

There is no way to separate my appreciation of Priscilla Ferguson as an intellectual and as a friend. She understood both the codifying privilege of rules and the creative genius of rule breakers (see: French cuisine), wrote about French intellectuals and social movements without jargon or ideological cant (Pierre Bourdieu, *l'Action française*), and underlined the importance of women culture makers in fields where they were historically devalued (cooks vs. chefs). She loved the refinements of an excellent meal while relishing the symbolic significance of a pot au feu. During years of meeting for lunch at various *bonnes tables* in New York, within the bounds of food allergies and tastes, she humored me by agreeing to eat soba—once—although this meal took place at a soba restaurant owned by Jean-Georges Vongerichten.

I loved listening to Priscilla talk about her food experiences. Recipes, food products, restaurants, and of course the vagaries of tastes were the fields in which she excelled. We first met in the early 1990s on a panel about food at a sociology conference, and we bonded over a love of meals we had eaten in France, which translated almost immediately into a shared ambition to understand the evolution of French cuisine. This led us to collaborate on a research project to compare the careers of French-born and U.S.-born chefs in New York, just when French cuisine's grasp of global hegemony was beginning to loosen and chefs who made their careers outside "the hexagon" were able to retain professional legitimacy. It was also a moment when chefs still stood somewhat hesitantly at the threshold of stardom. Daniel Boulud, David Bouley, Jean-Georges himself: these and other chefs who were written up in the food media but whose celebrity was not yet assured granted us long interviews. To our delight, they also brought us into their restaurant kitchens. Although colleagues assumed we were eating our way through the research, we scrupulously refused to accept anything more than a cup of coffee, well, espresso or, in Priscilla's case, a macchiato. She interviewed Gilbert Le Coze of Le Bernardin before he died and spoke often of that meeting; she was intrigued as well by the careers of women chefs who were just beginning to attract investors and starred reviews.

Priscilla leavened our collaboration with her extensive knowledge of the intertwined histories of French culture and cuisine. That kept us talking throughout our lunches, and we endlessly planned to bring our research up to date by interviewing new generations of chefs. Priscilla received even the wildest ideas with enthusiasm tempered by dry wit. Even if she didn't share some of those ideas, she always offered support.

Alas, our ambitions for collaboration were pushed aside by other work. Priscilla was very much in demand for talks and articles on French cuisine on both sides of the Atlantic. She translated the work of Pierre Bourdieu. She also developed serious expertise in roses and chocolate, material things that fascinated her, I think, as much by their histories and personalities as by their sensuous qualities. Their beauty offered her a permanent puzzle of embodied capital, a study in the sociology of everyday life that she took seriously both inside and outside the classroom.

Priscilla had other competences that I could only admire. When I met her, she jogged and could set up her own computer. She was an accomplished gardener and the first reader her husband, Robert Ferguson, turned to for criticism and advice. She tirelessly cared for him during his last illness. Her generosity and modesty, her ability to speak eloquently in a quiet voice, were rare in this time and will be greatly missed.

-Sharon Zukin, Professor of Sociology, Brooklyn College and the CUNY Graduate Center

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Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson's writings, especially *Accounting for Taste* (2004), were central to my re-education on the difference between cooking and cuisine, both discursively and materially. According to Priscilla, cuisine happens when cooking leaves the kitchen, is written about, turned into an erudite form of gastronomy that happened most successfully in France in the 18th century in conjunction with the intensification of the print revolution already under way since the 15th century. Her analysis allowed me to make productive distinctions between the silent cooking of most people in most parts of the world and the voluble cooking of mostly male French chefs. What is that gap between a profession and an everyday practice? And how is the boundary maintained between the two? What are the real skills acquired in a constituted field such as haute cuisine--say the making of a double consommé compared to chicken soup? What are the gaps, connections, and boundaries between the rhetoric and the reality of these modes of cooking?

Priscilla provided quiet but essential intellectual and institutional support for the legitimation of the emerging interdisciplinary field of Food Studies at NYU. She wrote letters of support, signed her name to grants, evaluated faculty tenure and promotion dossiers, helped launch our Feast and Famine Colloquium (conscientiously attending it three times a semester, often with her friends), and presented early versions of her work at our Seminar. I could go on and on about all the quotidian tasks she did to aid us in academic institution-building and maintenance. I will miss her deliberate intellect and diligent support immensely!

-Krishnendu Ray, Department Chair and Associate Professor of Food Studies, New York University

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At Chicago, Priscilla served as Chair of the French Department and pursued a fast-paced international career. Arriving at Columbia in 1989 at a time when women full professors were scarce and not in demand, she started as Associate Director of the Institute for Research on Women and Gender (IRWAG) and other committees. After affiliating with Sociology, she served as Director of both Graduate and Undergraduate Studies.

By the time the Columbia Department of Sociology moved to Knox Hall, Priscilla had stepped back from those leadership roles, published two books, and maintained a network of ties in France, traveling for conference, lectures, and PhD defenses. She made an important mark on individuals and on the department as a space/place to be. Culture was her subject and for her, a specific embodied style.

As a colleague, Priscilla was ever-organized, ever-professional, ever-elegant, ever-gracious. With just a few touches, she managed to create the only warm, inviting office in the department. She took the time to do the small, meaningful things. New assistant professors and senior women were welcomed into the department with handwritten notes and invitations to cultural events, museums, or lunch. She took one new professor to her first opera, giving her an unforgettable welcome and memory.

Priscilla served on the Knox Space Committee, deciding about offices and allocation of space. In the same way that she automatically converted her square box office into something inviting, she paired up with a new, junior colleague, and together they gained access to a Columbia library stash of art and photographs, pieces of which they managed somehow to acquire for us, bringing color and life to the hallways, the seminar room, and the department office. Through them, Priscilla is ever-present, and a junior colleague has an indelible memory.

As both colleague and friend, she stayed in touch, sending photos of her rose garden in the summers and enjoying little pleasures along with the big. Fine dining was one thing, but as regular at the Sunday farmer's market, she liked meeting friends at Le Monde for hot chocolate and croissant after. This, apparently, sparked "The Big Business of Haut Chocolat," in *Contexts*. Along with articles and book reviews, she published small pieces in French and English on current topics, including the film, "Le Festin de Babette," "Michelin in America," in *Gastronomica*, and with colleagues/friends elsewhere, most notably a *Contexts* review of the film, "Ratatouille," with Gary Fine, for fun.

-Diane Vaughan, Professor of Sociology, Columbia University

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As a graduate student in the Sociology Department at Columbia University, I had the privilege to work with Priscilla on her course "Food and Social Order." The class was not only insightful but also highly creative and, above all, fun. Priscilla's reading list included extracts from the Old Testament and the Quran, which revealed how foods and food preparations become part of a belief system, and in doing so, change social behavior. These readings complemented the classics of Sociology, such as Emile Durkheim's comprehensive study of religion, through which students learned how food was moved from mundane to sacred spaces, and how that shaped everyday life, starting from the most elemental forms of social life. Georg Simmel and Pierre Bourdieu's theories were also discussed, including their ideas of food as a form of distinction in modern society. We learned about the role of food in stratifying society, segregating individuals across class and gender, about the role of food in creating social identities and movements, and in confronting cultures. Towards the end of the course, and building on the theories we have learned, Priscilla would encourage students to analyze movies - ranging from the food classic "Babette's Feast" to the contemporary animated movies "Kung Fu Panda" and "Ratatouille" - through the conceptual framework we learned in class.

In her lectures, Priscilla would repeatedly point out: "Food is much more than food. Food has a social meaning and significance beyond the physiological act of eating." The class was run as a dialogue. Priscilla would ask students questions about their shopping experiences, their food preferences, "food fears," and culinary backgrounds. In one of our most fascinating classes we engaged in a discussion about the Thanksgiving meals we have enjoyed and how those revealed part of our identities. Priscilla was always fascinated to hear students' stories and incorporate them into the class.

Priscilla embodied Bourdieu's notion of distinction, in the most elegant way. For each class, she was wearing a new, stylish and beautiful outfit. Leather jackets, purple hats, red coats all matching — from top to bottom — with beautiful earrings, necklaces and shoes.

I had the privilege of being Priscilla's last PhD student. I remember the day I knocked on her door to tell her about my dissertation project on modernist cuisine — which deviated from the classic culinary tradition she so much admired. She immediately believed in my project and saw value in my work. She worked with me in identifying the connections of my findings to cultural sociology. She told me that she would almost "jump off of her chair" while reading my field notes. In our meetings, she showed me how much she enjoyed learning from my work, just as I had enjoyed learning from her research and classes.

When I defended my dissertation, Priscilla and Diane Vaughan, my two female mentors, invited me to celebrate at one of the best restaurants in New York (and in the world) - Jean Georges. Priscilla knew the restaurant well and had interviewed the chef years earlier in her work with Sharon Zukin. We had a wonderful meal, looking at the Central Park. Food, indeed, was much more than food.

A year before her passing we were working on an article on the subject of "play." Priscilla had the idea to work on this topic after a seminar organized at the Sociology Department at Columbia to pay tribute to her work, before her retirement in December of 2015. While coding the interviews, we were both fascinated to learn how chefs incorporated play in their craft and the joyful, fun, and ironic creations that resulted from their work. The process of working together on this project resembled our previous interactions: filled with good conversations at Cafe Le Monde (a French Brasserie, close to the Columbia University campus). We would talk for hours about potential theoretical avenues and also about our findings, trying to establish connections between the two. This collaborative process might explain why we decided to conclude our first draft with the following sentence: "for scholars interested in the subject — and based on our own experience — studying play may turn out to be not only illuminating for sociological research but also lots of fun."

Priscilla marked my life as a scholar, in a very simple but profound way. She studied novels, food, chefs, and roses because she loved them. She taught me that I could study something that brought me joy, and that in doing so - with care and dedication - I might bring joy to others and learn a great deal in the process.

-M. Pilar Opazo, Post-Doctoral Associate and Lecturer, MIT Sloan School of Management

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