FEEDING TEMPLE TOWN: A DIGITAL PROJECT EXPLORING FOOD, POLITICS, AND COMMUNITY IN NORTH PHILADELPHIA

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ABSTRACT

Russell Conwell's experiment to educate the Philadelphian working man has grown into a massive university that has transformed the physical, social, and cultural environment of its surrounding North Philadelphia community. Temple University has carefully designed itself as an "urban university" and its presence and growth has had significant costs. Displacement, gentrification, and urban renewal projects have altered the neighborhood to make way for Temple. The relationship between university administration, students and faculty, and community members is negotiated through different avenues, one of which is through food. Food reflects class, culture, gender, labor, urbanization, and it acts as a unique lens into the negative and positive aspects of the new cultural landscape Temple has crafted. The stories shared in this project seek to highlight the hidden narratives that contribute to more visible events. It uncovers hidden labor, the importance of space, and the voices of protest. From the early stages of university development in the 1880s and heavier community presence to the modern-day food trucks, looking at the foodscape in Temple Town will demonstrate how the university and its students interact with the community and culture of Philadelphia and contribute to the image of an urban university. This digital project seeks to create an informative website that explores stories surrounding food on Temple's campus using archival sources and oral histories. This paper concludes with a reflection and exploration of the next phases of the project.

DEDICATION

To Marcia Eggleston,

Whose one of a kind laugh still echoes, and whose

passion for history, books, and knowledge

inspired me to become the historian

I am today.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Temple University had humble beginnings. It was started in the 1880s by a minister, Russell Conwell. Conwell's mission was the betterment of the working man, which would contribute to the advancement of larger society. Wealth and prosperity began with knowledge.[1] To accommodate blue-collar workers, Conwell hosted evening classes starting in a small church on North Broad Street. What began as small meetings has grown exponentially into a massive university that has transformed the physical, social, and cultural environment of the surrounding North Philadelphia community permanently.

When Conwell and his students first began gathering, North Broad Street was the home of sprawling fields and elite mansions. As the city grew around the university, Temple University rebranded itself as an "urban university." Over the decades, the growth of Temple has come at the expense of the surrounding community. Displacement, gentrification, and urban renewal projects have altered the neighborhood to make way for new dormitories, sports fields, medical facilities, and classrooms. Studies have been conducted that explore directly the details of the physical growth of the university, but that growth has far-reaching impacts. There are gaps in understanding of how Temple has created a new cultural landscape, and who is employed to do so. This project seeks to uncover hidden stories of labor, gender, and immigration that connect and complicate the

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[1] Russell Conwell, "Acres of Diamonds," Temple University, https://www.temple.edu/about/history-traditions/acres-diamonds.

relationship that exists between university administration, service workers, and the surrounding community.

Human beings are incredibly complex. Intersections in our identities both differentiate us from one another and unite us. If we peel back the layers, there are experiences as humans that all empathize with. We all need to address our basic needs: food, water, sleep. Some face more economic and structural challenges than others when it comes to meeting these needs. For this project, I used food as a lens to explore the politics of space and access at Temple University.

The need to sustain our life and labor through food lurks behind our choices. There can be no organizing, no protesting, no development if this main need is not met. It is also more than just fuel. It is tied to identity, culture, and community. Temple University, both deliberately and organically, has exploited food to build its campus and culture. Analyzing how food is consumed, offered, exchanged, and changed through the decades of Temple's presence in the area demonstrates how the university and its students interact with the community and culture of Philadelphia to create the image of an urban university. Food historian Warren Belasco stated that food "identifies who we are, where we came from, and what we want to be."[2] This project seeks to explore who Temple and its students are, where they came from, and what they want to be. Answers to these questions through the lens of food studies has outcomes that can be utilized to explore other facets of Temple culture and community.

The production and consumption of food is unquestionably political. It is impacted by ideas of gender, class, race, and power. Finding food can involve a choice,

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[2] Warren Belasco, *Food* (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2008), p. 1.

but other times that choice is just an illusion. Food can be about control, but it can also be a subversive practice. Identity is expressed and formulated through food choices, etiquette, and rituals.[3] The modules of this digital project explore the gendered, racial, and class considerations when it comes to producing, consuming, and access food in North Philadelphia and Temple University. The result of the research shows that vendors, students, and community members have used food and dining spaces to negotiate for a more balanced power dynamic with the ivory tower in their backyard, Temple University. This project invites audiences to ask themselves, is Temple really "The People's University"?

This project began in 2021 during my first semester at Temple. During an introductory public history course, my classmates and I worked on the project *OwlWalk.* This project is a critical walking tour of Temple's campus that uncovers the hidden histories embedded in the built environment. Some of these stories are less apparent than others as their physical structures were demolished to make way for more modern facilities. As a new resident of Philadelphia, I seek to understand the new community I joined. As an aspiring public historian, I also found it necessary to study what was around me.

Historiography

Temple University is a force to be reckoned with in Philadelphia. Many scholars from different fields have addressed the history of Temple and its impacts. Besides his work with Temple University, Russell Conwell was a prominent orator and preacher who

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[3] Belasco, "Why Study Food," in *Food.*

wrote about his experiences in the Civil War. Historians have written extensively about the power of his words, his beliefs, and his imprint on Philadelphia. In 2009, historian James Hilty wrote the first expansive history of Temple University.[4] Hilty's work acted as guide throughout this project but given the more than a century's worth of history he was covering, the level of detail was not as in-depth as my project aimed to be. It is also important to note that Hilty's work was a project undertaken from within the Temple complex, much like my own. His perspective introduces important individuals and events, but it does not pay enough attention to the viewpoints from the neighborhood. It shares a perspective that is in line with the narrative the university wanted to be published. This is not to say that Hilty's work in inaccurate, or that my own work is not coming out of a similar situation. The voices shared in my project, however, seek to balance the scales and offer the perspective of protestors, laborers, and other individuals that would be overlooked in a grand narrative history of the institution.

To find these stories, I conducted my research primarily in the Temple University Libraries Special Collections. The archival material highlighted in my digital project came from the Templana-Conwellana Collection and the Contemporary Culture Collection within the Urban Archives. The opinions of students were gleaned from articles from *The Temple News* and *The Temple Free Press*. The *Temple Free Press*, which was rebranded *The Philadelphia Free Press* in September of 1968, was an alternative student-run newspaper that shared New Left student views. As the university administration censored some of the content of the official school newspaper, the *Free*

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[4] James Hilty and Matthew M. Hanson, *Temple University: 125 Years of Service to Philadelphia, the Nation, and the World* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2009).

Press was a space to express radical opinions about Vietnam, racial discrimination, Philadelphia politics, and more localized campus concerns.[5] The *Free Press* lent an uncensored student opinion to the research, which complemented more curated administrative standpoints expressed in Temple yearbooks, *The Temple News*, the alumni review, and Hilty's history.

More critical work on Temple has been conducted in the field of sociology and urban studies. At the turn of the twentieth century, Temple's small sphere of influence was bordering an industrial district and a wealthy neighborhood. After World War II, veterans cashed in their GI Bills and enrolled at universities in droves across the United States. With Temple's enrollment numbers increasing, the university demolished many of the neighborhood row houses to make room for additional student housing and campus facilities. Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, Temple was primarily a commuter college, but economic and cultural circumstances shifted so that more and more students were seeking options to live close to campus.[6]

The idea of Temple University as a fully urban campus took hold in the 1950s, dramatically decreasing available housing options in the area for non-students as Temple was forced to provide for its growing student population. The Housing Acts of 1949 and 1954 launched a revitalization project throughout the city emphasizing urban renewal. This resulted in the displacement of many Black residents throughout the city, forcing them into public housing or segregated neighborhoods partly formed through a white

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[5] Paul Lyons, *The People of This Generation: The Rise and Fall of the New Left in Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 105.

[6] Hilty and Hanson, *Temple University*, 62.

flight response.[7] The housing crisis was exacerbated and partly created through a shift to post-industrialism throughout the city that led to deeper divisions between race, class, and neighborhoods throughout the city.

Philadelphia's deindustrialization disproportionately affected its Black residents, and it also heightened the competition within the working-class population as real wages declined and housing costs rose.[8] In the 1960s and 1970s, residents of the Yorktown neighborhood dealt with structural inequality and a predatory housing market that had been preparing for university expansion beginning in the 1950s. In 1955, the Philadelphia City Planning Commission designated the area between 12th, 13th, Norris, and Diamond Street as the Northwest Temple Redevelopment Area, contributing urban renewal grant funds to redevelop the deemed blighted 38-acres under Institutional Development District zoning as the "squeeze of the slum area [was] becoming intolerable." [9] Activists at the time called out the need for better educational access, employment, affordable housing options, better relations between the police and Black citizens, and expressed concern that civil rights leaders were failing to address the true needs of citizens across Philadelphia.[10] These tensions were baked into the infrastructure of Temple's campus.

In *The Problem of Jobs: Liberalism, Race, and Deindustrialization in Philadelphia,* Guian McKee explores the effects of deindustrialization through a distinct

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[7] John F. Bauman, *Public Housing, Race, and Renewal: Urban Planning in Philadelphia, 1920-1974* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987).

[8] Carolyn Adams, David Bartelt, David Elesh, and Ira Goldstein, *Philadelphia: Neighborhoods, Division, and Conflict in a Postindustrial City* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993).

[9] Hilty and Hanson, *Temple University*, 109.

[10] Lenora Berson, Alex Rosen, and Kenneth Bancroft Clark, *Case Study of a Riot: The Philadelphia Story* (New York: Institute of Human Relations Press, 1996).

labor perspective.[11] McKee analyzes deindustrialization in the city and explores policies put in place to keep Philadelphia prosperous amidst racial and economic tensions. Like his scholarly peers, McKee extends his study into the 1970s and the conservative turn with Frank Rizzo. McKee compares two programs, the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation (PIDC) and Reverend Leon Sullivan's Opportunities Industrialization Center (OIC). Formed in 1958, the PIDC was created to retain jobs and create new ones to curb deindustrialization. Philadelphia's Black population often did not have access to these positions, despite some of the industries being in primarily Black neighborhoods. With the PIDC and liberal policies failing to account for racial disparities in employment, Reverend Leon Sullivan created the Opportunities Industrialization Center, which incorporated his typical agenda of self-sufficiency and answered to more specific local concerns in Philadelphia. The OIC attempted to provide programming "encompassing educational, vocational, social, psychological, economical, and personal factors," and achieved success in uplifting parts of society previously neglected and facing economic strain, like single mothers.[12] McKee contributes to the discussion surrounding the failings of liberalism in Philadelphia, and his research into economic policy initiatives and how deindustrialization exacerbated civil rights issues adds much to the overall historiography. Understanding the scholarship around Leon Sullivan helps inform my own research into his involvement in the Progress Plaza and food security for Black North Philadelphians.

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[11] Guian A. McKee, *The Problem of Jobs: Liberalism, Race, and Deindustrialization in Philadelphia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).
[12] McKee, *The Problem of Jobs,* 146-165.

In 1965, Temple became a state-affiliated institution and received an influx of funding to expand their physical footprint. Temple began insulating itself from the rest of the community as they shifted into the next stage of development. Rather than close off Temple from the outside world, certain student groups like the Steering Committee for Black Students fought to integrate with the local community, demanding that residents be granted open access to Temple facilities and fighting for the protection of preexisting houses and community structures from Temple's rapid expansion. In particular, they fought for public access to the Mitten Hall Cafeteria.[13] Temple dodged these requests, and student activists staged sit-ins to block customers from dining. Temple's administration finally relented, and public access to Mitten Hall was finally granted. This victory was short-lived, however, as the Mitten Hall cafeteria would soon become obsolete as new spaces rose to take its place.

Recently, scholars have explored further into assessments of development and started to address how this process is differs between urban and rural settings. Davarian Baldwin explored the exploitative relationship between universities and their surrounding neighborhood first in a 2020 article co-authored with Emma Crane and even deeper in *In the Shadow of the Ivory Tower: How Universities are Plundering Our Cities.* Baldwin and Crane investigate how urban investment tied to university campuses impacts the urban poor and neighborhoods of color and coin the term "UniverCities."[14] One of the key arguments in the article that influences my own work on this project is the idea that

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[13] "Black Students Respond," *The Temple Free Press,* March 31, 1969, p. 6, Box 664, Contemporary Culture Collection, Special Collections Research Center, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA.
[14] Davarian L. Baldwin, and Emma S. Crane, "Cities, Racialized Poverty, and Infrastructures of Possibility," *Antipode* 52, no. 2 (March 2020): 367.

liberalism and the "logics of inclusion and opportunity" have resulted in negative impacts

on the people of color living in the neighborhoods these universities are targeting to

include. In *In the Shadow of the Ivory Tower,* Baldwin doubles down on this argument

and demonstrates multiple examples of exploitative relationships that have resulted in the

disenfranchisement of universities neighborhoods. Baldwin argues that universities have

created "low wage labor, increased racial profiling, and the elimination of affordable

housing, retail, and health care."[15] All of these affects can be identified surrounding

Temple. Baldwin's criticism of these systems is complemented by his exploration of

activism and partnerships between students and neighborhood residents that have

countered the negative impacts of univerCities. This projects seeks to highlight the same

two facets that Baldwin focused on in the Temple community. The adverse environment

that Temple University has contributed to is apparent, but the stories of its activists and

change that has been fought for can sometimes be overshadowed by its resident Ivory

Tower.

Baldwin's creation of the term "UniverCity" is continuing the idea that college

towns are a unique type of urban place.[16] Their structure and development creates a

unique social and physical space that operates differently than a typical urban sector.

Other scholars before Baldwin have explored the unique characteristics of both urban and

rural college towns, and it is a significant challenge to fully integrate an urban college

town into the neighborhood around it due to its unique demands and population. There

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[15] Baldwin, Davarian L., *In the Shadow of the Ivory Tower: How Universities Are Plundering Our Cities* (New York: Bold Type Books, 2021), 16.
[16] Blake Gumprecht, *The American College Town* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts, 2008.)

has been a history of tension between the town and gown, and a university campus tends to dominate the culture and environment of the space that surrounds it.[17] Temple did not begin as a land-grant institution, but rather a small organization that was integrated into the space around it. As the university and its demands grew, however, Temple's politics reflect that of other large state universities despite its branding as an urban university designed for the people of Philadelphia.

One component of this project that goes beyond standard discussion of university urban campuses is the exploration of Temple's food trucks. Food trucks exist all over the city of Philadelphia. Temple is not unique in its offerings; there are food trucks at the University of Pennsylvania and Drexel. For Temple, however, the food trucks have become part of their built environment and atmosphere. Some are so embedded into the infrastructure of the street that they cannot be classified as a moveable vehicle anymore. To create an urban, Philadelphia campus, Temple has baked city elements into their infrastructure. Historic row houses are kept as facades but expanded with modern development, and city food trucks become student dining.

Street vending is common practice in both historic and modern times in different cultures around the world. Street food is also something that is defined as ready-to-eat meals that are offered in the streets or "other public spaces."[18] When assessing Temple's street food culture, there is a question of whether Temple's interior streets are truly public spaces. These are city streets that were built before Temple was conceived, yet they are

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[17] Baker-Minkel, Karen, Jason Moody, and Walter Kieser. "Town and Gown." *Economic Development Journal* 3, no. 4 (Fall 2004): 7–15.

[18] Andrzej Kowalczky and Magdalena Kubal-Czerwinska, "Street Food and Food Trucks: Old and New Trends in Urban Gastronomy," In *Gastronomy and Urban Space*, The Urban Book Series, (Switzerland: Springer Cham, 2020).

heavily surveilled and cater to a transient population of students and faculty. Temple's architectural planners and administration have capitalized off the image of a public street marketplace despite creating a privatized microcosm of urbanity that can be more easily controlled.

Food trucks also contribute to the practice of gastronomic tourism.[19] Historically, street vending has created economic opportunities for impoverished residents as side jobs or sources of additional income. Kowalczky and Kubal-Czerwinska argue that street vendors are less likely to be traditional trained chefs, but rather "people with higher education, who speak languages, travel a lot around the world, etc."[20] At Temple, the food vendors support this argument. Temple's vending population consists of immigrants, previous university students, and foodies. Food service can be an avenue for economic advancement, particularly in the case of an independent food truck that can be owned and operated by a sole individual. The diversity of Temple's food truck operators serving both local and international dishes contribute to a trend of "omnivorousness" that values authenticity and exoticism.[21] The cuisine options mold Temple as a destination where students can be gastronomic tourists in a contained environment as they broaden their horizons socially and educationally.

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[19] Joan C. Henderson "Street Food and Gastronomic Tourism." In *The Routledge Handbook of Gastronomic Tourism* (London: Routledge, 2021).

[20] Kowalczky and Kubal-Czerwinska, "Street Food and Food Trucks."

[21] Josée Johnston and Shyon Baumann, "Democracy versus Distinction: A Study of Omnivorousness in Gourmet Food Writing," *American Journal of Sociology* 113, no. 1 (July 2007): 165–204.

Contributors

This project is the result of a partnership between the Center for Public History at Temple University and the Temple University Libraries. Many individuals contributed their thoughts, time, research, and energy to creating different parts of this digital project.

The writers of the website entries were myself, Jacob Wolff (Temple University History Department, PhD), and Clare McCabe (Temple University History Department, PhD). The oral history interviews were produced by students Matthew Headley, Ruthie Freer, and Clare McCabe as part of Dr. Seth Bruggeman's Fall 2022 Managing Public History Course. Some of the voices that are left out of the official Temple publications, the student newspapers, and the secondary literature are the most important ones: the voices of the community and service workers on campus. Their oral history interviews were conducted in an attempt to address the silences in the archives and recover direct experiences of food vendors on campus.

The oral histories were conducted according to standard oral history methods, but interviewing food vendors created a unique challenges. Food vendors live busy lives with hectic work hours. All of the interviews were conducted on Temple's campus, usually within the food truck itself during open hours. Food trucks are small spaces, and the operators are also frontline staff. It is not possible to go to a quiet space in the back of the restaurant while other staff cover the register.

Ideally, this project would be a community partnership. My own positionality within the Temple University system does change the development and result of the project. The goal is not to create a project that is entirely critical of Temple University, but rather to use that criticism to build understanding through community engagement that can lead to change. Rebecca Wingo, Jason Heppler, and Paul Schadewald created the idea of "Digital Community Engagement" or "DiCE" to help direct the future of public

history scholarship.[22] DiCE moves towards a more collaborative framework that points to collective ownership of knowledge and using digital tools to create more equitable scholarship. For this project, oral histories are an opportunity to balance the power dynamic and create a co-authored history that places power more directly in the hands of community partners. The project includes multiple voices from undergraduate and graduate students at Temple, direction from food service operators, and will aim to invite more authors in the future for a comprehensive partnership project. The connections to Temple cannot be avoided, but having a partner within the university system can be beneficial when it comes to enacting change from this scholarship.

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[22] Rebecca S. Wingo, Jason A. Heppler, and Paul Schadewald, eds. *Digital Community Engagement: Partnering Communities with the Academy* (Cincinnati: University of Cincinnati Press, 2020).

CHAPTER 2

STORY SELECTION

Food is a broad topic. Everyone has a connection to it, many people work to create it and serve it, and food access has ramifications in different layers of our lives. It was challenging to trim down the stories I wanted to include. Selecting themes helped focus my work, and in the end, there were certain topics that were cut from the website. In this chapter, I will explore my process and reasonings for selecting the topics and content of each module.

Temple, Taverns, and Temperance

I had to determine a scope for my project. As a starting point, I chose the establishment of Temple College in the 1880s. The establishment of Temple would be the catalytic moment that would forever alter the progression and development of the area, although it started out fairly contained. To tell this early Temple history, I approached the story through the lens of alcohol consumption and spaces. For Philadelphians in the late 19th century, taverns were not only meals were had, but also where business was conducted, identity was negotiated, and relationships were formed. Taverns were political spaces where marginalized or less powerful communities, like the working-class around Temple, could have gathered to organize and strategize.[23] Touching on the history of alcohol on Temple's campus also works to combat a myth that Temple is a dry campus. This myth was something that I heard discussed as a student, despite it not being entirely factual. Although it is not across the board, alcohol and the university experience are

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[23] Christine Sismondo, *America Walks into a Bar: A Spirited History of Taverns and Saloons, Speakeasies, and Grog Shop* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

interconnected as students come of age and consume alcohol as they transition into adulthood.

Philadelphia has a long history of taverns, and in the colonial era these taverns were important centers of political debate, community formation, and social life for working men. The early taverns typically offered lodging options, but taverns in the 19th century had reduced their offerings to alcohol and simple meat-based meals. Following the Civil War, the Temperance Movement began to focus on taverns and saloons as centers of masculine working-class life, and concerned industrialists supported alcohol restrictions to reduce worker intoxication. As masculine social spaces, taverns were just one source of food for Temple's early, predominately male cohorts.[24]

Early gathering spaces like the Punch Bowl Inn on Lamb Tavern Road were replaced by hundreds of different alcohol-centered establishments over the century. Food options in the area would change over the decades as Temple grew, and the introduction of the Prohibition turned taverns into speakeasies. During the Prohibition, the myth that Temple was a dry campus was officially true. Once the Prohibition was repealed, taverns sprung up once again surrounding campus. The neighborhood was growing, too, and discussing the presence of bars also seeks to shed light on the perspective of the neighborhood when it comes to living in proximity to college students. Students advocated for more entertainment and night life options, while community members protested saying the proliferation of bars as "breeding grounds of violence and

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[24] Stephen Nepa, "Taverns," Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia, 2013, https://philadelphiaencyclopedia.org/essays/taverns/.

demoralization, and as a drain on the community's economy." [25] Universities across the United States must reckon with underage drinking and alcohol-related crime, but what can be done when those instances spill into neighborhoods of families and the working class? I ended this module with a question for reflection. As my primary audience is most likely to be Temple students and faculty, I want them to reflect on their own positionality and consider the perspective of their North Philadelphia neighbors. Students should have opportunities to form community and seek entertainment, but it is important to recognize that the presence of alcohol has served as a stressor for community relations. Understanding this history could create new avenues of dialogue for determining how and where it is appropriate to engage in alcoholic activities in respect of Temple's neighbors.

Women and Food Production

The next module I worked took a gendered perspective of food production. When I first started my research into food, I was confronted with many photographs, course catalogs, and advertisements for the Home Economics program. To better understand the complex relationship women have with food in both a private and public role, I shifted my gaze further back into Temple's history. Temple initially started with an all-male cohort, although they did open their classes to women within the first decade of its establishment.[26] Home economics was one of the first entry points for women to pursue

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[25] "A Real Commitment Toward an Urban University," *The Temple Free Press*, September 16, 1968, Box 664, Contemporary Culture Collection, Special Collections Research Center, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA.
[26] Hilty, *125 Years of Service*, 17.

higher education when other programs in the sciences and liberal arts were restricted by gender.[27] To uncover the history of female students at Temple, I had to start with food.

As I started unpacking the history of home economics, I discovered an alternative educational path for women to work with food outside of the classroom. The Pennsylvania Horticulture School for Women established on what would eventually become Temple's Ambler campus. Similar to the home economics program, the Horticulture School demonstrated the commitment to a scientific understanding of food cultivation and production.[28] This school differed significantly from the Home Economics program. It was not women being welcomed into a male-dominated educational space. It was a school created by, taught by, and attended by women. The contrast between the Home Economics programs at Temple's main campus and the development of the Horticulture School for women work together to form a comparative educational framework. The story of Temple begins with Russell Conwell and a group of enthusiastic working men, but the story of the Horticulture School works as a parallel development that centers the role of women.

Women's connection to food on Temple's campus was not just an educational one. The inclusion of the Mitten Hall hostesses reminds readers of different kinds of labor that are connected to food, and how women at Temple could have been used to domesticize dining halls and create a familial environment that employed white mother

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[27] Rima D. Apple, "Liberal Arts or Vocational Training? Home Economics Education for Girls," In *Rethinking Home Economics: Women and the History of a Profession*, 79–95 (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997).

[28] Jenny Rose Carey and Mary Anne Blair Fry, *A Century of Cultivation 1911-2011: 100 Years from the Pennsylvania School of Horticulture for Women to Temple University Ambler* (Langhorne, PA: Temple University by H.G. Services, 2011).

figures. Their roles in creating a university culture and community were not well documented in the archives and demonstrates another instance of women's labor in connection to food being obscured. The connection to Celia Jimenez's oral history interview places their thoughts back into the tangible environment around them. Readers will be provoked to ask questions about what is happening behind the scenes, who is actively building this urban university, and how food spaces might be gendered. Readers should also be prompted to consider how women throughout Temple's history have navigated both educational and working opportunities and how those experiences might differ across gendered, racial, class, or ethnic boundaries.

Mitten Hall: Serving Students for Decades

One of the main sources of food for Temple students are the dining halls. I wanted to explore the development of the dining hall and how these spaces have shifted from localized food space to corporate cafeterias. The changing atmosphere of the Temple dining halls also acts as a origin point for the popularity of the food vendors. Students, displeased with corporate options, prices, and attitudes, turned toward local vendors to fulfill their sustenance needs. Rather than tell an overarching story about each of the dining spaces, I decided to limit this module to one of the oldest and most important: Mitten Hall. Mitten Hall was the first student activities center on campus, and therefore served as one of the most important structures for community formation and student life. There were so many stories of protests occurring in or about Mitten Hall, and I knew that protests would play a significant role in my project. It was natural to focus solely on this space given the stories that spread out from this hub.

Mitten Hall was a core structure before Temple expanded its campus in the 1950s and 1960s. National trends in food history unfolded on Temple's campus in the Mitten Hall dining space. World War II food rationing and civil rights era sit-ins made their appearances in Mitten Hall. When assessing for national significance, it is a historic space that many students on Temple's campus today could overlook in favor of the new Howard Gittis Center. Looking around the modern development of campus today, Mitten Hall might seem like a relic of the past. In that past however, it was the battlegrounds of some of the most radical moments in Temple's history.

This dining space also points to an important local story. At Temple, students made the deliberate effort to connect with and support their surrounding community and formed student associations and political groups that advocated for affirmative action and fair policies for Yorktown. As Temple University settled into its new space, the relationship administration had with its surrounding community was exacerbated by questions of access. Rather than close off Temple from the outside world, certain student groups fought to integrate with the local community, demanding that residents be granted open access to Temple facilities like the Mitten Hall cafeteria. The action group also fought for the protection of pre-existing houses and community structures from Temple's rapid expansion. Their fight, supported by community leaders, resulted in the seminal 1970 Temple University-North Philadelphia Charrette.[29] This series of talks did result in changes to Temple's admission and administrative policy, and it functioned as a platform

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[29] The Temple University Representatives to The North Philadelphia-Temple University Charrette, December 9, 1969.

for community members and students to share their grievances with the university around discriminatory and exploitative practices.

The Charrette resulted in an agreement between Temple, city officials, and neighborhood leaders that dictated the boundaries of Temple's campus and what types of structures could be built in certain locations. The neighborhood was divided into seven blocks, with the community given jurisdiction over five of them. Particularly, four of the community blocks were designated specifically for housing development. For the two blocks under the control of the university, one block was dedicated to retail and housing, and the other was dedicated to campus structures with zoning height restrictions.[30] Altogether, the five blocks given to community control made up thirteen acres. A permanent committee was formed to keep the community involved in all future Temple zoning decisions. The boundaries that were agreed upon in this negotiation are no longer respected by Temple University today.

The Temple University-North Philadelphia Charrette was a unique event that united the North Philadelphia community and Temple University students as a combined force of power that held Temple accountable and temporarily stopped them from moving forward on their plan to raze much of the community that settled the area previously. When it comes to the question about what to do with this historical knowledge, students and Yorktown residents can utilize the Charrette to help inform their activism today. The Charrette is the beginning of the organized fight against Temple Town, and the protests leading up to it marked the rise of students as activists and changemakers when it came to university policy. It connects the protests of today to those that occurred over 50 years

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[30] Keefer, "Politicization of Space," 160.

ago. Student organizations like the Steering Committee for Black Students had a vision for what they wanted their urban university to be.[31] Temple would be a university that supported its neighbors, which offered curriculum that spoke to people of all races and ethnicities, and that truly was "The People's University." The question is whether Temple administration shared that same vision, and whether their definition of a good neighbor was.

The protest shared in the module, the Brown Bag Boycott, was a catalyst for the escalating protests around the Charrette. Students began protesting high prices and stifling cafeteria regulations, but that protest shifted into advocating for the right of free speech as Temple administration cracked down. The Brown Bag Boycott invigorated the student body, and it showed them what it took to launch a successful protest. They were successful in getting cafeteria prices lowered, and they would take this momentum into the fight in 1969 over community concerns.

Complaints over dining hall foods are standard fare for university freshmen, not just at Temple. National corporations like Aramark and Sodexo are entrenched in university campus dining, and this module works to uncover the history and presence of cafeteria food companies. While the corporatization and outsourcing of dining might seem new, the module demonstrates that before the current Aramark contract is a string of corporations back into the 1930s. Complaints over dining hall options have been popping up for over 50 years. As readers move through this module, they might consider

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[31] "Black Students Respond," *The Temple Free Press,* March 31, 1969, p. 6, Box 664, Contemporary Culture Collection, Special Collections Research Center, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA.

the benefits and drawbacks of corporatized food systems and if the demands protestors were asking for in the past have continued to be met by university administration.

Building Appetites, Building Campus

Building Temple University was a process, and that process is ongoing. For the next module, I wanted to specifically focus on development, gentrification, displacement, and growth. I wanted to balance out some perceived criticism of Temple with some focus on the idea of community. The community can refer to the neighborhoods surrounding Temple, but students at Temple also have formulated a strong sense of collective community among their peers. Like the Mitten Hall module, this entry also revolves around questions of access and availability. They are closely linked in that they both touch on the idea of being a good neighbor and the demands of the Charrette, but the Building Appetites module turns to focus more explicitly on food access for the larger community instead of students.

This module starts out with a more light-hearted tone by sharing the story of the annual flour fights. This story will appeal to a more student audience, but it is a reminder that a large bulk of the actors in these histories are students. They might behave in youthful, rambunctious ways. I also found the flour fight photos to be striking and engaging, and I knew I wanted to include them somewhere in this website and showcase a more animated story of community tradition that has been lost over the decades.

The tone for the rest of the module shifts away from the light-hearted flour fight to talk about a growing appetite for land. The Columbia Avenue Riots are a pivotal moment in the history of the area, and I could not leave out a mention. Temple Libraries already has a robust digital exhibit dedicated to this event, however, so I did not want to

spend too much space rehashing the details.[32] The riots contribute to rising tensions in the

neighborhood and give Temple administration more reason to begin insulating

themselves from the public around them. As frustration simmered around Temple, but

Black service workers were also facing discrimination, like the case with waitress Mattie

Cross.[33] Including this story lets the reader consider how people of color working in

service positions at Temple have faced discrimination and dangerous working

environments over the decades, and what has changed since these reports.

For the Charrette, students demanded that community members be able to access

Temple dining facilities. My research then led me to explore the reason behind this

demand. Why did community members want access to dining facilities run by Slater that

hiked up prices, instilled uncomfortable policing tactics, and had questionable quality

food? I then began to analyze food access for the larger neighborhood at the time. The

Fresh Grocer of Progress Plaza on Oxford and N Broad Street is the closest grocery store

to campus and utilized by both students and community members. Tied to the civil rights

movement, I traced the history of that space, Progress Plaza, backwards to Reverend

Leon Sullivan.

Students who live on campus might not consider that their homes are situated in a

food desert. The food options through Temple University create a façade of abundance

and variety, but those options are offered to an insular population. If students are reading

this module, I want them to carefully consider their food maps and how it might differ

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[32] Temple University Libraries. "Civil Rights in a Northern City: Philadelphia,"
n.d. http://northerncity.library.temple.edu/exhibits/show/civil-rights-in-a-northern-city.
[33] "Blacks Blast Racial Firing," *The Temple Free Press,* October 7, 1968, Box
664, Contemporary Culture Collection, Special Collections Research Center, Temple
University, Philadelphia, PA.

from someone who does not have access to Dining Dollars or the Temple meal plan. How food access changes when most of the quick food and grocery options are situated in university spaces that are heavily surveilled. While the Fresh Grocer might not seem like a historic structure, the module brings to light the struggles over the decades both to have a grocery store in the neighborhood, and one that offered affordable, safe food for everyone. Even with the Fresh Grocer, food insecurity is a constant threat, and the abundance of quick service food catered to college students does necessarily equal a healthy abundance.

Meals on Wheels

The module that started this whole project was the Meals on Wheels entry. Dr. Bruggeman's Managing History class focused an entire semester on exploring what a food truck was, and the food trucks on Temple's campus are some of its most unique features. The food trucks make up a core part of Temple's culture, and Freshmen students are taken to food trucks as part of their campus tours. Although it seems like a positive part of Temple's branding, looking into the archives tells a less rosy story. The vendors fought Temple and the city for a right to operate on these specific streets.[34] The archives also revealed that the presence of vendors on campus stretches further back into the past than just the 1960s, and it is continued to a larger Philadelphia cultural practice of street vending.[35]

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[34] Michael Tanenbaum "Temple Students Petition, Vendors Organize to Protect Food Trucks on Campus," *PhillyVoice*, April 24, 2019. https://www.phillyvoice.com/temple-food-trucks-petition-north-philadelphia-city-council-vendors/.

[35] Stephen Nepa, "Street Vendors," Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia, https://philadelphiaencyclopedia.org/essays/street-vendors/.

The module supports modern questions of what it means to be a food truck with historical context and the development of this facet of university life. With newspaper sources, it is actually revealed that vending on campus started as early as 1924.[36] After sharing the stories of early vendors like Walter Johnson and William Bush, the module turns towards two infamous figures in Philadelphia that have played significant roles in city politics and the fight for food vending on Temple's campus. John and Milton Street's legacies are larger than their time at Temple, but their work and fight when it came to discrimination and access is one that is overshadowed. The Street brothers have made controversial choices, but Milton's work with the Black Vendors Association and activism in North Philadelphia demonstrates a nuanced individual that was influential keeping vending a part of campus. Without Milton Street and the Black Vendors Association, the beloved food truck's of today might have never gotten the chance to operate.

The work of Milton Street and the establishment of the 12th Street Food Court also invites the reader to ask how vending on campus is affected by gender, race, ethnicity, immigration status, and age. Pulling up a truck and serving food might seem straightforward to the outsider, but the module reveals the many regulations and rules a food vendor must abide by if they want to keep their spot. It also reaches into the more recent past by including the 2019 protests and the affects of COVID-19 on campus food options. That Temple administration and the City of Philadelphia would have required food trucks to remove their vehicles overnight is an impossible task to accomplish, and

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[36] "Youthful Pretzel Vendor Finds Ready Purchasers," *The Temple News*, December 12, 1924, Special Collections Research Center, Temple University Libraries.

one, if implemented, would have broken the food truck community. The 2019 protest also invokes the spirit of the 1970 Charrette as a more recent example of community-student collective action. With the support of the students, the food trucks were able to fight back against the newest set of unfair regulations. Through food, students and community members were able to form supportive relationships and partnerships that worked to make a positive change that benefited local business and student interests.

Although there was success in fighting against that set of regulations, the COVID-19 pandemic did end up being the breaking point for many food truck operators. When approaching a project about food and dining spaces, the impacts of the pandemic had to be included somewhere. As semi-outdoor structures, I decided that including a discussion about COVID in this module would be appropriate. Oral history narrators also discussed their experiences working through the pandemic and how they survived with little customers and limited university support from their perspective. During the COVID-19 pandemic, large communal dining spaces like the Temple dining halls were closed, leaving students with fewer options.[37] The strains of Temple outsourcing its dining onto the food trucks was felt during the pandemic, as street vendors struggled to navigate the pandemic as small businesses and individuals themselves.

Despite the challenges, students and faculty and vendors maintain close and positive relationships. Connections are formed, and the urban university begins to feel a little bit more navigable as familiar faces serve dishes behind food trucks that cannot

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[37] Cal Setar, "Campus Dining in the Age of COVID-19," *Temple Now*, August 14, 2020. https://news.temple.edu/news/2020-08-14/campus-dining-age-covid-19.

move. Temple creates an oxymoron: an urban environment that somehow stays unchanging.

Other Modules

The next two modules were written by two Temple PhD students, Jacob Wolfe and Clare McCabe and produced in the Fall 2022 semester courses. I decided to leave their modules unedited to let their arguments, tone, and personal research shine through even if the style was different than my modules. Rather than conforming everything to the same mold, having differing voices and styles allows for readers to receive information in a refreshing way. The flexibility is also important for allowing potential new writers to join the project and produce more collaborative scholarship.

Wolfe's module about the Diamond Club focuses on the core themes of access, privatization, and hierarchies on campus. One thing I do not focus on in my modules are the experiences of faculty members. The lavish offerings of the Diamond Club for Temple's chosen few are contrasted with discussions of labor and activism. There are crossovers between food and labor, and Wolfe's article traces a collective struggle for better working conditions. After reading this module, audiences might begin to make connections between labor and food and see collective community struggles that cross boundaries.

The 12th Street Food Courts are a conversion of mobile food trucks into permanent campus infrastructure. Like Wolfe, McCabe's article focuses on questions of access, privilege, control, and incorporation into university bureaucracy. When it comes to restaurants in the pad, Temple enacts more control as a landlord than it can over the food trucks. Although the stationary nature of the 12th Street Food Court might seem

lucrative, it comes with its own headaches and concerns. The more recent pandemic is

touched upon in McCabe's article as well.

CHAPTER 3

THE WEBSITE

One of the main goals of this project was to reach different audiences, and I found the most accessible format to be a website. More than a podcast or a Temple-based walking tour, a website can exist in a multitude of spaces and reach individuals far beyond the boundaries of campus and North Philadelphia. A website is open at all hours, and for many the costs of access are minimal. Given that this project includes oral histories, it had to be designed as a digital presentation from the start. Offering a digital component to the project engages audiences outside of the perimeters of Temple's campus.

When starting to design the project, I asked myself some structural questions to decide which platform would be best suited.[38] I had originally planned for this website to be built on the Omeka platform. This was a new software for me, but I thought that the digital exhibit capabilities of Omeka would showcase these stories well. As I progressed through my research, however, I started to doubt my platform choice. I had archival materials to incorporate, but I felt the aesthetical limitations of Omeka drew the focus away from the contextualized stories. I wanted to create a product that was eye-catching, easy to navigate, and familiar to an average internet user. Omeka is designed to highlight rich digital collections of primary sources, and I found that the sources that built my modules did not require expansive storage or a separate digital archive space.[39] I wanted

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[38] Stefano Morello, "Choosing the Right Platform for Your Digital Archive," *GC Digital Fellows* (blog), March 22, 2021, https://digitalfellows.commons.gc.cuny.edu/2021/03/22/choosing-the-right-platform-for-your-digital-archive/.

[39] Ibid.

my sources to be incorporated directly into my essays, despite some of them having the capability of telling a story on their own.

I decided to move away from industry standard with Omeka and create a Wordpress site, hosted through Temple University. I did face restrictions in design and functionality due to the deal set in place between Wordpress and Temple University, but this was the most affordable option and would allow for me to advertise the site within the Temple system. The plugins available allowed for more creative engagement with the content, and the tagging system created a new path of exploration for site visitors. There is significant maintenance and upkeep requirements for WordPress, but selecting a platform that has a larger user base should ease the burden of keeping the website up to date. I had also previously worked on WordPress sites, so the ease of construction and comfortability with the platform for myself personally was a bonus.

For the design, I chose the official Temple cherry red color. Additionally, red is eye-catching. It can be associated with caution or power, danger or love. I put together the graphic header, which I also hope is enticing. Beyond those aesthetic choices, the rest of the design was limited by the themes available through Temple's Wordpress sites.
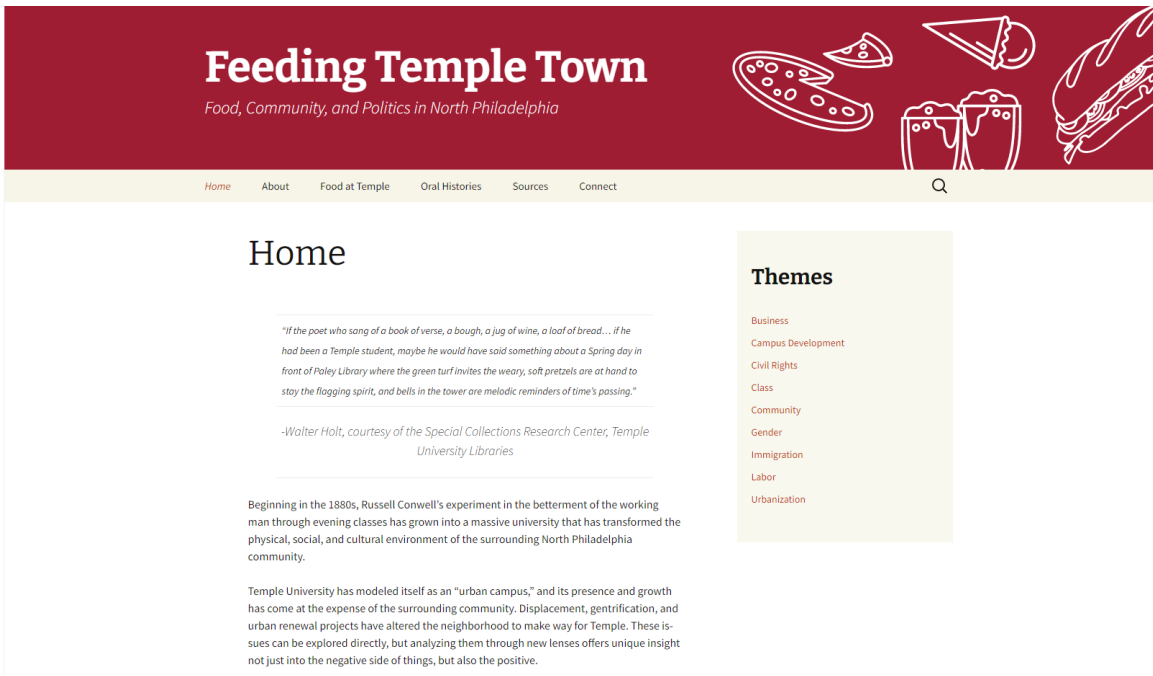
Figure 1. Landing Page of Website, *Feeding Temple Town.*

The "Home" page is the landing page of the website. This page includes a brief

description of the project. Also on the main page is the "Themes" bar. Visitors can

navigate to the "Food at Temple" page to browse through the modules and pick their

preference that way, but I wanted to created an alternative path for navigation based off

of thematic topics. For my themes, I selected Business, Campus Development, Civil

Rights, Class, Community, Gender, Immigration, Labor, and Urbanization. These are

broad themes, and each of the modules incorporates several of these themes. If a visitor

specifically wanted to read entries that focused more directly on gender, they could do so.

Lastly, one of the main core features of the website is the search bar. Visitors can search

for key terms, names, places, or any topic they would like and be directed to the related

content.

If visitors want to learn more about the project and the various parties that have

contributed to the work, they can visit the "About" page. There were multiple classes,

professors, and interviewees that contributed to the results of this project, and their contributions deserve to be recognized. Public history, at its best, is collaborative. Although I produced this website, I am just a part of a larger network of individuals that have been conceptualizing, researching, and working on this idea. As this website is just phase one of a bigger undertaking, this page also has room to grow and include the future names of individuals that will add to this preliminary work.

The main section of the website, "Food at Temple," is where the different modules are housed. There are seven different modules. I started with more than seven, but as I worked through the content it made sense to combine certain topics together. For example, I was planning on creating an entire separate module on how the COVID-19 pandemic impacted both food accessibility and the labor of food service workers on campus. I decided to incorporate the impacts of COVID-19 into the food truck module, and Clare McCabe also mentions the pandemic in her module about the 12th Street Food Court. This does not have to be a permanent decision, however. This website can continue to grow, and in the future the pandemic could become its own separate story as the long-term affects of the pandemic are more realized.

In creating these modules, there was always the question of where to cut the story off. Given the broad thematic topics and wide timeframe, there is almost endless space for different stories, alternative voices, and more content. Some of the modules span the breadth of Temple's history, while others focus on the more recent decades. They include connections to physical spaces on campus, and they each are directly tied to items in Temple Library's Special Collections.

Figure 2. Example of Module Entry

The modules include text and images. The images are items from the Special Collections photograph collection, newspaper articles, yearbook content, and other archival material. The included images support the textual narrative, but also include pieces of the story that are not found textually. I wanted the images to offer a more immersive option where readers could see the people involved, find humor and lightness in the stories, or be confronted with powerful images that conveyed emotions. If a reader wants to skip the text and just browse the supporting photos, they could still get a sense of the pieces of the story.
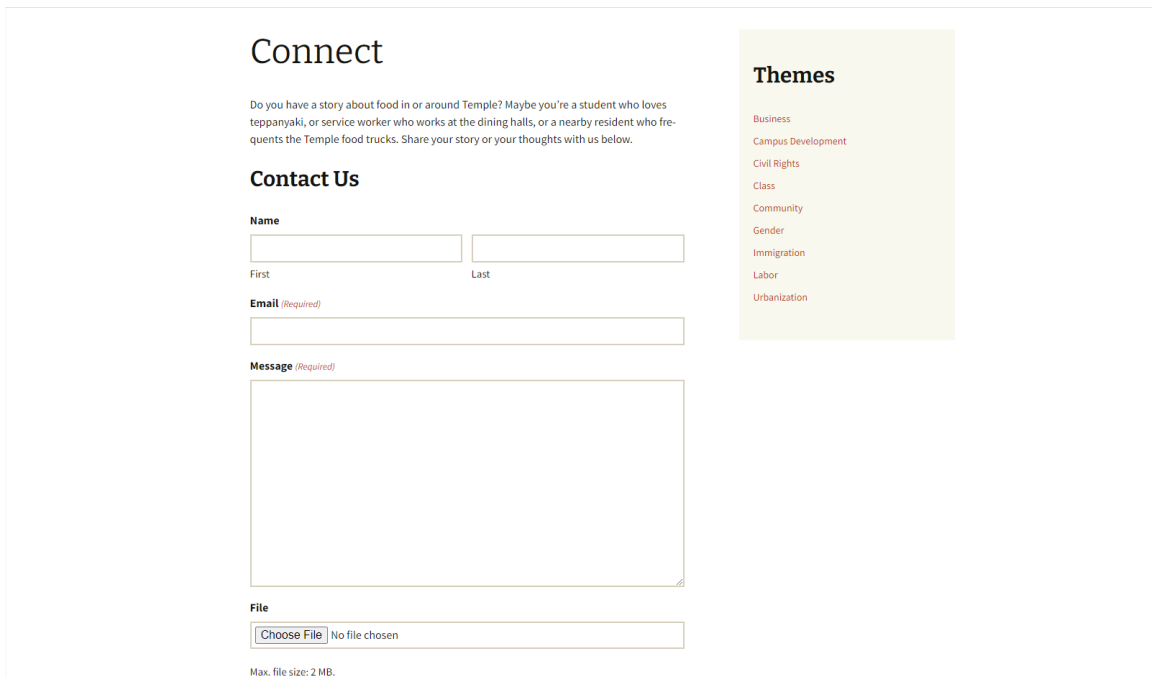
Figure 3. Example of Oral History Entry

The final content section of the website is the oral histories page. Visitors to the website can first navigate to the main page where they can select which interview they would like to explore, or they can find the interview pages through tags or keyword searches. The interviews feature the name of the narrator and their place of business. The audience for this project might have more familiarity with Fame's Famous Pizza than the owner behind the operation, Jim Amzovski. Placing their name at the forefront helps to center the human voices and labor behind these services.

Each oral history entry includes a photo, either modern or historic, a full transcript or indexed listening guide, a link to the hosted interview, and a brief introduction to the interview. The four oral history interviews shared on the website at the time this paper was being written were conducted by three Temple University students.

Next, the website includes a page with relevant secondary sources. If a visitor was interested in exploring the content that informed the research, or if they wanted to get more in-depth knowledge about the various topics, that information is available to them.

This is not an exhaustive list of sources like what is included in this paper. Rather, it is a prioritized list of worthwhile literature to consult.

The last section of the website is one of the most important. I wanted this project to incorporate a space for community input and deliberate expansion. This is not a finished project, but a living collection. This not only supports the Temple Libraries in growing their own institutional knowledge related to this facet of Temple's history, but it also allows for individuals connected and inspired by this work to share their own stories. It is one aspect of the website that seeks to create a more collaborative, co-authored project with community members. The submission form is an acknowledgement that many stories are not preserved in the archives.

Figure 4. The Connect Page.

The featured submission form can be anonymous if a submitter prefers. The only required components are the message and an email address, which can obscure an individual's identity. While it would be more ideal to know who is submitting information to verify accuracy, I also wanted to create a more equitable system of sharing

information. In this situation, it is important to be aware of the power balance between Temple University, its students, and its workers. It is more realistic to recognize that not all stories related to food and labor on campus will be positive, and I wanted to a create a space where people could comfortably share information. The oral history interviews are more public, and there can be a danger in that. If service workers wanted to share a more negative experience, they could do so through this form. Visitors of the site can also comment on any of the pages, if they can log into the platform. This does not allow for anonymous commenting, but this is needed to protect the website from spam content and security breaches.

The existence of this website will continue even after I have graduated. It can also be modified, edited, and expanded as the project grows and changes. The website at this moment in time is only the first iteration of this project. More oral histories will be added. More modules will be introduced to expand understanding. In the next chapter, I will explore more specifically the next steps of this project.

CHAPTER 4

NEXT STEPS

This project has the potential to be expanded in different ways to reach different audiences. The website is just the first presentation of this content, and there are plans to expand the base of this project further. The goal is to increase the number of oral history interviews, convert the content into a physical exhibit, and incorporate this content into the planned *OwlWalk* project.

There are currently only four interviews that make up this oral history collection. There are many factors that contributed to this smaller sample size. The interviews that were conducted each are their own beasts. The two interviews conducted by Clare McCabe with Jim Amzovski and Henry Lam are short interviews that are more journalistic profiles. The interview Ruthie Freer conducted with Celia Jimenez is a dual language interview conducted in both Spanish and English. The interview that Matthew Headley conducted with Peter Shin is the longest interview, but each interview appeals to different audiences and contributes to understanding the overall system that food truck workers on Temple's campus work within. Other interviews were planned, but they fell through for various reasons.

Outside of the field of history, many individuals do not understand the differences between an oral history interview and a journalistic interview. When approaching food truck workers with oral history interview requests, they assumed I was working for Temple university press. People have approached them over the years for interviews and comments so frequently, that there was a real sense of interview burnout expressed by the workers. In one approach, I was met with exasperation and the comment that they had

just given an interview to someone the day before. Despite explaining that I was not a journalist, and that this kind of interview was different, I was unsuccessful in getting an interview. I left my contact information and official interview requests explaining the project with each of the trucks I visited, and at the least this initial request set the stage for further dialogue.

Methodologically, I created a spreadsheet of all the existing food trucks on and around campus. Even creating that definite list was challenging, due to the inherent mutable nature of these businesses. I tracked responses, contact information, and notes about the different trucks and their willingness to sit down for an interview. While my own attempts at getting an interview were unsuccessful, this tracking sheet will continue to be useful for future partners working on advancing the project.

There were food trucks that flat-out refused an interview request. For some, there was a concern of a language barrier. Interview fatigue was apparent. For others, my own position as a Temple figure might have made them wary. As demonstrated in the module about food trucks, the operators and Temple administration have not always been working on the same side. Initially, the university fought against allowing vendors on campus at all. The vendors won that initial fight, only to face a successive series of discrimination, regulation, and exploitation over the decades. During the COVID-19 pandemic, vendors were left to fend for themselves as their primary customers fled campus and did not return for a year. Asking a vendor in 2022 to talk about their experience working under Temple was a big ask. In this case, not all publicity would be good publicity. There is protection in flying under the radar on campus.

My classmates and I reached out to people beyond the food trucks as well. One interview that I was unable to schedule but I think would have contributed a lot of valuable knowledge was with former Philadelphia mayor John Street. As a former food truck vendor and prominent figure within the history of the city, an interview with Street would have been invaluable to the project. Milton Street, the founder of the Black Vendors Association, passed away during this project.[40] The Street brothers played a significant role in the history of vending on campus, and it was partly through Milton's activism that the struggles and discrimination that vendors faced were addressed. Getting an interview with John Street to discuss his brother and this period of their lives is still a goal of this project.

In addition to Street, I would like to expand beyond the food truck operators and collect interviews from individuals related to the stories shared in the modules. Student workers, service workers in Temple facilities, community members that work in the food service industry, nutritionists, house mothers, Temple administration: the potential interview candidates are almost endless. Talking to workers and consumers in all of these different sectors would only expand understanding and grant more personal perspective in what it means to be a part of this system. Everyone has a relationship to food, and with a large group working on this project more interviews could be accomplished.

Gathering the voices and experiences of Yorktown residents certainly propels this sort of project. Due to time constraints, much fatigue of prospective interviewees, and

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[40] Ximena Conde, Chris Brennan, Lynette Hazelton, and Valerie Russ, "T. Milton Street Sr., Former Activist and Politician, Has Died at 83," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, November 28, 2022. https://www.inquirer.com/obituaries/milton-street-dies-philadelphia-mayor-candidate-activist-politician-20221128.html.

being new to investigating Temple's history through food, aspects of my work fall short to in sharing enough perspective and voices from the neighborhood. I aim to reconcile these shortcomings as the project progresses by reaching out to more community organizations to get a broader understanding of how people living adjacent to Temple interact with its services, if at all. Temple University has different community outreach programs, but it would be more illuminating to work with the community removed from a Temple affiliation. After my program is complete, I can shift to working on this project as a member of the Philadelphia community. It would be still a project that involves Temple, but my own circumstances and positionality will change. Moving forward, I would like to explore more deeply the impact of living in a food desert or food swamp, and turn towards projects like community gardens, discount grocery stores, and food fridges to better track individual relationships to acquiring and making food, and how that is affected by the environment Temple has created.

The next phase of the project that I have planned is to pitch a temporary exhibit installed in the exhibit space in the Temple University Charles Library. As much of this project contains artifacts found within Temple's collection, it seems like a perfect opportunity to showcase these artifacts and demonstrate to students, faculty, and visitors how Temple's collections can be utilized to produce new scholarship. Transforming this digital website into an exhibit will help the content reach more people. This space would still exist within a Temple structure that requires a security check-in, but exhibitions at the Charles Library are completely free and open to the public, only limited by business hours. The exhibit would be on display for a few months out of the year.

Figure 5. Example of Exhibit on Display in the Charles Library, July 2022. Photograph by Joseph V. Labolito.

The exhibit space at the Charles Library, as shown in the above photo, has the capability of sharing audio and video components. I would like to utilize this tool to share audio from the oral history interviews. Audio clips that share key or moving moments in interviews could be played as listeners browse through the artifact collection. The space can share all of the photographs from the website and from the result of my research. Given that the exhibit is mainly based in documents and photographs, I could see the exhibit cases displaying all the news articles, yearbooks, advertisements, menus, and other documentary artifacts.

This exhibit is not just one that explores the past, but as has tangible connections to the present. A physical exhibit would allow for the incorporation of material culture elements that are more challenging to work into a digital space. There are so many objects that people interact with when they are purchasing, consuming, or cooking food.

41

The exhibit could highlight different dishware, napkins, utensils, advertisements, takeout boxes, or any other physical objects that could be reutilized to create a more immersive and connective exhibit. Even a stale pretzel from the pretzel vendor by the Bell Tower could work as a temporary display. Granted, a pretzel is not stable entity to put on display, but it would be separated from artifacts and photographs so everything would remain unharmed. The pretzel is just an example of the clear connections this exhibit would have to the space right outside its doors. As this paper is being written, undergraduate students in Dr. Seth C. Bruggeman's Museum History course are brainstorming ways to convert this website into a physical exhibit for their final project. With feedback from those students and their varied reactions, the exhibit will be better suited to appeal to and effectively educate its core audience on campus.

I want this exhibit and this project to connect with and support the communities it references. This exhibit would touch on theoretical considerations of food truck definitions, but also seek to illuminate the labor that food service workers engage in. Within the past ten years, food truck operators have had to fight against impossible regulations, suffer financial losses from the COVID-19 pandemic, and have had to rebrand and reevaluate their business and labor models as students returned to campus. Members of the Temple community should be aware of these struggles and sacrifices, and this exhibit can work towards spreading that awareness. It will shed light not only on the plight of the food vendors, but also bring to light disparities in food access and amenities that Temple offers its students.

There is a lot of content on the website. For the exhibit, I would trim down this content to core stories. There is more space on a digital project to explore different

42

offerings, but for an exhibit you want the narrative not to lose focus or come across as too grandiose. For the exhibit, I would cut back on the modules and focus on the history told in the *Meals on Wheels, Building Appetites, Building Campus,* and *Mitten Hall* modules. I also think elements of the *Women in Food Production* module could be incorporated into the exhibit narrative. For parts of the modules that fall outside of the scope of a tighter exhibit narrative, they can be incorporated into an exterior component that is more directly tied to a physical spot. It is fairly affordable to create QR code signs that could be erected on site to connect people walking by to the website platform or briefer entries. They could also be repurposed for the eventual *OwlWalk* project.

OwlWalk is designed to be a more engaging, thoughtful tour of Temple's campus. As incoming freshmen, prospective students get a tour of all of Temple's hits: the shiny new dormitory, the state of the art library, and the bustling Student Union. For some, the buildings where they live, eat, and attend classes are as far as they will travel. *OwlWalk* will introduce students, faculty, and other audiences to the more obscure histories of their built environment. *OwlWalk* will touch on the Columbia Avenue Riots, the hidden Johnny Ring garden, and the abandoned Burk Mansion on North Broad Street. These events and structures make up part of Temple's campus and history, but their stories are often overlooked or hidden by new development or deliberate choices. The stories of food production and service workers on campus are similarly hidden from dominant awareness. *OwlWalk*, as it is planned now, will have a similar structure to the website that I created, but it would also include a more structured walking tour.

The other concept that started this project initially was creating a podcast. As explored in the previous chapter, creating a podcast as a sole individual was not

impossible, but did pose significant challenges. This podcast was going to be called *OwlTalk* and function as a component of *OwlWalk*. Although this idea did not pan out for this project, I see *OwlTalk* as Phase 3 of this project. Phase 1 is the website and prototype modules, Phase 2 is the physical exhibit and programming, and Phase 3 is the production of *OwlWalk* and *OwlTalk*. Instead of creating a standalone podcast, I think an audio tour that would complement *OwlWalk* modules would be more effective and reach a larger audience.

The audio tour would be curated sound bites that incorporate the oral histories into the narratives. There are different options for how to present these audio stories. One would be physically constructing QR codes stations at physical locations that anyone passing by could scan and listen to. This design would reach a wider audience than producing and advertising something within Temple's community. Having a physical, scannable station would open up the audience to the wider public and anyone who happened to be walking by. This format is also more affective in connecting the physical location people are standing in front of directly to the history they are listening to.

The drawbacks of this format are that QR codes are not permanent installations, and they would require a certain amount of maintenance. In addition to initial investment in printing and mountain stations, they would need to be monitored for damage and any necessary replacements. Within Temple's campus, monitoring these stations might be more achievable. The *OwlWalk* initial planning did include some locations on the outskirts of Temple's campus, like the Burk Mansion.

Removing the physical component, the audio tour could live virtually connected to the *OwlWalk* platform. Rather than picking up audiences off the street, the audience

would be slightly more limited to one that Temple could advertise to from the start. Keeping things digital would mitigate cost and maintenance concerns, however.

The project as it stands is largely next steps. Knowing what the proper path is, and what the most efficient and effective path for communicating these stories is, will become clearer as the project progresses. In order to gauge the quality of this project, feedback is necessary. This website and a potential exhibit will be pitched to the library, and they will serve as expert judges on whether this is a worthy undertaking. The other important feedback will be coming from Temple's undergraduate Museum Studies course, who will be evaluating the website and contributing their own ideas on how to convert these modules into an exhibit. As part of one of the core audiences, their ideas and opinions in this design phase will be invaluable. Although there are a lot of steps ahead, the project shows true promise and can continue to grow into something more compelling.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

In one of America's largest east coast cities, there is a mini pocket of urbanity that Temple has crafted. This design is not solely the work of Temple planners, however. Students, faculty, food vendors, staff, and neighbors all have a role to play in creating the campus culture and environment. This has resulted in positive change, but the creation of this urban university has also contributed to the destruction of the natural urban environment around it.

This project began with a question of trying to understand the economic, spatial, and cultural impacts that Temple University has had on North Philadelphia. It then transformed into a project that utilizes food as a lens to explore that question. Through the examples in this digital project and paper, meals and dining spaces are used to negotiate access, equity, and labor. The way individuals interact with and view their connection to food is impacted by race, ethnicity, gender, age, and class. Food and eating can often be underrepresented in the archives or not interrogated critically. When considering what happens around food, stories of activism and community shine through in new ways. Approaching a project through the lens of food allows researchers to view the archives in a different way than through more traditional cross sections.

The fights that happened in the 1960s and 1970s are similar to ones that happen on campus today. Community access is still something that is being debated behind closed doors. On March 22, 2023, Temple administration closed the Morgan Hall Food

Court to the "general public" from 2-5pm Monday through Friday.[41] Morgan Hall is situated right on North Broad Street, and the restriction was announced "for the time being." This announcement happened after a fight broke out in the food court, but this time period disproportionately affects minors getting out of school. If a member of the community wants to visit the Panda Express, they will have to be admitted by someone with a Temple ID. Much like the Diamond Club tiers of access that only allowed students to enter with a faculty member, Temple's neighbors are being forced to work within a system of hierarchy and restriction if they want to patronize fast food restaurants in the area.

The project has clear and unfortunate connections to issues affecting campus today. It also illuminates stories of solidarity and progress. The reach of the project will continue to expand with each phase, and the arguments will become more streamlined and accessible. Feedback from different audiences will help the project become stronger. As a public history project, it should be collaborative and accessible. More voices and scholars will be added to the project in each of the different phases, and that will work to uncover more relevant and informative histories that have been obscured or overlooked. To make this project the most effective, more oral histories are needed. The stories of Temple's food service operators have a historical and personal value. As it stands, the project stands as a foundational base that demonstrates how approaching the archives through a new lens can lead to new ways to analyze a relationship and include more diverse voices.

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[41] Michael D. Scales, "Recent Changes to Morgan Hall Food Court Operators," Email, 2023.

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