional character and The Mirabal sisters were real people who actually stood up to a dictator and changed a whole country, they have many heroic similarities. They were brave, unselfish, courageous, and strong. However, the most important attribute which I found within all of them was that they did not speak out on injustice in order to be credited. They did it because they knew it was the right thing to do. The fact that they were the least expected people to do anything about the situations at hand made it seem even more heroic.

This poem is truly enlightening if carefully thought about. It can inspire someone to speak up and it shows the power of telling the truth, regardless of the circumstances.

What Does Love Mean To Me? By Marielena Polonia

Love is love. Love is a four-letter word that is very powerful. Is a very strong word for me personally because I just don't hand out this word to anyone as if it's anything. It's very valuable to me. Love to me is a strong feeling and emotion that you can have towards any man or woman. Love can be a happy or sad feeling.

I've had a bad experience with love in my past relationship. I was only sixteen years old and I didn't know much about love or relationship. My love was taken for granted. [. . .] We had a relationship of three years. I was really close to his family. They became my family; I took his mother to all her cancer appointments. I used to take his little sister to school every morning, which was across the street from my house, and help her with her homework basically take care of her. I felt like I was married in this relationship. We had more of rough times than good times. My mother became upset because she used to say I do more things for that family than my own. I was in love and sometimes you do things you shouldn't but you do just because you love that person.

I loved him, I felt like he was the one I was going to marry foolish I know but love is blind. I felt like I was giving my all but not getting anything in return. I helped him throughout many things to get his life back on track, but he was a very stubborn, angry young man. [. . .] It reached a point where I hated myself for loving him. For loving someone who treated me so poorly. Love is very tricky. I never knew love would hurt as much as it did.

One day I decided to end the relationship, telling myself that I deserved better. [. . .] That was the day I opened my eyes and realized who he really was. I cried myself to sleep for two months; I didn't think I had so many tears in me. Mothers always know best. My mother always told me that you never get to really know a person as much as you think you know them. She was right because the man he became that night wasn't the man I was with for three years. After this horrible experience, I learned that you can't just hand out the word love to anyone.

In order for me to tell you those special words, you must gain my trust and have done something very special for me to say, I love you. Those are strong, sentimental words for me. [. . .] I built up a wall up because I didn't want to let anyone in. I didn't want to get hurt again. To give someone my all and to be taken for granted isn't easy. The pain will always be there no matter what, which always reminds me of this quote, "I can wipe my tears in my eyes...But... I can't wipe the pain in my heart." This is what love did to me; I will always be scared.

At the end of the day, love is something many want but can't find. I found someone who loves me for me and makes me extremely happy. I thank God every day for my past because I was able to grow from it and find someone. Now I know what love really is and what it is supposed to be. I found someone who makes me happy and believe in love again. Happy, joyful, safe love. [. . .] Passion mixed with friendship, respect, showing affection and weakness, being unselfish and loyal to each other. The caring concern for the good of that other person. This is what love means to me.

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An Unforgettable Moment by Salem Milord

Everyone in this life has a special moment with food. Some food moments are forgettable, but often those food moments that we share with our friends and family members are not. My friend, Ticha Kunda, a sophomore at SUNY New Paltz, was open to share with me the food moment he had while eating “Le Galette des Rois.” He was very pleased to explain to me what made his food moment so special. During the conversation, I realized food was definitely a part of the moment, but even more so, having the privilege to share it with his family made the moment almost perfect.



“Le Gallette des Rois” is a very popular French pie cooked on every January 6th. It has been held as a tradition since the Middle Ages to celebrate the holiday of the Epiphany. This holiday is based on the story of baby Jesus, when the three kings visited him. As a part of the tradition, the cake comes with two lucky charms hiding inside it; the first person who finds one of the lucky charms becomes King or Queen of the day (Kunda).

Ticha’s lucky food moment was in January 2007, when he was 17 years old. His mother, his brother, and he went for a visit to France to stay at the house of their cousin, Dominique. Dominique came home with “Le Gallette des Rois,” and as his cousin was coming into the house with the pie, Ticha’s eyes and his mouth were wide open. When he told me about this, I wondered why he was so excited even before he began to eat. Right after, I learned that he saw a pie made of syrup, very shiny and soft. When he saw that, he started drooling. When his cousin put it in the stove, the smell took over the house. The almond smell was so wonderful it made Ticha even hungrier.

This pie must have been delicious. His experience was so inspiring, I even started daydreaming about the pie. I started picturing every word in my mind. I felt like I was very present in the scene, because his experience with the pie took me away. Moreover, when his cousin took it out of the stove, Ticha’s eyes were unable to turn away from the pie. The pie became his world. Even when they were lined up next to the table to take food, he was still unable to take his eyes away from the pie. I, myself, felt very eager to taste the pie when he was telling me that. He captured my attention at this point because he was going to describe the taste. He persisted that when it was his turn to take from the pie, he was ready! Slowly, he took a piece and then sat down. When he took his first bite, he saw a rainbow. The interior of the pie was very soft and sweet. The pie completely dissolved in his mouth. As soon as he told me that, I started feeling hungry and eager to eat this pie.

In addition, something more exciting happened. He was crowned king of the day. He explained that while he was eating the pie, his teeth bit into something pretty hard. Behold, it was a lucky charm! He took it with excitement and joy. He showed it to the rest of his family. They took the crown that came with the pie and they crowned him king of the day. In addition, his mother found the other lucky charm and she was crowned queen of the day.

I believe that this tradition held with “Le Galette des Rois” and the game of finding the lucky charm has become a valuable tool to bring all the members of a family together. Ticha was very pleased to share this moment with his family. His family is not with him often. They often travel in different countries. It is rare for them to see one another. Therefore, this moment was a great privilege for Ticha and his family to be in fellowship with one another. In addition, the game of finding the lucky charm in the pie, contributed to Ticha’s food moment. This game adds entertainment in the midst of family members and makes them enjoy the day and the pie even more. Ticha Kunda’s success in finding the lucky charm was a great achievement that is inerasable in his memory.

Ticha Kunda showed me that the food did not only feed him, but also created an awesome and delicious environment for him and his family members to spend an ineffaceable moment together. At the end of his experience, he was full and happy. Ticha made me realized at the end that food is not only useful for feeding but also it can be used for spiritual and psychological purposes, by bringing laughter, entertainments, joy, and fellowship.

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The Way Food Connects Us by Yanying Wang

My roommate, Jennifer Heaphy, is an American, while I come from China. Both of us enjoy sharing each other's food. Last night, Jennifer told me that her favorite food is Penne a la vodka. The pasta, which is cylindrical with a bumpy texture, is covered with an orange cream sauce, and smells a little bit spicy and a little bit sweet when it is cooked. Food helps Jennifer and I get to know each other better. As we know, food offers energy for people, but also food plays a large role to promote people's relationships because food creates happy memories for them.

Penne a la vodka gives a special moment to Jennifer and her mom. At dinner time on weekends, Jennifer and her mom cook Penne a la vodka. Jennifer's mom prepares crushed tomatoes, vodka, cream, minced garlic, chopped fresh basil, salt, pepper and penne pasta. She expertly puts olive oil into a large skillet, and she adds garlic to the olive oil until the garlic is tender. Then she stirs the garlic with basil. At this moment, Jennifer's mom stretches out her right hand to Jennifer and without saying anything, Jennifer gives the vodka and crushed tomatoes to her mom. The vodka and crushed tomatoes are poured into the skillet and simmered for a few minutes. Also, Jennifer's mom uses salt and pepper to season. Finally, Jennifer's mom stirs cream into the sauce and cooks for 10 more minutes.



When she does this, she is like an artist mixing colors to prepare a painting. At the same time, Jennifer adds lightly salted water to a large pot to boil. Jennifer puts pasta into the boiling salt water and cooks it about 10 minutes.

When the sauce and pasta are prepared, they toss them together. Jennifer's mom always washes her hands after she cooks. Jennifer hands over tissues to her mom every time. Both of them smile. Jennifer's favorite moment is almost here.

She has already placed two small plates and two forks on the table and sits happily to wait for her mom to bring the Penne a la Vodka.

Jennifer and her mom like to share penne a la vodka on a big plate. Before her mom opens her mouth, Jennifer knows what she is going to say. They converse about their days with each other. Also, they like to discuss the plans for the next day. They laugh while they are eating. The food always disappears before they realize it. They will start all over until both of them feel full. Time always passes so quickly. They spend two hours on cooking and eating. Usually, after eating, a plate of penne a la vodka remains on the table. That one will be tomorrow's lunch. Jennifer says that the weekend dinner time is her favorite moment because every day is busy and it is a good time to stay with her family. Now, Jennifer has moved away from the house and onto campus. She does not go home every weekend to be with her mom, but she always can imagine her

mom preparing penne a la vodka in their house. Jennifer calls her mom at that time and shares her day or plans with her the same as if they were eating the penne a la vodka together.

After I heard Jennifer's food moment, I thought about a moment when my family and I eat together. It is Chinese New Year, and my mom cooks Chinese cuisine. We have chicken, Drunken Chops, sweet and sour lychees, meat balls, fish balls, braised fish in brown sauce dumplings, and hot pot, which is my favorite, just like Jennifer is fond of penne a la vodka. The hot pot is cooked on the table. So, it is similar to Jennifer's dinner. We eat and cook at the same time, too. My father, mother, younger brother and I sit around the table. The hot pot is put on the center of the table. The food, raw vegetables, dried beef slices, needle mushrooms, mut-tonchops, crab meat, ham sausages, corn and lobster, surround the hot pot just like petals on a flower. We put the food we prepared into the pot and cook as soon as the water boils. When we are eating, we do not chat a lot. The words I hear the most are my mom saying, "Eat more." Sometimes, my father takes a piece of lobster from the hot pot and puts it in my bowl because he knows I like it. We eat and smile at each other. For this special food moment, we always eat together and wait until everyone finishes. Although nobody speaks, we create community the same as Jennifer and her mom. At these moments, staying together is the most important.

Nobody can live without food. Usually, people of different ethnicities enjoy different food. Even though Jennifer and I come from different cultures, food is very important to both of us. Jennifer believes if she cannot eat Penne a la vodka anymore, she would feel sad, and would crave for it. For me, if there was no hot pot anymore, I would feel the same as Jennifer. We both enjoy food, but we are happier when we share food with our families. Even though we live away from them, we still have happy memories from our moments which keep us connected to our families.

Work Cited

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Homemade Cultural Sensation by Yeiri Cruz

Drool was slowly crawling out like ants strolling around an abandoned piece of a heart-shaped piece of chocolate cake on a coffee table. My saliva started trespassing through the right side of my pink crusty lips as I thought about it. I had goose bumps; I could almost taste the richness and saltiness of all the ingredients mixed together. Yet, all I had in mind was my simple homemade salsa, but the desire and the urge I had was only understood by my taste buds. The red V-neck shirt I was wearing reminded me of the red glow that the tomatoes would give to my savory salsa. This is when I realized that culture is not only preserved by following traditions and speaking our native language, but also it is kept in our significant homemade recipes.



I felt my best friend Lindsey piercing me with her almond-shaped, hazel eyes as we sat at my round kitchen table. From the corner of my left eye, I saw her short black hair touching her jaw, and most importantly her tanned, preoccupied, squared face wondering what was happening to me. What she did not know was that my mind was not there; only my body was present. As I sat there I was “[thinking] about the flavorful juice that the combination of lemons, red onions, tomatoes, [and] fresh cilantro [would make]. I just could not stop thinking about that favorable juice sinking in my tongue, along with the crunchy triangle shaped corn chips that would add the extra hint of salt to it” (D’apice). This thought was over as soon as I felt her unexpected, small pinch. “MARIE! What is going on with you? Is something wrong?” Lindsey proclaimed in a worried tone. “No, Lindsey, better yet something spectacular is about to happen. We are going to make my favorite homemade salsa that my grandparents used to prepare for me back in Italy”.

It was a sunny, hot summer day; Lindsey and I rushed to the nearest local store that was five minutes away. The sun shone radiantly over us as we sped-walked as if somebody was following us. When we got to the store, we grabbed a green basket and started searching for the ingredients. We were on a mission. We split the list in half to finish faster; so while Lindsey looked for a red juicy round onion, lemons, and tender tomatoes, I searched for fresh cilantro and our favorite Tostitos corn chips. After purchasing our ingredients, we hurried on our way back home, and there we were minutes away from encountering my Italian culture. As we put all the ingredients together, we started to tear as we sliced the onion into miniature squares. Then the moment came; “[As] I took the first bite I got immediate satisfaction, and I continued to devour the bowl of salsa[.] I felt [like] it was something that my body need it not something that I desired[.]” (D’apice). I closed my eyes and enjoyed the bite I took; when we got to the bottom of the bowl, I craved more. I witnessed Lindsey’s special moment with my homemade salsa and saw her gratitude as she tasted and flavored all the delicious ingredients. As soon as I saw her licking her fingers, I knew with no doubt that it was something that she would definitely desire again.

Homemade food is not only secured in our minds, but also trapped in our

hearts. By just taking a bite of any of our culture’s food, we can time-travel back to that special place where we were born, the place that we come from. I come from Italy, and just through a simple homemade salsa I experienced so much satisfaction as if I were there. I also introduced my best friend to it and showed her a little bit of me. Food is as powerful as the blood that rushes through our veins, which is our DNA, our genes, our identity. By maintaining our homemade recipes we can still experience our culture. No matter how old or young we are homemade food is always kept in our hearts. We do not necessarily need to go back to our native countries in order to feel like home. By taking a bite of that special dish, we may feel as if we are there. Through my homemade salsa, I was able to preserve my culture and heritage through each loving bite.

Homemade Salsa Recipe

Ingredients

- 1 red onion
- Lime juice
- 1 tomato
- Fresh cilantro
- Salt and pepper
- Tostitos corn chips

Directions

1. Cut the onion and the cilantro in small squared pieces. Peel the tomato, remove the seeds and then chop it
2. Put the cut up cilantro, tomato, and onion in a bowl
3. Add 1 1/2 to 2 tablespoons lime juice
4. Sprinkle 1 to 2 tablespoons of salt and pepper
5. Mix the ingredients for at least two minutes
6. Pick up the salsa with a Tostito chip and take a bite!

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The First Attempt by Danny Perez



The kitchen is quiet and the only noises that can be heard are the voices of the commentators on the Univision channel. Johnny Perez is alone in the kitchen. He is about to cook on his own, for the first time, a vegan meal. He is nervous but at the same time excited. Through many trials and errors on the different dishes he has made on his own, he discovers that the act of cooking is also an art.

Johnny begins to set up the necessary ingredients for the veggie burger: zucchinis, carrots, small pieces of onion, a piece of garlic, red and green peppers, mushrooms and black beans. The frying pan is on the stove, motionless and cold. The next step is to process the vegetables into bits and pieces through the food processor. The sound is loud and breaks the silence in the kitchen. There is a constant struggle for each vegetable to get cut into small pieces. Johnny stops and moves the vegetables inwards to be cut nicely (Perez). The vegetables' appearance had to be perfect like small cube dices. Every last bit has to be carved out similarly to a sculpture. A sculpture with great details is admired by many.

The process of making the veggie burger is still not complete as Johnny has a few more steps to achieve greatness. After processing all the vegetables, the beans are then boiled. The boiling water and beans appear like lava but only darker and black. The little sounds of popping bubbles begin to arise. The smell of fresh beans roams around the house, leaving everyone to become hungry. To the rest of family, the beans give a similar odor of meat, but it is actually the beans boiling. When the boiling is done, the frying is next. The beans are fried with olive oil and onion to give it extra flavor. The beans hit the pan and a sizzling sound occurs. Johnny wants the beans to be delicious and perfect. To him, perfect is to constantly move and stir the beans to make sure they are the right texture and taste. While the cooking process is already in effect, there are times where Johnny feels confident but there were also times that he feels worried about the veggie burger (Perez). To most artists, there is a feeling of failure, but, at the same time, there is great determination and confidence to finish the project. Since it is Johnny's first time cooking on his own, there is an expectation that the taste and texture needs to be perfect at the first bite. This is the same with an artist's first time with a new project to work on. The artist does not know what the final piece is going to look like. Only by working towards the work of art can it soon be a masterpiece.

The process is almost complete for the veggie burger and the smell is already reaching Johnny's nose. Johnny reaches for the vegetables and mixes them together and uses Quaker oatmeal as the base for the veggie burger. He processes the oatmeal and then mixes up the other vegetables. Last but not least, he mixes the finished beans into the bunch. Instead of using a spatula, he uses his

hands to mix every ingredient. The ingredients stick to Johnny's fingers and hand, creating a second skin. He forms a veggie burger but then breaks it apart and mixes it together to have an even distribution of the ingredients (Perez). The feeling of using his hands is more empowering. To an artist, using touch is a way of connecting with the process of painting or producing the sculpture.

The veggie burger makes the finish line as it is put in the frying pan. The first sound heard is the sizzling. The smell of the veggie burger is delicious and can already be tasted. Johnny wants the veggie burger to be held together, so he constantly flips the burger slowly. He watches the burger get crispy and dark on the corners, but the middle is a very light brown tone. Johnny then tops the veggie burger with bread, lettuce, tomatoes, and puts some extra flavor by putting seasoning: organic herb mix (Perez). At last, the masterpiece is done. For an artist, this is the end stage, but now the artist must observe what he or she has created.

The moment of truth finally comes, and Johnny is about to eat his first home cooked veggie burger. The smell is rich and flavorful. Johnny breathes in and out slowly and holds the veggie burger. At the first bite, the veggie burger comes apart, but the flavor is indescribable. Every ingredient can be tasted. The fried beans and the vegetables with distant flavors come together as one. The outside is very crunchy while the inside is still soft. Johnny is happy that all the hard work and effort to make the veggie burger finally came together with the great first bite (Perez). To an artist, the final stage is to look back at the key elements, to stand back and look at the sculpture or painting. What can be improved? But what is good about the current piece? This is what Johnny does in the future: to learn from his mistakes but to keep attempting to make the perfect veggie burger.

The moment of eating and tasting the veggie burger for the first time impacts Johnny's life. He could have just bought a veggie burger from the market, but he did not feel right about what is really in that veggie burger. Instead, he desires to cook it and go through the steps at his own pace. He feels more in control over what is going to be in the veggie burger and what he did not want to include. This is similar to an artist selecting the right tools to begin working such as paints, brushes, pencils, erasers and other materials. Not by just buying an art piece that is already done, the true art is to create a magnificent masterpiece from scratch. Johnny became vegan after eating the veggie burger. He thought that if he can do it for one day to weeks, months and years, then he can do it for a lifetime.

Recipe for Veggie Burger:

INGREDIENTS

BEAN BURGERS WITH SPICY GUACAMOLE

1/2 cup water
 1/4 cup quinoa, rinsed
 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
 1/2 cup chopped red onion
 1 clove garlic, minced
 2 1/2 cups cooked pinto beans, well drained
 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
 1/2 teaspoon ground toasted cumin seeds
 3 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
 3 tablespoons cornmeal, plus 1/3 cup for coating burgers
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 Freshly ground pepper to taste
 6 whole-wheat hamburger buns, toasted
 6 lettuce leaves
 6 tomato slices

PREPARATION

Bring water to a boil in a small saucepan. Add quinoa and return to a boil. Reduce to a low simmer, cover and cook until the water has been absorbed, about 10 minutes. Uncover and let stand.

Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a medium skillet over medium heat. Add 1/2 cup onion and garlic and cook, stirring occasionally, until soft and fragrant, about 3 minutes. Add beans, paprika and ground cumin and mash the beans to a smooth paste with a potato masher or

GUACAMOLE

1 ripe avocado
 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh cilantro
 1 tablespoon lemon juice
 2 teaspoons finely chopped red onion
 1 clove garlic, minced
 1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper, or more to taste
 1/8 teaspoon salt

Tabouli by Nadia Ouedraogo

We never think about certain things unless we are asked to, but, there is always a moment when eating food feels good and different. This difference is not only caused by the type of food but also the setting, the weather, and people that we share this moment with. We all have a special food moment that we always remember and which will light up a smile on our faces, because that feeling never gets old. It is the feeling of being part of a community that makes the food moment even special. That is what I felt like after talking to Mrs. Freel and reflecting on my own experience.

It was during a nice warming summer day when Situ Habooba came to visit. Her visit would bring the family together for dinner. Usually Situ and Mrs. Freel's mother would prepare dinner and the kids would watch. Yet, it was different that day. After picking the fresh legumes and vegetables, they were washed. Most of the vegetables are grown in the family garden during the summer so they are juicy and fresh. That day, Mrs. Freel wasn't a spectator she was asked to take part in the process of making one of the best foods. All the ingredients were fresh and ready to go. Situ handed her the sharp cutting knife and the



process of making Tabouli Salad began. Tabouli salad is a Lebanese dish which is also called a woman's dish. It is called so because in the Middle East, women work the family garden; therefore, they usually use their fresh vegetables that they grew to make a salad which they would gather together and share. Mrs. Freel chopped up the vegetables while Situ and Mrs. Freel's mother observed her to make sure that she was managing the knife well. After all the vegetables were well cut, every-

thing was put together. It was an experience of a life time and the first time. In the gigantic bowl, there was a mixture of colorful and juicy summery vegetables, including tomatoes, scallions, peas, parsley, and other legumes. In addition, there were the juicy summer lemons, and for the tasty touch, Situ's seasoning which includes: salt, pepper cinnamon and "nana", mint in Arabic. With this combination, the sour taste of the lemon tickles your jaw, plus the smell of the mint and the taste of the cinnamon made a perfect combination. Tabouli was not the only food on the table, but it was the masterpiece. After everything was ready, everyone came together and shared the good food. It was the murmuring and the "hum hum!!" from the enjoyment of the food that ambiance the event.

This reminded me of my food moment back home in Burkina Faso. I consider my grandmother, who I call "Yabaa," as one of the best cooks in the world. She used to wake up early in the morning to cook rice which she would sell. Everyone in my area knew her for her cooking. Since I am her favorite grand-daughter, she used to make me some of her special meals. One time she was making me a famous and delicious tomato sauce with beef. This time she allowed me to help with the processes, just like Mrs. Freel experience with her Situ. First I cut up the tomatoes then the onions which caused my eyes to tear.

What made my grandmother's sauce so special were the many vegetables that she included. She added carrots and cabbage and okra which made the sauce sort of elastic. After putting the legumes together, she seasoned the sauce with her secret ingredients which she shared with me that day: garlic, celery, parsley, black pepper, plus other African seasonings. Then, to end it all she added the beef that she had seasoned and fried. This also made me very happy because it was not only the first time that she let me help but also it was also my very first cooking lesson. Yabaa put the white rice on a big plate and topped it with our sauce. Right in the middle of the courtyard, my aunts, grandmother and I gather around the food and enjoyed it with our bare hands, just like the women in the Middle East were doing with Tabouli. "This way we can feel the food while eating it; therefore, we will appreciate it more," my grandmother would say when she wanted us to eat with our hands.

After dinner, Situ enveloped Mrs. Freel with her strong, after mentioning her help to everyone. She was steady enough to warm Mrs. Freel's entire body.

To most, being able to chop up vegetables is not such of a big deal, however, it was for Mrs. Freel and me. It is not the action of helping that matters, it is the life experience and the warm feeling that we carry with us that is the most important. Sometimes I still eat with my hands, so I can feel that Yabaa is right next to me.

Dear Mrs. Freel,

If we avoid everything that Michael Pollan tells us to, we will starve. Although they are good ideas, I think it is impossible to do everything he says.

For example, number six; avoid food products that contain more than five ingredients. I do not usually look at the ingredients on things, but when I do there are way more than five things listed on that list. I think it would be extremely hard to keep track of foods with only five ingredients.

Number two: if grandma does not know what it is, then do not buy it. Well, there are many things that my grandmother does not know about. Does that also mean I should do those either? It might be a good idea, but there is no way that I'm going to pass up Go-Gurts, ironically I was eating one as I was reading it.

Number four: Avoid everything with high fructose corn syrup. In other words, avoid life.

Number Seven: Avoid foods if a third grader cannot pronounce it, which is basically everything. Things bring ingredients that even I cannot pronounce. Usually it is a scientific name and the producers do not want us to know what it actually is. I heard Chochipdrixophenia is the new name for cookie, bet you did not see that one coming.

Number Twenty: It is not food if it arrived through the window of your car. Yes it is and it is delicious.

Number Eighteen: Do not eat from places where everyone is required to wear a surgical cap. Do you want hair in your food? Me either.

Number Sixteen: Buy your food at the farmers market. I am in college; I have been to our local Thursday farmers market. There is no way that I would ever be able to afford ANYTHING that they are selling. Who charges five dollars for a cookie? It is whatever, they taste better packaged anyways.

Number Seventeen: Eat food only cooked by other humans. Well, then I would not know what ingredients are in the foods. I would not know their cooking habits, and I would not know how clean they are. McDonalds is kind of cooked by humans, right?

Number Nineteen: If it came from a plant eat it, if it is made in a plant, don't. Okay everyone, Poison Ivy is now safe to ingest, knock yourselves out, literally.

Number fifteen: Get out of the supermarket. The farmers market does not carry everything that I need. Plus, they are expensive. I enjoy stop and shop anyways.

Number fourteen: Eat foods from ingredients that you can picture in their raw state. Yum, a stack of sugar, fats, and oils.

Number thirteen: Eat foods that would eventually rot. Everything will eventually rot; some things just take more time than others.

Overall, I think these are all pretty good tips, from now on; I am going to follow everything he says. I am only eating tomatoes, lettuce and potatoes. Everything else it is restricted. I am eating them raw; to avoid any scientifically made ingredients too. All jokes aside, if someone can afford his tips, then they should follow them, I think that these are really helpful and will be beneficial in the long run.

Sincerely, Imetzi Adon

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Dear Mrs. Freel,

The most pleasurable moments of eating are only created when we gain knowledge about the production and the creators of what we eat. Only then do we appreciate and enjoy everything about our food. In today's current American society, many of the manufacturers choose to forget the old techniques used in farming and raising livestock. In addition, many of them are also forced to adapt the new farming procedures in order to have bigger and faster production. The use of dangerous chemicals, hormones and pesticides are ways in which many American farmers practice agriculture, in order to have rapid growth in their crops and livestock. As a result, there has been an outbreak of deadly diseases and sicknesses, and people are not getting the essential nutrients they need. In Wendell Berry's essay "The Pleasures of Eating," he stresses the importance of healthy eating. He also shares how vital it is to eat naturally and to grow more local crops rather than consuming foods made from far places. Only then do we experience the true pleasures of eating.

People often take for granted their food production and they have no idea of the process farmers go through to make their lives as happy as it is. In the last paragraph of "The Pleasures of Eating," Wendell Berry focuses on the aspects of appreciation, gratification and experiencing the fullest pleasure. "Eating with the fullest pleasure – pleasure, that is, that does not depend on ignorance – is perhaps the profoundest enactment of our connection with the world;" In this line Wendell Berry highlights how people could achieve pleasurable eating. He believes that people should educate themselves with the truth behind their food production. In addition, he feels that being connected to the world starts by knowing what and who has contributed to the production of our food.

There is always an importance in being aware of what we eat and the process by which everything is given to us. Many people believe that foods are grown on farms and then placed on the shelves in their local supermarkets. However, Berry feels that our food production takes a longer process. "There is nothing to eat, / seek it where you will, / but the body of the Lord." He quotes from William Carlos Williams' poem which supports his ideas by highlighting that our foods are blessings from the Lord. He realizes that there is a spiritual connection with our foods and that people should be thankful for it. He believes that people should be grateful for their blessings and only then would they experience pleasurable eating.

Eating responsibly is one of the things people should practice in order to live a good life. There will be a greater outcome if we start to pay more attention to what we consume and where our food comes from. Wendell Berry wrote the essay, "The Pleasures of Eating," to highlight the true meaning behind people's choices and the industry's way of fooling their consumers. In the last paragraph of his essay, he makes a general summary and realization about our food. He believes that in order for us to attain the pleasures of eating, we must first examine the actuality behind our food. He also believes that there is a divine power behind the creation of what we eat. The only way people would be able to enjoy their food is to pay more attention to their food production and to be more appreciative.

*Yours Respectfully,
Akeem Samuels*