

‘We still mourn that book’:¹ Cookbooks, Recipes and Foodmaking Knowledge in 1950s Australia

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Lisa Heldke² suggests that foodmaking is a ‘thoughtful practice’ where practice and theory converge. In contrast to an hierarchical dualistic separation, in which theory is privileged over practice — a separation that has burdened traditional western philosophy — the theory and practice of foodmaking is relational: practice is informed by theory, which is altered through practice. Following Heldke, I contend that foodmaking, as a form of traditional women’s work, is both philosophically significant and meaningful in the ‘everyday’.³ Heldke argues for a theoretical understanding of foodmaking both as a “‘mentally manual” activity, [and] a “theoretically practical” activity’.⁴ By rethinking foodmaking in terms that diminish its dualistic hierarchy, Heldke follows John Dewey in ‘suggest[ing] that the difference between theory and practice is a difference of degree, not kind; that theorizing is in fact a *kind* of practice’⁵ and, in so doing, other dualisms such as knowing and doing, mental and manual, ‘head work and hand work’, ‘acting subject and acted-upon object’ are eroded.

Heldke argues that the separation of knowing and doing determines the representation of knowledge, and these preconceptions find their way into everyday life ‘where they shape and are shaped by attitudes and structures that categorize and oppress people’.⁶ Further, knowing and doing are gendered because men are generally regarded as the ‘knowers’, and women as the ‘doers’.⁷ Men are associated with rational, scientific knowledge, ‘producing timeless, unchanging results — known as genuine knowledge’, which is valued highly in the western philosophical tradition.⁸ Moreover, such knowledge sustains and is sustained by ‘social prejudices favouring those activities — mathematics, physics, literature, philosophy’ — that supposedly support an unchanging knowledge.⁹ In contrast, knowledge that ‘changes — the physical world in particular — has historically been regarded in some sense as unknowable’.¹⁰ Such knowledge has traditionally been aligned with women and emotion.

Between February and December 1998 I conducted oral history interviews with forty-eight women who were wives, mothers, housewives and homemakers in Western Australia in the 1950s.¹¹ The results of this study suggest that foodmaking requires skill, thought and planning, and that it is not just a matter of simply ‘doing it’. Janet Theophano argues that women’s culinary skills ‘evolve over time and in many instances prowess might imbue women with cultural authority’.¹² In this sense, cooking can be regarded as a thoughtful practice, because it requires gaining a certain amount of knowledge and ‘training’ in a cumulative and transformative process. Women’s knowledge of foodmaking is expanded and increased each time they cook, and they begin to embody foodmaking as a thoughtful practice. In this article I will specifically examine the

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importance of cookbooks and recipes used in developing, consolidating and extending foodmaking knowledge. Cookbooks (published or home-made) are important in this analysis because women utilise them to improve their foodmaking practice, but they also gain pleasure from their 'collection'.

Scholars such as Anne Bower, Rosalind Coward, Jean Duruz, Janet Floyd, Laurel Forster and Janet Theophano have written about women's relationship to cookbooks.¹³ Coward argues that women often go to 'bed with a good cookbook' to read. Women in my study also discuss a fascination with cookbooks, sometimes buying them for one recipe only, and having a collection of cookbooks that are not used very often.

'You should see my collection':¹⁴ The allure of cookbooks

Some women in my study regarded their successful foodmaking practice as derived from natural ability. However, through their stories, they show how they *learned* to cook through a layering of knowledge. The women learned to cook from mothers, mothers-in-law, grandmothers, sisters, servants, aunts, female friends and neighbours, and occasionally fathers, fathers-in-law and husbands. They augmented this knowledge with domestic-science classes in high school and adult-education classes at technical college. Some were self-taught, both before and after marriage, through trial and error and reading cookbooks. Beverley expresses the interplay between methods of learning how to cook:

Well, I was the eldest of six children. My father had the railway shop in N—, which meant my mother helped a lot in the shop, so I quite often had to cook at home and it was just one of those things. I'd seen my mother cook. We did have domestic science at school and I picked up a lot there, but that was another thing, it was almost instinctive. I liked to buy cooking books. I sort of helped myself more or less along that line ... I loved it.¹⁵

The skill and knowledge that women gained from manifold sources enabled them to cook for their families. These recipes were learnt by heart, written down and reproduced through generations from mother to daughter (or grandmother to granddaughter). The women in my study made a distinction between everyday cooking, in which they did not need recipes, and specialty cooking, such as cakes, pastries, desserts and biscuits, where recipes were used to ensure correct measurements. Those women who were self-professed 'good cooks' tended to improvise or alter recipes as part of their everyday practice. However, other women adhered to recipe rules strictly. The majority of women eventually cooked their everyday meals from memory — they no longer consulted recipes or cookbooks to ensure they were doing the 'right' thing.

Cooking can be understood as a process. As such, when mastery is achieved, the need to follow recipes (either from cookbooks or written down in scrapbooks) is often lessened, but women still rely on them for particular types of recipes and still collect recipes to augment their knowledge. Each woman also had 'special' recipes for main-course meals and cakes and desserts, which were regarded as 'family favourites'. For migrant women, these 'special' recipes were often the traditional foods from their countries of origin. Hence, each woman's recipes and cookbooks:

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textually draw together vestiges of woman's work, intellect, and social interactions: the food she prepares or hopes to prepare daily and ceremonially for her family [and] the people who comprise her world.¹⁶

Most Australian-born women in this study relied on well-known Australian cookbooks such as the *Country Women's Association Cookbook* (CWA) of Western Australia (1956) and the *Western Australian Golden Wattle Cookery Book* (1926),¹⁷ uniquely Australian cookbooks that feature what is regarded as 'traditional' Australian food such as Anzac biscuits and lamb roast. Other popular cookbooks included *Margarete's Cookbook* and *Whitcombes Everyday Cookery with Mealtime Planning in Wartime*. The *Golden Wattle* cookbook was written by five women who were 'Officers of the Education Department of Western Australia'.¹⁸ It had four main objectives, which suggested adherence to a discourse of scientific management in relation to cooking (taught within domestic science classes):

To place before young students a record of methods of cookery taught at school; supplementing lessons ... and generally increasing their knowledge of the subject.

To enable girls who have left school to maintain their interest in cookery, and to have in their possession a book of dependable recipes which may stimulate a desire to venture further in the culinary art.

To give, in a concise and simple form, information on food values and the cooking of food.

To set before those taking up life in rural districts of the State [Western Australia] simple directions for bread-making, jam and jelly making and fruit preserving, which will secure success at the outset.¹⁹

The *Golden Wattle* exemplifies Heldke's thesis that foodmaking is a thoughtful practice. The writers clearly explain in their objectives that foodmaking encompasses both the theoretical and the practical. While one aim of the *Golden Wattle* was to consolidate and extend knowledge, foodmaking was also regarded as a creative act that the *Golden Wattle* could enhance by 'stimulat[ing] a desire to venture further in the culinary art[s].'

Meg discussed the importance of the *Golden Wattle* to her cooking practice both in the 1950s and today:

I used to use the *Golden Wattle Cookery Book* like everybody did in those days, because once again you couldn't afford these 'you beaut' cookery books that are around now ... I still use it, if I make a Margarete Steam Pudding, I would use the *Golden Wattle Cookery Book*. If I make pikelets I use it. So there are things I still use out of that book.²⁰

Most women in my study mentioned popular cookbooks they used regularly, and many women stated that they still used them today. Myra stresses the importance of the *CWA Cookbook*: 'I think I had one cookery book in those days [that] was every woman's home Bible with all the hints at the back of it'.²¹ It was not only Australian-born women who used the *CWA Cookbook*. Jessie, an Anglo-Indian woman, also purchased it: 'Yes, I bought the *CWA Cookbook*, and I used that because I found that was really good, there were a lot of recipes I used'.²²

Spending money on cookbooks was regarded as a luxury in the 1950s. In their stories of 1950s kitchen life, women stated that during their cooking trial-and-

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error period they believed that they had to be careful with what they cooked because they could not afford to waste either food or money. All women in my study grew up in a time of frugality and were watchful of their limited resources — for most women, this was a trait that guided their lives when they had families of their own.

Many migrant women brought cookbooks with them, and some purchased cookbooks in Australia in their languages of origin — Polish, Croatian, Dutch, Italian and German. The cookbook that Gabrielle brought with her was one that she admired as a young girl. As a ‘rite of passage’, the cookbook was given to her when she married:

I had a very nice book, which I got from my mother, which is now very old, because it is from 1927 and I was still a little girl. I can still remember there were beautiful pictures in there, and I said, ‘I would like that book’, and my mother said ‘well, when you get married you can get it’, which I did. And so I still have it, so that is what helped me a lot in the beginning.²³

Even though Pamela cooks most recipes from memory, there are some special recipes for which she still consults the cookbook she brought with her from Croatia:

Oh, those everyday dishes I never look at the recipes, but I brought some recipe books from the area of my home district, which were written by one of the teachers, [a] very renowned teacher in cooking economics. I always check on the recipe book — oh, you should see the book, it looks haggard. For all the dishes, a lot more elaborate dishes I have to [check the recipe] ... cabbage in brine, salt sardines, to make a torte for a birthday party, that has everything in it, that book.²⁴

Women also acquired cookbooks in their own language when they arrived in Western Australia. Beata bought a Polish cookbook from ‘a Polish bookshop [which opened] in Perth ... in 1950 or earlier’.²⁵ Carla, an Italian woman, also purchased an Italian cookbook in Melbourne ‘for sixty cents. I still have the book, it is really old [laughing]’.²⁶ For Helena, a Polish woman, reconnection with her family in Poland provided the opportunity for her to have a Polish-language cookbook:

The book was a very big necessity for me and when I found my family in Poland, my extended family, my father’s family ... the first thing they sent me was a Polish cookbook, *Cooking Polska*, and it was very old. I have since subsequently got new ones, but I still love this old book. Pages were very frail, in the Communist times, the paper was fairly poor quality, but I’ve still got it.²⁷

Through cooking and cookbooks, migrant women maintained links with their mothers and their cultural traditions, and some lament that it is a tradition that perhaps will not last: ‘Yes, I still have my German cookbooks, later my Mum sent me German cookbooks, and I still bake after German cookbooks. [But] after me it will be gone, probably’.²⁸

Bower argues that reading cookbooks has a two-fold effect. First, reading cookbooks allows women to:

maintain a self-image that fits some variation of a fairly traditional female role — the nourisher, the giver, the homemaker; and [secondly] *escape* the mundane

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aspects of that 'feminine' role into an elevated or new vision/version of herself as she identifies with the cookbook author, a different role or way of life, a different culture.²⁹

It is possible to see these effects in the women's stories of their cookbook collections. For example, many women use cookbooks as inspiration for their cooking:

I love cookery books, I just love reading cooking books, I have a lot of them — and when I have guests I think, 'What am I to cook? What am I to do?' I look through the pictures, especially, to get an inspiration, then, I close the book and do what I always do. [So you don't actually follow the recipe?] It inspires me to cook, I hardly ever follow it.³⁰

In addition to collecting cookbooks, many women collected recipes, swapped them with friends, read them in magazines and newspapers, wrote them down, collated them and placed them in scrapbooks. For them, this practice became a 'hobby'.³¹ Tami, a Pakistani woman, voices a commonly expressed desire to have a wide variety of recipes, but states that she does not use them. It is my contention that the women like to have a variety of recipes because it increases their foodmaking knowledge; even though they may never use the recipes, the knowledge gained from reading recipe 'methods' or ingredients lists enables women to practice their foodmaking skills in a broader manner:

Yes, I do like recipes up to this day. You should see my collection; do you think I use them? [laughing] I only use one or two recipes that I keep on using. The rest are always sitting there, books and books and cuttings and cuttings! I'm very fond of that, I read every recipe, I'll cut it out, I'll put it in the book, do you think I make them?³²

Carmella has a similar habit:

I have a hobby of buying cookbooks and if I see anything, only a couple of weeks ago, and don't ask me why I bought it because I'm sure I will never use it, but I saw all these soups and things and I thought 'That'd be a good idea, I'll buy it' and I bought it. I come home and sit down and read it in my bean bag, I'd be reading it and then I'd put it away and I may not pick it up again, but that's just me, that's what I do.³³

Women's self-created recipe scrapbooks:

testif[y] to the development of a woman's craft, an archive of memory and knowledge. The text becomes an emblem of the self and may encode culturally appropriate images of the feminine, of the ideal family, and of the good life.³⁴

For example, Dorothy states that her recipes were written down and that she had a collection of recipes she used for 'inspiration', but more often she relied on recipes that she could cook competently. She states:

Yes, I always wrote them [recipes] down and if they worked out alright I put them into my recipe notebook. Also I've always been a sucker for recipe books and I collect them and would have to weed them out periodically. But in spite of all that I would often quietly cook some stewed apple or something in the end [laugh].³⁵

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For some women who created their own recipe books, this became a means of connecting them with other family members and a link between generations. Emily recalls her granddaughter saying, 'Nan, I'm going to get all your little secret books when you go'.³⁶ The creation of scrapbooks becomes a symbol of family and cultural knowledge. The importance of such a symbol is exemplified in the loss of knowledge of how to make a certain type of cake. As Dorothy explains:

We always mourn that Mother had a thick exercise book with recipes written in it and when she died it disappeared and I think — you know, Dad wouldn't realise, bless his heart, he probably thought, 'This old thing!' because he never cooked, so I guess he threw it out. And we still mourn that book. There were certain things Mother made. She made a very good light fruit cake and my sister and I mourned over that light fruit-cake because we never really achieved it. Not in the way Mother made it. And we don't know exactly what she did. So I think it's important to pass those on and I'm always going to do it [laugh]. Mother was a reasonably practical cook but not a devoted cook. My sister is the same, she once said, 'If I never had to cook again I wouldn't care'. But I love to cook. I am very contented cooking.³⁷

Many women regard recipes as 'rules', and not following the recipe, presumably, as 'breaking the rules'. Endrijonas argues that many post-war cookbooks required women to follow the recipe strictly:

True to the nature of the culture at this time, women were expected to follow the directions given; thus their creativity and experimentation had an element of control to it.³⁸

Indeed, some women in my study felt that there was an unwritten law about recipes: they should be strictly followed. Myra states that she followed the recipe quite rigidly:

I had them written down from day one ... Generally I'm not a very adventurous cook, so generally I would follow a recipe. I'm not saying that I don't embellish every now and then, overall I tend to stick to the rules.³⁹

The women who did embellish recipes and initiate variations were those who considered themselves to be good cooks or regarded cooking as a creative activity. Heldke argues:

The way you treat written recipes often reflects your degree of skill and confidence as a cook, your spirit of adventure, your knack for imagining what foods might taste good together ... And it requires the expertise to know when enough is enough: when a rule cannot be broken or bent.⁴⁰

Concetta, an Italian self-professed 'good' cook, suggests that a recipe is just a guide: 'Oh, sometimes [I follow the recipe], but I do not like recipes, I just do what is convenient. Sometimes you just do what you think is better'.⁴¹ Kathleen suggests that once she learned to cook, she became more adventurous and tried other recipes that were not from her mother and aunt (implying that these were 'foolproof' recipes):

I tried those, then I think you break away and you try something more adventurous and you try something yourself, so I still have a couple of mother's recipes of biscuits and slices, that kind of thing. And they just sort of come all the way through

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[the years] ... I had to follow the book first and then you get to remember ... I'm not a very specific person in this regard. I'm not an outstanding cook or anything. I'm just a very basic cook.⁴²

'Aunty Ethel's Melting Moments':⁴³ Recipes and intergenerational knowledge

A generational link between family members is often reinforced through notions of food. The generational food-centred links described by the women of this study extend from well before the 1950s, from the women's own mothers, to their daughters, sons and granddaughters, and includes aunts, mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law. Most of the women interviewed acknowledge the importance of passing recipes down to their children and receiving recipes from their mothers. The passing-down of recipes maps a genealogy and reflects cultural traditions.⁴⁴ Important in this reproduction of culture, skills and knowledge is the historical context of the women's practice; that is, they reproduce this foodmaking knowledge and practice in a way that is both different from and similar to the previous generation. Consequently, there is also an intergenerational layering of knowledge. Furthermore, for all the women, maintaining family recipes, like the foodmaking process itself, is highly emotional.

The passing-down of recipes reinforced the notion of family. For example, Amelia said:

I think it keeps a family together, if you can do things for them and they like those things. I think I can remember some of the things Mum did. Yes, I think its part of family bonding really.⁴⁵

Giving recipes evokes family memories, and further adds to the emotionality of food and the reproduction of knowledge. Floyd and Forster suggest:

Personal histories or pasts constructed through memory or the process of remembering with others, are often centred on food: favourite childhood dishes, [and] special family occasions.⁴⁶

For example, Myra recalls the importance of 'Aunty Ethel's Melting Moments' to her daughters:

Obviously the kids remember it, it is a happy memory for them because they were nice, and they did get to meet Aunty Ethel even though she was an elderly aunt, and because she was a nice warm cuddly person, they associate nice biscuits with nice Aunty Ethel. Or even my mother's recipes, something that my Mum made. And I guess in our case, cooking is very much a thing that draws us together. Because my girls both like, perhaps it's subconscious, perhaps it's because I always liked cooking and I was always happy in my kitchen, they absorb some of that because they are likewise. So I guess the recipes are all part of it.⁴⁷

Some women lament a possible loss of foodmaking knowledge through the generations. Duruz argues that such knowledge 're-create[s] [a] mythical past of comfort and stability'. The passing-down of recipes is an attempt by women to ensure that cultural traditions are not lost. Through food, migrant women, in particular, were able to 'cope with stress ... [in their] culturally liminal ... lives'.⁴⁸ Sally has written her recipes down, but her daughters do not cook Maltese food. She states: 'I wrote them down in my book in case they want to do them one day

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when I'm gone. [I've] just got them in a book'.⁴⁹ Lina also expresses the importance of passing down recipes and other skills: 'definitely, because [what]ever you teach your kids, they can teach their kids, although now everybody wants to go out for dinner, you know'.⁵⁰

For some migrants and their children, their traditional foods are imbued with nostalgia.⁵¹ Grace was asked by her sons 'how to do this and how to do that'. She believes that passing on such knowledge is important because it 'brings you close as a family'.⁵² Sometimes daughters showed a lack of interest in cooking the traditional⁵³ cuisines of their mothers — but if daughters did not take up cooking or have an interest in the traditional recipes of the family, it was often acquired by the grandchildren, granddaughters in particular: 'Even the grandchildren ring up and ask for some of the favourite recipes. How to make self-raising flour and plain flour'.⁵⁴ A love of cooking is another reason the women in my study emphasise the importance of intergenerational knowledge: 'one of my ... granddaughters, she really loves cooking, she rings me up, she asks what do I put there, how much you know, things like that, because she loves cooking'.⁵⁵

Renata taught her granddaughter traditional Christmas and Easter recipes from the Ukraine, but she did not insist that her children continue the traditions, as she had concerns about integrating into Australian culture:

They don't want it ... Only on Christmas Eve, we celebrate and cook all Ukrainian food. [Did you pass these recipes down?] They don't want to learn, and I don't teach them. [Do you think it is important to pass them down?] ... If they want to learn that's okay, if they don't want to learn, that's up to them. When we came to Australia, I wanted them to be Australian. I don't care what people think or say, because I saw in Europe many things which went wrong ... When I came to Australia, I thought I wanted them to be Australian, if they want to speak my language, that's okay, if they don't want to, that's okay, I didn't force them.⁵⁶

Similarly, Gabrielle insisted that her son 'integrate' into Australian culture:

It is very important that you bring up your child in such a way that he fits in with society, and [because] he was born here in Western Australia he should be brought up as such, but he should not forget his background, it is very important.⁵⁷

Food practices are one site through which cultural identity is renegotiated by the children of migrant women. For example, Jadzia passes Polish recipes on to her Australian-born daughter, and reconstructs her Polish-Australian identity and illustrates the continuum of negotiating and renegotiating cultural and gendered identity:

I think [the kitchen is] in some ways the centre you know, apart from other things, the language and everything, but eating is one of the cultural things and not just to keep up being Poles, but it's to keep up with the tradition you know, in one's family, I think. It is sort of the link that continues like a trail.⁵⁸

Renata spoke about reading a recipe for Ukrainian food in the *Australian Women's Weekly* in the 1950s:

sometimes I cooked like it said how to cook Ukrainian food, and I nearly died from it. That's what they say to use, vinegar, parsley, celery and capsicum, you never do this with that stuff!⁵⁹

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Renata's story shows the impact migrants had on Australian culture. However, as Sheridan argues in her article discussing the *Australian Women's Weekly* and 'her Migrant Others', the relationship between migrants, food and Anglo-Australians was contradictory.⁶⁰ At one level, the *haute cuisine* of countries such as Greece, Italy and Germany was readily accepted; however, the migrants' dislike of the food they were expected to eat in the migrant camps and their desire to eat their own foods was not understood.⁶¹ Such a contradiction shows again that assimilation was not expected to alter Australian society dramatically:

It is as if non-Anglophone migrants ... are merely instrumental in providing some cultural enrichment, their presence indicated only by stylistic traces in food. In such a 'discourse of enrichment', what is notable is who has the power to deploy it, who has the power to value — not the migrants themselves, but the Anglo-Celtic subjects of Australianness.⁶²

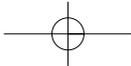
While foodmaking holds significance for the women in maintaining generational and cultural links, it can also express a power relation in both intergenerational and intercultural terms. For migrant women, especially those who have Australian-born daughters-in-law, the power relation is also based on cross-cultural exclusion and inclusion. For example, Australian-born daughters-in-law may be culturally excluded because they do not or cannot cook culturally specific food:

When your son marries an Australian girl, you can't really say, 'You have to learn that', but if she asks me, like when they come I always make something that they like, like beef olives [German dish] ... And when my children come and my daughter-in-law says 'How do you do them?' [beef olives] ... I'm not sort of a fanatic to pass it on.⁶³

In contrast, Mariola feels that foodmaking practices are vital in maintaining cultural knowledge. Her Australian daughter-in-law can cook typical Ukrainian dishes, such as borscht and cabbage rolls: 'that's like everything ... [I] passed to them, you know, and that's very important that they know something about [our culture]'.⁶⁴

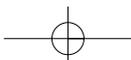
Conclusion

The interweaving of knowledge and practice provides a disjuncture in dualistic knowledge; the women have to know to be able to 'do', yet they have to 'do' in order to know. The women interviewed for this study manifest a type of knowledge that bridges the gap between knowing and doing, forming an interrelationship that is both circular and unified. For these women, foodmaking relies on an embodied practice. Women use cookbooks and recipes as a guide, but they apply their learned skills to make the food. For example, Gabrielle used the memory of her mother's practice as a guide to 'know' what the food should look like, and Ruth used the recipes and pictures in a similar way, but she embellished the recipes to create her own versions of the recipes. Perhaps, in this way, these women transgress the intended use of recipes and cookbooks in a way that is subversive of cookbook discourse; that is, the recipes are used in a way that infused them with the women's own practice. Hence their foodmaking knowledge



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is transformative — it indicates a level of competence and confidence that is only gained with practice. Moreover, these women used cookbooks to record and recall cultural traditions. While their cookbooks acted as a source of inspiration, they also provide an insight into the women's daily lives, the types of meals they cooked for their families and the foods they created for celebrations. Importantly, their cookbooks allowed these women to extend and develop their foodmaking knowledge and provided an opportunity for the women to share their knowledge intergenerationally, passing down and recreating their 'thoughtful practice'.



Notes to pp 82–88

- 45 Betsy Lucal, 'What It Means to Be Gendered Me Life on the Boundaries of a Dichotomous Gender System', *Gender and Society*, vol 13, no 6, 1999.

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- 1 Dorothy, Interview 1998.
- 2 Lisa Heldke, 'Foodmaking as a thoughtful practice' in Dean Curtin and Lisa Heldke (eds), *Cooking, Eating, Thinking: Transformative Philosophies of Food*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1992, p 203.
- 3 Dorothy Smith, *Writing the Social: Critique, Theory, and Investigations*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1999.
- 4 Heldke, loc. cit.
- 5 Heldke, op. cit., p 204.
- 6 *ibid.*
- 7 U Narayan, 'Eating cultures: Incorporation, identity and Indian food' *Dislocating Cultures/Identities, Traditions, and Third-World Feminism*, Routledge, New York, 1997, pp 161–2.
- 8 Heldke, loc. cit.; see also Genevieve Lloyd, *The Man of Reason: 'Male' and 'Female' of Western Philosophy*, Methuen, London, 1984; Sherry Ortner, 'Is female to male as nature is to culture?' in Michelle Rosaldo and L Lamphere (eds), *Women, Culture and Society*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1974, pp 67–87.
- 9 Heldke, *ibid.*, p 205.
- 10 *ibid.*, pp 204–5.
- 11 The interview material used in this article is taken from my PhD thesis entitled, "'It was another skin": The kitchen in 1950s Western Australia'. I conducted oral history interviews between February 1998 and December 1998 with 48 women — 21 Australian-born and 27 migrant women, who were wives, mothers, housewives and homemakers in Western Australia in the 1950s. The average age of the Australian born women in 1950 was 21. The migrant women arrived in Western Australia in the late 1940s and 1950s. There were primarily three ways in which migrant women came to live in Western Australia — as Displaced Persons, through sponsorship by employers or family, or through marriage. The migrant women interviewed were from ethnic groups that, according to the Australian government, were easily assimilable into the Australian culture and 'way of life': Holland, West Germany, East Germany, Austria, Poland, Ukraine and the United Kingdom. There were also women who migrated from countries not actively sought after: Malta, Sri Lanka, India and Pakistan. The ages of the migrant women on arrival varied considerably, from 14–35. The women's class position can be identified as working class or lower middle class. In the 1950s the women lived in rural and urban locations. Pseudonyms have been used to maintain anonymity.
- 12 Janet Theophano, *Eat My Words: Reading Women's Lives through the Cookbooks They Wrote*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2002, p 123.
- 13 Anne L Bower, 'Romanced by cookbooks', *Gastronomica — The Journal of Food and Culture*, vol 4, no 2, Spring 2004, pp 35–42; Rosalind Coward, *Female Desire: Women's Sexuality Today*, Paladin, London, 1984; Jean Duruz, 'Food as nostalgia: Eating the fifties and sixties', *Australian Historical Studies*, vol 30, no 113, October 1999, pp 231–50; Janet Floyd and Laurel Forster, 'The recipe in its cultural contexts' in Janet Floyd and Laurel Forster (eds), *The Recipe Reader: Narratives — Contexts — Traditions*, Ashgate, Aldershot, 2003, pp 1–12; Theophano, *ibid.*
- 14 Tami, Interview 1998.
- 15 Beverley, Interview 1998.
- 16 Theophano, op. cit., p 122.
- 17 The *CWA* and *Golden Wattle* cookbooks are reprinted regularly. The *Golden Wattle* has been reprinted 27 times with the first edition published in 1926. The *CWA* has been reprinted 48 times.
- 18 Margaret Wylie, Mabel Yewers, Margaret Reeves, Doris Gray and Marie McKinnon, *The Golden Wattle Cookbook*, E S Wigg & Son, Belmont, 1984.
- 19 Wylie, et al., p 5.
- 20 Meg, Interview 1998, Australian-born woman.

- 21 Myra, Interview 1998.
- 22 Jessie, Interview 1998.
- 23 Gabrielle, Interview 1998, Austrian woman.
- 24 Pamela, Interview 1998.
- 25 Beata, Interview 1998, Polish woman.
- 26 Carla, Interview 1998.
- 27 Helena, Interview 1998.
- 28 Marlene, Interview 1998.
- 29 Bower, op. cit., p 35.
- 30 Beata, Interview 1998.
- 31 Coward, op. cit.; Elspeth Probyn, *Carnal Appetites: FoodSexIdentities*, Routledge, London, 2000.
- 32 Tami, Interview 1998.
- 33 Carmella, Interview 1998, Italian woman.
- 34 Theophano, op. cit., p 123.
- 35 Dorothy, Interview 1998, Australian-born woman.
- 36 Emily, Interview 1998, Scottish woman.
- 37 Dorothy, Interview 1998.
- 38 E Endrijonas, 'Processed foods from scratch: Cooking for a family in the 1950s' in Sherrie Inness (ed.), *Kitchen Culture in America: Popular Representations of Food, Gender, and Race*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 2001, p 161.
- 39 Myra, Interview 1998.
- 40 Lisa Heldke, 'Recipes for theory making' in Dean Curtin and Lisa Heldke (eds), *Cooking, Eating, Thinking: Transformative Philosophies of Food*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1992, p 257.
- 41 Concetta, Interview 1998.
- 42 Kathleen, Interview 1998, Australian-born woman.
- 43 Myra, Interview 1998.
- 44 Theophano, op. cit., cf. Chapter 3.
- 45 Amelia, Interview 1998, Australian-born woman.
- 46 Floyd and Forster, op. cit., p 7.
- 47 Myra, Interview 1998
- 48 Jean Duruz, 'Haunted Kitchens: Cooking and Remembering', *Gastronomica*, vol 4, no 1, Winter 2004, pp 57–68.
- 49 Sally, Interview 1998.
- 50 Lina, Interview 1998, Italian woman.
- 51 Deborah Lupton, *Food, the Body and the Self*, Sage Publications, London, 1996, p 49
- 52 Grace, Interview 1998, Austrian woman.
- 53 I am using the term 'traditional' to indicate culturally specific food, for example, Sally discusses making felafel. Often traditional food is cooked to celebrate specific occasions such as Christmas and Easter, but it also represents everyday food that may be cooked by migrant women but which is not cooked by Australian-born women who also have their own traditional food.
- 54 Ivy, Interview 1998, Australian-born woman.
- 55 Lina, Interview 1998.
- 56 Renata, Interview 1998.
- 57 Gabrielle, Interview 1998.
- 58 Jadzia, Interview 1998.
- 59 Renata, Interview 1998.
- 60 Susan Sheridan, 'The 'Australian Woman' and her migrant others in the postwar *Australian Women's Weekly*', *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies*, vol 14, no 2, pp 121–32.
- 61 Sheridan, op. cit., p 127.
- 62 Ghassan Hage, *White Nation*, Pluto Press, Sydney, 1998, p 121 in Sheridan, op. cit., p 128.
- 63 Clara, Interview 1998.
- 64 Mariola, Interview 1998.