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How Martha Stewart cultivates class by teaching good taste

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HOW MARTHA STEWART CULTIVATES
CLASS BY TEACHING GOOD TASTE

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Journalism
& Mass Communications
San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science

by

Sherry M. Charles

May 2004

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A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "D. Dunleavy", written over a horizontal line.

Dr. Dennis Dunleavy

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "C. Baldwin", written over a horizontal line.

Dr. Cecelia Baldwin

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Scot M. Guenter", written over a horizontal line.

Dr. Scot M. Guenter

APPROVED FOR THE UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

HOW MARTHA STEWART CULTIVATES CLASS BY TEACHING GOOD TASTE

by Sherry M. Charles

Although lifestyle seemingly offers an opportunity to transcend class boundaries, dominant social structures are constantly reproduced through mediated processes of socialization. The ideological struggle implicit in the construction of meaning impacts the formation of the self, and although subjects resist through the active interpretation of texts, dominant ideology is far from powerless. *Martha Stewart Living* television employs the how-to genre to cultivate dominant notions of domesticity and female identity.

This study is a discursive and narrative analysis of Stewart's naturalization of symbolic and material values that impact class structuration. Stewart helps develop self-disciplined and domesticated subjects who desire an aestheticized lifestyle. By valorizing entrepreneurship, Stewart helps develop subjects who seek individual solutions to class-produced inequalities. By cultivating a class-derived standard of taste, the texts invite complicity with dominant class values.

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Introduction

In *The Way We Live Now*, Anthony Trollope (1875/1962) chronicled the woes of nineteenth century parvenu financiers and industrialists thwarted in their attempts to buy their way into upper-crust society by their ignorance of exactly what to own. Though they might purchase the goods that bespoke class, wealth alone could not guarantee a social position. Lapses of taste and ignorance of prescribed behavior sabotaged their social ambitions, but today we have help. Today we have Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia.

Martha Stewart is a celebrity and media mogul, and, above all, a brand (Lippert & Ferguson, 1995; Talbot, 1996). Martha Stewart is famous for being famous, and she has reshaped an institution: "Martha is the Madonna of lifestyle, and in the last ten years she has reclaimed the image of the homemaker in much the same way Madonna has subverted the role of the sex object" (Lyons, 1993, p. 8). Martha Stewart the person and Martha Stewart the brand are inexorably intertwined, and Martha the celebrity has achieved single name status. Like Coco, Yves, Ralph, Giorgio, and Izaak, Martha is a potent marketing force who dictates style. Like Cher, Madonna, Jackie, Hillary, and Oprah, Martha is a mythic female force.

As the queen of domesticity, Stewart exhibits her own privileged lifestyle, then instructs her audience how to recreate it at home. Martha Stewart is an expert cook, housekeeper, laundress, gardener, decorator, author, caterer, antiques hound, painter, farmer, baker, crafts person, and all around neatnik. Her accomplishments set the standard for the ideal homemaker.

As an arbiter of lifestyle and taste in a society with deep respect for expertise, Stewart's opinions influence popular culture: "She presides, in fact,

over a phenomenon that, in other realms, is quite familiar in American society and culture: a cult, devoted to her name and image" (Talbot, 1996, p. 30). The cultivation of taste, the mysterious ability to make aesthetic judgments, has a strongly ideological dimension (Halle, 1992; Sparke, 1995). Taste, as Bourdieu (1984) established, is a class marker.

The concept of taste involves the individual's ability to make aesthetic discriminations about a range of cultural artifacts and activities; each set of cultural preferences corresponds to a specific class location (Bayley, 1991; Bull, 1991; Bourdieu, 1984). As Bourdieu demonstrated in a sociological study of taste, the cultural tastes of the upper classes are privileged throughout society. Upper-class tastes are canonized as high culture, and the inferior tastes of the lower classes are dismissed as popular culture (Gans, 1999).

Although Bourdieu correlated taste with class location, the postmodern perspective has found these ties less secure. Class position has been characterized as more mobile, social identity more fluid, and lifestyles more self-constructed (Giddens, 1991; Holt, 1997; Kellner, 1992).

Martha Stewart teaches a standard of taste drawn from upper-class or bourgeois cultural values. When Martha Stewart demonstrates the finer points of cultivating a tasteful lifestyle, she speaks to viewers from a real position of privilege as a wealthy and powerful woman. In Marxist terms, Stewart's wealth and ownership place her firmly in the bourgeoisie.

Upper-class lifestyles have emulated the habits and style of a gentry that in turn had modeled itself on what was left of the feudal aristocracy (Sparke, 1995). In the turmoil that attended the industrial revolution, society anxiously looked for visible delineators of class status. Aesthetic considerations informed all of household arrangements of gentlemen and would-be gentlemen. Furnishings, decorations, entertainments, dress, dining, and gardens provided

the stage for the visual display of privilege. The cultivation of pleasure was paramount, and the genteel interests were carefully distinguished from the rude pastimes of the lower classes (Bayley, 1991).

Industrial capitalism is supported by the myth that a lifestyle marked by the cultivation of leisure is available off the shelf. Thanks to mass production a plethora of luxury goods is within everyone's grasp, a vision of plenty that is incessantly promoted by mass media. Today's consumers know what to want, what to buy, and, thanks to Martha Stewart, they know what else should be in the room and what to serve for tea. "To read Martha Stewart is to know that there is no corner of your domestic life that cannot be beautified or improved under careful tutelage, none that should not be colonized by the rhetoric and discipline of quality control" (Talbot, 1996, p. 30).

As much as Martha Stewart has traded on her self-constructed upper-class identity, she has relied on her Polish roots for the authenticity that resonates with a broad audience. Working-class roots have entitled Stewart to the immigrant's dream of riches won through pluck, luck, and hard work. Her childhood habits of industry and thrift have endeared her to her working-class viewers (Taylor, 2002). Her initial success was built on food (catering and cookbooks) that reflected a different social sphere: "From the tiniest hors d'oeuvres to the catered weddings for two hundred, Martha Stewart food is whiteness with a high-church, White Anglo-Saxon Protestant (WASP) gloss" (Bentley, 2001, p. 90).

Martha Stewart's domestic advice follows in the venerable tradition of courtesy literature, or practical writing on conduct, that can be traced back to ancient Egypt. This practical body of work has prescribed conduct, ethical codes, aesthetics, and any other information deemed useful to a class-conscious group. Manuals of conduct have drawn an evolving portrait of social ideology by

describing the ideal behavior for princes and rulers (Mason, 1971).

Victorian compendia of practical advice were directed as much toward personal conduct and moral behavior as to household affairs. Some even ventured to explain natural phenomena: "Why do not sailors get cold, who are frequently wet all day with sea-water?" (*Enquire Within Upon Everything*, 1856/1978, p. 71). Popular domestic manuals like Mrs. Beeton's *Household Management*, published in England in 1861, dispensed moral advice along with practical wisdom. In her equally popular manual, Catherine Beecher (sister of Harriet Beecher Stowe) emphasized the role of the American home and particularly the American homemaker in maintaining national virtue.

These manuals also helped clarify muddled identity issues for the newly middle-class housewife. Advice manuals explained how to hire and educate servants to upwardly mobile women unaccustomed to household staff. Advice manuals have helped establish and maintain cultural standards that reflect class, gender, and racial differences (Fox, 1998). Martha Stewart is herself a parvenu who crossed class boundaries and constructed an identity in keeping with her new circumstances.

The Martha Stewart brand is a remarkable testament to the effectiveness of synergistic marketing as well as to Stewart's energy and ambition. Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia (MSLO), a \$269 million dollar media empire, encompasses publishing, broadcasting, a syndicated newspaper column, a website, a mail order business, and branded products (Kaufman & Carter, 2002, June 25). *Martha Stewart Living* (MSL) embodies Stewart's personal lifestyle, and the MSL magazine, website, and television program deconstruct it through cooking, gardening, collecting, housekeeping, and crafts activities.

Publishing has been MSLO's most profitable enterprise and produced \$183 million or 62% of total revenues in 2002 (Ulick, 2003). The *Martha Stewart Living*

magazine was launched in 1991 and had a paid circulation of 2.4 million within a decade. MSLO extended that success into specialty magazines about weddings, babies, kids, holiday baking, and easy cooking. Stewart's media success began with a single book, *Entertaining*, published in 1982. She has since published over 30 books, and *Entertaining* has gone through 30 printings (Wajda, 2001, p. 73).

Stewart's personal reputation is critical to the Martha Stewart brand: "The perils of totally identifying a brand with a single living and therefore vulnerable human being were much discussed around the time of the I.P.O. . . ." (Didion, 2000, p. 272). These perils concern both her person and her good name. Martha Stewart provides a case study of both the positive and negative dimensions of basing a brand on a single person.

The new *Everyday Food* magazine introduced in 2003 was the first publication not to carry Stewart's name in the title, seemingly a step in weaning the brand from total identification with her name. *Everyday Food* is targeted to a diverse audience ranging from college students to empty nesters and from the affluent to the financially challenged: "'They have been neglected by society,' Ms. Stewart declared. Not only do they not know how to cook, but 'they don't have time to watch all the cooking programs on television'" (Hays, 2003, June 26).

Stewart's syndicated radio program has been carried by 285 stations and her syndicated newspaper columns by 235 papers (Wajda, 2001, p. 73). Television revenue in 2002 generated \$27 million or 9% of total revenue (Ulick, 2003). The *Martha Stewart Living* magazine was extended to television in 1993 as a half-hour weekly program on the Lifetime cable network. National coverage grew from 75% to 82% in less than a year (Byron, 2002). As an hour-long show on CBS, the program has reached 88% of US households and has been syndicated in Brazil and Japan. MSLO has also produced several spin-off programs for cable networks. *From Martha's Kitchen* airs on the Food Channel,

although two similar programs developed for HGTV left the air at the end of 2003. Plans are underway for a program based on *Everyday Food*, and a pet care show has been developed for 2004 (Hays, 2003, June 26).

Merchandising accounted for \$49 million or 17% of the total revenue in 2002, and *MSL* products sold over the Internet and by direct mail accounted for \$37 million or 12% of the total (Ulick, 2003). The direct mail catalog reaches a desirable demographic: 85% are college-educated women in their forties with an average household income of \$70,000. Most of these women work, are married, and are homeowners (Moran, 1998). The online *Catalog for Living* sells items for the home, garden, kitchen, entertaining, homekeeping, decorating, holidays, weddings, books and music, stationery, crafts, and flowers (Omnimedia, 2004).

Stewart developed a comprehensive line of paint for Sherman Williams Paints and in 2003 launched the popular Signature furniture line. The *Martha Stewart Everyday* product line licensed to Kmart brought in \$1.5 billion of that chain's \$36 billion revenue in 2002. Kmart's bankruptcy in January 2002 has had serious financial ramifications for MSLO (Hays, 2002, October 9). Although not legally bound to Kmart, Stewart stated on *Larry King Live* that running out on a partner was not her style (CNN, 2003).

Disaster struck Stewart and the MSLO empire when Stewart was indicted on June 4, 2003, following a lengthy investigation into allegations of insider trading related to her sale of approximately 4,000 shares of ImClone (IMCL) stock in December 2001 (Hayes, 2003, June 5). Stewart resigned as CEO and Chairman of MSLO shortly after her indictment (CBS, 2003).

The investigation did not establish grounds for charging her with insider trading, but instead indicted her for defrauding MSLO stockholders: "Inserting an unusual twist into their indictment of the domestic diva, prosecutors charged that she committed a crime when she stood up in public last summer and denied

engaging in insider trading" (CBS/ AP, 2003). The securities fraud charges were subsequently dropped during Stewart's trial (Glater, 2004, February 28).

On March 5, 2004, Stewart was convicted of conspiracy, obstruction of justice, and two counts of making false statements in connection with the sale of the ImClone shares. Stewart faces a probable prison sentence of 10 to 16 months (Hays, 2004, March 6). Her prosecution has been tied to her fame and high visibility and to the zealous investigation of corporate criminals since the Enron and WorldCom scandals. The scrutiny of Stewart has been compared to the criticism of Hillary Rodham Clinton, another highly visible woman in the male-dominated world of business and politics (Glater, 2004, March 7).

Following her indictment Stewart took out a full page ad in *USA Today* and launched a website to tell her side of the story (Hays, 2003, June 6). The site has posted letters from Stewart's lawyers, articles by journalists and pundits, and letters from her fans, as well as Stewart's own upbeat messages:

I am very pleased that a trial has now been scheduled for January 12, 2004. It is good to know that I will soon have the opportunity to defend myself. I am looking forward to my day in court--and to having a jury of my fellow citizens judge for itself the validity of the government's case against me. (Stewart, 2003)

Within hours of her conviction Stewart had posted a message to her fans: "I will appeal the verdict and continue to fight to clear my name. I believe in the fairness of the judicial system and remain confident that I will ultimately prevail" (Stewart, 2004, March 5).

MSLO posted a loss of \$2.7 million on March 4, 2004, its first yearly loss since going public in 1999. The *MSL* magazine lost 34.6% of its ad pages in 2003 and an additional 30% in the early months of 2004. The television audience dropped to an average of 1.56 million in the first two months of 2004, compared to 1.85 million in 2002. *MSL* was pulled off the air by WCBS, the CBS-owned

flagship, immediately after her conviction (Carr & Deutsch, 2004, March 6).

The consequences of Stewart's misfortunes are only beginning to be felt, but her image and effectiveness have been damaged. As Jonathan Glater wrote in *The New York Times*, "Ms. Stewart has long been a lightning rod because she has been politically active, female, powerful and rich, and perhaps because she has managed to straddle class lines in her dual roles as a celebrity and an adviser on taste" (Glater, 2004, March 7, p. A1). Any textual analysis of *MSL* is informed by the image of the convicted Stewart, and any separation between her public and private personae has been erased.

As a female role model, Stewart has always been paradoxical (Mechling, 2001; Toobin, 2003). She has promoted traditional domestic virtues, but has been characterized as an aggressive, competitive, and ruthless entrepreneur (Byron 2002). These discrepancies have polarized public opinion and made her a target for parody and hostility: "The outrage, which reaches sometimes startling levels, centers on the misconception that she has somehow tricked her admirers into not noticing the ambition that brought her to their attention" (Didion, 2003, p. 276).

Whether by happenstance or design, Martha Stewart has functioned as an icon of traditional femininity and third-wave feminism (Finley, 1996). Camille Paglia was quoted naming her as "one of the most important forces at a time of crisis in America of the female sex role. She is someone who has done an enormous service for ordinary women--women who identify with the roles of mother, wife, and homemaker" (Lippert & Ferguson, 1995, p. 30). Other feminists have seen an antifeminist backlash in her popularity (Talbot, 1996).

Stewart has lived the American dream by rising from working-class origins to fame and fortune. "Holding an appeal that transcends class, and even gender and race to some extent, Martha is a fascinating barometer of American

culture . . . " (Bentley, 2001, p. 89). Stewart's celebrity and wealth were achieved through a level of individual effort and persistence that demonstrates a mythic strength of character. As a feminized incarnation of a hero in a Horatio Alger novel, Martha Stewart embodies the core Yankee virtues of fortitude, industry, and individualism (Wajda, 2001) that form the bedrock of American values.

Whether Martha Stewart is a good thing (to use her own favorite affirmative) for women in particular and society in general is a complex question. She galvanizes debate about the nature of domesticity, the meaning of home, and women's work. She seemingly reinforces a neo-traditionalist domestic identity for women: "However, reading Stewart as a proponent of Fifties-style homemaking misses . . . the promise she makes her readers and viewers, which is that know-how in the house will translate to can-do outside it" (Didion, 2000, p. 277). Stewart is a powerful role model and teacher whose fans apply her can-do attitude and knowledge to the transformation of their everyday lives.

Mason & Meyers (2001) asked Stewart fans how and why they used MSLO media. Like Radway's (1991) unexpected discovery of the empowering role of romance literature in the lives of the Smithton women, Mason & Meyers found a positive dimension to fans' use of the Stewart media. Fans realized that *MSL* showed the fantasy of upper-class lifestyle, but used the fantasy selectively for personal validation and inspiration.

Cynthia Duquette Smith (2000) examined postfeminist cultural trends in Stewart's discourse. Smith noted that Stewart's rhetoric helped develop subjects who were self-disciplined, inclined to see consumerism as self-expression, and viewed the home as a refuge and as therapy. In this study I determined that Stewart's rhetoric also helps develop subjects who cultivate an aestheticized lifestyle in which subjectivity is empowered.

Martha Stewart Living reproduces normative class stratification through

discourses of expertise, aesthetics, and entrepreneurship. Stewart's discourses affirm dominant notions of feminine domesticity and help develop aestheticized subjects who seek individual solutions to social ills. The power wielded by mediated expertise on the formation of identity pervades these discourses.

This study of *Martha Stewart Living* has focused on the under-explored genre of how-to television programs. Like news programming, the how-to genre is constructed on expertise and its perceived reality. The discourses of expertise or specialized knowledge are powerful and pervasive in our media-saturated society.

The present study scrutinized the role of *MSL* texts in the formation of class-derived codes of aesthetic value that impact class structuration. Economic, occupational, and cultural capital combine to situate individuals in class locations. Cultural capital derives from the acquisition and display of knowledge about class-derived codes of aesthetic value. Every morning on network television, Martha Stewart, the professional housewife, shows viewers how to bake a perfect cake, iron shirts, polish silver, propagate orchids, and restore lawn chairs. Stewart shares her secrets for creating a lifestyle that is "functional, casual, and yet refreshingly beautiful" (Stewart, 2003, May 28). This lifestyle reproduces upper-class cultural standards and makes them accessible to a mass audience. Cultural capital is represented in lifestyle, and cracking the cultural codes contained in a lifestyle accesses this capital and enables class mobility. Stewart's own history supports the myth of class mobility; her transformation from working class to upper class was achieved through the acquisition of economic and cultural capital.

By normalizing upper-class aesthetic standards, Stewart valorizes the hierarchical social structure that produced those standards. By inciting desire for an upper-class lifestyle, Stewart helps ensure the perpetuation of the hegemonic

class structure. Rather than topple the upper class, people would prefer to join, and their willing consent to the dominant hegemony is generated by this desire.

But by encouraging the cultivation of taste in aesthetic judgments, Stewart enables another sort of resistance to hegemonic culture. The individual's recognition of the self as the site of aesthetic (and moral) judgments enables the formation of subjective alternatives to massified culture. As Stewart appropriates and refashions the detritus of mass production, she infuses consumer products with alternative meanings. By professionalizing the activities of the domestic sphere, Stewart helps women achieve success outside the masculine public sphere. At the same time the domestic sphere is made into a launching pad for entrepreneurial activity.

The application of aesthetics to everyday life has positive and negative dimensions. The cultivation of the aesthetic response can entail adopting classist cultural standards. The development of the ability to make finer and finer aesthetic discriminations can be used to increase consumption practices.

But the aestheticization of everyday life can also help generate (or regenerate) belief in the possibility of individual change that fundamental to the Enlightenment project. The possibility of transformation and growth is a prerequisite for social progress as well as for self-realization. From a Marxist perspective, the aesthetic directly concerns the autonomy of the subject. The autonomy of the artifact established by the aesthetic discipline provides a model for human subjectivity. The capacity for self-regulation and self-determination that is intrinsic to the art object can be applied to the subject. Self-regulation and self-determination are the means of resistance to the power of the totality. The reflexive subject becomes an agent capable of enhancing the self and the collective self. The inertia imposed by mass culture can be disrupted by the cultivation of the pure gaze.

The project of transforming everyday existence through aesthetic sensibility has a venerable history and deserves serious consideration. The apprehension of the beautiful involves an internal apprehension of harmony; this evidence of the resolution of conflict, of utopia, is a prerequisite for its eventual social manifestation. Although notions of beauty may be socially constructed, they are useful constructions, and the evidence that society operates successfully without them is lacking.

Review of the Literature

The somewhat eclectic scope of this literature review stemmed from an abiding interest in the mediated construction of reality and individual identity. This study has examined the interaction of the individual with mass media through the lens of a single television program. I looked to structuralism and semiotics as a conceptual base before considering the political forces at play in the situating of the individual within the class structure.

Structuralism

In the early 20th century the philosophical underpinnings of the trust in external objectivity were shaken by the revelation that the object of perception is necessarily altered by the very act of perception. The observed object exists in constant relation to the observer rather than independently, and its meaning is thus constructed through interaction with the observer. The notion that the world consists of relationships is basic and essential to structuralist thinking:

At its simplest, it [structuralism] claims that the nature of every element in any given situation has no significance by itself, and in fact is determined by its relationship to all the other elements involved in that situation. In short, the full significance of any entity or experience cannot be perceived unless and until it is integrated into the *structure* [emphasis in original] of which it forms a part (Hawkes, 1977, p. 18).

The origins of structuralist thinking can be traced to Giambattista Vico, the prescient Italian jurist of the 18th century (Hawkes, 1977). In *The New Science* Vico set forth a science of human society modeled on the natural science of Newton, Galileo, and Bacon. Vico's premise was that primitive (therefore natural) people possessed a poetic wisdom (*sapienza poetica*) that articulated their responses to experience as metaphors, symbols, and myths. Myths impose a shape on the world that is then perceived as natural or as reflected reality. The principle of *verum factum* stated that what people recognize as true (*verum*) and

what they make (*factum*) are one and the same. In perceiving the world, people perceive the structures of their own minds. Constructed entities, or institutions, are meaningful only as they mirror the mind's structures (Hawkes, 1977).

Symbolic interactionism, which grew out of the pragmatic philosophies developed by James, Dewey, Mead, and Peirce, describes how the self and society are formed by their mutual interaction. Conduct is formulated directly through social interaction rather than through the considered application of formalized notions of conduct or abstracted values. From a pragmatic perspective, meaning arises from concrete, situated experience of interaction rather than through abstraction or reference to preexisting ideal forms. Reality itself (the perceived world) is in flux as meaning is constantly reconstructed through the interaction of the self with the external world which embraces people, events, and the environment (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002).

Blumer (1969) noted that the objects that comprise each person's world are derived from symbolic interactions. An object is defined as anything that can be indicated or pointed out to the self or to others. Any object may be variously categorized as physical, social, or abstract. Blumer followed Mead's analysis in conceptualizing symbolic interaction. To Blumer symbolic interaction is the making of and responding to gesture which Mead had defined as an outward act signifying a larger action. The gesture holds meaning first for the person who initiates the gesture and second for the person who interprets the gesture. The third aspect of signification refers to the joint action that comes out of the interaction, the meaning shared between the two actors.

The self defines meaning through an internal narrative that interprets the dialogue between the self's outward actions and the reactions of the external world. Meaning is constructed through a process of testing or asking *what if* and evolves out of a back-and-forth exchange of action and interpretation. Through

this testing, the self attempts to anticipate future reactions. Meaning emerges as the anticipated outcome of an action. Blumer (1969) wrote that the central conceptions of symbolic interactionism imply that:

- (1) people, individually and collectively, are prepared to act on the basis of the meanings of the objects that comprise their world;
- (2) people necessarily associate with one another by making indications and interpreting each other's indications;
- (3) social acts, whether individual or collective, are constructed through a process in which the actors note, interpret, and assess the situations confronting them; and
- (4) the complex interlinkages of acts that comprise organizations, institutions, division of labor, and networks of interdependency are fluid and constantly changing. (p. 50)

Berger and Luckmann (1967) stated that objective reality is experienced both spatially and temporally. An individual experiences everyday reality in the *here* of the body and the *now* of the subjective present. The individual's orientation of self as the orienting point provides an ongoing frame of reference for all further encounters with time and space. The primary social interaction between the self and "the other" is affected by spatial proximity. Society is then conceptualized as a dialectic process among the three simultaneous moments of externalization, objectivation, and internalization. The individual self externalizes the objectivated self into the social world, and the social world is internalized as objective reality in an endless loop.

In this process both society and the individual are formed reflexively, and the mass media provide society with a constant, useful image (or objectivation) of itself. Baudrillard (1988) described this self-regard as a form of narcissistic voyeurism that induces a state of stupor: "The social becomes obsessed with itself; through this auto-information, this permanent autointoxication, it becomes its own vice, its own perversion" (Baudrillard, 1988, p. 210), rearticulating the

Marxist critique of the effect of mass media (Horkheimer & Adorno, 2001).

Identity is impacted through these interactions with mass media.

Thompson (1995) described the self as a symbolic project that the individual creates by means of an internal biographical narrative. The symbolic messages provided by media are the raw material for this construction of self. This self-narrative is assembled as a collage of meanings, of interchangeable parts drawn from the flow of media messages. Because these messages are incessant, the self must constantly reassemble the collage of meaning, often without the editorial framework provided by traditional social structure (Holt, 1997). As individuals are cut loose from the social moorings of traditional society, their ability to make sense of the world around them must operate without the traditional frames of meaning. The self knows who and where it is in a traditional culture, but must construct itself in isolation in a postmodern world.

Language and semiotics. Semiotics is a structuralist approach to the social construction of meaning using sign systems. Spoken language is the prime example of a sign system, but sign systems may be composed from pictures, gestures, sounds, objects, or other phenomena. Semiotics seeks to uncover the levels of meaning deep within a text and thereby excavate the history of its underlying interactions with the social structure (O'Sullivan, Fiske, Hartley, & Saunders, 1983). Semiotics in America and semiology in Europe rose independently of each other in the early 20th century. The Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure theorized a science that could study the "life of signs" in human society. Between 1906 and 1911 Saussure delivered a series of lectures that formed the basis of the *Cours de Linguistique Générale* assembled after his death in 1915. The American logician C. S. Peirce developed a similar approach to the life of signs in his system of semiotics.

Saussure conceptualized the two primary dimensions of language as

langue and *parole*. *Langue* refers to the abstract systems that order each language, while *parole* refers to the concrete, everyday spoken units of language (Eagleton, 1996; Fiske & Hartley, 1978). Saussure considered the ability to construct a language or a system of signs as a natural human aptitude (recalling Vico's *sapienza poetica*). *Langue* is a set of conventions that have been agreed upon socially and is always implicit in *parole*, the concrete instances and uses of language. Language itself is fundamentally dependent on perceived differences. On a phonetic level a sound is meaningful only when it can be distinguished from other sounds. Differentiation (or opposition) thus creates meaning. When difference can be perceived, a sound can be recognized as unique and be symbolically useful. The phonemic level of language contains the sets of recognized sounds, or phonemes, that are perceived as meaningful contrasts. The phonemic principle of paired binaries or opposites is the fundamental structural concept of language (Hall, 1997; Hawkes, 1977).

Language is a structural system of signs. The linguistic sign is comprised of both the concept (the signified) and the sound-image (the signifier). However, since the relationship between these two aspects of the sign is arbitrary, meaning is derived from the context of the particular linguistic structure.

Saussure defined two critical aspects of the relationships that form language. A sign simultaneously has syntagmatic and associative relationships with other signs. Language develops sequentially; that is, it is assembled and understood through time. This syntagmatic meaning is built up through the linear, horizontal sequencing of words. These words acquire an additional level of associative meaning (the vertical axis) informed by relationships to words that are only potentially present.

The French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss applied the linguistic approach of semiotics to social behavior. Like Vico, Lévi-Strauss maintained that

primitive people naturally possess a myth-making poetic wisdom that frames their response to the world. Lévi-Strauss applied linguistic analysis to anthropological data in an effort to discover if the inner structure of culture paralleled that of language. As a structuralist who looked for the inner set of rules that govern the external world, Lévi-Strauss used linguistic methods to look below the surface of conscious social life for the invisible *langue* (or rules) of which the conscious world forms the *parole*. In myth Lévi-Strauss found a social language that functions on this subconscious level. The mind of man is revealed as much by the necessary structures of myth as by the structures of language (Hall, 1997; Hawkes, 1977).

Lévi-Strauss found a necessary correspondence between the unconscious meaning of a myth and the conscious content used to convey that meaning. This correspondence is not merely a mirror image of unconscious and conscious, but a transformation. Lévi-Strauss formulated two basic propositions about myth: (1) the meaning of the myth resides in the way the elements are combined and must acknowledge the potential for transformation; and (2) language in myth has specific properties above its normal linguistic level.

In *Totemism* (1962) and *The Savage Mind* (1962) Lévi-Strauss employed the term *bricolage* to describe the preliterate or 'savage' mind's response to the external world. Rather than respond abstractly through language, the savage or *bricoleur* uses concrete objects to represent or stand for natural and social events. *Bricolage* is a totemic form of logic in which an object can stand for an unrelated phenomenon (Hawkes, 1977). Post-structuralists have appropriated the term and consider its widespread appearance in postmodern society to be a consequence of post-literacy and the rise of the image (and fall of the word).

Roland Barthes (1972) contended that descriptive, or denoted, meaning is merely the first level of signification. Myth is the second order of signification.

The sign formed by the union of signifier and signified on the first level of signification becomes itself a new signifier. When this sign-turned-signifier joins with yet another signified, a second level of meaning is reached. This second level is mythological, or ideological. The meaning of the sign at the first level is devalued at the second level, although the new sign maintains a weak connection to its original signification. The earlier meaning lingers on without its original vigor or robustness. Rather like the progeny of an incestuous marriage, the new offspring is not quite healthy and is easily influenced by questionable company. The mythic sign, being feeble, is susceptible to the attachment of arbitrary and more powerful connotations such as those provided by ideology.

Barthes defined myth as a semiological system whose social role is to justify intentions and make them seem natural. This definition corresponds to the neo-Marxist formulation of the role of ideology (Althusser, 1972; Gramsci, 2001). Language relates directly to actions and events in the first level of signification. In the second level of signification myth presents what is taken as common knowledge, but is not derived from immediate actions or events. Myth is a distortion of reality and thus an instrument of ideology (Barthes, 1972).

Framing and rhetoric. Theories of framing consider how images and facts take on meanings as they are embedded into larger systems of meaning or frames. "Frame plays the same role in analyzing media discourse that schema does in cognitive psychology—a central organizing principle that holds together and gives coherence and meaning to a diverse array of symbols" (Gamson, Croteau, Hoynes, & Sasson, 1992, p. 384).

Erving Goffman (1974) discussed the social frameworks that provide a sort of background for daily events. Social frameworks assume an intelligent agency behind events that is not present in natural events, and the most basic social frameworks tend to reflect a culture's cosmology.

Myths are frames that highlight standards of behaviors and values. Likewise, lifestyles are frames that highlight sets of possible personal choices. (Taste can be conceptualized as a frame for aesthetic judgment.) Discourses function as frameworks or schema that help organize understanding of particular bodies of knowledge (Hall 1997a; Pascale, 2001).

Framing works principally through a process of selection and salience. One aspect of reality is selected and made more visible or salient. This pointing action both proposes and promotes a particular point of view. Frames can be used to define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgments, and suggest remedies (Entman, 1993; Goffman, 1974). For example, media frames determine how media texts actually get produced, but the viewer adds a personal set of frames to the interpretation of the received text (Scheufele, 1999).

Media frames may reflect particular stereotypes, clichés, information, or misinformation. Aspects of the text are highlighted by repetition or by association with culturally familiar symbols. Omission of information is a powerful framing device that is frequently used to maintain authority. The viewer assembles a personal frame from the stock of cultural frames floating around in the form of common knowledge or from media texts. However, saliency or mere visibility of elements in a media text does not guarantee viewer acceptance (Entman, 1993). That is the province of rhetoric.

The rhetorician Kenneth Burke (1966) noted how diverse approaches to language directed the reader's attention differently. Burke distinguished two forms of language: *scientific* (language as definition) and *dramatistic* (language as act). The scientific approach sees language concerned with naming and defining. The culmination of the scientific approach is found in symbolic logic. The dramatistic approach focuses on the attitudinal or hortatory functions of language contained in stories, poems, mythologies, and in the rhetoric of oratory

and advertising. Dramatistic language may express attitudes, or it may be used in the social processes that create cooperation or competition.

The symbolic or dramatistic aspect of language is concerned with persuasion. One essential way language persuades is by which aspect of reality it selects (or makes salient). Language itself frames reality; it selects rather than reflects reality. Terministic screens are the selected bits of language or fields used to direct the attention in a particular way. Burke noted that these screens tend to put things together or take things apart, that is, stress continuity or discontinuity.

The Burkeian Pentadic Scheme. Burke was concerned with motive, the language and terms people use to make actions and events understandable to themselves. "In *A Grammar of Motives*, Burke delineates a pentad of key elements around which motivational discourse is formed: act (what was done), scene (the situation or context in which the act occurs), agent (the kind of person or actor that performed the act), agency (the means used to perform the act), and purpose (the ends of the act)" (Knapp, 1999). In any discourse some elements of the pentad are brought forward while others are pushed back. This process of foregrounding elements creates a terministic screen that limits salient language and directs experience by way of this filtration. Knapp used Burke's pentadic scheme to examine the discourse of expertise utilized by a professional group of psychologists. Knapp's exploration of how these claims of expertise were put forward provided a model for the analysis of Stewart's discourse of expertise in this study. Stewart's claims of expertise in the domestic sphere provide the foundation of her authority.

Motivational discourse constitutes the author at the same time it constitutes the text. In the Burkeian approach, claims of expertise construct the problems experts claim to address at the same time they construct the identity of the professional group or individual. Constitutions are sets of motives or

narratives that create a new agent or expert. The narrative constructs a motivational arena or scene for future actions and acts as an instrument or agency for forming human behavior through actions in this arena.

Constitutions connect claims of expertise to elements in the symbolic realm that provide legitimacy for the expert as well as construct the expert's identity. Narratives are grounded in each of the five elements of the pentad and emphasize the corresponding element. For instance, narratives grounded in the agent or individual emphasize the personality or character of the author of the act. Narratives grounded in the agent as a system regard society or a group as the active force. Narratives grounded in agency emphasize the means by which action occurs. These narratives of agency explain how rather than why an action occurs. Narratives of purpose are based on claims to special knowledge such as religious revelation.

Stewart's expertise derives from narratives of the agent and narratives of agency. As an agent, Stewart's character, personality, and accomplishments are used to establish her trustworthiness and value. Her expertise also strongly depends on her ability to explain how things work, or on narratives of agency. Stewart's expertise exists to the extent she can explain phenomena encountered in the domestic sphere.

Visual rhetoric. Visual communication has become an increasingly crucial part of the construction of meaning. Methodologies have correspondingly evolved and adapted to visual analysis. Moriarty (1996) applied Peirce's semiotics to the analysis of visual communication. In the sign system of visual communication, signs can stand for experiential knowledge as well as for ideas. Peirce was particularly interested in how signs are linked to their objects and how the 'stands for' relationship creates meaning (Hawkes, 1977).

Peirce developed the third analytic method of abduction to complement

the two traditional analytic methods of induction and deduction. Abduction is an interpretive process that uses observation to build up a web of clues from which a hypothesis may be formulated through an act of insight (Hawkes, 1977).

Moriarty (1996) posited that, as an inferential process based on observation, abduction parallels the process of visual communication itself: "... the interpretative method of semiotics based on abduction is very similar to how we process visual information" (p. 184).

Semiotic methods have been useful in the interpretation of advertising imagery (Barthes, 1972, 1977; Scott, 1994; Williamson, 1978). The visual elements of advertising signify by a set of codes or conventions--a set of socially-constructed meanings--rather than by the level of realism or perceived resemblance to the natural world. Advertising imagery has an established iconography of its own visual codes (Williamson, 1978).

Since the Renaissance, theories of art had conceptualized painting as a window on reality. That is, the eye sees a painted landscape the same way it sees a real landscape. The visual image enters the mind of the viewer directly without mediation. However, studies of visual perception have shown that seeing--whether a painting or a tree--involves cognitive activity, and visual perception involves more than the passive reception of stimuli (Arnheim, 1964; Scott, 1994).

Television nonfiction genres (the how-to genre, news genre, talk show genre, and sports genre) tend to be perceived more as a version of reality than as an example of fiction. Like news programs, how-to shows provide credible, useful information that viewers can use in everyday life. The constructed personality of a media personality such as Stewart is more or less accepted as real (Byron, 2002; Dreher, 2002). "Because Stewart's public persona trades off of her private life, one perceives that there is little separation between the Martha we see on television and the 'real' Martha" (Smith, 2000, p. 350). The perceived

reality of the media personality contributes to the perceived reality and credibility of the information from that source.

Post-Structuralism and Representation

The concept of representation has come to occupy center stage in the study of culture. Representation concerns how meaning and language become attached to culture: "Representation is the process by which members of a culture use language (broadly defined as any system which deploys signs, any signifying system) to produce meaning" (Hall, 1997, p. 61). The constructivist approach differentiates the objective material world from the symbolic operations of language that stand for concepts or mental pictures of objective reality. Individuals or social actors use language and other symbolic systems to create meaning. The construction of meaning is thus a social process. (This answers a resounding no to natural philosophers who posited that natural language would spontaneously emerge in an individual isolated from social contact. Kasper Hauser, however, spoke no language until he was taught by other men, and the medieval infants cloistered away from all human contact did not speak the language of man before the Fall.)

The constructivist approach to representation stresses the social dimension of language. The external word does not "mean" anything in itself or even to itself, and neither can the individual create meaning in isolation. Meaning accrues in social practice through consensus. Representation operates in physical, conceptual, and symbolic dimensions to connect the physical world of people, events, and objects to people's mental images of the physical world. These mental images are linked to signs that stand for conceptual constructions and are organized into languages within the social group (Hall, 1997). The linguistic or semiotic model describes the workings of language within the overall system of representation. Culture itself has come to function as a

language that is itself “read” and “spoken” by society.

With the scrutiny of the process of how social knowledge (known as common sense) comes into being, the focus has shifted to the interaction of power and knowledge within the construction of meaning. Michel Foucault examined discourse as a system of representation. Foucault sought to establish the rules and practices that regulate discourse or the “clusters of ideas” from which social knowledge is constructed. Discourse is determined by underlying conventions that cluster in sets, networks, or orders of discourse that embody particular ideologies (Fairclough, 1989). Foucault examined the specific locations or sites where power was exercised on individuals by social bodies such as institutions and governments.

Although Foucault identified himself as a historian (Martin, Gutman, & Hutton, 1988), he “excavated” what he called genealogies that uncovered rather than explained historical events. This genealogical tack followed Nietzsche’s approach to history and indicated Foucault’s rejection of grand historical explanations or metanarratives (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983; Hall, 1997).

Foucault, Derrida, and Lacan moved from a structuralist to a post-structuralist position by essentially rejecting the notion of modernity (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983; Hall, 1997; Sarup, 1993). Although post-structuralism is frequently conflated with postmodernity, Foucault denied being a postmodernist, maintaining he didn’t even know what the term meant (Foucault, 1991). Post-structuralists rejected the abstraction of reason upon which the Enlightenment was built as just another metanarrative (Peters, 1996).

Modernity, modernization, and modernism. Modernity, modernization, and modernism are similar but distinct concepts. Modernity refers to “the progressive economic and administrative rationalization and differentiation of the social world” (Sarup, 1993, p. 130). Modernity involves the political,

economic, and social systems that emerged from the eighteenth century onward. Foucault, following Baudelaire, thought that modernity was revealed in the consciousness of the discontinuity of time. From this perspective what is eternal and lasting--what is heroic--exists within the present moment and must be extracted from the present moment to be transformed. The stance of modernity is not the distant stance of the spectator. Modernity requires engagement and commitment in order to uncover the heroic. The spectator on the other hand takes an ironic view of the ephemeral moment and regards it with mere curiosity (Foucault, 1984b).

Modernity involves a particular relationship to the self as well as to the present, a relationship of asceticism: "To be modern is not to accept oneself as one is in the flux of the passing moments; it is to take oneself as object of a complex and difficult elaboration: what Baudelaire, in the vocabulary of his day, calls *dandysme*" (Foucault, 1984b, p. 41). The subject is faced with the endless task of producing or inventing the self.

Modernization on the other hand refers to social development generated by industrialization. Modernization is a collection of socio-economic changes derived from scientific and technological innovation, the formation of nation states, and the growth of the capitalist world market.

Modernism is more directly involved with the cultural or aesthetic styles stemming from artistic movements around the turn of the century. Modernism involves a rejection of narrative structure in favor of montage, an attraction to ambiguity over certainty, and an aesthetic of reflexivity and self-consciousness (Sarup, 1993). Some of these attributes, such as the preference for montage, have been mistakenly attributed to postmodernism. The separation between modernism and postmodernism is considered to be highly tenuous; Giddens (1991) argued that late twentieth century society is still in a stage of high

modernism rather than in the stage of postmodernism.

Postmodernism. Postmodernists have studied the potential or actual dissolution of the social formations that developed in consequence to the Enlightenment project. The notion of social progress rests on the belief in the capacity for transcendence and growth in the individual and society. This capacity for transcendence is a prerequisite for positive social change. Marxism and other progressive social theories are underwritten by a humanistic belief in progress that stems from the Enlightenment. However, in a postmodern world belief in the possibility of social progress (and achievable equality) has yielded to the mere scrutiny of the operations of power.

Foucault discussed the implications of humanism in relation to normalization and the power of knowledge:

What I am afraid of about humanism is that it presents a certain form of our ethics as a universal model for any kind of freedom. I think that there are more secrets, more possible freedoms, and more inventions in our future than we can imagine in humanism as it is dogmatically represented on every side of the political rainbow: the Left, the Center, the Right. (Martin, Gutman, & Hutton, 1988)

Foucault's major themes of analysis were power and the subject, particularly the historically situated instances of the exercise of power on the subject and the subject's resistance. Foucault focused on the relations between capacity and power that arise from such interactions and abandoned questions of signification. In these interactions relations of power determine what is true or accepted at a given moment. Truth is thus constituted by the discourses of a particular system at a particular historical moment rather through the transcendental abstractions of signification. As Foucault wrote: "Truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power" (Foucault, 1984a, pp. 72-73).

Foucault identified the varieties of struggles against ethnic, social, and

religious domination, against exploitation or the separation of the individual from his production, and against subjection and the forms of submission. The struggle against submission and subjection has become increasingly fierce since the Reformation. It was then the individual began to oppose spiritual authority based on received (thus irrefutable) knowledge (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983).

To resist subjection the individual must struggle against ideology, against knowledge that is taken for granted, and against the manufacturing of consent. Foucault examined the techniques of power—the micropractices of power—that are visible in the struggle for individual autonomy and identity:

This form of power applies itself to immediate everyday life which categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him which he must recognize and which others have to recognize in him. It is a form of power which makes individuals subjects. (Foucault, 1982, p. 211)

Personal identity is more or less what remains when there are no more choices of possible future selves to be had. Since the Reformation, the state has evolved increasingly sophisticated techniques of power that are applied to the individual and the totality of individuals that comprises society. The individual is caught in both locations and is subject to the workings of the state as the individual self and as the self within the group. The postmodernist notion of the multiple self provides some means of escape by providing a less tangible target, but assumes that the individual can incorporate and protect these multiple selves (Collins, 1987; Eagleton, 1996; Sarup, 1993).

This manifestation of power involves the production of truth that is taken as common sense or accepted as natural and real. What is natural becomes the basis for future action in the world. Social constructions are taken as natural forces and are as readily accepted by society as the force of gravity. Foucault (1982) noted that a relationship of power establishes a tendency for the

individual to act in a certain mode by internalizing the relationship and reproducing it internally:

Perhaps the equivocal nature of the term *conduct* [emphasis original] is one of the best aids for coming to terms with the specificity of power relations. For to 'conduct' is at the same time to 'lead' others (according to the mechanisms of coercion which are, to varying degrees, strict) and a way of behaving within a more or less open field of possibilities. The exercise of power consists in guiding the possibility of conduct and putting in order the possible outcome. (p. 220-221)

Social mechanisms such as aesthetics and taste cease to appear innocuous. Directing a viewer to recognize, perhaps prefer, the style of one chair over another is an exercise of power. The viewer may come to favor that particular chair and develop a need to sit on such an object. Desire may ensue for this special chair. The viewer may feel that not possessing such a chair is intolerable. This creation of desire is derived from the power relations that circulate through social life within a network of knowledge, discourses, and pleasure.

Social Stratification

Civilizations may be described by the criteria they use to determine social difference. These differences are employed to rank individuals and establish social structure. The industrial age has seen the emergence of egalitarian ideologies and the delegitimization of the extreme stratification of caste, feudal, and slave systems. Social stratification in advanced industrial society charts the unequal distribution of wealth, power, and prestige. Stratification systems reflect and reproduce attendant social inequalities. These systems determine the value of goods, the allocation of goods in relation to the division of labor, and the occupational mobility (access to goods) available to individuals (Grusky, 1994).

Stratification theory has wrestled with the question of the inevitability of stratification and inequality (Grusky, 1994). One response has been the functionalist hypothesis that a society must find a means of motivating its best

workers. The simple solution of a hierarchy of rewards and privileges that provides motivation also institutionalizes inequality. The reward system has also been criticized for its failure to account for heredity systems of determining occupations and for the element of power in forming stratification.

Societies value various goods and assets, and stratification concerns their distribution and accessibility. Grusky's (1994) historical analysis revealed economic, political, cultural, social, honorific, civil, and human asset groups. A theorist may select a single asset grouping as the determining factor in a society. Marx, for instance, selected economics.

Typologies of classification are based on the distinctions among class, caste, and estate in which one set of assets acts as the dominant stratifying force. Social classes or status groupings typically coalesce around a particular asset group. Each stratification system reveals varying degrees of inequality and rigidity and has an ideology legitimatizing class parameters and restrictions.

Class is perhaps the single most complex concept in stratification, and Marxists have regarded class structure as the determinant of social structure. Sociologists have also approached stratification through the Weberian variables of class, status, and power. "To Weber, studies of class and of status are studies of bases of power, in the sense that class or status positions may be seen as resources for affecting the action of others" (Sørensen, 1994, p. 229).

Levels of status and class are differentiated through theories of inequality. Weber's notion of status groups was based on a prestige concept of status, but a socioeconomic or welfare notion of status has also been used in stratification. The stratum concept of class is similar to socioeconomic status and indicates groupings along various markers of inequality, but provides no explanation for inequality. Both the Weberian or market concept of class and the Marxist concept of class address inequality directly (Sørensen, 1994).

Social theory in the recent decades has emphasized the construction of social boundaries or differentiation by gender and race rather than by class (Anthias, 2001; Collins, 1993; Kandal, 1995; Pascale, 2001; Taylor, 2002). Social movements based on sex/gender and race/ethnicity issues (identity politics) have been privileged since the 1960s. With the ethnomethodological turn in social science, gender, race, and class have been viewed as situated accomplishments that cannot be understood apart from historical context. Social situations are viewed as sites for the active production of difference. Feminist approaches have stressed the process of differentiation through its simultaneous construction in society and the individual (West & Fenstermaker, 1995).

Though gender and race are more or less visually obvious, class position is more difficult to determine, and this invisibility helps classism deny its own existence (Pascale, 2001). Although everyday discourse categorizes individuals by class, Americans tend to assume that they live in a classless society (West & Fenstermaker, 1995). However, a class analysis of the United States today would reveal a polarity of wealth and poverty that Marx could recognize (Kandal, 1995; Pascale, 2001). America is becoming less and less a middle-class nation, and the gap between the rich and poor is returning to Gilded Age levels of inequality. Between 1973 and 2000 the average real income of 90% of Americans fell by 7%. At the same time the income of the top 1% of the population rose 148% and that of the top 0.01 % rose 599 % (Krugman, 2004). Social mobility becomes less possible as class, gender, and race constrain individuals within the social structure.

Critical Theory

Critical social theory is concerned with issues of power and justice and is involved with a commitment to social progress grounded in the social philosophy of the Enlightenment. This philosophy was informed by a belief in

the capacity of human reason to achieve a more perfect state of individual and social being:

The Enlightenment pictured the human race as engaged in an effort towards universal moral and intellectual self-realization, and so as the subject of a universal historical experience; it also postulated a universal human *reason* [emphasis in original] in terms of which social and political tendencies could be assessed as 'progressive' or otherwise (the goal of politics being defined as the realization of reason in practice). (Lovibond, 1986, p. 6)

Critical or Marxist theory is dedicated to progressive social change and has defined class inequality as the primary site of social struggle: "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles" (Marx, 1994, p. 69).

Marx and Engels presented a materialist (or economic) theory of history in their unpublished work *The German Ideology* in 1845 in which the ruling forces of history were viewed as material interests and class struggles. Marx and Engels divided humanity into two opposing classes--the bourgeoisie and the proletariat (Kellner & Durham, 2001a). Class position is determined by the relationship of the individual to the ownership of the means of production. However, in their analysis social dominance also involved ideology:

The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas: i.e., the class which is the ruling *material* force of society is at the same time its ruling *intellectual* force [original emphasis]. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, consequently also controls the means of mental production, so that the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are on the whole subject to it. (Marx and Engels, 2001, p. 39)

In the Marxist theory of class, the inequality between classes is intrinsic to the capitalist system. Although Marx recognized the presence of a middle class, he stated that the forces of capitalism increasingly polarize society into the two great and opposing classes (Marx, 1994). Exploitation is the inevitable outcome of the relationship between the two classes; the logic of capitalist production obliges the bourgeoisie (capital) to exploit workers. "Class relations that are

relations of exploitation create inequality independently of the personal characteristics of those who occupy class positions" (Sørensen, 1994, p. 233).

In the Weberian concept of class as market power, classes are comprised of people with similar power over economic resources; the market itself is held responsible for creating inequality. Class position is derived from the individual's manner of consumption (or style of life) as well as from the relationship of the individual to the means of production (Wright, 1997).

Following Weber, Bourdieu (1984) correlated occupational class position with cultural tastes and preferences. Bourdieu shifted the Marxist focus from how consumption functions within the framework of class stratification to how people practice consumption (how people "do consumption") and produce meaning from the artifacts and processes of consumption.

Developing an expanded concept of capital that included economic and cultural (or symbolic) dimensions, Bourdieu created a model of class structuration and reproduction that related the uses of consumption to occupational class position. Both cultural and economic capital contribute to the class positioning, but cultural capital provides an additional means of differentiation within each class. The lifestyle behaviors embodied in personal taste generate additional cultural capital and enable a degree of social mobility (Bourdieu, 1984; Webb & Danaher, 2002).

From a sociological perspective, Bourdieu reworked the conventional distinction between class and status groupings. "If one assumes, as does Bourdieu, that classes are highly efficient agents of selection and socialization, then their members will necessarily evince the shared dispositions, tastes, and styles of life that demarcate and define status groupings" (Grusky, 1994, p. 20). In Bourdieu's reproduction theory, classes act as socializing forces that form the complete experience of subjects.

Ideology and culture. Ideology constrains individual and group experience and, according to Marx, supports the dominant elite. Marxist scholars have defined culture by its signifying practices and society by its structures of power and domination. The task of Marxist interpretation is therefore “to describe (and intervene in) the way messages are produced by, inserted into, and function within the everyday lives of concrete human beings so as to reproduce or transform structures of power and dominion” (Grossberg, 1984, p. 393).

The Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci further theorized the process of hegemony by which the ruling intellectual and cultural forces of a given historical period establish dominance by winning consent to their rule (Kellner & Durham, 2001b, p. 7).

The Frankfurt School consisted of neo-Marxist scholars (particularly Horkheimer, Adorno, and Marcuse) who fled to America during the rise of the German Third Reich in the 1930s. Horkheimer and Adorno returned in 1953 to the Institute of Social Research in Frankfurt while Marcuse continued to work in America. Following the Marxist imperative to work for social action, their efforts exposed the authority and injustice attendant on industrial capitalism. The Frankfurt School studied the role of cultural institutions (media, industry, and science) in the creation of the ideology that maintains social structure (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2001). The Frankfurt School critique of mass culture analyzed the organization of mass production as well as the psychology of mass consumption. Their critique disparaged the destructive force of mass culture in relation to high culture which was considered capable of heightening individual and social consciousness and thus enabling social progress.

Horkheimer and Adorno exposed the workings of the commodification of mass-produced culture in *The Culture Industry* (2001). The mass-produced culture relies on stereotypes to produce artifacts that are privileged over the

authentic products of folk culture. The products of folk culture are intrinsically invested with the beliefs of their makers. In mass production, the labor of the worker is devalued of its personal meaning. When production is broken down into repeatable component steps, the individual worker is denied responsibility (and satisfaction) in the production of a complete object.

In their estimation the masses have been duped: "The misplaced love of the common people for the wrong which is done them is a greater force than the cunning of the authorities" (Horkheimer & Adorno, 2001, p. 80). The masses have come to accept this inauthentic mass-produced culture over the authentic products of folk culture. Mass culture has created a society incapable of forming the alternative or utopian visions that are necessary for social change. Without the ability to imagine a new world, social change will not occur (Traube, 1996).

Adorno traced the roots of the present popular culture to the early eighteenth century when literature began to be developed with an eye to the market, particularly by Defoe and Richardson. As these authors "calculated the effect of their wares upon the audience" (Adorno, 1954, p. 216), they created and directed their audiences. Popular or mass culture has grown in strength as the traditional sociological structure of the audience has been transformed. The old cultural elite is gone, and the modern intelligentsia only partially corresponds to it and carries out its social role.

Adorno (1954) perceived a gap between the lives of modern consumers and the ideology of the crumbling early middle-class society. Middle-class ideology continues to endure without the structure that it both supported and was supported by. Traditional middle-class values continue to be promoted but are subverted by the hidden messages of mass culture. The ominous forces of conventionalism and conformity described in early popular novels have become the strict behavioral prescriptions that govern everyday life. A hierarchical and

authoritarian social structure has been established through the hidden calls to obedience that construct a docile work force.

Ideological messages are inserted into the everyday world in the way that the subject is addressed or interpellated. Althusser considered interpellation to be the process in which identity is established. As the subject is 'hailed' by a more powerful figure, the subject is obliged to respond in terms of that imposed identity. Interpellation is a process in which discourse produces subjects who identify themselves within the same discourse and social location. The subject's response and reaction to the interpellation is a tacit recognition of self in the characterization, thus an endorsement of the subject position contained in the interpellation (Altshuller, 1972; Webb, Schirato, & Danaher, 2002).

Individuals are not limited to a single identity; the subject or viewer may be hailed as a consumer, student, or friend (Pascale, 2001; Smith, 2000). Stewart frequently interpellates the viewer by speaking to the camera. These various interpellations establish different relations of power with the viewer. Smith (2000) noted that these interpellations require the audience to identify with Stewart's vision of them. Stewart also provides a model for the audience to follow as it moves to occupy a given subject position. Mechanisms of address include linguistic devices, the organization and presentation of rhetoric, and visual elements such as photographs. Smith (2000) identified the disciplined, therapeutic, and consumer subject positions constituted by Stewart's rhetoric.

Hegemony and cultural studies. Gramsci (2001) reformulated and extended the Marxist construct of ideological domination. Hegemony theory states that ideological domination can never be truly achieved, but that power constantly shifts among competing groups. Political domination is established through ongoing negotiations of power or attempts to win consent from the competing social or ideological group. Hegemony is achieved by winning consent rather

than by exercising force.

The class struggle is not the only site for these negotiations to win consent. The struggle for hegemony also occurs among groups formed through differentiators such as age and gender. Hegemony describes the production of consent to various and multiple versions of social reality (Traube, 1996). The strategy for winning consent is to naturalize social structures and mask the exercise of power. Ideological hegemony is concerned with the meanings, rituals, representations, and cultural forms used to produce consent to the status quo (Berger, 1997).

Marxist critical theory and hegemony theory were taken up in England by Stuart Hall and the Birmingham School and used to analyze the struggle of marginalized social groups with the dominant hegemony. The work of Hall and the Birmingham School became known as cultural studies. As Marxists dedicated to active participation in social change, Hall and the British school began by asking how these social divisions had been made meaningful. "Cultural studies might be understood most broadly as consistently providing theoretical frameworks for examining ideology as sets of discourses that constitute widespread knowledge and values" (Pascale, 2001, p. 32).

In examining media as a vehicle of ideology, Hall (1980) developed an encoding-decoding model of the communication process. Meaning is encoded into a message by the producer and emerges an independent text which the reader must decode. Although the reader actively interprets the text during decoding process, the encoded message is significantly privileged. Decoding entails negotiations between the encoded meanings and the interpretations constructed by readers using their own frames and contexts.

The discipline of cultural studies has focused on issues of identity and representation in the resistance of subgroups such as youth, the working class,

and women. The reformulations of dominant meaning by these subgroups are valorized as new forms of cultural goods. In this act of positive mass consumption, the value of rearticulated meanings is derived from the value of the group itself (Fiske, 1989; Frith, 1991; Hebdige, 1988, 1996).

The anthropologist Roger Rouse (1995) noted two major threads in the analysis of the changing modes of power in the dominant narratives of capitalism. The first, a postmodernist perspective, emphasized the effects of the increased prominence of images on power and knowledge. The second, a Marxist perspective, emphasized the need to situate shifts in power/knowledge within the context of global capitalism. Rouse developed a third perspective that emphasized the evolution of power in the dominant narrative brought by transnationalism. Rouse stated that transnationalism has undercut the influence and authority of the nation-state and affected the nature of the class struggle.

As wealth is increasingly polarized, the middle region of the class structure shrinks. Rouse (1995) substituted a model of class structure that took the form of a rocket in place of the well-known pyramid model of class structure. In the rocket model the middle class has been reduced in size to something nearer that of the elite. The model flares out widely at the base formed by the lower classes. The formerly gradual transition between the lower and middle classes has been reshaped into a dramatic division. Access to the middle class from the lower class is increasingly difficult. Considering the consequences of this model, Rouse concluded that analyses of hegemony should focus less on issues of identity and affiliation and more on relations to work and collectivity.

In Rouse's analysis the bourgeoisie's struggle to maintain profit has utilized several strategies. One strategy has focused on expansion into global markets and activities that were run by the state or monopolies such as telecommunications. The second has focused on reducing the cost of labor.

The third strategy has focused on increasing overall demand for goods and services through a comprehensive stimulation of the desire that intensifies consumption. One tactic used in this strategy has been to reinforce the linkage between self-worth and consumption. The second tactic has been to train consumers to make finer and finer distinctions about goods, thereby expanding need. The third has been to build brand loyalty (Rouse, 1995).

The mass media is essential for the success of this strategy of stimulation. *Martha Stewart Living* employs the same three tactics to generate demand for MSLO products (and consumerism in general). The cultivation of the ability to make increasingly subtle discriminations about the value of products is a basic component of the aestheticized lifestyle Stewart promotes. MSLO media works synergistically to build brand loyalty, and the relationships between Stewart and the audience is critical to this loyalty. The link between self-worth and consumption is implicit in the Stewart lifestyle.

Consumption. When individuals are defined as consumers, all possible social roles are reduced to a single one. The role as consumer overrides any other defining factors of identity. Marx noted that the working class both consumes and produces the objects of mass production, but is deprived of a meaningful role in their production. Industrialized production has through the assimilated artisanal production processes (Marx and Engels, 2001). Contrariwise, the how-to genre valorizes and reproduces artisanal practices. This genre reestablishes the pre-industrial role of worker in the production process. The artisanal worker gains satisfaction and self-fulfillment in labor by completing the production cycle. The how-to genre reformulates consumption by providing a more satisfying work experience and an alternative to mass-produced items.

Radway (1986) noted the historical linkages between consumption, mass-

production, and popular culture. The verb *to consume* originally referred to fire or other natural forces that annihilated the elements upon which they acted. When applied to the process of purchase, *to consume* meant simply to use up or exhaust something. In pre-industrialized Europe the masses (essentially peasant) produced objects for their own use in their largely rural households. These objects could be circulated and exchanged with other households nearby. Distanced from these sources, urban dwellers were obliged to purchase goods that had been especially made to be sold to them. These goods were used-up (consumed) by a growing urban population. Folk-produced objects had been imbued with the beliefs and values of their makers, but objects made for the urban market held no such meaning. The urban proletariat consumed objects that did not represent authentic beliefs or values (Bayley, 1991; Radway, 1986).

As Marxist cultural critics further theorized consumption, they distinguished mass culture from elite culture (Horkheimer & Adorno, 2001). The Frankfurt theorists sought to explain the appeal of Nazism to the general population. Mass culture was castigated for having instilled a mindless stupor in the public that left it susceptible to external influences (Baudrillard, 1988; Debord, 2001; Radway, 1986). The Frankfurt theorists saw a different role for the objects of high culture. Fine art or music engaged the individual through its perceptual inventiveness and heightened consciousness (Horkheimer & Adorno, 2001).

Postwar affluence during the late 1950s and early 1960s expanded the production of consumer goods, and consumption by the less wealthy classes could respond to desire rather than necessity (Ewen, 1999). The introduction of television on a mass scale provided a medium eminently suited to cultivating desire. When television became part of the household, everyday life changed dramatically (Spigel, 1988), and by 1951 viewers had already formed a preference for televised reality over lived experience (Lang & Lang, 1971).

Material culture. Consumption can be conceptualized as material culture or artifacts and as symbolic behavior within the social structure (McCracken, 1988; Morley, 1995). The anthropologist Mary Douglas studied the symbols that form the basis of classification schemes (social order) from the perspective of everyday life. Boundaries that differentiate among groups and differentiate the individual from the group delineate social structure (Wuthnow, Hunter, Bergesen, & Kurzweil, 1984).

The study of material culture examines the symbolic interaction of people with purchased cultural products. Meaning can be constructed out of social interactions with objects as well as with people (McCracken, 1988; Miller, 1995; Sparke, 1995). Symbolic discriminators such as taste (an embedded set of aesthetic criteria) reveal the boundaries that delineate social structure. Symbolic discriminators operate on material culture within the structures that govern consumption decisions.

McCracken (1988) theorized the phenomenon of Diderot unities and the Diderot effect to help explain consumption patterns. McCracken defined Diderot unities as constellations of consumer goods linked by some unifying factor (that might be personal taste). These goods exhibit a sort of inner harmony or consistency and complement one another. The Diderot effect is the coercive force that operates on constellations of goods. On the one hand, the Diderot effect may compel the consumer to maintain a particular constellation. On the other, the effect may drive the consumer to make a radical transformation of consumption patterns and to establish a new constellation of goods.

The notion of the Diderot unity and effect was derived from the observations of the eighteenth century French polymath Denis Diderot in a little essay on the consequences of the gift of a new dressing gown. Diderot found that the harmony of his normal surroundings was disrupted by the splendor of

the new dressing gown. The gift demanded surroundings that complemented it. Diderot was compelled to transform his environment to harmonize with the now-dominant dressing gown (McCracken, 1988).

The perception of consistency in a constellation of consumer goods reflects the cultural meaning contained in them, the manner in which that meaning was embedded, and the manner in which that meaning was coded. Goods derive meaning from their place in a system of goods and from the relationship of this system to existing cultural categories: "For example, the Rolex watch takes its meaning from its relationship to all the other extant brands of watches and the way in which this product set corresponds to (and therefore represents) cultural categories of person, place, time, and occasion" (McCracken, 1988, p. 120). The correspondence between goods and cultural categories (sometimes read as lifestyle) determines which products go together. Product categories are organized to correspond to the tastes of a certain set of cultural categories (demographics). The structural position of various brands across product categories will demonstrate the same relation to the cultural categories. Products with a similar structural position within different product categories will harmonize and form a unity like Rolexes and BMWs.

One way meaning is embedded into consumer goods is through advertising and fashion systems. Innovative subgroups intervene with the intended meaning of goods contained in marketing messages. These subgroups attach own alternative meanings to these goods (a phenomenon noted by cultural studies scholars). These subgroups appropriate the meaning of consumer goods and reinterpret the embedded meaning. The subgroup's reconfigured meaning can coexist with the original meaning of the goods (Hebdige, 1988).

Communication that utilizes material culture is most successful when a

particular consumer item is embedded in a group of items that carry the same message. Like other forms of nonlinguistic communication, consumer goods don't communicate effectively in isolation, but depend on the redundancy of similarly signifying goods. "In other words, the symbolic properties of material culture are such that things must mean together if they are to mean at all" (McCracken, 1988, p. 121).

One important way the self knows or recognizes itself is in relation to the material environment it has constructed for itself. This environment is a manifestation of particular interactions of the self with the external world. The Diderot effect helps maintain the continuity of the objects that help define the self to itself and others. Diderot unities and the Diderot effect help explain the appeal and force of the goods Stewart has assembled.

Feminist Theory

In *The Dialectic of Sex* (1970) the radical feminist Shulamith Firestone wrote a manifesto based on what she called sex class. Firestone located the origins of class struggle in the biological division of the sexes for reproduction and literally rewrote Engels' definition of historical materialism:

Historical materialism is that view of the course of history which seeks the ultimate cause and the great moving power of all historic events in the dialectic of sex: the division of society into two distinct biological classes for procreative reproduction, and the struggles of these classes with one another; in the changes in the modes of marriage, reproduction and childcare created by these struggles; in the connected development of other physically-differentiated classes [castes]; and in the division of labor based on sex which developed into the [economic-cultural] class system. (Firestone, 1970, p. 12).

In Marxist theory class position is determined by the relationship to the means of production, but in feminist theory class membership is biologically determined and defined entirely by sex. Following Marxist theory, the relationship between the two classes is characterized by exploitation. As Heidi Hartmann noted, "The

material base upon which patriarchy rests lies most fundamentally in men's control over women's labor power" (1994, p. 570). This control is maintained by excluding women's access to productive resources (occupational limits) and by restricting women's sexuality. Radical feminists such as Firestone considered human reproduction as an additional form of production. The material base of patriarchy may be seen to rest on reproduction or childbearing and on women's labor (Hartmann, 1994).

However, feminist theorists have also distinguished biological sex differentiation from socially constructed gender differentiation, and the relationship between class, gender, and race or ethnicity is the subject of much debate (Anthias, 2001; Collins, 1993; Kandal, 1995; Kaplan, 1992; Pascale, 2001; Taylor, 2002 ; West & Fenstermaker, 1995). Stratification by gender (as well as race) concerns parameters of identity and difference that may or may not reflect material position. The social constructions of gender and race are more tied to the symbolic or cultural realms than the material. Gender and race are the critical factors in the construction of difference and identity, factors that impact the relationship to material outcomes (Anthias, 2001). West & Fenstermaker (1995) theorized the dynamics of gender, race, and class relations as interactional processes that enable patriarchal, racist, and class oppression. Individuals are held accountable by other individuals and institutions to differences that conform to dominant cultural conceptions. The researchers recognized that the dynamics of class inequality differ markedly from the other two categories.

Marxist feminists have maintained that class is qualitatively different from gender and race. In the sociology of stratification, class may simply refer to strata or population aggregates ranked by the common socioeconomic indicators of income, occupation, and education. In this descriptive sense class is no more meaningful than gender or race. But from the standpoint of Marxist

theory, class is qualitatively different. Class relations reflect a dialectic unity of opposites and provide both a site of exploitation and a site of social change. From the Marxist perspective, class power forms the base of all social interactions (Gimenez, 2001).

Feminist theorists sympathetic to Foucault's notions of power have studied how power influences female subjectivity at the level of everyday life. The formation of female identity is influenced by relationships of power that maintain hegemonic patriarchy: "It can be argued that the popular media, with its focus on the details of women's activities and relationships, has played an important part in the changing constructions of women's bodies and subjectivities" (Hyde, 2000, p. 158).

Female domesticity and consumption practices. Consumption practices reflect and reproduce gender as well as class differentiation. As mass-production came to supply more of the goods needed in daily life—clothing, food, and household goods—the feminine role in the household changed. The traditional role as co-producer of household goods was reframed in the nineteenth century to that as consumer of goods produced outside the household (Sparke, 1995). Researchers (Madigan & Munro, 1996; Miller, 1995) have examined the role of gender in both the symbolic and economic dimensions of consumption.

Economic power is constantly exercised through consumption practices centered in the household. As mass production democratized the availability of household goods after the First World War, greater economic impact was situated within the site of consumption, the individual household. Each housewife came to represent the collective decision-making of the paradigmatic consumer and to wield that collective economic power (Miller, 1995). By delineating what is materially essential for the home, *Martha Stewart Living* directly impacts the consumption practices of her substantial audience.

Collins (1992) examined the effects of gender how on class positioning and the structures that produce status. Stratification, the hierarchical structures and organizations that rank individuals socially, is a particularly complex question for women. Occupation is a major determinant of class and is defined by the role in the production process. This process can be conceptualized in terms of the power implemented by order-giving or order-taking. Women's paid labor in industrialized societies has predominantly been on the order-taking or working-class end of the spectrum.

Within the household women have traditionally been employed to display household wealth. Outside the home women have sometimes been similarly employed to display corporate status or wealth in the front office. Working-class women utilized for this vicarious form of status display have tended to become less involved in class-based political opposition. Their personal investment in the production of corporate status has defused their class consciousness through a process of self-indoctrination and self-idealization (Collins, 1992).

Since the industrial revolution, women have been more involved with cultural than economic production in the domestic sphere. While the upper and middle classes have been educated to engage with the aesthetics of consumption that produce status (Altman, 1990; Halle, 1992; Kellner, 1992), the working-class housewife has tended to conflate status with the proper appearance of the household: "It appears that working-class housewives have often been obsessed with the cleanliness of their home and with the housework role generally" (Collins, 1992, p. 216).

Women employed outside the home spend drastically less time on housework than do full-time housewives. However, despite the introduction of appliances and the application of scientific methods to housework, full-time

housewives tend to spend as much time on housework as they did in the 1920s . The class-derived expectations of husbands also affects women's involvement in housework. Women with working-class husbands spent more time cleaning than those with middle- or upper-middle-class husbands (Collins, 1992). Martha Stewart's meticulous instructions for housekeeping may appeal to housewives who see status in a well-polished table, but her standards may also drive less obsessed housewives to spend longer at these tasks than they think necessary.

The urban exodus to the suburbs in the 1940s and 1950s by working-class households involved a move up to the middle class. Working-class culture has been characterized by group conformity, localism, and reification of cultural objects (Collins, 1992; Madigan & Munro, 1996). Working-class suburban life claimed middle-class status and primarily derived this status from style of life. The working-class household looked anxiously to the neighbors for validation and made a fetish of status symbols. Advertising relies on this sort of aspirational behavior, and Stewart's thinly veiled advertisements are as much directed to insecure or socially ambitious consumers as to the affluent.

Upper-middle-class women tend to be less focused on household appearance than working-class women and to take a more positive view of career. To the working-class housewife, working at an outside job signals economic distress rather than success. Attachment to the perceived status of being a stay-at-home housewife has fueled an antifeminist backlash from working-class women. The promotion of careers for women is seen as an attack on their notions of status (Collins, 1992). Stewart skirts the issue by emphasizing the importance of the home, but at the same time reframing housewifery as a professional career.

The Better Homes in America (BHA) campaign was a national reform campaign of the 1920s that deliberately redefined the idea of the American home

(Altman, 1990). A commercial consumer culture had emerged around the turn of the twentieth century with the rise of corporate industrialism. By the 1920s the consumer was firmly characterized as white and middle-class, but consumer behavior was not well formed or managed. The BHA campaign sought to tie patriotism and citizenship to home ownership. The campaign reified the traditional family home to counter popular utopian notions of a more communal world following the Russian revolution. The BHA campaign called on women to furnish their new homes according to standards set by experts. These standards in turn promoted newly standardized products, and housework itself was subject to the new industrial methods of standardization.

The BHA campaign constructed "a specific gendered image: the white woman as housewife, mother, and consumer, guided by science or expert advice" (Altman, 1990, p. 293). This construction is reproduced today by *MSL* in Stewart's updated version of the Better Home. Stewart's technique of negating class-differences by not speaking about them also reproduces the BHA strategy.

Madigan & Munro (1996) studied how modern working-class and lower middle-class British women approached home decoration in an effort to assess consequences of the postmodernist redefinition of style. The traditional hierarchy of taste reflected the assumption of class superiority in matters of style (Bourdieu, 1984), but the postmodern rejection of the distinction between high culture and popular culture implied the possibility of consumer-led notions of style. Madigan & Munro (1996) concluded that the ideological dimension of the home continued to encourage conformity. Family, gender, and social class still imposed limits on women's ability to envision or embrace alternative styles.

These researchers noted a tension between the women's desire to create a comfortable family environment and their desire to conform to public standards of appearance. Their solution was to equivocate and try to balance the out-of-

date or homey elements with the up-to-date or aspirational elements. The concept of home was strongly implicated in social identity for these women. Ultimately, however, the appearance of the home proved less important than ensuring comfort for the family. Public notions yielded to private.

Mason & Meyers (2001) argued that Stewart's imagery presents a domestic fantasy that promises class mobility by substituting the appearance of luxury for the actuality. The researchers found that women fans were able to recognize Stewart's imagery as mere fantasy. Like the Smithton women's use of romance literature for privacy and escape from domestic bonds (Radway, 1991), the fans used the MSLO material positively in their own lives.

Radway concluded that despite the romance's implicit support for the patriarchal domestic structure, the Smithton women were empowered by reading romances. The women were empowered as they claimed the right to private time for reading. Romances also helped them to manage gendered conflict in their own lives by psychological identification with the characters. Radway (1986) noted that romance readers often became romance writers and were directly empowered through creative activity. Even those who only read the books gained a sense of community with other women readers.

Mason & Meyers (2001) found that fans similarly use the fantasy of the Stewart lifestyle to meet emotional needs, escape daily routines, and improve the quality of everyday life. Fans interpret the program to mean that living an elegant lifestyle is possible without being born to wealth. (Stewart herself is the proof of that premise.) The fans are willing to settle for the appearance of luxury and learn to modify projects to fit into their own budgets (Taylor, 2002). "In Martha's world, initiative and hard work are adequate, even preferable, substitutes for hard cash" (Mason & Meyers, 2001, p. 820).

Feminist criticism and television. Feminist critical theorists have studied the

power relations between the genders through an analysis of television's portrayals of women and feminism (Brunsdon, 1997; Spigel, 1988). In the 1970s and 1980s researchers focused on the greatly disparaged genre of soap opera (Fiske, 1987) within the larger body of work on the feminine. Study of daytime soap opera was extended to include prime-time soaps such as *Dallas* and *Dynasty* (Kaplan, 1987).

Dow (1996) analyzed prime-time series that featured prominent female characters such as *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, *Murphy Brown*, *Designing Women*, and *Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman*. Dow noted the powerful role of these programs in establishing feminist articulations of women in the social environment. A more recent ethnographic study of *Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman* utilized online chat rooms to track current fans' perception, integration, and discussion of the program (Bird, 2003).

From a postfeminist or neo-traditionalist point of view, women have won the right to say no to a career outside the home. In the 1970s television helped articulate this ideological repositioning that sent women back into the home after the disruptions of the women's liberation movement. Probyn (1990) noted a similarity to the tactics used by the New Zealand media to direct women back to the domestic sphere after the Second World War.) Neo-traditionalists have constructed strong personae for women at home. For instance, the wife and mother figure was all-powerful in the popular 1970s sitcom *Roseanne* and held complete economic and social control of the family, a radical departure from the gender dynamics of earlier sit-coms. Many of the female characters on *thirtysomething* had achieved personal fulfillment by returning to the home from the working world. The articulation of the home as a refuge from the chaos of the outside world is essential to postfeminist ideology. In *thirtysomething*, the career women as well as the men relied on the serenity and strength of the at-

home mother, Hope.

Probyn (1990) noted the increasing media articulation of successful women who want something more out of life than the rewards of a career in the masculine world. Murphy Brown's flourishing career did not appease her natural desire for a baby and, despite her successes, she was initially portrayed as an inferior mother in a further indictment of the effects of career (Fiske, 1996). By affirming the right of a liberated woman to choose home over career, the neo-traditionalist ideology of choice has reaffirmed the status quo and taken women back to the home (Probyn, 1990).

This phenomenon has grown in unexpected quarters. More young professional women with sterling educational credentials are declining to climb the corporate ladder. Although many of the educational and occupational barriers that feminists struggled against are down, the number of women taking their degrees into the corporate world does not reflect their educational achievements. Surveys of professional women show that between one-quarter and one-third are out of the work force, and two-thirds work fewer than 40 hours a week. Although women are rejecting the corporate workplace, the number owning or co-owning businesses has climbed 11 percent since 1997. Women are redefining how and where they want to work (Belkin, 2003).

Martha Stewart Living has worked to reframe the housewife's job as a professional occupation so that women who opt-out can enjoy the satisfaction of a professional career. *MSL* also speaks to women who own businesses; women and entrepreneurship are intertwined in the *MSL* discourse. From a feminist perspective, however, *MSL* strongly reproduces the patriarchal view of the division of labor and promotes women's domestic role in society.

Aesthetic Theory

Aesthetics is the theory of beauty or the philosophy of art and is informed

by the perception of beauty or ugliness. Although aesthetics is a formal discipline for discussing value in art, it is intimately related to epistemological questions of knowledge and power. The aesthetic bridges the everyday-- the experiential, embodied world--and the realm of cognition, intellect, and reason.

Modern aesthetics dates from the Enlightenment when it was first articulated as a separate philosophical discipline by Alexander Baumgarten. In the *Aesthetica Acromatica* (1750) Baumgarten argued that sensory perception was a valid faculty of knowledge. Hammermeister (2002) translated Baumgarten's definition from the Latin: "Aesthetics (as the theory of the liberal arts, as inferior cognition, as the art of beautiful thinking and as the art of thinking analogous to reason) is the science of sensual cognition" (p. 7). Baumgarten developed the new discipline of aesthetics as both a science of cognition and a theory of art.

Baumgarten constructed a methodology that enables reason to deal with the chaos of sensory information. Sensual cognition is required for rational cognition yet cannot be directly apprehended by reason. Aesthetics provides an intervening logic and acts as a sort of feminine sublogic of reason to extract meaning from sensory chaos (Hammermeister, 2002). Aesthetic cognition does not merely generalize from sensory information, but rather apprehends an organic unity from within the sensory information. Baumgarten called this gestalt-like process a *confusion* (with emphasis on the fusion component of the word). The aesthetic succeeded with the chaos of sensory information by perceiving a level of structure that reason cannot grasp (Eagleton, 1990). This gestalt-like apprehension appears to prefigure Peirce's notion of abduction that Moriarty (1996) applied to visual interpretation as well as Arnheim's (1964) analysis of visual perception.

Edmund Burke published *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* in 1757 less than a decade after the appearance of the

Aesthetica. Burke explored the notion of taste as an essential aspect of aesthetics:

But to cut off all presence for cavilling, I mean by the word Taste no more than that faculty, or those faculties of the mind which are affected with, or which form a judgment of the works of imagination and the elegant arts. This is, I think, the most general idea of that word, and what is the least connected with any particular theory. And my point in this enquiry is to find whether there are any principles, on which the imagination is affected, so common to all, so grounded and certain, as to supply the means of reasoning satisfactorily about them. And such principles of Taste, I fancy there are; however paradoxical it may seem to those, who on a superficial view imagine, that there is so great a diversity of Tastes both in kind and degree, that nothing can be more indeterminate.

All the natural powers, which I know, that are conversant about external objects, are the Senses; the Imagination; and the Judgment (Burke, 1757/1990, p. 13).

Burke systematically examined these natural powers by attempting to define the faculties and passions. En route he arrived at the notion of the Sublime that came to dominate the Romantic imagination. The territory of the Sublime includes all of nature and provides a direct experience of human limitations. The Sublime is the apprehension of naked power that cannot be comprehended by reason. For Burke the experience of the Sublime was the direct experience of God (Eagleton, 1990).

Burke concluded that there was generally less difference of opinion on matters of taste than on matters of "naked reason" and noted that taste at least responded to education: "It is known that the Taste (whatever it is) is improved exactly as we improve our judgment, by extending our knowledge, by a steady attention to our object, and by frequent exercise" (Burke, 1757/1990, p. 25).

In the *Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (1790) Kant set out to explore the faculty or power that ensures the unity of reason. When Kant demonstrated that pure reason and practical reason were based on different principles, he discerned a gap between theory and practice or freedom and nature. In the *Critique* Kant proposed the judgment of taste as the faculty that can mediate

between sensuality and cognition on the one hand and between sensuality and moral action on the other. Kant considered aesthetic judgments on a par with the judgments of cognition and morality. For Kant aesthetic judgments were less concerned with the work of art than with the perception of beauty in nature and the human experience of the Sublime (Hammermeister, 2002).

The explication of the idea of beauty has a lengthy history. Plato set beauty next to the good at the top of his hierarchy of ideas. The notion of art has been less abstractly articulated and has been more evaluated in terms of the physical processes of its making. Kant simply required art to be beautiful.

Kant defined taste as the ability to estimate the beautiful and tied the judgment of taste to subjective feeling. He considered aesthetic judgments distinct from rational judgments and involved with a particular type of pleasure, the pleasure in beauty (Hammermeister, 2002). Kant distinguished the pleasure in beauty from two others pleasures that involve the physical existence of objects. The first of these second forms of pleasure is the purely subjective pleasure of the agreeable that accounts for personal preferences. The pleasure of the agreeable is directly interested in the physical existence of the object. For instance, when one prefers wine to beer, pleasure is gained from drinking it, and so the pleasure of the agreeable produces a desire to possess the object (Hammermeister, 2002).

The second pleasure is that felt in what is morally good, a pleasure which first requires a concept of the good. To recognize the good then naturally leads to the desire for its material existence or embodiment for humankind. Of the three forms of pleasure, only the aesthetic does not depend on the material existence of the object. The pleasure of beauty quiets rather than incites desire and longing and provides an antidote to mindless consumption (Hammermeister, 2002).

Kant described four 'moments' or faculties of the aesthetic judgment. First, the aesthetic judgment involves a detachment or disinterest in relation to the object, a detachment that exhibits selflessness or non-acquisitiveness. Second, the aesthetic judgment behaves as if beauty were a real and objective property of the object and as if that objective property were universally communicable. Third, the aesthetic judgment can not identify the purpose of the beautiful object even though the individual is affected by it. Beautiful objects are 'purposive without purpose.' Beauty has neither an external purpose (what it was meant to do) nor an internal purpose (what it was meant to be like) and expresses neither utility nor perfection. Finally, the aesthetic judgment must be necessary, in the sense of being exemplary; the aesthetic judgment is characterized by its inevitability. This moment of the aesthetic judgment is grounded in taste. Kant called this ground 'common sense,' the subjective condition of possibility of aesthetic judgment that is our feeling for the beautiful (Burnham, 2001).

Aesthetics & virtue. Kant stated that the beautiful is a symbol of the morally good, and the practice of the judgment of taste teaches the individual to find pleasure in moral ideas rather than in sensuality (Hammermeister, 2002).

British empiricists theorized that the moral sense operates intuitively much like the aesthetic judgment. The distance from the object required for an aesthetic judgment is also necessary for a moral judgment. The individual must curb passionate involvement in external events in order to apply the perspective of the intellect. The apprehension of the good (the moral) parallels the intuitive apprehension of beauty. In fact, what is good *is* beautiful. What is good is compelling and complete in itself like beauty. As a logic for apprehending and thus governing sensory experience, the aesthetic provides a model for moral sensibility (Bayley, 1991; Lloyd Jones, 1991).

The neo-Platonist Lord Shaftesbury theorized that elevating the level of taste in an individual will produce a corresponding elevation of the moral sense. To become aesthetically refined is to become a better person (Lloyd Jones, 1991). From a Marxist perspective, the aesthetic is directly related to the autonomy of the subject, as the autonomy of the artifact provides a model for subjectivity. The capacity for self-regulation and self-determination that is intrinsic to the art object can be extended to the subject (Eagleton, 1990).

Aesthetics and taste. The metaphoric use of the word taste entered the English language in the early eighteenth century when Shaftesbury and Addison applied the notion of taste (*goût* or *gusto*) to the aesthetic process (Bayley, 1991; Lloyd Jones, 1991). The notion of taste was found useful in discussions of the qualities necessary to make and appreciate fine art. These discussions assumed that the standards of taste were distinguishable from cultural norms and that these standards of taste formed the criteria necessary for aesthetic judgments.

These eighteenth century philosophers assumed that individuals could acquire taste by exposure to and study of beautiful objects (Lloyd Jones, 1991). The education of taste was frequently described in terms of training and refining the sense organs, such as developing an eye for beauty, a good nose, an ear for music, or a discriminating palate. This approach to aesthetic education assumed that a lack of appreciation for art indicated a lack of perception that could be corrected by study. As the senses were honed, perception would be enhanced. As the individual perceives more of the formal qualities in a work of art, greater appreciation naturally follows (Bayley, 1991; Lloyd-Jones, 1991).

The notion that physical refinement parallels aesthetic refinement has been used to justify the differentiation and classification of individuals by physical attributes. A lower class position was correlated with coarser physical features, and an upper class position was reflected by a corresponding physical

refinement (Bayley, 1991).

In *Distinction* (1984) Bourdieu demonstrated that cultural preferences or tastes in modern French society were determined by the level and quality of education and by social or class origins. Bourdieu conceptualized four taste formations (legitimate, middlebrow, popular, and pure) to provide interpretive guidelines for his sociological analysis.

Legitimate taste indicated a preference for and familiarity with established and emergent forms of classicism. (This classicism conformed to the cultural canon that reflected dominant art historical and cultural threads.) This taste was aligned with the dominant class whose members had attained a high educational level. Middlebrow taste was displayed by the middle class and was less rigorously classical in its preferences. Popular taste was aligned with the working class and revealed preferences for commodified and devalued forms of art. The category of the pure indicated the realm of the aesthete who demonstrated the most highly developed and self-directed aesthetic facility.

Bourdieu (1984) demonstrated that social class, occupation, and educational level correlated to aesthetic preferences in music, photography, literature, other arts, and even food. Together these preferences constitute social capital. Although taste and discrimination may be experienced by the individual as natural and intuitive, they are in fact derived from class situation and education. Taste is situated in the habitus, the site in which the individual develops and reproduces the attitudes and dispositions experienced as common sense. The habitus is the repository of the cultural values and beliefs the individual has acquired both consciously and unconsciously. These values are socially constructed and socially constructing. As the acquired ability to differentiate, taste operates as common sense informing aesthetic judgments (Webb, Shirato, & Danaher, 2002).

Current notions of aesthetics have followed Bourdieu in emphasizing taste as the mechanism for determining what is beautiful (Sturken & Cartwright, 2001). Taste is considered to be a subjective and culturally specific faculty, yet does not merely indicate individual preferences. Taste reproduces and is reproduced by cultural experiences. Sturken & Cartwright (2001) also noted that the concept of taste expresses class location:

When we say someone 'has taste,' we are usually using culturally specific and class-based concepts. When we say people have good taste we often mean that they participate and are educated in middle-class or upper-class notions of what is tasteful, whether or not they actually inhabit these class positions. (p. 48)

Narrative Theory

Narrative theory was developed to excavate the hidden structure of literary texts (Eagleton, 2001). In the early twentieth century Russian literary critics defined the workings of literature as the organization of language with its own laws, structures, and devices or techniques. In this linguistic approach the Russian Formalists studied the literary text as an independent entity, believing that the clarity achieved through examination of the isolated text would be clouded by including the world reflected by the text.

By the mid-century, the methodology of narrative analysis was heavily influenced by Leavis's notion of close reading. Leavis also insisted on the isolation of the text from its historical context or authorial intent. New Criticism continued the focus on the literary text as an isolated aesthetic object rather than as social practice (Eagleton, 2001).

In the 1960s literary structuralists applied Saussure's linguistics to literature. The Czech theoretician Roman Jakobson provided the direct link between Russian Formalists and French structuralists like Lévi-Strauss. Jakobson defined the necessary components of a communication as an addresser, an

addressee, the message, a shared code, a physical medium, and a context. This return to context and author was an abrupt turn in the analysis of literature.

Narratology evolved from the structuralists' work on myth, especially from their notion of the decentered subject. When meaning is perceived as socially constructed, the individual subject can no longer be considered as the sole source (the center) of meaning. Narratology extended Lévi-Strauss's work on tribal myth and incorporated Vladimir Propp's work on the typology of fairy tales (Eagleton, 2001)..

Narrative criticism examines the varieties of social interactions involved in producing and interpreting texts. Wayne Booth (1983) considered the degree of distance to be a critical factor in these interactions. Booth attempted to delineate the possible variations of distance in the interactions among author, narrator, other characters, and reader. Distance (which can be moral, physical or temporal) may be constructed between the narrator and the implied author, the narrator and other characters, the narrator and the reader, or the narrator and the reader's norms. The distance between the implied author and reader or other characters may also vary.

The narrator is found to be reliable or credible "when he speaks for or acts in accordance with the norms of the work (which is to say, the implied author's norms) . . ." (Booth, 1983, p. 157). The reliable narrator dramatizes the position of the implied author. Reliability is a critical factor in establishing the credibility of a figurehead or narrator like Stewart. In the *MSL* narrative, the identification of the implied author (the brand) with the narrator (Stewart) impacts the credibility of both; Stewart's reliability affects her personal reputation and the brand.

Booth (1983) also examined the process of molding belief. Booth determined that rhetoric works to implant beliefs in addition to those which the

reader already possesses, but noted that: "[Yet] there is a surprising amount of commentary directed to reinforcing values which most readers, one would think, already take for granted" (p. 177).

In the rhetoric of television narrative the effort to convert or change opinion often seems secondary to the effort of reinforcing existing beliefs. By and large, television narrative serves to reproduce existing norms and to preach to the converted. The relation between the television narrative and the viewer is a joint action between the collective entity that produces the narrative and the collective entity that reads it. As Blumer (1969) noted, even well-established group actions must be continuously reinforced. Social institutions or networks cannot endure without being actively formed and reformed.

Narrative criticism examines the relationship of the narrator to the story and of the narrator to the world created by the story. Kozloff (1992) noted the variables that can impact this relationship:

1. Whether the narrator is a character in the story or external to it.
2. Whether the narrator's story is complete or part of a larger tale.
3. The distance of the narration from the time and place of the events.
4. The narrator's use of irony as a means of establishing distance.
5. The reliability of the narrator as a source.
6. The omniscience of the narrator.

The relationship between Stewart as narrator and the world constructed by the narrative is impacted by the confusion between her role as narrator and her private persona. Stewart's reliability as a source, her perceived omniscience, and her role as a character are drastically affected by the events of her private life.

Narrative theory and television. First applied to film and then extended to television, narrative theory helps define the formal structures of text. Fictional television programs are obviously narrative, but nonfictional shows often utilize

a narrative structure. For instance, television news may be told as a story rather than conveyed as discrete packets of information. In considering instances of narrative in television, Kozloff (1992) excluded programs with their own unique structures such as game shows, talk shows, exercise shows, sports, and musical performances. But even in these formats, content can be framed as narrative. An announcer may tell a series of events as a story. Narrative or storytelling dominates most television content whether or not the content is fiction.

Within television narrative, theorists have differentiated story (or what is told) from discourse (or how it's told). The techniques used to produce the television program are an aspect of its discourse, while the plot determines story.

Fiske (1987) developed a schema of television codes as a method for examining visual conventions. The schema describes the levels of television codes or conventions. These levels ascend from a concrete correlation with the natural world to the most abstract.

The basic level of reality of a television show is established by the correspondence of the televised image to the natural world. Correspondence is assessed through the physical appearance of the characters, dress, make-up, behavior, environment, speech, gesture, expression, and sound. The level of representation describes the production techniques of camera, lighting, editing, and music. The level of ideology is presumed to be inscribed in the content.

Storytelling involves a teller and a listener, and narrative theory has extensively discussed the interaction between the two. The simplest form of the transmission of a story is from teller to listener. (This form parallels the transmission model of communication in which the message provides a third component.) The transmission of a printed text to the reader is a more complex transaction, and narrative theory has located six participants in the chain of transmission. The message moves from real author to implied author to

narrator to narratee to implied reader to real reader (Booth, 1983).

Substituting viewer for reader, Booth's model may be applied to the analysis of the television narrative. The real author is the large and elastic production group that exists deep within the layers of authorship. The implied author is more or less the viewer's perception of what the show represents.

The implied author functions as the author's second self, a self who will always be superior to the real or actual author (Booth, 1983). In *MSL* the implied author of the narrative could be seen as the brand while the corporate entity which produces the brand and show is the real author.

The narrator is rather like the spirit of the show that appears in visual or musical elements and in human agents. The perky theme music and familiar locations of *MSL* perform as narrators. Booth (1983) noted that the anonymous center of consciousness had become the most important modern form of narrator. This third-person narrator may reflect interior mental activity, but may also be the eye of the camera. This seemingly neutral and sense-bound narrator intensifies action by selection and focus.

The narratee in television can be the studio audience, the laugh track, the at-home audience, or an on-screen presence like a news anchor. This narratee provides a model of the good listener for the viewer. When a guest explains the propagation of orchids, Stewart functions as the good listener or narratee.

The implied viewer understands what the implied author perfectly and accepts the implied author's view of the world (Booth, 1983). The implied viewer is constituted by the rhetoric of the program: the implied viewer is addressed as the implied author envisions the ideal viewer.

And finally, the real viewer is at home on the couch watching the program. The final step loops back to the embodied world. Using direct address, the narrator speaks to the viewer at home as the narratee, following the

theatrical device of the player addressing the audience. In the theater, this form of address breaks the illusion of the contained world onstage. The fourth wall of the illusory theatrical space is broken.

The Scene Function Model. Building on Seymour Chatman's classification of story events, Porter, Larson, Harthcock, and Nellis (2002) developed the Scene Function Model to explicate the narrative function of television scenes. The authors defined character development and continuous story lines as the unique components of television narrative. Chatman had distinguished between the kernel scenes that are intrinsic to plot development and the satellite scenes that add texture and depth. Following Kozloff's (1996) division of narrative into story and discourse, kernel scenes are story and satellite scenes are discourse.

Porter, Larson, Harthcock, and Nellis (2002) defined the functions of kernel scenes as disturbance, obstacle, complication, confrontation, crisis, and resolution. They defined the functions of satellite scenes as exposition, dramatic question, introduction of a new character, action, plan revealed, relationship affirmation, clarification, conflict continues, relief, theme, foreshadowing, and ambiance. Although the model was developed as a heuristic for analyzing narrative structure in fictional shows, it provides an approach to nonfictional.

Bishop (1999) applied the Scene Function Model in his analysis of the *Antiques Roadshow*, a popular program on the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS). Ordinary people bring their keepsakes and antiques for valuation by the program's expert appraisers. Bishop noted how the narrative between the expert and novice shifted the value attached to the object from sentimental to commodified. The expert's valuation established new and enduring associations around the object and gave them a new context in a process similar to that of advertising. "The appraiser creates a narrative of value which supersedes the participant's emotional or historical narrative" (Bishop, 1999, p. 28).

Martha Stewart Living shares aspects of this discursive process with the *Antiques Roadshow*. Like the *Roadshow* expert appraisers, Stewart redefines the personal meaning of familiar objects for the viewer by reframing the symbolic and commodified value of domestic objects.

Methodology

The present study is a narrative and discourse analysis of the *Martha Stewart Living* television within the general framework of hegemony theory. This study primarily focused on the role of MSLO media in the reproduction of class stratification through the aestheticization of everyday life.

One significant way power enters into everyday experience is through discourses of expertise. This study explored the inculcation of an aestheticized lifestyle in the subject through Stewart's discourse of expertise. Stewart's authority as a tastemaker and teacher derives from and reproduces her status as an expert in domesticity. Stewart's idealized domesticity valorizes an aesthetic orientation toward everyday life. The aestheticized subject is taught to make the finer discriminations about consumer goods that stimulate consumerist practices. However, an aestheticized subjectivity also contributes to the autonomy of the subject and enables resistance to the dominant hegemony through its transformative potential.

In addition, the study noted that Stewart employs a discourse of entrepreneurship to reproduce market capitalist values and to redefine feminine labor in the domestic sphere. The creative and artisanal activities sited in the domestic sphere are framed as potentially entrepreneurial. Participation in creative or artisanal activities redirects the subject from the passive (and merely therapeutic) consumption of goods to a more active role in their production.

The present study complements Mason & Meyers' (2001) study of viewer response to MSLO media. Mason & Meyers interviewed fans about their use of Stewart media products. This study also contributes to existing literature on Stewart's role in popular culture (Beecher, 2001; Leavitt, 2001; Mechling, 2001; Wajda, 2001) and extends Smith's (2000) analysis of subject positions constituted

by the Stewart media.

A viewing archive was constructed from a total of 50 episodes of *Martha Stewart Living* broadcast on CBS from late April to late June in 2003 and two weeks in fall 2003. Eight episodes of *from Martha's House* and four of *from Martha's Garden* broadcast on HGTV in fall 2002 were included in this archive for comparison. A sample of nine episodes broadcast on the Lifetime cable network during the 1994 -1995 season provided a historical benchmark (see Appendix A).

In addition, I tracked the MSL website and *marthataalks.com*, Stewart's personal website, followed media coverage of Stewart's activities, and examined current and historical issues of the MSL magazine.

Preliminary Analysis of Archive

Each episode of the hour-long program consisted of five to eight independent segments. The study sample consisted of a total of 348 segments. These segments were categorized by activity (see Appendix B), and the frequency distribution and relative frequency of each activity was established. The field trip category, the second most frequent category with 19% of the programming, was subcategorized by type of activity (see Appendix C). I excluded Stewart's introductions to each episode from my analysis. These introductions mainly promote the upcoming program, and the present study focused on the analysis of discursive formations of activities rather than of promotional messages.

Everyone that appeared on camera was designated as a character, and the number and gender of characters in each activity was tabulated (see Appendix D). However, with field trip events that involved large numbers of people such as weddings, I tallied only characters that spoke or were named. I also noted the frequency of Stewart's appearances as the sole character and the frequency of appearances of MSL staff.

I examined the narrative and discourses of *MSL* as a complete series, following selected examples from the extensive literature on women's television (Brunsdon, 1997; Dow, 1996; Fiske, 1987, 1996; Probyn, 1990; Smith, 2000; Spigel, 1988). Additionally, I transcribed four typical segments from the core activities of decorating, crafts, cooking, and collecting for close examination and analysis. The individual segments included:

1. Decorating: Displaying a collection of Blue Willow Ware.
2. Crafts: Making a fern votive candle.
3. Cooking: Making strawberry ice cream cones with Alice Waters.
4. Collecting: Antique tableware with Patrick Dunn.

Cooking represented the most frequent of all activities and initially provided the basis for Stewart's expertise. The other three activities related directly to the aestheticization of everyday life.

In the analysis of individual segments I examined the narratives and discourses of expertise, aesthetics, domesticity, and enterprise. In addition the analysis of individual segments examined relations of power between Stewart and her guests.

Goals and Aims of the Study

The present study provided a textual analysis of Stewart's naturalization of symbolic and material values that impact class structuration. The study examined how Stewart helped develop self-disciplined and domesticated subjects who desire an aestheticized lifestyle. This lifestyle was shown to manifest aesthetic standards that reflected upper-class cultural values and promoted the dominant class structure. This lifestyle cultivated aspirational consumerist practices that promised class mobility, but defused collective social action. This study examined the role of the discourse of expertise in the construction of this compliant subject position.

The study further examined how Stewart reproduced hegemonic notions of domesticity by reframing feminine labor in the domestic sphere as a professional occupation. The study noted that Stewart valorized market capitalism by encouraging entrepreneurship in the domestic sphere and thus further supported the dominant hegemony.

This study has provided an analysis of the production of the *MSL* text and has provided the groundwork for a complementary study of the audience's reading of the text.

Analysis of *Martha Stewart Living* as a Series

The Televisual Apparatus of Martha Stewart Living

Several major discursive threads run throughout *Martha Stewart Living*. One thread concerns Stewart's personal vision as a teacher, guide, and entrepreneur. The second concerns the expertise that underlies Stewart's credibility and authority. The third thread concerns the aesthetic dimension that informs her teaching and expertise. The figure of Stewart and *MSL* are conflated and whatever reproduces one aspect of her identity encompasses the other.

Socially constructed discourses circulate the flow and range of meaning within a society, and the individual constantly interacts with these discourses. Indeed, the constructionist position holds that the external world is known to the individual only by this participation in discourse: "Foucault argues that since we can only have a knowledge of things if they have a meaning, it is discourse—not the things-in-themselves—which produces knowledge" (Hall, 1997, p. 45).

Power is exercised in the everyday world in the construction of meaning as one interpretation is established over another: "[Rather,] power must be understood discursively in terms of its ability to impose a particular knowledge over resisting, competing knowledges" (Fiske, 1989, p. 162).

The knowledge or information that Stewart circulates in the role of expert is complex. On the one hand, it is comprised of factual information, procedures, and processes. On the other hand, it is concerned with the nebulous and subjective realm of aesthetics and taste. In both dimensions Stewart's discourses are embedded with dominant notions of feminine domesticity.

From a Burkeian perspective Stewart's primary approach is one of agency. This approach emphasizes how an action comes to occur. Experts claim special knowledge of why things occur as they do. The subjective nature of

aesthetics creates a platform for expertise that is hard to refute (rather like a narrative of purpose based on special or revealed knowledge).

The aestheticization of everyday life concerns the transformation of ordinary existence into artful existence. An aesthetic sensibility underlies Stewart's affirmation of domesticity: "I don't consider housekeeping a chore. For me, homekeeping done correctly should be considered an art. That's what my company is all about--to inspire people that everyday life should be celebrated and coddled and treated with care" (Stewart, 2003, May 1). However, this focus on artful living normalizes particular habits of consumption at the same time it sets about transforming everyday life.

Martha Stewart as a brand. Since the publication of *Entertaining* in 1982, Martha Stewart the person has been transformed into Martha Stewart the brand. *Martha Stewart Living* was launched as a magazine in 1990 and the next year as a syndicated television program. Within two years the half-hour weekly program reached 97% (Byron, 2002). By 1996 *MSL* was the most popular woman's program on television and became a daily show later that same year. *MSL* was expanded to an hour by the end of 1998. The brand became highly visible.

In addition to the syndicated network program, *MSLO* developed three half-hour programs for cable networks. These programs, *from Martha's Home* and *from Martha's Garden*, recycled segments from recent or classic episodes of *MSL* and aired on the House and Garden Channel¹ (HGTV). A third, *from Martha's Kitchen*, went to the Food Network, HGTV's sister network.

Stewart stepped down as CEO of Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia (*MSLO*) after her indictment in June 2003, but remained its chief creative officer

¹ *MSLO* and HGTV signed a two-year agreement that took effect in October 2001. This agreement expired at the end of December 2003, and the two programs were removed from the HGTV schedule. According to a statement on its website, the network looks forward to future programming from *MSLO* (HGTV, 2004).

until her conviction in March 2004. Stewart worked hard at renovating her public image in the months preceding her trial in the winter of 2004. When Barbara Walters asked if she were guilty, Stewart answered, "I think I will win this case and be proven innocent of any wrongdoing" (Sloan, 2003, June 8).

Martha Stewart the brand has been conflated with Martha Stewart the person over the course of thirty years. MSLO had developed a contingency plan for her inevitable departure long before the ImClone scandal. Martha Stewart the brand is intended to outlive Martha Stewart the person (Didion, 2000).

Stewart herself noted that television is MSLO's most vulnerable area: "The one exposure that the company has in terms of my leaving in some--in some fashion and not coming back is television and my program, because it would be pretty hard to keep that going without me" (Safer, 2003).

Martha Stewart as a mediated figure. The living person, the corporate entity, and the television character of Martha Stewart have combined into a single figure of hyperreality like the Murphy Brown-Candice Bergen-Diane English mediated figure. Martha Stewart the person has merged with Martha Stewart the brand, the character, and the businesswoman. The conflation of live and televised personae has created a character that simultaneously inhabits electronic and physical reality (Fiske, 1996).

This mediated Martha Stewart is a celebrity whose life is a tabloid drama of success, celebrity, and wealth, but with a subplot of a failed marriage and a reputation as a harridan. Popular culture loves the myth of rags to riches, but the spectacle of the downfall of the high and mighty is even more prized. Stewart's conviction just adds to the drama.

But had hubris already done in Martha Stewart? Barbara Walters seemed to think so in Stewart's interview on 20/20 (Sloan, 2003, November 7). Walters reviewed a notorious display of Stewart's pride. Stewart had been a regular

guest on *The Early Show* (which runs right before *MSL* on CBS) until late June. Stewart was chopping cabbage for coleslaw as correspondent Jane Clayson pressed for a comment on her indictment. Stewart refused to answer and kept on chopping. As Walters replayed the footage, she emphasized the threat of the chopping knife, thus reframing Stewart's action as ominous and criminal. .

Television flow has assured that the ImClone scandal has blurred semiotically with the *MSL* program. The juxtaposition of news coverage of her legal tribulations with the insulated world of *MSL* has been ironic. The day after her indictment, Stewart appeared on a field trip to Harry Winston's, the upscale New York jeweler. Stewart was beaming and chic in a black pants suit and sported an elegant diamond necklace. "I do feel very fancy, trying on some of the most beautiful stones I've ever seen," she confided to viewers (Stewart, 2003, June 5). At the station break, a teaser for CBS news showed Stewart leaving after her indictment as the news commentator discussed her case.

Popular ogling and virtual worship of celebrities has its flip side. Popular culture enjoys the dark pleasures of *schadenfreude* whenever calamity and scandal hit celebrities. (This pleasure has sustained the rabble even before Madame Dufarge knit her way through the Terror.) The haggard close-up of Stewart and her umbrella at her indictment was used nearly 20 times as a lead-in to station breaks during her appearance on *20/20* (Sloan, 2003, November 7) and served to frame the entire interview with her criminality.

Historical Perspective on MSL

Compared to the 1994-1995 season, the 2003 season was much more complex and polished. The show was literally twice as long and held a greater variety of activities. The 2003 title montage (see Appendix E) demonstrated the increase in visual density. A decade ago Stewart was shown either cooking or gardening. In 2003, she was still cooking much of the time, but gardening much

less frequently (see Appendix A). Cooking was a more sociable activity, and Stewart appeared with a guest chef more frequently than not. In the 1994-1995 season, Stewart was predominantly shown alone in the kitchen.

A decade ago Stewart was the only character in over half of the segments. The 2003 season incorporated many more guests and *MSL* staff, and Stewart soloed in only about a third of the segments. Stewart built the brand on the basis of her personal expertise, but the appearance of *MSL's* food, craft, and style editors has showcased the brand's expertise and creative resources.

Since the mid-1990s the production values have risen considerably. The 2003 *MSL* looked as slick as the advertisement it was developed to be (Byron, 2002). The early shows appeared to be shot in Stewart's actual kitchen rather than on a set. For the past three years MSLO has produced the program jointly with CBS (Safer, 2003, June 8). The program has been mainly filmed at the MSLO studios in Westport, Connecticut, on sets which have recreated Turkey Hill, Stewart's renovated Connecticut farmhouse. Gardening and outdoor projects are shot both at Turkey Hill and Lily Pond Road, her house in the Hamptons.

Broadcast Environment

The analysis of television narrative requires consideration of the program within the overall flow of the broadcast environment (Fiske, 2001; Kozloff, 1992; Williams, 1975). The viewer does not so much watch a particular program as the entire sequence or flow of images and sound in which the program is embedded.

Scheduling or time of day also influences the viewing experience. *MSL* is embedded within the flow of women's programming. The daytime schedule is comprised of soaps, news, and self-help.

KPIX, CBS San Francisco, Weekday Schedule, May 2003:

04:30 *News*

07:00 *The Early Show*

09:00 *Martha Stewart Living*

10:00 *The Price Is Right*
11:00 *The Young and the Restless*
12:00 *News*
12:30 *The Bold and the Beautiful*
01:00 *As the World Turns*
02:00 *The Guiding Light*
03:00 *Dr. Phil*
04:00 *Maury*
05:00 *News*

Raymond Williams (1975) noted that broadcast media had radically changed the process of making sense out of a communication. Reading a book and attending a performance, for instance, were essentially bounded processes. Each book or play could be approached, judged, and comprehended as a singular entity. Williams found that broadcast conventions have dispensed with any interval between television's scheduled units. This continuous flow of broadcast information has impacted the interpretation of any single program embedded in it. Even within the program's boundaries, commercial and station messages are inserted and confuse interpretation of the program content.

MSL helps guide and maintain viewer attention in the midst of this flow by a well-developed system of musical, graphic, and verbal cues. The musical theme signals program entrances and exits from the surrounding flow, and the *MSL* announcer provides summaries and previews. The strong visual identity helps *MSL* stand out from competing messages. Advertising for *MSL* media or products provides an additional buffer zone. *MSL* presents a familiar and soothing environment within the hyperactive network flow.

Watching television at home is a different experience than watching a film. Screen theorists have examined the construction of cinematic illusion. In the dark theater the scale of the screen and the sound system dominate the senses, creating an experience similar to dreaming. The filmgoer is part of an audience, but is isolated by darkness and codes of behavior. Encapsulated in this dark

womb, the filmgoer can no longer distinguish perceptions of the real world from the images that represent the world. The filmgoer accepts the world represented by the film and the subject position constructed by the filmic apparatus. The female subject is dominated by the patriarchal construction of femininity dominant in film imagery (Flitterman-Lewis, 1992).

The cinematic illusion is not maintained in the domestic sphere. The television set is one more piece of furniture in the everyday environment (Spigel, 1988). Television viewing is integrated into family life, and the household competes for the viewer's attention. The codes that govern television's use at home reflect the power relations of family members (Fiske, 1987; Fiske & Hartley, 1978).

Narrative Analysis of MSL

Television as well as film yields to narrative analysis. Although the narrative aspect of fictional programs is clear, nonfictional programs also display narrative structure (Fiske, 1987). Nonfictional formats like game shows, exercise shows, talk shows, and sports have their own structural regulations that can be overlaid with narrative (Cook, 2000). Kozloff (1992) that "[Thus,] narratives are not only the dominant type of text on television, but narrative structure is, to a large extent, the portal or grid through which even nonnarrative television must pass" (p. 69).

Fiction and nonfiction. Television is accepted as a representation of the world, and the infant viewer learns to read its normalized codes. Fictional and nonfictional programs utilize frames of reference or genres that the viewer can easily recognize. "These types have developed into formulas which . . . pre-establish the attitudinal pattern of the spectator before he is confronted with any specific content and which largely determine the way in which any specific content is being perceived" (Adorno, 1954, p. 226). Genres or formats are read in

relation to other texts in the web of conventions from which they are formed, conventions as familiar to the viewer as to the producer of the text.

The news genre pioneered conventions (or structures) that other nonfiction genres have come to utilize. These include a presumed objectivity and veracity, a personality as host or anchor, a structure of short complete units, and a visible production apparatus (Fiske, 1987; Kozloff, 1992). *MSL* incorporates many of these conventions, and Stewart performs as the host.

The how-to genre has proliferated since the arrival of Julia Child on PBS and Bob Vila on HGTV. Today, people as well as houses and gardens are transformed into superior versions of themselves. *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy* has enjoyed a runaway success by trading on popular stereotype of gay men as style mavens. Transformation even occurs without the intervention of experts; ordinary people redo their own homes on HGTV's *Weekend Warriors*. *MSL* covers most home and garden genre categories with segments on gardening, restoring, entertaining, good things, crafts, decorating, cooking, collecting, and homekeeping (Omnimedia, 2003).

The growth of the genre and its incursion into network television has created a more competitive environment that *MSLO* faces in addition to the ImClone scandal. In the fall of 2003, CBS moved *MSL* from its morning time slot to less prominent (and effective) time slots in six major markets including New York, Los Angeles, and Miami in reaction (Hays, 2003, August 12).

Series and serials. Like most prime-time drama and comedy programs, *MSL* is a series rather than a serial. A series is a set of independent programs with regular characters or setting. In the serial format developed by soap operas, the story or plot is never resolved in a single episode if at all, and narrative emphasis is shifted from the resolution of plot to the development of character. However, like a classic soap opera, *MSL* depends heavily on character

and setting. Each activity is a story and contains plot elements, but who tells it and where it's told is equally important.

Each episode of *MSL* (like news, talk/tabloid shows, and other how-to programs) is comprised of independent segments, complete narratives in which an activity starts and ends. Studies of the viewing habits of the soap opera audience noted the ease with which segmented structures are integrated into the household routine (Dow, 1996; Kaplan, 1987). Interruption is a part of the daily household routine, and the interruptions of commercial broadcasting into the program are normalized. *MSL* provides practical information on the management of house, garden, family, and self:

Cooking	Crafts	Gardening	Fitness
Entertaining	Projects	Flower arranging	Personal care
	Collecting	Field Trips	Pet care
	Decorating		Authors & books
	Housekeeping		

With a few exceptions, the narrative of each segment is complete in itself, and each program or episode provides five to eight stories with happy endings. Each segment moves quickly from introduction to demonstration to conclusion. Like successful advertising, *MSL* provides closure for each story.

Story and discourse. Narrative theorists distinguish story (what happens to whom) from discourse (how the story is told). Story involves plot or the unfolding of events, while discourse concerns texture and means--the ideas, opinions, and histories that give stories relevance. The most basic story moves from harmony to disruption to a new harmony. (Girl meets boy, girl loses boy, girl finds boy.) The basic conflict between order and disruption is woven into the innocuous narratives of *MSL*. Each successful cake is the triumph of form wrested from the chaos of ingredients.

Characters and setting. In analyzing narrative structure, Chatman

differentiated the two components of a story. One component is comprised of the events, or the actions and happenings. The existents or elements of character and setting comprise the other component (Porter, Larson, Harthcock and Nellis (2002). The existents form the discourse of the narrative and display how events or actions occur. The medium of television is necessarily less visually complex than film by virtue of the physical limitations of the video camera. Consequently the visual existent of setting is less robust than it characteristically is in film. Character development used to compensate for the feebleness of location has come to dominate television narrative (Kozloff, 1987).

Though Stewart and the invisible announcer are the only constant characters on *MSL*, guests appear in about half of the programs. And all of Stewart's guests have expertise to share. Most are creative professionals, frequently with a book to promote. *MSL* is another stop on a book tour and has also added special interviews with authors in the 2003 season.

Stewart's normal costume is a long-sleeved shirt with buttons worn over trousers. (No sloppy T-shirts for her.) Her neatly casual costume is professional and businesslike. Stewart dresses tastefully, wears little jewelry, and is discretely well-groomed. Her appearance denotes a no-nonsense and capable persona². Stewart's credibility as a character depends heavily on expertise, and her authority is constantly reasserted and reestablished. Her expertise is augmented by the new knowledge accumulated from expert guests that she then integrates into her personal expertise.

The visual setting represents Stewart's idealized lifestyle and resonates with social references such as displaying the season's most fashionable draperies.

² Even Stewart's name has a symbolic dimension aligned to her image of practical capability. Martha, the sister of Mary and Lazarus, appeared in the New Testament. In contrast to her sister who was contemplative, Martha's nature inclined her to industriousness. The name Martha became synonymous with usefulness.

When Stewart renovates a chair, the transformation of the chair is the story, but the discourse shades the transformation. Plots revolve around battles and obstacles inherent to the process of altering the physical world. Houses, gardens, and chairs are obdurate empirical beings.

Each individual scene is a little story in which something starts, develops, and ends happily. A cake is baked; a tree is planted; a discarded chair is reclaimed. The *MSL* rhetoric is as much visual as verbal, and the effectiveness of the visual communication is critical. Appearance is paramount in her ideology. *Stewart as a powerful woman.* Stewart's interactions with her expert guests sometimes revealed a struggle for dominance. She can be preemptory, assertive, and interruptive to some guests, though she is cordial and gracious to famous restaurateurs or the daughters of powerful men. These relationships provide proof of Stewart's membership in the cultural and power elite. Stewart's on-screen behavior tends to exhibit the powerful behavior that is traditionally the masculine prerogative.

Lauzen, Dozier, and Hicks (2001) noted a correlation between the roles of women occupied behind the scenes and the portrayal of women on screen. In the sample of prime-time programs, 40.5% of all characters were female, a statistic at odds with national demographics. Women comprised 21% of the workers involved in production. When women had prominent roles behind the scenes, the number of female characters on camera increased, and the on-screen characters exhibited more powerful traits. The presence of a single female executive producer increased the number of female characters to 42.7%. Yet when the executive producers were exclusively male, the number of female characters fell to 37.8%. The presence of a single female writer pushed the number of female characters to 46.8%. However, the researchers concluded that the presence of female creators or producers (apart from executive producers)

was not significant in determining the quantity of female characters, but did influence how they behaved on camera (Lauzen, Dozier, and Hicks, 2001).

The MSL television production staff is more or less equally divided between men and women, but women occupy most senior positions. Stewart is listed as one of the two executive producers of *MSL*, but no writers are credited (Omnimedia, 2003). The spontaneity of the dialogue typifies and enhances the perceived reality of the nonfiction genre--the game shows, talk shows, and how-to shows--in which the host and characters are perceived as real people.

Lauzen, Dozier, and Hicks (2001) analyzed how expressions of power in dialogue were constituted in prime-time programs. Specifically they noted how characters of different genders controlled the direction, length, and nature of conversations. Control in interactions was tactically established by interrupting, by having the first or last word, and by issuing orders. The exercise of power in front of the camera depended on the gender of the character and on a parallel gendering of significant roles in production.

Stewart constantly exercises power in her relations with other characters. She interrupts, finishes their sentences, and inserts her own questions and opinions. As host, the first and last word in any exchange are hers by fiat. Stewart displays powerful behavior similar to that shown by powerful fictional female characters like Murphy Brown. The powerful roles of senior women in production help Stewart exert power in front of the camera. Stewart's powerful behavior is described further in her interactions with a male and a female guest in the analysis of the individual segments.

Reproduction of Class, Gender, and Race in MSL

Although Marx believed that class disparity would galvanize the working class into political action that would overcome the class structure, ethnicity and gender have been privileged as the sites of social struggle in recent years. Class

politics has taken a back seat to identity politics.

Martha Stewart Living has reproduced dominant patriarchal values that relegate women to the domestic sphere. By presenting domesticity as a perfectly viable personal option for women, *MSL* has seemingly exhibited a postfeminist perspective with the ideology of choice that is complicit with patriarchal hegemony. Stewart has implicitly valorized domesticity through its saliency as the substance of her brand. *MSL* has reformulated the nature of the domestic sphere, beginning with a redefinition of housewifery as the profession of homekeeping. However, *MSL* has naturalized and valorized the cultural capital of an upper-class lifestyle.

Consumerist values complicit with market capitalism are promoted by a literal emphasis on material culture. For instance, when Stewart shows how to bake a cake from scratch, she may recommend special or expensive kitchen equipment or ingredients. The recipe is likely to be complex and the final product sumptuous.

In any case, the time involved in the production of this lifestyle puts it out of reach for a working woman juggling the hours. The upper-class woman who has time for the complex rituals of entertainment will likely have a budget capable of providing the ingredients and gear.

Class. The myth of a classless society in America is supported by the democratic ideals of equality. Nonetheless, the U.S. Census Bureau is deeply concerned with categorizing the population by income, assets, occupation, education, and habitat, as well as determining its quantity, gender, and ethnicity (U.S. Census, 2003). Marketing demographics regularly classify by gender, income, education, age, and, increasingly, zip code.

Although Stewart has been constrained by gender, she is privileged by whiteness, and her celebrity status has provided another means of transcending

the limitations of gender, class, and race. But economic status is the single most powerful class determinant, and in that respect Stewart has worked her way into the upper classes. As Morley Safer pointed out to America, Martha Stewart is the poster child of the work ethic: "She does not believe in the work ethic; she is the work ethic" (Safer, June 2003). The work ethic is mythologized as the fervent belief that hard work is the road to financial success.

Martha Stewart, born Martha Kostyra, was one of six children in a working class family in Nutley, New Jersey. By marrying Yale law student Andy Stewart, Martha Kostyra followed a traditional feminine route to social mobility. Her mother-in-law was an interior decorator who introduced her to the upper-middle class tastes Stewart had studied in her art history classes at Barnard. Her familiarity with those tastes formed the basis of her success and wealth.

Class is visible on *MSL* in the manner, tone, and cultural acumen of its characters and in the constant visual representation of affluence and leisure. Characters are overwhelmingly white, well-educated, and upper-middle or upper class. Stewart's guests often own fashionable businesses that provide specialized goods and services to discriminating consumers, the demanding well-to-do. These guests (chefs, floral designers, rose breeders, antiques dealers, collectors, curators, designers, and artisans) enjoy an ambiguous cultural status that is enhanced by their proximity to wealth.

These creative occupations are often the province of the privileged classes. Stewart was careful to let the audience know that Laura the chocolate maker was the daughter of her "good friend," the director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Stewart's interaction with the Metropolitan director's daughter demonstrated that Stewart is part of the cultural elite and holds cultural as well as economic capital. Laura left her job as an investment banker to follow her dream of making chocolates. The availability of the option of self-fulfillment

over economic necessity demonstrated the richness of life choices available to the children of the upper class.

Sexist or gender issues seem unobtrusive in the arts and media occupations of many *MSL* guests. Although this occupational category represented only 1.9% of the population, the Census recorded equal numbers of men and women in this designation (US Census, 2003). Slightly over half the *MSL* guests in my sample were women.

The average user of *MSLO* products and media is affluent (Moran, 1998), and Stewart tends to assume a level of affluence. Of course the viewer will have "good silver" to carry out into the garden for a summer dinner. Of course the viewer will have a house with a garden with which to entertain large groups. Of course the viewer will have leisure time to apply silver gilt to a mirror frame.

But Stewart also displays a thriftiness that speaks to less affluent viewers (Taylor, 2002). She emphasizes long-term value as a justification for cost and recommends alternatives for expensive or specialty items. For instance, as Stewart sliced angel food cake with a special cake cutter, she confided that her mother's method of using forks to pull the sticky cake apart worked just as well.

Crafts and collecting show how to create the "very special . . . very expensive" look of affluence without buying expensive items. But thrifty alternatives implicitly depict affluence as socially and personally desirable at the same time they provide a solution for insufficient funds.

The visual representation of an upper-middle class lifestyle is perhaps *MSL*'s most powerful articulation of class. As collectors, curators, and antiques dealers, as well as celebrity chefs and the daughters of the cultural elite, share expertise and promote goods, upper-class culture is substantially depicted.

MSL regularly visited the upper-crust in the quasi-documentary field trips which comprise about 17% of the programming. *MSL* took viewers to weddings

at the Bel Air Hotel and a Long Island mansion, to the centuries-old yew gardens of a Welsh castle and the greenhouses of a nineteenth century English botanist. *MSL* viewers learned the trade secrets of the company that still makes silk lampshades like they did for Mrs. Vanderbilt in Newport a century ago.

Gender. Where talk shows in the daytime television landscape commonly engage with issues of gender and race (Dixon, 2001; Mittell, 2003), *MSL* follows the lead of *The Cosby Show*. Gender and racial differences are simply invisible. (Although women are powerful at *MSLO*, sexual politics is not on the agenda.)

However, a feminist argument for the professional capability of women was implicitly made by the number and occupations of the women depicted (see Appendix D). Male characters accounted for 34.9% of 441 characters in 348 segments. Stewart appeared alone in 24% of the segments, while other female characters appeared in 41%. Women comprised 65% of the total characters.

Like men, women are experts, and the feminine claim to expertise is endorsed by Stewart's constant example. Individuals are distinguished by knowledge or expertise rather than by gender or race. Conversations devolve on what the guest knows or makes and rarely touches on life experiences.

The *MSL* discourse, however, strongly reproduces traditional notions of femininity. Goods and practices are gendered. For instance, Stewart noted that certain vintage aprons were "... something my mom would've had ... " (Stewart, 2003 June 19). Stewart recommended needlecraft as an appropriate activity for any young girl. Craft projects were lauded as ways to help out the family, underwriting the basic female role. These activities reinforced the traditional patriarchal view of domesticity rather than its new professionalism.

The creative professions have traditionally tolerated and incorporated sexual minorities in advance of general social trends. *MSL* likely includes gay staff and guests: stylists, floral designers, or antiques dealers sometimes present

a stereotypical tonality for a stereotypical activity. (That a man must be gay to have a sense of style is ridiculous, but *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy* has enjoyed a considerable success by playing off the stereotype.)

Race and ethnicity. Although the faces seen on *MSL* are overwhelmingly white, *MSL* has responded to social trends with a faint nod to multiculturalism. For instance, one week *MSL* explored the *Cultures of the World*, that is, the nonwhite cultures of Asia, Africa, and Mexico. Stewart covered Africa in a single day starting with pictures of her own trek up Mt. Kilimanjaro. Brooklyn teenagers performed African dances on the lawns of Turkey Hill. A white South African anti-apartheid lawyer turned art dealer discussed native beadwork. (This encounter reproduced the traditional power relationship between white and native cultures.) An elegant Ethiopian discussed his book about Modernist architecture in Asmara.

The few African-Americans guests were generally associated with arts and crafts. Elderly Southern women quilt makers were presented as a sort of living history of a traditional African-American craft. Stewart visited the studio of a Brooklyn woman artist who made fanciful black dolls. The artist provided one of the rare allusions to racism by noting that she had begun to make dolls because there were so few attractive black dolls available. These African-American women were associated with a more primitive and tribal world. Quilt making is an oral tradition handed down from woman to woman; the youngest quilter discussed how she learned from the older women. Only the male author was presented as an intellectual.

A few thoroughly Americanized Middle Easterners have appeared on regular episodes. An ebullient young man named Adid made goofy balloon hats for a children's birthday party, and Stewart's hair colorist concocted a Persian chicken stew with pomegranates and saffron. Cooking is *MSL*'s major forum

for multiculturalism, and Stewart takes pains to ensure regional authenticity.

Equality and enterprise. The literal and emotional value of entrepreneurial activity is an important thread in the MSL discourse. Stewart identified herself as such: "When people ask me what I am, I say an entrepreneur. I started with an idea" (Stewart, 2003, April 29). Virtually all her guests have successful businesses based on their personal interests. The MSL announcer intoned: "Meet people who've turned personal passions into careers they truly love. Creative people whose success stories continue to inspire. They're enjoying the rewards of their own businesses" (ibid.).

During the week titled *The Spirit of Entrepreneurs: Inspiring Stories of Success*, Stewart visited an exhibition on the history of American women in business. The curator and historian Virginia Drachman said: "We wanted to include Martha Stewart because she really represents the continuity of a historical theme, turning domesticity into business. . . . the self-made man in this century included women" (Stewart, 2003, April 29). Drachman named Martha Stewart, Oprah Winfrey, and Katherine Graham as the three most prominent women in business in this era. Stewart explained her approach: "I've really tried very hard to ignore the fact that I'm a woman in business, and I just think I'm a person in business" (Stewart, 2003, April 29).

This statement reveals what appears to irk some feminists about Stewart. Her efforts were not symbolically made on behalf of women, or even as a woman. Instead she claimed gender neutrality. This stance aligns with the postfeminist perspective that the struggle for equality in the workplace has been won. But by saying she had to ignore her gender, Stewart revealed that being a woman in business had been a struggle. Christopher Byron (2002) noted that the men running Time-Warner had "chicked her" (trivialized her acumen) when she pitched her television series to them. She went elsewhere.

Stewart created her own equal opportunity and has been a fervent proponent of the pursuit of the individual dream. Stewart's entrepreneurial guests may pursue their dreams, but they rarely engage in production on the scale that she has. But the factory that produces Stewart's mass-marketed furniture purports to use artisanal methods. This family business sticks to the time-honored, labor-intensive methods that ensure quality.

Artisanal goods are often luxury goods, and Stewart points out the qualities that justify the increased cost. She shows how to make finer and finer distinctions about goods: "When you know how it's done, you can be a demanding consumer" (Stewart, 2002). This process demonstrates one of the tactics by which dominant corporations increase consumer demand for goods (Rouse 1995).

Interpretation and Evaluation

As the same time that *MSL* reproduces the visions of privilege that promote consumerism, *MSL* also urges viewers to just get out there and make things. As the embodiment of the work ethic, Stewart's mantra is industry, and her success is the result of individual effort.

Entrepreneurship is presented as a vehicle for autonomy and self-fulfillment through discursive practices that assimilate gender and race. The constant valorization of artisans and entrepreneurs helps develop subjects who are self-reliant and view their own creative activities as business opportunities

As Smith (2000) noted, *MSLO* discourses help develop subjects who are self-disciplined, inclined to see consumerism as self-expression, and view the home as refuge and therapy. In this respect *MSL* flies in the face of feminist goals by diverting women from the pursuit of equality in the public sphere and by substituting individual solutions to social problems. Individual solutions tend to subvert collective action. But the discourses articulated on *MSL* have

additional consequences.

More than anything else, the viewer sees people doing things with their hands. People cook, construct, repair, build, paint, glue, and grow things, all activities that directly speak to and develop the senses. Taking care of the self with exercise, beauty, and books is seen more frequently than taking care of the house through decorating, collecting, entertaining, or housekeeping. Although cooking is reaffirmed as a basic feminine domestic activity, childbearing is downplayed. This most primary and divisive form of female labor is an occasion for decoupage rather than mothering. Housework is more an exercise in beautification rather than in cleanliness. (This emphasis in itself displays a class-revealing reliance on household help to do the floors.)

The viewer is interpellated as a participant in these activities and directed to incorporate the activities in everyday life. Stewart constantly exhorts the viewer to "be creative in your own right" (Stewart, 2003, May 30) and valorizes an aesthetic approach to the household. This discourse does not merely professionalize housework by teaching Laundry 101, but cultivates a productive aesthetic sensibility that informs the wider range of individual choices.

Stewart follows the traditional route of aesthetic education by working to refine the senses, particularly developing the eye. Visual activities like flower arranging, collecting, decorating, and entertainments train the eye. Cooking educates the palate and nose, and the garden educates the eye and nose. Even household organization has an aesthetic dimension: an oilcloth bulletin board organizer is as attractive as it is functional. Order is more pleasing than chaos.

Kant defined taste as the ability to estimate the beautiful and tied the judgment of taste to subjective feeling. Aesthetic judgment is distinct from rational judgment and involves a particular type of pleasure, the pleasure in beauty (Hammermeister, 2002).

Kant distinguished the pleasure in beauty from two other pleasures that are more involved with the material existence of objects. The first is the subjective pleasure in the agreeable that lies behind personal preferences. Pleasure in the agreeable has a vested interest in the existence of the physical object: a preference for wine over beer naturally leads to desire to experience the agreeable pleasure of the wine (Hammermeister, 2002).

The second is the pleasure felt in what is morally good, a pleasure which requires a concept of good. To recognize the good naturally leads to the desire for its material existence and its availability to all.

The aesthetic (the pleasure in beauty) alone of the three does not require the existence of the object. The pleasure of beauty quiets rather than arouses material desire and longing and provides an antidote to mindless consumption. The pleasure in beauty is experienced through the aesthetic gaze and contemplation of the object. The judgments of taste require this detachment or disinterest in relation to the object, a detachment from the material that elevates the higher consciousness of the subject (Hammermeister, 2002).

When Stewart states that "everyday life should be celebrated and coddled" (Stewart, 2003, May 1), she directs viewers toward sensory immersion and the pleasures in the agreeable. Yet Stewart's aesthetic philosophy of elegant simplicity cultivates the ability to find pleasure in beauty and the detachment that enables the judgments of taste.

The creative processes she teaches through projects, activities, and field trips require both detached contemplation and extreme involvement. Aesthetic training is an essential part of *MSL* and is intended to create a preference and desire for her branded products. But developing an aesthetic sensibility in the viewer is ultimately at odds with purely mercantile goals.

As Stewart cultivates an enhanced level of taste in her viewers, she runs

the risk that they may find sufficient pleasure in the detached contemplation of the beautiful, rather than need to possess it. The cultivation of aesthetic judgments of taste has the revolutionary potential to lead away from the practices of consumption.

Analysis of Individual Segments

My first impression of Sofia was that she was quiet and graceful. And that she had taste, and when I say taste, I mean judgment in really subtle things. She always knew the feeling she wanted to convey in everything she did. And that's true taste. (Hirschberg, 2003, August 31, p. 37)

Taste reflects shifting social attitudes to aesthetic values. Film director Spike Jonze's description of Sofia Coppola reveals the currency of the notion of taste among cultural intermediaries. While Jonze described taste as a direct route to the emotions, Fredric Jameson (1991) provided a more classic definition: "'Taste,' in the loosest media sense of personal preferences, would seem to correspond to what used to be nobly and philosophically designated as 'aesthetic judgment'" (p. 298). These approaches reflect the tension between the senses and contemplation inherent to the judgment of taste.

Cultural tastes operate on a sliding scale of duration. On one end is the fad that is everywhere and then suddenly gone. At the opposite end is the tastes that display the canonized aesthetics of the upper class. However, the exercise of taste has come to encompass personal as well as social ideas of aesthetic value (Hebdige, 1988). As metanarratives fell, so did the validity of abstract systems such as aesthetics. Personal preferences and relativistic notions of taste gained more validity and came to prevail.

Although Martha Stewart rarely mentions taste, her taste has determined her success. She is "this symbol of impeccable taste" (Safer, 2003, June 8). This impeccable taste embodies her aesthetic sensibility and governs her decisions with elegant simplicity.

A good eye is the mark of an aesthetic sensibility. Martha Stewart demonstrates her aesthetic sensibility through the constant projects and activities. The viewer learns by watching Stewart make and articulate aesthetic

judgments while arranging flowers, printing stationery with half an apple, or displaying porcelain.

In *How to Decorate* (1996) Stewart shared her personal vision and taste with the novice decorator: "What I have learned, after designing and decorating five homes, is that decorating is something one can learn to do, that it consists of the ability to turn a space, however small, into a home that is inviting, warm, and useful" (Stewart, 1996, p. 9).

The aesthetic Stewart has called elegant simplicity permeates MSLO media. Interiors in magazines and books and on television reflect her penchant for mixing tag sale finds with antiques and the aesthetic that holds the rooms together. Stewart's design sensibility has been described as "a mixture of pan-1800's connoisseurship and flea-market style" (McKee, 2003). The Signature furniture Stewart produces is derived from the interior design of her major residences: Skylands in Maine, Lily Pond in the Hamptons, and Turkey Hill in Connecticut.

Decorating: Displaying a Collection of Willow Ware.

Dressed in designer black, Stewart stood in a room with peculiar yellow-green walls. Sunlight and shadows streaked across the wall as in photography for high-end magazines such as *Architectural Digest*. An arrangement of budding branches stood on a small round table. The color and lighting, flowers, and costume created an ambiance that reinforced Stewart's identity as a decorator.

Stewart held a large art book that carried the authority of the cultural academy. As she spoke, the camera revealed a group of Blue Willow Ware plates hung on the wall behind her. Stewart demonstrated how to construct the display as she discussed the various plates in her collection. Close-up views of the plates alternated with views of Stewart hanging and arranging them.

Transcript: May 8, 2003, (05:03).

Decorating: Displaying a Collection of Willow Ware

(Stewart's dialogue is italicized. Each section is followed by commentary in Roman type. Ellipses indicate pauses.)

(1) Every March there is a fantastic antiques, decorative arts, uh jewelry, and painting fair in the Netherlands, in Maastricht. And this year I spent a couple days there looking at . . . just an amazing assortment of wonderful, wonderful objets d'art. And I saw a painting which inspired me to display a collection of Blue Willow in a very different and interesting way.

Stewart's opening remarks reassert her stance as a cultural insider with expert knowledge of European decorative art. Her status as a connoisseur is enhanced by attending cultural events such as the international art and antiques fair in Maastricht in the Netherlands, described on its website as the fair where:

Only the most illustrious of the world's art and antique dealers--nearly 200 eminent dealers from 13 countries--are invited to exhibit at TEFAF. These dealers bring to the Fair a wide range of exceptional and exquisite pieces of the very highest quality. TEFAF is also special because of the vetting process, which is second to none. Each piece is scrutinised for authenticity, quality and condition, by a team of over 130 international experts covering all specialities (TEFAF Maastricht, 2004).

Connoisseurship is an approach to art history that depends on familiarity with original works of art. The connoisseur develops an deep and intuitive understanding of art by studying original works that bear the physical evidence of the maker's hand. An original work of art emanates an aura of authenticity that the connoisseur comes to apprehend intuitively (Hebdige, 1996). "The written word cannot adequately convey what the trained sense discern in a flash without the mind being fully conscious of all the criteria involved" (Watney, 1964, p. 5)

In another sense connoisseurship is closely related to the notion of taste.

The connoisseur is popularly taken as a well-bred person who innately possesses the ability to distinguish good art from bad. "This class-based notion of taste as a 'discriminating' skill presents it as something that is natural to the connoisseur" (Sturken & Cartwright, 2001, p. 49). However, the connoisseur in fact develops taste by learning and internalizing culturally established criteria. In this segment Stewart demonstrates her commitment to the ongoing study of original works of art required by connoisseurship.

The selection of Blue Willow Ware as a topic establishes the saliency of European culture and importance of the European tradition in the decorative arts for the collector and decorator. Willow Ware has a history that echoes the mercantile expansion of the European powers into the far corners of the world.

The Dutch East India Company began to import Chinese and Japanese porcelain to Europe during the seventeenth century, and by the eighteenth century the Chinese style in decorative goods was all the rage. Chippendale made furniture in the Chinese mode, and blue and white porcelain became widely popular (Fisher, 1954; Watney, 1964).

Between 1650 and 1700 the potteries of Delft in Holland and Meissen in Germany discovered how to make blue and white painted porcelain in an approximation of the Chinese style. Blue and white ware demands particular materials, but is relatively simple to produce, requiring fewer firings in the kiln than other decorative techniques. The cobalt blue is applied as an underglaze and complements the pure white of the porcelain body. The blue and white porcelain produced in English potteries after about 1750 shows the influence of Oriental and Continental wares. The English Willow Pattern is attributed to Thomas Minton who worked at the Spode potteries after 1789. The densely figured Willow Pattern is very much a Western interpretation of Chinese motifs (Fisher, 1954; Watney, 1964).

The history of Willow Ware follows the emergence of factory production methods in English potteries. Hand-painted decorations began to be imitated by transfer printing that could be cheaply applied as piecework rather than expensively painted by a single artist. Printed Willow Ware was produced in the cheaper stoneware rather than porcelain for the mass market during the nineteenth century (Fisher, 1954; Watney, 1964).

Stewart is the dramatized narrator of the story of her experiences at Maastricht and subsequent reconstruction of the display. The narrative tells the story of Stewart's inspiration (or appropriation) and her creative deployment of this inspiration. The narrative of constructing the display provides a model for viewers to follow in assembling their own displays.

Stewart's enthusiastic responses to Maastricht indicate a cultivated aesthetic sensitivity: *an amazing assortment; wonderful, wonderful; it inspired me*. Her use of French (*objets d'art*) connotes membership in the cultural elite and reinforces the predominantly European heritage of high cultural objects. However, her warm response could also be characterized as feminine, emotional, and excessive--in a word, popular. Her enthusiasm resonates with her popular, and larger, audience.

Her implied familiarity with the European tradition of fine and applied art underwrites her authority. When Stewart correlates value with uniqueness (*very different and interesting*), she taps into a central Romantic notion about art and the artist (Eagleton, 1990; Hebdige, 1996). As she assesses the detail in the painting and judges it unique, she substantiates her own abilities of discrimination. Her inspiration connotes potential creative capacity, and she transforms an element of high culture as surely as any urban teenager might transform the meaning of a Burberry scarf (Hebdige, 1988). Stewart has appropriated a decorative detail from a seventeenth century Dutch interior for mass America.

(2) *When I travel I like to go to lots of museums, I like to go to fairs like Maastricht, and I really do look at as many different new things as possible.*

She reiterates her membership in the elite club of collectors and connoisseurs: *When I travel I like to go to lots of museums.* Maastricht was not a singular experience, but typical of her privileged lifestyle. Keeping up in her field reaffirms her credentials as an expert. Knowing about culture is her job, and she accomplishes this job with her well-known thoroughness: *look at as many different things as possible.* Stewart portrays thoroughness and attention to detail as the only possible way to accomplish a task, thereby reproducing socially valuable work habits.

(3) *Well, this is a new old thing. This was a painting that was also on display, with a mirror . . . shown hung very high on a wall, on a very extreme tilt, so that when you were . . . look at yourself, you'd see pretty much . . . our entire image. . . . very unlike the image you would get if the mirror were flat against the wall.*

After sifting through goods exhibited at the fair, Stewart selected something unique that she was privileged to notice: *this is a new old thing.* Making an old thing into a new thing is a recurrent Stewart theme and is the *raison d'être* of any tag sale enthusiast. Stewart frequently takes an object of questionable value (perhaps high, perhaps low) and makes it useful again. She makes it more valuable in the bargain, but the real value is retrieving the item for everyday use. In this instance, she is restoring an old technique or style of display to everyday use.

The viewer is shown the mirror detail as she interprets: *you'd see pretty much . . . your entire image. Very unlike the image you would get if the mirror were flat against the wall.* A detail the casual viewer might miss is identified as the most intriguing aspect of the painting. Her acuity of vision is proof of her refined aesthetic sensibility.

Stewart addresses the viewer with the pronoun *you*. Though this pronoun may be used for the impersonal third-person, Stewart seems to use the second person to address someone immediately present. Stewart gestures to indicate the height and position of the mirror to help the viewer feel what she had felt in front of the painting. She struggles to explain herself: *so that when you would . . . look at yourself, you'd see pretty much . . . your entire image*.

This special knowledge about the effect of the mirror was gleaned from her personal experience at Maastricht. She takes pains to distinguish it from normal experience: *Very unlike the image you would get if the mirror were flat against the wall*. Stewart asks the viewer to pay attention to how mirrors reflect images. In this case, the normal correspondence of scale has been altered by the angle of the mirror. Learning to look beyond the normal and expected is a central aspect of training in art and aesthetics. In order to see accurately and fully, the student of art and aesthetics must break the habit of letting the mind fill in perceptual gaps. Dispensing with cognitive shortcuts trains the eye to take in more information (Arnheim, 1964).

(4) *Well, there was a painting at the fair with an unusual display painted in the painting, probably from the 1700s, of Blue Willow . . . in an extraordinary display, like this. And I decided that I'd come back, and I'd try to recreate a similar kind of technique on the wall.*

Stewart reveals more information she alone was privy to: *Well, there was a painting at the fair*. The offhand *well* sets off the importance of the information. The painting she saw at Maastricht isn't in the reference book she shows the reader. She identifies the Blue Willow in the painting in the art book from her expertise as a collector: *probably from the 1700s, of Blue Willow*. Because she is creative, she will be able to use the image: *I'd try to recreate a similar kind of technique*. She testifies that she has successfully accomplished her plan by gesturing to the display she has created: *in an extraordinary display, like this*. She

has accomplished something extraordinary and shares in the success of the unnamed master of the Dutch interior.

(5) *The Blue Willow pattern was made in England, as far back as the late 1700s. Now each one of these plates is unique, and they all look very beautiful together.*

Stewart identifies the pattern and date for the viewer: *Blue Willow, made in England, as far back as the late 1700s*. As she checks the back of the plate, the camera moves up close and the camera angle shifts to Stewart's point of view looking squarely at the display. In earlier shots, the viewer saw the plates on the wall at an oblique angle behind her. The shift in angle enables the viewer to experience Stewart's action as she hangs the plates and to see the plates more accurately from Stewart's privileged vantage point.

Stewart establishes the aesthetic and financial value of the Blue Willow pieces: *each one of these plates is unique*, and asserts her aesthetic viewpoint: *they all look very beautiful together*.

(6) *And once you take all the numbers off . . . and the numbers are here, only here for the plan of the way that we're going to display the plates.*

She reveals that even hanging plates on a wall requires a technique: *the plan of the way that we're going to display the plates*. Stewart uses the plural pronoun *we* for the first time. From this point on, Stewart and viewer create the display together. Sometimes the plural pronoun is a sort of royal *we* denoting Stewart and her staff, but in this conversation the *we* helps establish the viewer's complicity and participation. This use of the *we* frames the activity as a collaboration between producer and subject.

(7) *I laid all the plates down on a table . . . kept sort of . . . moving them around, just to see how the display would look. And then I took a Polaroid. And this really helps you get an idea. And then I number each of the plates. The measurements can be taken, and then you can put your hooks . . . into the wall, according to your measurements. And*

you begin by hanging the center plate.

Stewart reveals her logical solution of arranging the plates before hanging them up: *I laid all the plates down on a table.* But this physical process involves a design phase, and this requires an eye: *just to see how the display would look.* Creative activity can be a mysterious process where inspiration and genius prevail over logic and method. Designing the display was mysterious and chaotic until Stewart established control: *And then I took a Polaroid. And this really helps you get an idea.* As a representation of reality, the photographic image creates the distance that enables reflection and aesthetic judgment. The photograph transforms the three-dimensional world into a graphically succinct image. The creative process requires finding ways to see the composition with a fresh eye. Artists look at a work in progress in a mirror or out of the corner of the eye in an attempt to circumvent their habituated perception of it. The change in scale inherent to photography provides a new perspective.

Once the puzzle of the design has been solved, the practical task of hanging the plates on the wall moves forward. The orderliness wrested from the chaos of possibility is maintained: *And then I number each of the plates.* The process is now rational and methodical: *The measurements can be taken . . . put your hooks . . . into the wall according to your measurements.*

(8) This very beautiful large plate is really extraordinary. And it is the focal point of this display. And then you hang . . . the other plates all the way around it.

(9) So I'll start with number two because of . . . you can see this one overlaps this plate, this also overlaps number 12. Number 12 overlaps . . . the center. And number 10 and number 11.

A languorous close-up of the large central plate lets the viewer assimilate its quality. As the camera moves slowly across the pieces, the eye has time to wander around the image. (Although connoisseurship is built up by extensive

direct exposure to art, vicarious electronic experiences may have to do for Stewart's viewers.) The aesthetic (and possibly monetary) value of the large plate is indicated by its centrality: *And it is the focal point of this display*. Stewart ignores its history, but notes its aesthetic quality: *really extraordinary*. Stewart methodically demonstrates the process of building up the display: *this also overlaps number 12*. Overlapping blurs the boundaries between the objects and helps to unify the elements into a whole.

(10) *And these are those expandable hangers that you can get at a good hardware store.*

Tools are the mark of a professional, and Stewart always recommends the proper tool for a job. Here the tool is the hardware on the back of the plate: *those expandable hangers*. The professional requires a quality tool: *you can get at a good hardware store*. Good means professional.

(11) *And now this plate is Giraffe and Camel, 1815. So you wouldn't want to really be using this to eat on, on a regular basis. And here's the giraffe, and here's the camel, uh, here is the Blue Willow . . . right . . . on this plate. Now make sure you get on . . . the hook . . . there. And that goes right there. Now it's leaning / but we'll fix that when we get . . . number three . . . on the wall.*

The viewer sees the identifying markings on the back of the plate as she names it: *this plate is Giraffe and Camel, 1815*. Stewart makes a snobbish little joke that indicates the plate's value: *So you wouldn't want to really be using this to eat on, on a regular basis*. Its value as an antique transcends its practical value. The little word *so* reveals her horror that someone might actually eat scrambled eggs from an 1815 plate. Stewart appears to patronize the viewer, but by making a joke elevates the viewer to the status of a colleague who knows better. The hands-off attitude, however, reflects the middle-class sanctification of valued objects (Bayley, 1991; Madigan & Munro, 1996).

Details are pointed out for the viewer: *here's the giraffe, and here's the camel,*

uh, here is the Blue Willow. The *uh* lends a tentative or distracted tone, but may merely signify her passion for the task. As she gives directions, her physical absorption with the task breaks the flow of her speech. She uses the rhetorical *we* to reassure the viewer that she's not sloppy: *we'll fix that when we get.* The problem is under control because there is a designated time to deal with it: *when we get . . . number three . . . on the wall.* Chaos will be overcome by the construction of order through a rational process.

(12) *Now this is Chinese Flag Bearer, and you can see . . . the little figures going across the bridge, bearing flags. Now this was uh about 1820. Again, a rare antique and something that probably should be displayed rather than used on a daily basis in the kitchen.*

Again, the viewer is given a close look as Stewart flips the plate to its front and points out the naming feature: *Chinese Flag Bearer.* Her descriptions are cursory at this point; she merely names the figures and actions. (Every segment on *MSL* runs against the clock, and Stewart is careful to accomplish her task within the confines of the network's schedule.) She is vague about the dating: *Now this was, uh, about 1820.* Again, she emphasizes monetary value: *a rare antique.* This value outweighs any possible use it could have for its owner: *should be displayed rather than used.* With this plate the stronger prescriptive *should* is used rather than *would*. Not using this plate is not really a matter of choice. Her absorption connotes the calamity a broken plate would be.

(13) *Number four . . . ah, what a beautiful plate this is, this is 1800. And it's blind engraved. It is pearl ware, and it is just a very beautiful scene, very clear and crisp. And this can get put, uh, underneath these two plates . . . this one goes . . . under . . . there. You can adjust to see what's, what's going to overlap which way. Let me try to just hang it straight so the design is straight.*

Craftsmanship and economics are trumped by aesthetics in the *ah* with

which she greets plate number four: *ah, what a beautiful plates this is, this is 1800.* The repetition of this is denotes her state of abstracted contemplation of beauty. There's no confusion about the date. She responds to the object almost in surprise: *And it's blind engraved.* But she recognizes the piece: *it is pearl ware.* Her aesthetic approval is emphatic: *it is just a very beautiful scene.* She presents the criteria for evaluating line quality: *very clear and crisp.* The glazing process softens painted lines, and so a badly glazed piece is blurry. The clarity of the lines adds aesthetic and monetary value.

The task requires her active attention all the way through. Decisions must still be made at this point in the process: *You can adjust to see what's, what's going to overlap which way.* The will to order reasserts itself: *Let me try to just hang it straight.* Overlapping is one thing, but the design must be seen properly.

(14) *And Number 5 . . . is Spode, 1795, even earlier. Wow, this is a fantastic one. Very deep cobalt blue, very wonderful plate. Now this can just . . . be hung . . . overlapping.*

The connoisseur identifies the next piece: *Spode, 1795, even earlier.* Her intense reaction might be to the date and probable value of the antique: *Wow, this is a fantastic one.* Yet her response to the color signifies the dominance of aesthetic criteria in her assessment: *Very deep cobalt blue, very wonderful plate.*

(15) *And the last plate in this particular design is a lighter cobalt blue called Curling Palms. And here are the Curling Palms. How charming they are. And this goes . . . right here.*

She is so absorbed with color that she does not even date the last piece: *a lighter cobalt blue called Curling Palms.* Her tone of voice emphasizes her fondness for the piece as she identifies its naming feature: *And here are the Curling Palms. How charming they are.* Charming is probably not an adjective a causal observer would use to describe a painted palm tree. Collecting is a source of pleasure for the connoisseur and collector. Stewart's pleasure in viewing (and doubtless

owning and handling) these objects is apparent, and aesthetic appreciation is closely linked to sensory pleasure (Bayley, 1991). This enthusiasm and pleasure in the artifacts of high culture has traditionally been the province of the aesthete. However, Foucault noted that the modern self views itself as complex and elaborated (Foucault, 1984b). This elaboration of the self requires the heightened consciousness cultivated by aesthetic practices. The ability to contemplate the self requires aesthetic distance.

(16) *So now these look . . . very good. I think I can . . . take off my markers. The ubiquitous and very useful Post-It.*

As Stewart pulls the remaining markers off the plates on the wall, she reaffirms her authority and expertise as a decorator: *So now these look . . . very good*. Professional tools come in many form, and product names are casually used throughout MSL. In some cases, the viewer is directed to the source of particular products, often supplies for crafts activities. Although Stewart also directs viewers to the MSL website, it is usually to get specific information like a recipe. Once at the website, however, there is always the opportunity to buy MSLO products.

(17) *A display like this . . . really catches your eye. This is . . . a real expressive way to hang a fine collection. Well, I hope it'll inspire you to take your collectibles out of hiding, out of those cupboards, out of those closets and show them off in a way that can be considered . . . very artful, in itself.*

Stewart recognizes that the social function of display is to attract attention: *really catches your eye*. Those who see this will be doubly impressed by the collection and how it's shown. She also points out display's more private function: *a real expressive way*. The vernacular use of *real* as an adverb recalls everyday speech.

Decorating is a means of self-expression as well as a way to enhance social

status by the appearance of the home (Collins, 1992; Madigan & Munro, 1996). A strong aesthetic sense fuels creative activity and hence self-fulfillment. Stewart urges the viewer to act: *I hope it'll inspire you to take your collectibles out of hiding.* The discourse in the Willow Ware narrative is argumentative, aimed at changing behavior even when not exhorting the viewer directly.

Discussion. Collectibles run the gamut from antiques to matchbooks, and collecting is a popular leisure activity that crosses social boundaries. However, the activity of collecting is a major site for the cultivation of class-derived aesthetic standards. A collection is heavily invested with self. Each object is an expression of personal taste and displaying a collection exposes the self as well. In showing how to display a collection, Stewart prods the viewer to reveal the self reflected in personal taste. By valorizing high culture, or traditional forms of European art, she frames taste within that tradition. The aesthetic of elegant simplicity reflects the taste of the classes that have defined high culture.

In terms of aesthetic education, the viewer has been shown how to evaluate and revise a composition by establishing distance. The viewer has been shown how to assemble objects into a sculptural unity by overlapping. The eye of the budding connoisseur has been developed by exposure to objects of established aesthetic value.

Stewart has of course endorsed her own design, but has also promised a successful outcome to the viewer's future attempts: *very artful, in itself.*

Interpretation. The overarching narrative of *MSL* involves the aestheticization of everyday life that refines the subject's ability to experience pleasure in beauty. Aesthetic discriminations produce pleasure in physical and emotional dimensions by enhancing sensory perceptions.

Despite the massification of culture through populist exhibitions, the institutions of high culture continue to canonize upper-class tastes. The

museums and symphony orchestras established in the early 20th century by wealthy benefactors continue to rely on upper-class patronage. Today's benefactors may be corporate rather than individual, but still represent upper-class wealth. Collecting has traditionally been a past-time or occupation for the wealthy. When the heir to the Johnson & Johnson fortune was seeking a career, his father suggested collecting historical documents and maps (Johnson, 2003). However, *The Antiques Roadshow* on PBS has demonstrated the popularity of collecting with a mass audience.

Collecting is a regular topic on *MSL*, and antique dealers or collectors share their expertise. Stewart's personal collections focus on goods for the table, such as Willow Ware plates, but she has also recognized the more mundane side of collecting. One segment focused on holiday collections of sea shells and samples of sand while another focused on a collection of vintage aprons. The major value of such personal collections may be nostalgic, but Stewart grants them an aesthetic status independent of financial or nostalgic value. By recognizing the validity of these collections as collections, Stewart valorizes the role of personal taste in collecting: "What's aesthetically pleasing to you is what you should be thinking about" (Stewart, 2003, May 5). The authority of the individual is asserted as the same time the individual is told what to do.

Stewart collects tag-sale items as well as antiques. The reused tag-sale object combines the virtue of thriftiness with the thrill of treasure hunting. When Stewart displays a collection of tag sale treasures, low income women can read a validation of what they have done through necessity (Taylor, 2002), but affluent women can respond to the chic of vintage goods.

The act of selection can transform a used-up, mass-produced reject into an art object. In this essentially surrealist aesthetic, the act of selection transforms (and consecrates) the mundane into art. By restoring or adapting a discarded or

undervalued object, the collector creates art.

Willow Ware plates have a respectable place in the hierarchy of collectibles. The presence of antiques in a household traditionally indicated inherited wealth. Antique objects displayed the patina that testified to generations of use. Patina signified the duration of family in a society that valued honor and lineage over other class discriminators (Bayley, 1991; Lloyd Jones, 1991). Although to be called a *nouveau riche* is less disparaging than it was a hundred years ago, old money continues to be marbled with a social power that new money lacks. Antiques and collectibles are both economic and cultural capital. As cultural capital, these objects reflect a socially-situated level of taste (Bourdieu, 1984). As economic capital, they are bald evidence of wealth.

Collectible objects and antiques frequently predate mass production and provide a link to artisanal society. *MSL* promotes modern day artisans who use traditional techniques, implicitly valorizing early or pre-industrial manufacturing methods. The artisanal and entrepreneurial businesses *MSL* highlights often trade in nostalgia if not in pre-industrial manufacturing. (One woman decorated hangers for baby clothes with images from children's books of the 1920s and 1930s.) As a rhetorical device, nostalgia is an emotional route to the idealized past that resonates strongly with popular culture. (Aristotle himself stressed the necessity of using an emotional argument with the masses.)

The cultivation of nostalgia helps bind viewers to Stewart's idealized world of gracious living. When her third line of Signature furniture line was unveiled, a New York Times review noted that: "Martha Stewart weighs in with a new line of nostalgia" (McKee, 2003, October 23). Consumer response to her furniture has provided a bright spot in the *MSLO* balance sheets.

Evaluation. The knowledge that Stewart doles out has a dual nature. On one hand, it provides logical, itemized instructions for accomplishing a task. On

the other, it is intuitive, nebulous, and subjective. Stewart cannot explain why flowers bunched one way look better than flowers bunched another way, but she has a preference defined as better. Aesthetic knowledge enhances the ability of cultural initiates to make distinctions. These subjective distinctions have objective consequences, such as defining who is one of us and who isn't.

That the subject makes minute distinctions is especially important for those who have something to sell. Manufacturing the ability to make arbitrary distinctions about objects is a powerful force that increases desire for commodified goods (Rouse, 1995). Stewart herself provides the constant proof that making aesthetic discriminations is meaningful, valuable, and rewarding. If Stewart weren't out there telling 35 million people a day that "a functional, casual, and yet refreshingly beautiful lifestyle" (Stewart, 2003, May 28) is necessary for everyday life, some corporation would have to invent her.

Crafts: How to Decorate a Votive Candle

Stewart revealed herself to be a woman with a mission when she discussed her interactions with fans with Morley Safer on *60 Minutes*:

Safer: Is there something almost evangelical about what you're doing?

Stewart: I don't want to be an evangelist, you know? I don't want to be--I think of myself more as a pilgrim, going out, discovering, setting roots, feeding, growing. The word I'm looking for is--is improve, to think about them--themselves in a better way. You know, there's a lot of lack of self-confidence around, a lot of . . .

Safer: Not in this house.

Stewart: No, a lot of lack of self-fulfillment. A lot of people live through their lives and are never fulfilled (Safer, 2003).

Where the role of evangelist connotes patriarchal sermonizing, judging, and moralizing (Elmer Gantry and Pat Robertson spring to mind), the role of the pilgrim is receptive, nurturing, and female. The pilgrim connotes a quest for harmony with the natural world. The evangelist exhorts the listener to adopt a creed, but the pilgrim nurtures what grows within. Stewart continued by saying,

"The word I'm looking for is--is improve, to think about them-- themselves in a better way" (Safer, 2003). One way Stewart works to improve self-esteem is through traditional feminine handwork and crafts.

Although crafts comprised only about 15% of the total programming in my sample, they were of considerable variety. My definition of crafts excluded major furniture restoration or carpentry projects but included the traditional, feminine, quasi-artistic activities that a nineteenth century domestic advisor could recognize (*Enquire Within Upon Everything*, 1856/1978). For instance, the *MSL* magazine showed how to make a pine cone picture frame that was similar to a project from Catharine Beecher a century earlier (Leavitt, 2001). The difference between a craft and a project on *MSL* is a matter of scale, but both develop skills with materials. Remodeling a cabinet is clearly a project, while hot-gluing marbles onto push pins is merely a craft.

Crafts usually are done in Stewart's dedicated crafts room with its wall devoted to storage. (This vision cashes in on the American housewife's omnipresent lust for storage.) A professional florist's refrigerator stands to the right. A cutting mat, glass cylinders, scissors, paper, glue, and a live fern stood ready for making fern votives. This activity was officially labeled a Good Thing.

The analysis of this segment utilized the Scene Function Model developed by Porter, Larson, Harthcock, & Nellis (2002). In this model kernel scenes affect story events, while satellite scenes are discursive and add depth and texture.

Transcript: May 23, 2003, (3:22). Crafts: Making a Fern Votive Candle.

(Dialogue is italicized. Each section is followed by commentary in Roman type. Ellipses indicate pauses. This segment was introduced by the announcer and graphic titles.)

Video: Overhead view of crafts supplies arranged on a large table.

Super: Good Thing. Super: Revlon.

(1) *Announcer VO: This portion of Martha Stewart Living is brought to you by Revlon.*

Sponsors are rarely mentioned on MSL, but some activities have special sponsors that are identified by a super and announcer copy. Activities are not generally identified by title. The sponsorship of this segments indicates the importance of crafts in the program hierarchy. (The announcer's voice additionally alerts the viewer to the new segment, but then is heard no more.)

(2) *MS: There. We've been trying to think of some really beautiful candles for our fern decorations for the party, and these are votive candles. All different sizes of glass cylinders, covered with rice paper, over a real fern leaf. And you have a really pretty array of lights. And I'll show you how to cover them.*

The use of the corporate *we* implies that MSL is comprised of many talented, creative people, a resource that adds to Stewart's stature as founder and head of MSL. The plural also calls upon the viewer to identify with Stewart as a surrogate self.

This kernel scene states the disturbance: *trying to think of some really beautiful candles*. Kernel scenes determine the path of action. In this case, the solution of the fern votives determines the subsequent action creating them.

(3) *Just take a cylinder like this, very inexpensive at flower supply stores. Measure the circumference. And this one . . . measures . . . twelve and a half around, so cut your piece of paper . . . about thirteen inches. And also the right height from . . . table top to . . . rim is just a little bit less than six inches. And that's what we've done. We've cut a rectangle of paper.*

The second kernel scene is an obstacle to the action, in this case to making the fern votives. Here the obstacle of finding the raw materials has already been overcome. The physical obstacle in the second scene is fitting the paper to the glass cylinder. Luckily, there is a tape measure and scissors. The problem has been solved at the end of the scene: *We've cut a rectangle of paper.*

(4) *And now we want to place this really beautiful fern . . . and the pretty part of the fern should be down . . . that's the right side of the fern, should be face down. Just center it or place it. And we have this great vellum tape.*

The third kernel scene presents a complication. Here, the complication is merely how to attach the fern to the paper. The introduction of the tape is a clue that this complication will be easily solved: *great vellum tape*. MSL is dedicated to simple solutions.

(5) *This is something that if you haven't used, you should try it. Uh, just put a piece of the vellum tape . . . on your paper . . . like that. And the way this works is . . . now pull . . . the paper . . . up and what's left is some sticky . . . right . . . on the surface. That sticky is what's going to hold the fern in place. And you don't have to press very hard . . . to keep it there. Just place it . . . like that, and there, it's, it will stay.*

The confrontation between two possible outcomes—success or failure—in this fourth kernel scene is resolved by the appearance of the sticky tape. This tape is a lifesaver that everyone should know about: *you should try it*. Even the simplest technology is presented as a wonderful solution, and Stewart's knowledge of it is evidence of her expertise in all things domestic.

(6) *Now the same sticky vellum . . . tape . . . should be placed down . . . this side . . . and just cut it off. And now put another piece of vellum tape on this side. Now trim . . . right off at the top. . . . And we want to pull this off here.*

This scene affirms the relationship between the sticky tape and the glass cylinder and so functions as a sort of satellite scene. The tape is useful in more than one place. The proper procedure for using this special tape is reiterated.

(7) *And you want to start . . . by placing this right . . . nice and perpendicular. You want to take the paper . . . around the cylinder. And now pull off this tape . . . and press . . . this in place. You can use a bone folder to make sure that your seal is secure.*

The fifth kernel scene of narrative is crisis. This narrative only marginally

has a crisis, but the effect would certainly be ruined if the paper didn't adhere to the cylinder. Another crisis would occur if the paper were not affixed vertically. That lack of attention to detail would result in an imperfect votive. The use of the bone folder will ensure that the sticky tape will work as intended: *make sure that your seal is secure*. Aligning the paper takes a modicum of skill.

(8) *And there you have . . . yet another . . . votive candle. And I think I can light that one. [Music up] Candles that follow a theme will light up any table. A fern votive like these is a Good Thing.*

The sixth and final kernel scene provides resolution. Stewart lights the candle to display the successfully completed votive, and the scene cuts to the dining to show the completed buffet table for the party. All the elements are harmoniously coordinated: glowing fern votives, fern napkins, cutlery tied up with green ribbon, attractive food, and a fern-lined centerpiece. Stewart gives the project her seal of approval: *a Good Thing*.

Discussion. This activity requires no manual skills, not even the ability to decide how hard to pound a fern onto a linen napkin: "Pound gently but firmly. You can hit too hard and really squash it," she advised in the napkin segment (Stewart, 2003, May 23). What might seem the critical aesthetic moment--the placement of the fern on the paper--is glossed over.

The difficult aesthetic question concerned the overall design of the party. The entire episode demonstrated how to organize an event around a decorative theme. The votives are part of a process that establishes a sort of Diderot unity for the event. Stewart printed linen napkins with fern fronds, decorated votive candles with ferns, and arranged a centerpiece of ferns and flowers for the table. This sort of labor-intensive activity is the stuff of parody, but even these simple activities valorize an aesthetic and industrious approach to the everyday.

Crafts are usually simple activities like gluing buttons on push pins,

constructing a paper pansy for a Mother's Day card, printing on notepaper with an ear of corn, scanning a damask napkin to print out wrapping paper, or making a child's pillow with button-on letters. These tasks mainly require patience, but also develop tactile skills and aesthetic sensibility. More importantly, these projects develop tractable workers who can follow directions.

Stewart is the narrator throughout this scene and, as the principal character, performs and describes the action. The story stands alone, but is part of an ongoing series of similar activities. As narrator, Stewart knows everything there is to know on the subject and is prepared with the right tools and supplies.

A fern votive is a marginal means of self-expression but presents a viable alternative to purchasing more expensive decorations (Taylor, 2002). That the project is simple contributes to its therapeutic value. Since it is virtually foolproof, it is likely to yield a positive experience for the novice craftsperson. The steps of the activity are presented with the utmost seriousness: the careful close-ups of peeling away the tape, measuring the cylinder, smoothing down the seam with the bone folder. This seriousness anoints the ritualistic activity, each step a station on the pilgrim's road to self-knowledge.

Such activities constitute a fourth subject position, the subject as a creator. Though the creative level may be banal, any act of creation has personal value, and the viewer is prepared for more complex challenges. Rather than buy decorations, the viewer learns to make them. The how-to genre sends the viewer back into the objective world.

Interpretation and Evaluation. The discourses of self-fulfillment have occupied mass media since the 1960s, but self-fulfillment and self-improvement are essentially middle-class luxuries. A level of comfort precedes concern with self-fulfillment. Many women who opt out of corporate careers for a more fulfilling life at home are well-educated and well-heeled (Belkin, 2003). Self-

fulfillment through career was part the feminist mission, but women's' return to the domestic sphere does not advance their collective cause.

Although commercial television maintains otherwise, money doesn't buy happiness. The young and wealthy also struggle with self-worth and self-image. As the Johnson & Johnson heir stated in his documentary: "There're no courses in college about how to be a hardworking and productive rich person . . . it's something you've got to figure out for yourself" (Johnson, 2003).

MSL offers a compendium of genteel handicrafts that take hard work and deliver a sense of accomplishment. Concern with self-fulfillment has taken Stewart into the territory of Oprah and talk television, but down a different path. Where talk television operates as a sort of public confessional or psychotherapy session, Stewart favors getting on with the job. If self-confidence is weak, the antidote is to build it up through accomplishments.

Self-worth is empowered subjectivity. Self-worth or self-confidence is a sense of personal capability which derives from access to the power to influence the external world. Class position and thus prior experience heavily affect the individual's sense of capability. Those privileged by class have experienced and thus come to expect a positive response to their efforts that conditions the nature of those efforts. Class determines the distance between expectation and a positive outcome to that expectation (Rouse, 1995).

Postmodern theory has taken a hopeful view of the formation of identity within the matrix of power relations. From this perspective, identities are more chosen than determined by class. Foucault rejected the idea that identity merely expresses an individual's innate, immutable core. Instead, identity is a discourse in which the individual speaks to and about the self, and the self interacts with the self. In this discourse the subject struggles against the identity imposed by external forms of authority (Foucault, 1982).

However, the limitations imposed by economic inequality cannot be ignored, nor can the weighting of media discourses toward consumerist forms of identity be discounted.

Cooking: Making Strawberry Ice Cream Cones with Alice Waters

Despite a century of tumultuous change, women are still frequently found in the kitchen. Martha Stewart and Alice Waters have made successful careers out of this aspect of traditional domesticity. Each prepares and presents food in an innovative and public manner. Each is an expert in her own realm, but their social contexts are distinct. Stewart's expertise is constantly being constructed and renewed by her interactions with experts and authorities. Her credibility derives in part from the exhibition of her connections to these experts.

Alice Waters operates in a different sphere of the food cult than Stewart. This sphere has a political dimension less related to domesticity than to big business. Both women are successful entrepreneurs, and their encounter is part of MSL's ongoing endorsement of entrepreneurial activity.

Transcript: June 18, 2003, (06:42).

Cooking: Making Strawberry Ice Cream Cones with Alice Waters

(Note: *M* is Martha Stewart. *A* is Alice Waters. Their dialogue is italicized, and a bracket indicates overlapping dialogue. Commentary follows in Roman type.)

(1) *M* Last year . . . we got a plane . . . on a Sunday morning and flew out to California to Alice Water's fabulous fabulous thirtieth anniversary party for Chez Panisse, her delightful . . . and legendary restaurant in Berkeley, California. There was lot of amazing food. There was . . . were a lot of amazing people. *A* Uh-huh.

Stewart tells a little story to introduce Alice Waters and establish the context of her famous restaurant. This story simultaneously establishes her own membership in Waters' circle. Stewart's use of the plural *we* implies a celebrity's

entourage. Flying to California for a party is nothing for a jet-setter like Stewart who is enhanced by her associates: *There were a lot of amazing people.*

(2) *M I got to sit with . . . George Lucas. And I got to sit with Peter Coyote. . . . And Alice Waters of course and her family. Got to meet your mom and your dad. Tables like this . . . that looked as if it came out of nineteenth century France. And look! Lamb after lamb after lamb. Many grills.*

A [Twenty spit roasts.]

Although Stewart is a celebrity, she appears star-struck. She name-drops and lets viewers know her stature as a guest. Seating arrangements connote status even in a democratic society. Stewart idealizes a gracious and cultivated past with France as the gold standard: *as if it came out of nineteenth century France.* The lavish scale of the feast matches Stewart's standard of opulent entertaining: *And look! Lamb after lamb after lamb.*

(3) *M Twenty! And they were delicious. Oh, it was just delicious. And the beautiful breads baked by . . . ? A Steve Sullivan. M So incredibly beautiful.*

A And that would be Anthony who made mulberry ice cream cones.

M In mini-cones that were homemade by Alice . . . and her . . . staff. . . .

Stewart shares photos of the bread and the cones from her visit with the viewer. Successful, powerful women like Stewart and Waters have staff and an organization behind them as would any man in their position.

(4) *M And today Alice is here with just a plethora of gorgeous fruits. . . . And she's going to make us a strawberry ice cream because strawberries are in season in California, and she brought them with her on the plane. . . . And crispy crunchy sugary ice cream cones.*

Visually appealing food lavishly displayed permeates MSL media. Stewart's own catering business reputedly took off because of the sumptuous presentations that picked up on the theme of abundance in the American myth.

The image of careless abundance continues in her current presentations of food and other goods. Waters's success and appeal is also linked to abundance: *a plethora of gorgeous fruits*. By noting that the berries were in season, Stewart both preempts and supports Waters' philosophy of using local and seasonal foods. Stewart sensually enjoys the sounds of the words that describe eating: *crispy crunchy sugary ice cream cones*.

(5) A *This is about three baskets . . . worth of strawberries . . . that are organically grown*

M *[um I just want to show them how red these are, what a real strawberry looks like. Not white inside. Red through and through.*

A *It's a good variety . . . but it was also picked when it was dead ripe.*

Cooking with real food (local, sustainable, and seasonal food) is not yet common in mainstream culture, but making it so is Alice Waters's personal mission. Stewart agrees that seasonality is important for food quality, but her interruption also emphasizes her own expertise.

The relations between these two powerful women is a constant assertion of dominance through particular knowledge, a sort of information one-upmanship. Waters reasserts herself by revealing secret knowledge of when the, the berries were picked. Her philosophy of food insists on the fulfillment of natural cycles: *it was dead ripe*. Stewart's interruption reasserts her importance as host and interpreter of the guest for the viewer.

(7) A *Now I'm going to put in less sugar than the recipe calls for because . . .*

M *[So you're putting in half a cup instead of three-quarters.*

A *Instead of three quarters. Then I can always add a little extra. I'm putting . . . not so . . . much water in either. Because . . . it's so dependent . . . on . . . the, uh, juiciness of the fruit . . . and the sweetness of the fruit. . . . And then I'm just going to puree. . . . And that's it. M And look at that great color.*

Waters celebrates the flavor that develops through the natural cycle of growth: *it's so dependent*. Her language describes the voluptuous experience of food: *juiciness . . . sweetness*. Waters' creative approach stresses the simplicity of effort that results from alignment and harmony with the natural world: *I'm just going to puree. . . . And that's it*. She doesn't have to do much with the perfect ingredients. Stewart's reaction promises a similar pleasure in the natural to the viewer who pays attention and uses the senses: *And look at that great color*.

(8) A *And then . . . some juice from this . . . sweet Meyer lemon. . . . Just a little bit of juice in there.* M *Um, tastes good*

Sweetness can come from unexpected sources like lemons. The novice cook (or artist) must venture beyond what is familiar and expected. Stewart is the surrogate risk taker who confirms that what should be sour is indeed sweet.

(9) A *We'll stir it around and see whether it wants to have any more sugar. . . .*

What do you think?

M *I wouldn't.* A *I wouldn't either.*

M *Delish.* A *That's good.*

Waters, the reigning queen of the real food movement, graciously includes her host and credits Stewart's powers of discrimination: *What do you think?* Waters switches to the plural pronoun *we* that indicates her professional and pedagogic persona and also includes Stewart, her cohort in this activity. Waters credits the food with human impulses and desires: *whether it wants to have any more sugar*. The food itself is a living character in Waters's creation.

Waters swiftly verifies Stewart's judgment with her own. Stewart has just passed a little test and uses an uncharacteristically breezy adjective: *Delish*.

(10) M *Now . . .*

A *Now, we're going to get the ice cream . . . maker out of the freezer.*

M *OK. How do you like using the, um, the Genevieve?*

A I love using this, um, this machine because it's not electric . . .

M (laughs) [Right.

A OK. M . . . blades.

A . . . but it, it has this insert . . . and you just put that in . . . the freezer . . . overnight.

Stewart is simultaneously a part of the production staff and a character . Here she displays the producer's sense of schedule and sets the pace as she often does with guest chefs. Waters responds to the prompt with a plan of action. The playing field between them stays equal.

The feminine name of the ice cream maker, the Genevieve, indicates that the mysteries of food are the province of women. But the masculine attempts to insert the soul-destroying forces of technology into this realm. Waters hesitates even to use the word machine: *this, um, this machine because it's not electric*. Technology is suspect and alien to the feminine perspective.

The rise of modernism reflected the emerging dominance of science, technology and rationality and established a masculine cultural paradigm. The aesthetic derived from architectural modernism was applied to the design of the material environment and increasingly marginalized feminine tastes which were held responsible for the decorative excesses of the Victorian interior.

However, earlier reform efforts led by Ruskin and the Arts and Crafts movement in the late nineteenth century ultimately held capitalism itself responsible for the decline of aesthetic standards. The alienation of the worker diminished the aesthetic sensibility. Despite this, Ruskin's arena for reform remained in the drawing room, and feminine tastes were discounted. Instead, the rules of good design were applied in the production process and were closely allied to function. The aesthetic of the material environment increasingly became the province of designers guided by rational criteria. As the notion of the rational household took hold in the early part of the twentieth century, principles

of standardization, efficiency, and utility overshadowed feminine criteria such as taste, irrationality, and beauty in the household (Sparke, 1995).

(11) *M* Generally we just put that in, I mean, this, this . . .

A [Exactly, exactly.

M My freezer has several of these *A* Yeah.

M They're ready . . . to go if . . . you want to make ice cream.

Waters kindly rescues Stewart from a rare loss of words. Stewart has been so busy asserting herself that she forgets what she's saying: *I mean, this, this . . .* Making life easier is one of Stewart's major themes and is accomplished by various time-management techniques. In her role as a pilgrim and teacher Stewart seeks to simplify and clarify everyday life for the viewer. Although she had to learn things the hard way, everyone can benefit from her discoveries. Everyday life in the kitchen is made easier by advance preparation: *They're ready . . . to go*. Waters appears unimpressed: *Yeah*.

(12) *A* Then all you do is you pour this in . . .

M [And you have just the perfect amount.

For initiates of the feminine way, creation is easy: *all you do is*. Perfection comes instinctive behavior. For Stewart and her working-class roots, excess is never perfect, and waste brings chaos: *just the perfect amount*.

(13) *A* . . . and a little miracle happens. Stir it from time to time. . . . And in twenty minutes . . . it's made. *M* Great.

As the archetypal earth mother, Waters calls a spade a spade. That food cooks, ice freezes, or berries ripen is a mystery: *a little miracle happens*. The natural world is the realm of the sublime, a world beyond human understanding (empirical science notwithstanding.)

(14) *A* We're going to . . . do . . . these little ice cream cones.

M I just love how you have them standing in sugar.

The first phase of the project has been accomplished, and the scene is moved to the other end of the kitchen counter for the baking of the cones. Stewart acknowledges Waters's sensibility in which the practical is aligned with the beautiful: *I just love how you have them standing in sugar.*

(15) *A* *If you would . . . like to do the beautiful eggs.*

M *How many would you like?* *A* *Two.* *M* *OK.*

A *Just the whites. And I . . . just love . . . the colors . . . of these . . .*

M *Um.* *A* . . . *Araucana chicken eggs.*

M *And the chickens have been very generous lately.*

A *[Ahhhhhh . . . have they?*

M *Oh yes, they've been laying like crazy lately.*

Courtesy traditionally indexes class position. The romantic Waters is in awe of the natural world: *the beautiful eggs*. The egg as a symbol of generative power reaches back to the earliest cosmologies. Stewart as handmaiden, sister, and hostess responds in the same tone. The elite of the food world appreciate the pleasures of the rare and extraordinary.

As cooks and gardeners Stewart and Waters are aligned to the natural cycles of seasons and growth. The natural world still runs wild, and chickens lay at their own discretion: *the chickens have been very generous lately*. The berries were gathered in harmony with their season, when their essential nature was fulfilled. The natural world is not yet completely commodified in the realm of gardens and foods. The viewer is directed from the world of images to that known through direct experience, through sensory participation.

(16) *A* *And then . . .*

M *[And here we are using that old-fashioned eggbeater, which I love.*

A *This is the one . . . that I grew up on.*

M *Yes, I did too.* *A* *Um.*

M Alice and I both grew up in New Jersey. It's the Garden State, Alice.

(A laughs.) I think that's why Alice and I love gardening and produce from the garden so very much.

During the making of the sorbet, Stewart watched and fetched equipment for Waters. In this batter making phase, she is given a task of her own. The *we* denotes their common enterprise even though only Waters is actually using the eggbeater: *And here we are using that old-fashioned eggbeater.* We the professionals may use this archaic appliance, but the reaction is individual: *which I love.* Once again, an earlier and less technological time is valorized. Here the celebrity chef doesn't use the whisk associated with gourmet cooking, but clings to the tools that harmonizes with her own nature and origins: *the one . . . that I grew up on.* Stewart frequently uses a whisk for cooking, but here she acknowledges her own history with the tool: *I did too.* She may well have used a crank eggbeater years ago in Nutley. Stewart establishes a common geographical origin that bonds further with Waters: *Alice and I both grew up in New Jersey.*

(17) A Um . . . when it's almost beaten here. . . you want to add a tablespoon of . . . confectioner's sugar. . . and a little pinch of salt. And just a quarter, quarter, a little capful, half a capful . . .

M [Of vanilla extract.

Waters addresses the viewer directly and poses the instruction as the viewer's own desire: *you want to add.* This rhetorical device invites complicity. Also, this language allows the viewer to participate more directly in what is happening in the kitchen. Desire is cultivated not only for the product, but for participation in creating the product, for being in that on-screen life.

(18) A And now I'm going to continue until it's in stiff peaks. Now once it's in stiff peaks . . . you want to add . . . um the confectioner's sugar. Now this is already . . . been . . . sifted. This is about . . . about eleven tablespoons and so . . . I'm going to fold this in,

just turning it gently . . .

M [Now this little Krumkake baker, um, it's like a waffle iron, but it's not . . . um, it just makes these flat, beautiful, Pizzelle-like cookies.

Waters's speech arrives in little bursts between extensive pauses that denote her absorption with the task, but also makes her appear less accustomed to talking at the same time she's cooking. This speech pattern makes her appear softer and more feminine, hence, in the kitchen, more authentic. Stewart takes the more masculine role by keeping to the schedule. She's moving ahead to the next phase of the process as she interrupts Waters' litany of sugar.

Although the Krumkake baker is sold on her website, Stewart is content here to describes how it works. Stewart establishes the desirability of the tool by explaining its function and role in the recipe.

(19) A So once you have that . . . pretty much folded in, you're going to take a half cup of flour. This has already been sifted.

M Oh, OK.

Stewart is told politely to leave the flour alone. Waters's oblique and courteous language displays the power of a social superior.

(20) A And a quarter cup of butter, and what I'm going to do is sort of alternately fold in butter, a little bit of butter . . . and then a little bit of flour . . . until it's all gone.

The rhythm of Waters's speech is soothing, simple, like listening to a bedtime story. Cooking is really so very easy.

(21) M Alice's book Chez Panisse Fruits is an amazing book. A lot of research went into that book.

A close-up shot of the book is inserted into the kitchen scene. This visual interruption makes the book stand out from the kitchen activities.

(22) A Well, it's very important that we talk to people about . . . varieties . . . and how they can use the fruit when it's right in season. And who the sustainable farmers are

... and it's, it's all part of what real food is about.

Waters is given a forum here to expound on her philosophy of real food. Issues of sustainability and use of local ingredients entail political and ecological attitudes and practices. Although Stewart recommended fresh, seasonal food in the publication of *Martha Stewart's Quick Cook* (Stewart, 1983) thirty years ago, she has continued to ignore the political implications of sustainability.

(23) *A And ... think that's just about it. Now, let's ... just try it out. You take ... about a tablespoon ... and put it up there in the corner ... a little bit towards the end.*

M Now why do you put it up there?

A Um, because it, it spreads out, and it moves toward the front. We'll just see what happens, and you press it together ... right at the big end. Steam should come up.

The action shifts to the baking of the batter. Stewart asks questions on behalf of the viewer; she is the surrogate of the viewer. She herself is certainly familiar with how to use the Krumkake baker. Waters has her own technique though, and her expertise dominates here. Waters's speculation about the outcome of the process adds surprise to the action: *We'll just see what happens.* This language reminds the viewer that in cooking and in the natural world, outcomes are variable. Even technology can't guarantee a uniform product.

(24) *M And I better turn our sorbet.*

[A Oh, uh, yeah.

M So this really more like a sorbet than a sherbet. It doesn't have any milk in it.

A I think all those terms have gotten a little bit confused.

They've both been calling it ice-cream up to now, but it isn't ice cream after all. Stewart wants to know exactly what to call it, but Waters is unconcerned. Naming things (a practice of Burke's scientific approach) is irrelevant in the experiential universe Waters inhabits. Waters dismisses Stewart's concern through her own lack of concern. She focuses on the food, the

process, and the senses.

(25) *A I'm going to peek. When they come out, you have to be prepared . . . to quickly . . .*

M [OK

A . . . roll them . . . as soon as they come out.

M [So I either have this kind of cone or a wooden cone.

Waters is excited. This is the dramatic high point in the real-time event, and the vigilant Stewart is prepared. Cooking makes temporal demands that cannot be ignored: *as soon as they come out.*

However, in this segment like in other cooking demonstrations, discourse time and story time are not necessarily equal. Cooking time can be editorially compacted by cutting to a later stage in the process. Almost invariably the staff kitchen has the dish in various stages of completion that can be pulled out of a hat, so to speak. These preparations control the cooking process.

On-air baking time (or freezing time or frying time) is not real time. The program discourse does not artificially imply the passage of time, but reveals the preparations that create the perfect show. In some respects, this preparation and the time-compression reveal the apparatus of production (recalling the visibility of production that formed one of the conventions of television news adopted by other nonfictional formats).

(26) *A Right. So . . . and you want to turn them . . . right around that and hold on the little end . . . hold them on that . . . for a minute. But as soon as they're cool, you can just take them out . . .*

M And there you have a . . . delicate and beautiful homemade ice cream cone.

Physical processes requires a careful technique. Waters as the artist and generative force coddles the newly emergent creation. Stewart speaks like the proud father who approves of what has been born: *delicate and beautiful.*

(27) *A Sometimes we put a little chocolate down in the bottom . . . and so it kind of plugs the hole . . . and at the same time, it . . . it surprises people when they get that taste. Well, we made some other . . . ice cream.*

M Look at that color. Now have you ever seen anything prettier? For you, Alice.

A Thank you.

Waters actually has fun with her work, her creative work. She has participated in the entire production cycle so can take pleasure in the final product. She also takes pleasure in the effect of the product on other people. The *we* here includes the Chez Panisse staff and reaffirms her realm.

The visual appeal of food is constantly stressed in Stewart's discourse. She discusses flavor as well as visual appeal, but the image and presentation of food is even more important. This privileging of appearance and image, of surface over substance, could be said to indicate a postmodern sensibility.

(28) *M What a gorgeous dessert. Serve these in a sea of sugar so that they can stand upright, and enjoy. These are . . . delicious. Thank you very much.*

A Oh, thank you.

The little ice-cream cones have virtually become animated creatures. They stand upright in a desirable but dangerous world: in a sea of sugar. Their effect on the palate is almost an afterthought secondary to their exquisite appearance: *These are . . . delicious.*

Discussion. This story of how to make strawberry ice cream and cones involves a beginning, middle, and end as does any other sort of project enacted for the viewer. The story introduces the characters then constructs the two major elements of the dish, the ice cream and the cone. Each of these phases is broken down into intermediate steps. Both are completed and combined into the final product, then evaluated together.

The first kernel scene, the disturbance, can be defined as the introduction

of the visitor and definition of the task. The first obstacle or second kernel involves preparing the fruit. The third kernel presents the complication of transforming the fruit into a frozen substance. The confrontation or fourth kernel scene requires devising a container or cone. This phase is first broken down into the different steps required to make and bake the batter. The final crisis (the fifth kernel) comes when the completed cookies are shaped into cones, perhaps the most difficult physical task. The resolution arrives when the successfully formed cones hold ice cream. Not only do the cones hold ice cream, but look and taste good: *What a gorgeous dessert.*

Interpretation. What things look like--the setting and props and people--is especially critical for *MSL*. Visual representation is as important to the rhetoric as the verbal language. Stewart sells a visually articulated lifestyle that competes with the glossy images of advertising. In the *MSLO* marketing strategy the television program itself functions as an advertisement for the brand (Byron, 2002), and the brand is the *MSL* lifestyle. Production values are high on *MSL* compared to other programs in the genre, but are more or less standard for national advertising. Lighting and sets can require serious financial investment, and the three major sets on *MSL* are the most lavishly dressed: the kitchen, crafts room, and potting shed.

The carefully designed kitchen is the heart of the show where over a third of the activity occurs. The design details establish a rich visual environment, and each camera shot is carefully framed to include textural embellishments. That is, a view of a bowl full of egg whites may have a vase of flowers visible behind it. The objects on the shelves behind the work table change to reflect the episode or the season, and the tools of the cook's trade are abundantly displayed.

A pervasive sense of abundance is achieved through this rich visual discourse. The *MSL* aesthetic creed of elegant simplicity prevents the visual

design from totally falling into the tastelessly rococo, but there is always plenty to see, especially in the kitchen. This establishes a feeling of abundance appropriate to the realm of food. The visual movement encompasses a Diderot constellation of objects that complement one another. This unity of the furnishings is a powerful visual argument for this articulation of the well-appointed kitchen (as it also is in the rooms presented in the *MSL* magazine). The association of abundance with the kitchen asserts the ability of the social system to provide for the most basic needs of sustenance for its people, at least the hardworking, therefore worthy ones.

In film and fictional television, the viewer is often given the omniscience of the camera. On television the viewer is privileged by the use of multiple cameras, a standard developed for live production. The viewer sees and knows what each character sees and knows, thus the complete plot. But in nonfictional television there are no hidden plot elements for the viewer to be privy to. Everybody knows the story. It's how it's told—the discourse—that's important.

Here, the camera moves back and forth busily from wide to close-up views. This segment, like many others, begins rather dramatically; the camera swoops down from a high wide angle to settle around eye level. The camera's task is to strike a balance between portraying character through close-ups and conveying information by showing what the characters do with their hands. That requires a lot of cutting.

The viewer never precisely sees a character's perspective. Even when the camera appears to look straight down at the work surface, it's actually a view over Stewart's shoulder. The camera puts the viewer in the catbird seat in front of the action and takes the viewer closer to see all the details.

In this six and a half minute segment, I counted roughly 122 cuts. This is impressive amount of editing for a basically static activity in which two women

stand and work quietly with their hands. Though this editorial pace is inconsequential for an action film, it's more similar to advertising than to other programs in its genre. Rarely does any one shot last longer than two or three lines of dialogue. The opposition between wide and close-up shots establishes a rhythm that increases dramatic excitement. This dynamism helps integrate *MSL* into the commercial broadcast environment.

Evaluation. Both Martha Stewart and Alice Waters have reframed the meaning of food for the public. Stewart's visibility and influence was built through the mass media, whereas Waters emerged into prominence through the cultivation of cultural intermediaries. The style of cooking invented at her Berkeley restaurant, Chez Panisse, inspired California cuisine. Chez Panisse was named the best restaurant in America in 2001 by *Gourmet* magazine. Its fame grew by word of mouth, so to speak, through the experiences of food devotees, food writers, and lifestyle enthusiasts. Her ideas are contrary to the standards of mass produced and marketed foods, and her creed of sustainability, localness, and seasonality is aligned with the ecological ideology that opposes agribusiness.

Stewart has expounded a philosophy of food that emphasizes simple and fresh ingredients, but doesn't insist on particular sources. The recipes in the new *Everyday Food* magazine use supermarket ingredients and are intended for the mainstream audience. However, Stewart prizes fresh produce from her own gardens; she supports sustainable, local, and seasonal food from the most individual of sources. Waters supports the collectivity of sustainable farmers, but Stewart continues to focus on individual effort.

Alice Waters and Martha Stewart have both been fortunate in timing their interests with the mood of the day. Waters provides a thread to the countercultural movement prominent in Berkeley when Chez Panisse was opened in 1971 by "Alice and some idealistic friends" (Chez Panisse, 2003). At

the same time Stewart was working as a broker on Wall Street. Chez Panisse stated its position succinctly: "At Chez Panisse we celebrate our thirtieth year with a restatement of our commitment to good food, community, and sustainability. . . . The recent development of a federal organic standard, along with the controversies surrounding genetic manipulation and global marketing, requires a clear restatement of that commitment" (Shere, 2003).

The pretty strawberries that Waters brought from California to make into sorbet connote a topical and complex global issue. Stewart noted the berries' origin and ripeness, but Waters brought up the importance of talking to people about sustainability.

The disarmingly simple ice cream cone is reframed here as a handcrafted and superior version of itself. Making this superior cone is time-consuming and requires special equipment, not to mention the finest ingredients. Although a blender is a fairly common appliance, ice cream makers are less so, and Krumkake bakers are downright rare. The kitchen that can accommodate this project is well-appointed and not so likely in the homes of the economically challenged. But the delights of the perfect sorbet in the perfect cone appeal to the refined palates of food cognoscenti, to those who have learned to make the discriminations that now compel them to prefer this aesthete's version of the ice cream cone to Baskin and Robbins.

Although Waters and Stewart are both prominent figures in the food world, their social orientations are distinctive. Waters seeks to transform the public's consumption habits on a local and national scale and on a global scale through her affiliation with the Slow Food movement.

Stewart's orientation is purely mercantile, and *Martha Stewart Living* is mainly an American phenomenon. However, her products are available in 200 stores in Japan, and the television show and magazine are also popular (CNN,

2003). Stewart's orientation toward entrepreneurial activity has been a driving force since her childhood in working-class Nutley, New Jersey. The American dream is attractive to those hoping for a better future. Since this dream is to be achieved through individual effort and hard work, entrepreneurial activity is particularly well-suited.

Besides the economic dimension, the juxtaposition of these two figures touches on feminist issues centering on career and domesticity. Both have created successful enterprises as women in a patriarchal society. Both are concerned with how food is grown, prepared, and consumed and have built imposing careers from mundane feminine skills. Both were born in the early 1940s and knew the counterculture and second-wave feminism first hand. Both are single career women with daughters and ex-husbands. But Waters's awareness of the political implications of food indicates a commitment toward social action that is missing from Stewart's capitalist orientation.

Collecting: Antique Tableware with Patrick Dunn

Although collecting comprised only about 5% of the total programming, collections and unique items provide a pervasive visual element in the settings. Stewart's various collections are frequently part of the general decor, especially in the kitchen where her crockery collection is part of the set.

In this segment, Patrick Dunn, a New Orleans antiques dealer, discussed some pieces of antique tableware with Stewart who took the role of good listener and student. The artifacts that Dunn brought related to the pleasures of the table, and his narrative painted a picture of a privileged and largely vanished style of living. However, the willing consumer can enjoy the gracious lifestyle encoded in these artifacts of a lost age.

Stewart and Dunn were seated at one end of a large dining room table. Stewart wore a long-sleeved shirt with small red stripes and reddish trousers,

and Dunn was dressed in a pale suit, blue shirt, and bow tie.

Transcript: May 27, 2003 (6:47) [5.3.B]

Collecting: Antique Tableware with Patrick Dunn

(Note: M is Martha Stewart. P is Patrick Dunn. A bracket indicates overlapping text.)

(1) M Well, I'm looking through this new and wonderful book. It's called The Epicurean Collector. It just reminds me so much of one of my most favorite visits to an antique store in New Orleans. It is Patrick Dunn's store. It's called Lucullus, a fabulous place devoted to foods and wine and everything that has to do with the kitchen and fine dining. And this is Patrick Dunn.

Dunn's credentials as an antiques expert are established by his book, shops, and collection. Stewart's ongoing association with Dunn allows her to share in his expert status. New Orleans itself connotes a decadent sensuousness, as does Lucullus, the Roman-sounding name of his shop. The lengthy history of aristocratic display of status through lavish consumption is brought to mind.

(2) M And I just noticed you brought one of your special spoons. It's a pierced silver spoon. P For sugar.

M Oh, look. P Looks like snow.

M Oh, it's the perfect way to distribute it evenly, isn't it?

P One of the great things for me is that, um, in the past, dining al fresco didn't mean dining without style. And people took great pleasure in carrying out all these beautiful things out into the garden. They didn't make the distinctions we make between being formal and being informal. For them, high style was a way of life.

Dunn's narrative paints a picture of life dominated by style in which style enhanced pleasure in any sort of activities. Dunn gently castigates the modern penchant for informality that implies a diminished capacity for pleasure. The formality which has been generally mocked and distrusted by the lower classes

is positioned here as a superior vehicle for sensual enjoyment.

(3) *M* Now, this object, I looked at it and looked at it and looked at it. Looks like it has little pierced birds. And you think maybe it's a salt and pepper shaker/ you just go like that. But you can't fill the birds, so it's not that. But what is it, Patrick?

P This is actually a toothpick holder.

M [Ahhhhh.

P And some very grand toothpick holders existed in the eighteenth century because picking teeth was . . . was quite acceptable.

M Even at the dinner table? . . . And after dinner?

P [Even at the table. *M* Oh, my gosh.

P By the end of the nineteenth century, you draped your arm and held a napkin over it to disguise it.

M And the Japanese, you know how they do, . . . like this.

P Well, that's, and I think we may have learned that from them, as a matter of fact.

M To cover your mouth? *P* To cover your mouth. But this I think is a great thing to use even if you're not going to um accept the idea of picking teeth. It'd be useful for picking a berry off . . . off of a plate or something else.

M Oh, that'd be nice. *P* They're so pretty that . . . they're whimsical.

M [Gorgeous.

In this little excursion into the social history of toothpicks, Stewart is the novice who cannot read the object with the birds. This is an exception to her general stance of omniscience, but lets her viewers see that it is perfectly correct to reveal a lack of knowledge and ask questions.

(4) *M* And of course your glass domes now.

P These are um called cheese cloches. But they're really for any kind of food, and they're great because they keep things fresh.

M [Um, have a sandwich?

P I'd love to, so tempting.

M [Little tea sandwiches, watercress, cucumber.

P Still crunchy. M Ummm.

Stewart and her guest enact the ritual consumption of the tea sandwiches that connotes a privileged lifestyle with staff to polish the silver and trim away crusts, a lifestyle more frequently encountered today at five-star hotels.

(5) P Now these glasses, they're called, um, they are pastilles. Which, because the little round shapes look like pastilles . . . little pills. M Ummm.

Dunn's use of the term pastilles alludes to New Orleans' French history as well as to the general influence of French cuisine and culture in refined circles.

(6) P And I brought this tole glass carrier. Used of course in France to carry glasses out into the garden . . . painted tole. I brought this . . . because if we're going into the garden, we're probably surely are going to need this.

The of course of Dunn's explanation of the object includes Stewart (the audience's surrogate) among the cognoscenti. He invokes the currency of the gracious lifestyle with its roots in an aristocratic, refined age as he says: if we're going into the garden. Reconstructing and reliving that gracious lifestyle is within reach and is merely a matter of deciding to do it at that point in time.

(7) M Now you were, you're the first person to tell me about those too. Do you know what this is? It's a mysterious thing. There's something in here you can put your hand in. There's a little ledge around here.

P A little reservoir. M You tell them. You tell them.

P These were made for all over the colonial world. And they would fill it with sugar water and a little bit of arsenic. Well, what would you do with arsenic near the table? Well, you'd set it down somewhere off site. And the flies will crawl in. And of course you [had] corked it up on top and the flies didn't escape. They perished.

M If they didn't drown, they died of the arsenic.

P Right. Well, I didn't want to go into too many details of what happened to them.

M (laughs)

Stewart switches her address from Dunn to the audience when she asks: *Do you know what this is?* In the collaborative relationship between Dunn and Stewart, she defers to her expert guest: *You tell them.* Stewart shares her narrative role with the audience to Dunn by referring to the audience as *them*, a *them* that both she and Dunn can talk to. Stewart's characteristic directness is displayed by her bald description of the process: *they died of arsenic.* Reflecting the older and perhaps more ironic culture of New Orleans, Dunn prefers to skirt the issue: *I didn't want to go into too many details.*

(8) *M* And this beautiful jar?

P Is one of my . . . things that I like to use . . . old things in new ways. This was an olive jar. From the eighteenth century. Hand blown glass.

M [Gorgeous.

P But we often use them for serving lemonade or sangria or some wonderful punch.

M [Ahhhhh.

Stewart's murmurs of approval interrupt Dunn, but do not throw him off track. Dunn, like Stewart, speaks very quickly and is not easily diverted. Here he introduces a common theme in their narratives: *old things in new ways.*

(9) *P* I brought this egg cruet because I loved your, the colors of your eggs, and I thought that this barbotine, which was the French majolica, would go beautifully with these colors. *M* And it does indeed.

P I love this mahogany.

[*M* So like the hard boiled eggs would just be set out here, for a picnic?

P For a picnic and sent out.

Stewart gets a lot of mileage out the eggs from her flock of Araucanas. These chickens appear in the opening montage of every program and connote

her authentic earthy roots in the working class.

(10) *P* This has a New Orleans connection. This was a praline seller's basket from the old French market. I love using these um market kind of baskets to do things like carry the cutlery or carry napkins. *M* I love the napkins.

P Well, of course, I had to bring ones with M's on them.

[*M* Oh, my gosh. Beautiful.

P For dining al fresco, one of the things I like to do, again, is to use something that was intended for something else. This was a tea towel. But they make great napkins as they were in the seventeenth century which covered great voluminous dresses.

M I call them lapkins.

P Lapkins. But these actually were tea towels. *M* Yes.

P In . . . beginning in the seventeenth century they often would have napkin hooks too, so that men could hook them into their collars. Sometimes we still find napkins that have button holes in them.

M Oh, do you? Un-huh. And this?

Stewart was quite pleased with her invention of the word lapkin, but Dunn dismissed it offhandedly and returned to his own story.

(11) *P* This is a cutlery tray to bring forks and knives to the table, but also what a great way to bring wine and glasses.

(12) *M* And then, I love the plate rack.

P Well, it's your color, isn't it. *M* It is.

P And this of course was to carry, it was used, I actually bought this, it was in a garden house, to carry plates out to a side table. And I've done a naughty thing which is to put beautiful 18th century plates . . .

[*M* You have indeed. I was going to tell you that that's kind of dangerous.

P Well, we should live dangerously with these things.

[*M* I know. These are beautiful.

P And this, uh, Rose Barbeau, um, pattern which was very popular in the eighteenth century. The French loved this because they really didn't know how to make porcelain all that well. And they could scatter the flowers and cover the glitches. And if you notice, uh, each, uh, arrangement of the flowers is slightly different.

M They're beautiful. And these are eighteenth century?

P These are eighteenth century. M Wow. This is beautiful.

The discussion of the French porcelain recalls the history of the European mercantile trade in Asia touched on in the discussion of Willow Ware in the first segment. By the eighteenth century the French were still novices in the techniques used to create porcelain in Asia. Stewart is scandalized by Dunn's treatment of the antique French porcelain. Dunn shows the aristocrat's carelessness that follows generations of privilege in which objects are easily replaced. Dunn is more offhand about artifacts than Stewart, but her attitudes are rooted deep in a working-class childhood that taught caution with precious objects. Stewart is new money, while Dunn appears to represent old.

(13) M So now, what about these boxes? These, these must have been in a wicker basket or something.

P A picnic basket, to fit in the back of an early auto. Early storage boxes for . . . for sandwiches, et cetera. I guess the earliest form of Tupperware. You'd have it made of porcelain with, um, steel tops. And of course that's one of the great things about the past and things for the table. They were intended to survive a long, long time.

Dunn makes a critical distinction between artisanal production and mass-production with these artifacts of early manufacturing: *They were intended to survive a long, long time.* Consumer logic requires that goods wear out and be repurchased. Antiques are a direct link to a different ideology.

(14) M And this, which I already gave a hint about.

P You did, um. This was an ice cream mold. They would submerge this in a in a big vat

of saltpeter, and, um, which is like salt, and ice and turn it. It was said that to do two pints of ice cream would take about 40 minutes, um. And these were called in . . . in the eighteenth century, um, sel-boîtière, a salt boot. Now I think that may be where we get sorbet, the word sorbet. Which also probably came from sherbet which is a Persian word.

[M Ahhhhh.

P You know, the Arabs gave us so many delicious things for the table and ice cream was one of the things they taught the Italians in the . . .

[M So the Italians got it first and then the French?

P [Then the French.

The Italians revived their art of making ice cream in the Renaissance. And I'm sure they learned it in Sicily from the Arabs and then it spread throughout Europe.

(16) M Well, that's great. So if you want to know about more beautiful tableware, things that have to do with your kitchen and with the preparation of food, please get Patrick Dunn's beautiful book. And also visit his shop, or shops, in New Orleans. He'll direct you not only to his shops, but he'll direct you to every place you want to know about in New Orleans. Because you're so knowledgeable. P Thank you.

Stewart and Dunn are colleagues, and their businesses interests are complementary. Stewart cultivates Dunn as a source of antiques and information, and he in turn cultivates her as a patron and host. His expertise in antique tableware clearly surpasses hers, but his diplomacy obviates any threat to her authority. The portly Dunn appears benign, and he skillfully flatters Stewart throughout their exchange.

Discussion and interpretation. The objects that Stewart and Dunn examine are presumably important and valuable. Dunn's expertise confirms the authenticity of the objects and establishes their aesthetic value. As commodities, the value of antiques depends on provenance or authenticity, and Dunn's encyclopedic knowledge is authoritative.

Antiques, like works of art, are imbued with the aura of the original. This aura of singularity and authenticity is the property of the original object, a property that the mass produced object does not share (Benjamin, 1977). But although a modern factory reproduction of an eighteenth century chair has no value as an antique, an artisanal reproduction has a level of authority as an authentic interpretation.

The use-value of antiques and collectibles has presumably been transformed by economic or exchange-value. The work of art need not have a functional purpose (reflecting Kant's characterization of beauty as purposeful without purpose). But the beauty that defines it as art (according to Kant) is capable of elevating and transforming the consciousness of the viewer. The function of art is therefore spiritual. The artifacts of high culture, the original works of art, have a capacity for transformation that the products of mass culture do not (Horkheimer & Adorno, 2001).

Connoisseurs (and the art market) have long since sanctified the decorative arts, and antiques are valued as works of art, even though these objects were originally functional. That lapse has been forgiven. The original value of these objects has been overwhelmed by their value as commodities, but also by their enhanced aesthetic value. These antiques have auras that can affect the viewer like works of art. Antiques has been consecrated and transformed into art by the collective opinion of experts, connoisseurs, and the marketplace. By studying these objects first hand and receiving authoritative information, Stewart's connoisseurship is enhanced and by proxy the viewer's.

Stewart takes the role of student and novice in much of this exchange, but also reveals that she has assumed the role of the novice. Stewart asks questions that reveal a lack of knowledge and shows that she's not really so different from her viewer. This helps construct a relationship with the viewer as a friend and

colleague that tempers her frequent role as omniscient instructor and judge.

Evaluation. In the great American empire, economics, not culture, determines class position. The great-great-grandson of Kaiser Wilhelm II pondered the difference between the wealthy in America and those back in the old world: "It's just a question, you know, of manners, and . . . it's not even that . . . it's just the difference between old money and new money . . ." (Johnson, 2003). The difference is a matter of manners to some extent and of a longer relationship with culture. But culture is a minor form of capital in a nation dazzled by bling-bling.

Stewart's personal lifestyle conspicuously displays wealth through her imposing houses, her far-flung travels, her glamorous associates, and above all her lucrative business. Stewart speaks to her wide audience from a position of privilege. Although Stewart is privileged by wealth, culture, and prestige, she is still a woman who has constructed and inserted herself into that position. Although she has the economic capital that provides class membership, she must construct the identity that grants access to the upper class status group.

As Trollope's nouveau riche financier learned in *The Way We Live Now* (1875/1962), cultural capital can be more difficult to acquire than economic capital. Cultural capital entails deciphering the meaning encoded in particular objects and pastimes. Cultural capital, the taste that recognizes and relishes particular configurations of cultural elements, provides a more enduring entree to certain status groups than does economic capital. These tastes that define these status groups are learned and absorbed, whether at the mother's knee, in the museum, or from the television.

Conclusion

Martha Stewart may be identified as a domestic diva, but she is defined by her devotion to the expansion of her corporate empire. Martha Stewart is an old-fashioned capitalist, a woman of vision and enterprise who took an idea and made the most of it. She has sold an image of domesticity and has reproduced classism on two major fronts, sex and money.

In an industrial capitalist society, class position is determined by the relation of the individual to the means of production and ownership. The relationship between those two economically defined classes is necessarily antagonistic. For the bourgeoisie to profit and flourish, the workers must be exploited. The middle class is diverted and pacified by the great myth that they are not workers. The systematic positioning of the middle class as consumers is a tactic of the dominant hegemony. Stewart lends an able hand to this task.

When Marx described the nature of the bourgeoisie, he could have been describing Martha Stewart: "In one word, it creates a world after its own image" (1994, p. 71). She has created a lifestyle in her own image and made it represent a superior form of existence.

Celebrity blurs the boundaries between public and private personae. Stewart has constructed a public self that is virtually her private self and that conflates with her brand. Stewart has mythologized her life and used it as a rhetorical tool to sell the brand. Controlling both a corporate empire that produces goods and the media that promotes them, Stewart is a powerful presence in the marketplace and the homes of her audience.

By establishing herself as an expert in the field in which she is most heavily vested, Stewart has positioned herself to insure success. She defines what is appropriate and desirable for the home and then sells it by showing how

to use it in everyday life.

But the most important product Martha Stewart sells is her expertise, information served up for an information age. Stewart's media are compendia of household advice full of useful information and appealing ideas of which Stewart is the source. Stewart's ideology of industry and individualism underlies her expertise, but her everyday activities legitimate and enhance it.

It is through the use of expertise in persuasion and image making that the corporate and public Stewart becomes a social force. Although her efforts are directed toward private ends and self-interest, she has become a mythic character on the public stage. Her performances have come to represent issues and currents that course through the social body. Her expert interpretations, pronouncements, and opinions carry substantial weight and are appropriated by her audience for improving their everyday lives and constructing their identities.

Stewart is aligned with dominant hegemonic interests by her dedication to business. By underwriting the economic system that is the defining factor in stratification, Stewart enters into complicity with the class system. As an eminent businesswoman and corporate stakeholder, she is a member of the bourgeoisie. She made a fortune through individual effort and has been rewarded with profits and prestige and assets derived from the labors of others.

However, Stewart's contribution to the support of the class system extends beyond the solidarity provided by her enthusiasm for business. She is a creator of desire and thus a promoter of consumption, and this is a powerful role that drives the economic engine. Stewart creates desire by showing what to desire. She defines, presents, and legitimizes a vision of an ideal lifestyle. This vision shows what to consume and implicitly how to be a consumer.

This vision proposes that identity can be assembled from a set of material objects or images. A constellation of objects creates a sort of portrait of their

owner and by assembling the objects, the identity has been established. (The lie the economic perspective tells is that clothes make the man: put on the right suit, and you can go anywhere and be anyone.)

The discourse of this vision cultivates a deeper understanding of the value of particular objects. Stewart differentiates, points out details, and provides the rationale for selecting one over another. In this process the methodology of aesthetic education is applied to consumer items. As the viewer refines the senses and thus experiences the art object in greater depth, the viewer can appreciate the value of the art object (or commodity) more deeply. In the application of the aesthetic method to choices about consumption, the true objects of aesthetic consideration are devalued. Art and aesthetics are trivialized by commodification.

Stewart's vision portrays an upper-class lifestyle of elegant simplicity, but desire for it is cultivated across class boundaries. Even though Stewart takes pains to connect to the working-class members of her audience through her own working-class roots, she is showing them an impossibly upper-class lifestyle. She introduces the foods and furnishings and shows how to polish the silver and arrange the flowers. The lifestyle of elegant simplicity reflects upper-class cultural tastes and thereby normalizes the authority of class-related values.

Stewart cultivates desire for objects that can't be bought off the shelf and that are not mass-produced. She cultivates desire for the authentic, original, and unique, and the price for such items is beyond the grasp of many of her viewers. Stewart operates by way of the Diderot effect in which the acquisition of one object or habit disrupts the harmony of the consumer's private assemblage of goods and demands more. Not until the new arrival has been surrounded by more of its own kind will harmony be restored. That is to say, even the introduction of an inexpensive object or minor habit can have major

repercussions. But what is more problematic is the inherent ideology that promises social mobility seemingly on the grounds of cultural capital alone. That the appearance of wealth is equal to the possession of wealth is a false promise.

Stewart's vision of domesticity is of course focused on women. The idealized lifestyle of elegant simplicity takes place in the home (though it may include the occasional tour of a stately garden). Consumption practices reproduce gender as well as class differentiation, and women normally perform the acts of consumption that Stewart makes salient, fascinating, and important.

The home or domestic sphere is the site of the intersection of sexist and classist oppression. Feminist theory holds that patriarchy is supported by men's control over women's labor. The struggle between the two sexes is an even more fundamental conflict than the class struggle Marx described. In the patriarchal capitalist system women have been excluded from prominent roles in production outside the home and restricted to a role in the specialized production and reproduction in the domestic sphere.

Stewart's promotion of entrepreneurial activity inside the home is paradoxically both an act of resistance and of complicity to patriarchal control over women's labor. If the enterprise is economically successful, the woman's control over her own labor is established. But if the enterprise is more successful therapeutically than economically, it maintains the patriarchal status quo.

Stewart's highly visible financial success is a powerful persuasive argument for entrepreneurial activity, and she repeatedly urges her viewers to follow the example of her guests who have satisfied personal and financial goals with businesses. Personal and creative fulfillment are conflated with business ownership. Entrepreneurial activity itself has both a positive and negative effect on inequality. Entrepreneurial activity has a necessary interest in the success of the economic system that supports the status quo. But entrepreneurial activity

can also provide a means of social mobility.

With a business centered in domesticity, Stewart has a vested interest in binding women to the home. She almost incidentally supports the patriarchal division of labor and roles in promoting her own interests. Stewart makes activities centered in the home more interesting and fulfilling to women, and their duties more respected, but these enhancements also keep them at home. She extends the possibilities of the domestic sphere by portraying it as a good place to run a small business and to "be creative in your own right, take a hobby and make it into a reality" (Stewart, 2003, May 30). However, this call to individual industriousness endorses individual rather than collective action.

Although her biographer (Byron, 2002) noted Stewart's struggles with patriarchy in her early career, her discourses and practices have continued to support the status quo inherent in cultivating domesticity. And although the old-boy network rebuffed her (and may do so again), she refused to yield to sexist oppression in her professional life. Her tactic of ignoring her sexual identity indicates that there was indeed a problem, that her sexual identity had to be suppressed: "I've really tried very hard to ignore the fact that I'm a woman in business, and I just think I'm a person in business" (2003, April 29). Always an overachiever, Stewart has been criticized for displaying masculine traits of aggressiveness, authoritarianism, and coldness in her business dealings.

As much as capitalism depends for a profit on exploiting the workers, it depends on consumption of the goods the workers produce. One important way Stewart persuades her audience to consume more of what she creates is by training them how to consume more selectively. Stewart uses aesthetics as a tool of persuasion, but she also constructs an aestheticized subject position.

The aestheticization of everyday life can refer to the transformation of everyday life into a work of art, but in another sense concerns the effects of the

proliferation of mutable images on everyday life. In this sense the physical function or use-value of the object is abstracted into market or exchange-value. The object takes on additional value as a sign, and cultural intermediaries then circulate these images with their attached sign-values throughout society. The sign-values articulated and manipulated by this cultural sphere are directed toward creating desire for consumer products (Featherstone, 1992).

The construction of the aestheticized viewer who creates as well as appreciates is another aspect of the aestheticization of everyday life. This viewer is equipped with the faculty to make judgments of taste through the aesthetic training Stewart has provided. The how-to program is categorically concerned with transforming the physical environment, and this focus on interacting with the external leads the viewer from simulated electronic reality back into the lived world. Stewart's practical advice and aesthetic training enable the viewer to transform everyday life into a work of art.

Artisanal and creative activities are empowering and provide satisfaction and self-fulfillment through the control of physical tasks. As the workplace is transformed and traditional forms of work disappear, finding closure in an activity has become rare. In late capitalism, cultural production has become separated from its traditional social functions, and the worker is estranged from the process of production. Even the commodified art object has lost its organic meaning.

The aestheticization of individual subjectivity can help generate (or regenerate) belief in the possibility of positive change. The possibility of transformation and growth is a prerequisite for self-realization and ultimately social progress. From a Marxist perspective, the aesthetic directly concerns the autonomy of the subject. The autonomy of the artifact (art or artisanal object) can act as a model of human subjectivity. The capacity for self-regulation and

self-determination that is intrinsic to the art object can also be cultivated in the subject. "The aesthetic is . . . the very secret prototype of human subjectivity in early capitalist society, and a vision of human energies as radical ends in themselves which is the implacable enemy of all dominative or instrumentalist thought" (Eagleton, 1990, p. 9).

According to Kant, the aesthetic judgment of taste mediates between sensation and cognition and between sensuality and morality (Hammermeister, 2002). Aesthetic judgment thus develops a facility for subjective decision-making that incorporates both the objective and subjective perspective. Reflexivity involves the capacity for self-regulation and self-determination and enables resistance to the totalizing forces that seek to absorb the individual.

Stewart's valorization of an upper-class lifestyle endorses a hierarchical social structure, but by cultivating personal taste in aesthetic judgments, Stewart provides opportunities for resistance to dominant culture. By promoting entrepreneurial and artisanal activity, Stewart reinforces the myth that individual effort is rewarded with wealth and status. By professionalizing the domestic sphere, Stewart provides a way for women to succeed outside of the public sphere, but reinforces the patriarchal exclusion of women from it. But by cultivating the subjective facility for the aesthetic judgment of taste, Stewart sets her viewers on the road to self-realization.

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Appendix A

Frequency Distribution and Relative Frequency
of Program Activities

Activity	Number	% (n=348)
Field Trips	66	16.9
Cooking	109	31.3
Martha & guest(s)	(57)	(16.4)
Martha solo	(52)	(14.9)
Crafts	51	14.7
Projects	9	2.6
Collecting	17	4.9
Decorating	4	1.0
Entertaining	3	0.9
Housekeeping	1	0.3
Flower arranging	23	6.6
Gardening	26	7.5
Fitness	16	4.6
Books	7	2.0
Personal care	4	1.1
Pet care	12	3.4
	348	99.9

Appendix B

Historical Comparison of Activity Frequency Distribution
and Relative Frequency

Activity	2003		1994-1995	
	Number	% (n=348)	Number	% (n=40)
Field Trips	66	16.9	6	15.0
Cooking	109	31.3	12	30.0
Martha & guest	(57)		(2)	
Martha solo	(52)		(10)	
Crafts	51	14.7	3	7.5
Projects	9	2.6	1	2.5
Collecting	17	4.9		
Decorating	4	1.0		
Entertaining	3	0.9		
Housekeeping	1	0.3		
Flower arranging	23	6.6		
Gardening	26	7.5	16	40.0
Fitness	16	4.6		
Books	7	2.0		
Personal care	4	1.1		
Pet care	12	3.4		
	348	99.9	40	100.0

Appendix C
Generalized Field Trip Categories and Gender Distribution
Ranked by Frequency Distribution

Activity	Number	% (n=66)	Characters	
			Male	Female
Gardens	24	36.4	20	11
Workshops & Businesses	18	27.3	14	18
Cooking	14	21.2	10	8
Events	8	12.2	5	19
Pets	2	3.0	2	0

Appendix D

Title Montage, Fall 2003

(CU=close-up, ECU=extreme close-up, MS=medium shot, EWS=extreme wide shot.)

Opening Sequence (00:30:20): (musical theme throughout)

- 1 Zoom to CU bees on sunflower [very fake looking.
- 2 Zoom to Martha watering plants with a hose on terrace. Orange shirt.
- 3 CU leafy green plant in urn on stone wall.
- 4 MS Martha polishing windowpane of French door. White shirt.
- 5 ECU black and white cat.
- 6 ECU bees on sunflower.
- 7 CU Green leafy plant in planter.
- 8 CU the Chow Chow dog, pull out to see Martha grooming dog.
- 9 CU Golden flowers in blossom in flower beds.
- 10 EWS Martha with shovel planting small tree in lawn.
- 11 WS Martha with shovel. Tan barn jacket.
- 12 CU chickens.
- 13 CU face, quick diagonal move and pull back to Martha up hanging bird feeder. Blue sweater.
- 14 CU face to medium Martha with sheets on line. White shirt.
- 15 ECU pink rose in full bloom.
- 16 Martha in garden with wheelbarrow on path between flower beds.
- 17 CU two birds at bird-feeder.
- 18 CU Martha's face.
- 19 ECU ear of corn on grill being turning over.
- 20 Medium Martha picking up pot of blue flowers from wheelbarrow.
- 21 Medium Martha putting grilled meat onto serving platter.
- 22 Dinner table outdoors, Martha serving grilled meat to guests.
- 23 ECU face, move to out of focus garden.

Closing Sequence (00:41:30): (musical theme throughout)

- 1 Martha polishing windowpane of open French door. White shirt.
- 3 Golden flowers in bloom in flower beds.
- 2 Bushel of green vegetables, the Chow Chow lying down behind.
- 4 Tight on plants in pots on terrace, move to Martha watering plants.
- 5 CU chickens.
- 6 Martha in garden pushing wheelbarrow in garden. Brown jacket.
- 7 CU yellow bird at bird-feeder.
- 8 Martha at barbecue grill turning or basting meat, guests in background.
- 9 ECU corn sizzling on grill as a pat of butter melts.
- 10 Martha hanging bird feeder; move to out-of-focus garden.

Appendix E
Gender and Number of Characters Ranked by
Frequency Distribution of Activities

Activity	Number	% (n=348)	Characters (n=441)		
			MS solo	Male	Female
Cooking	109	27.9	52	34	29
Field Trips	66	16.9	0	51	57
Crafts	51	13.0	25	8	29
Gardening	26	6.6	13	13	11
Flower arranging	23	5.9	6	12	8
Collecting	17	4.3	3	7	8
Fitness	16	4.1	0	6	17
Pet care	12	3.1	1	11	11
Projects	9	2.3	4	5	0
Books	7	1.8	0	5	3
Decorating	4	1.0	1	0	3
Personal care	4	1.0	0	0	3
Entertaining	3	0.8	1	1	2
Housekeeping	1	0.3	1	0	0
	348	99.9	106	154	181
			(24%)	(34.9%)	(41%)