

Mapping digital foodscapes: digital food influencers and the grammars of good food

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Mapping Digital Foodscapes: Digital Food Influencers and the Grammars of Good Food

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Abstract

Drawing on recent debates around food, space and digital media, this paper introduces and develops the concepts of the *digital foodscape* and ‘good’ food *grammars*. Through a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the digital platforms, discourses and personas, we investigate the ways a key set of *digital food influencers* (DFIs) construct, curate and share the meanings of good food. We first explore who these influencers are, describe what platforms they inhabit, how the variable social media affordances work through these platforms and the notions of good food they construct. We then focus specifically on DFIs’ communicative practices on Twitter to analyse the core discourses DFIs produce and those that are taken up by audiences through re-tweets and likes as well as the re-tweeted tweets of DFIs. Overall, our findings suggest that first, good food grammars are being constructed by rule setters beyond the already well-established food personalities and celebrity chefs of the UK’s foodscape. Yet, these grammars also re-inscribe a form of white, hetero-normative middle- and upper- class privilege that produces a particular grammars of good food. Second, different social media and digital platforms provide space for diverse good food grammars given their variable affordances. Twitter, in particular, is the place where the grammars of

DFIs take on non-food themes such as self-empowerment, inspiration, charity campaigning and awareness raising. Third, the notions of good food in DFI grammars revolve around a range of constructions, with the most elevated related to ‘clean’ eating and/or ‘clean’ lifestyles that combined healthy, ‘free from’ diets with fitness regimes and expand DFI grammars - and ultimately their brands – into a more holistic lifestyle brand. This paper’s initial empirical and conceptual foray into digital foodscapes and DFIs opens up space for further research on food and digital media within Geography and beyond.

KEYWORDS: Digital Foodscapes, Digital Food Influencers, Media Geographies, The Cultural Politics of Food, Discourse Analysis, United Kingdom

1. Introduction

The worlds of food – and their geographies – envisioned by Morgan et al. (2006) over a decade ago have rapidly changed. Today, as celebrity chefs tweet recipes to their millions of followers, as another ‘how to’ cooking instructional video is uploaded to YouTube, as a new ‘get clean’ diet is posted on Facebook and goes viral, food has become thoroughly digitized. Indeed, as a core component to the so-called global ‘digital turn’ in contemporary societies (Ash et al., 2016), digitized food – in all its forms and functions – has colonized all corners and platforms of the Internet and played a key role in facilitating the construction of contemporary digital societies and food-based capitalism. Food’s multitudes, as Mol (2008; see also Leer and Povlsen, 2016) has it, are now even more multitudinous as they are turned into bits and bytes, posted, shared, liked, re-tweeted, Instagrammed and ‘Snapped’ to then (sometimes) appear to us on our plates. This emplacement of food into and out of cyberspace has considerable implications for how we not only understand food and the digitization of our culinary lives, but also food’s shifting geographies and its spatial characteristics.

The spaces of digital food are vast, with many voices, some of whom become more dominant than others in exercising influence and power. While recent research emphasizes

the fundamental role of the digital in reshaping our relationship with food (e.g. Lewis, 2020; Schneider et al., 2018), little is known in detail about who these dominant digital voices are that inhabit these *digital foodscapes*—as we call them—and steer their development. To understand the emerging spaces of digital foodscapes, how they grow and circulate and how they influence and create affective relationships with audiences requires a careful empirical approach that maps out these dominant digital actors and examines *what* they say and *how* they say it. Understanding how dominant voices operate across digital foodscapes, what kinds of discursive resources they deploy and curate and how they use these discourses to inhabit and grow these spaces is essential if we want to understand how the normative ideas—or, as here, ‘good’ food *grammars*—of what we should eat, cook and how we should live our lives are created, curated, disseminated and bounded across the diversity of digital foodscapes.

Positioned within the context of recent debates in Geography and Food Studies, this paper develops the concept of the digital foodscape through an analysis of how digital food media are being created and curated by a distinct grouping of online food voices who predominately live and work in the UK. It endeavors to address and explore three core research questions: First, *who are these influential digital food voices?* Second, *how do these voices utilize the affordances of the digital to create and curate digital foodscapes?* And, third, *what kind of norms and practices (i.e. grammars) emerge and circulate as a consequence of the online food ‘work’ of these elevated digital voices?*

Importantly, we see digital foodscapes as thoroughly geographical: they are relational spaces (e.g. Massey, 2005; Murdoch, 2006; Whatmore, 2002) that blur the distinction of our offline and online lives and the often indistinguishable kinetic and digital places we inhabit, perform and connect in and to. They are relationally material—in the physical networks, servers, platforms and screens that supply food-related digital content—and semiotic in the images, texts, meanings and politics emplaced for audiences in digital space. Digital

foodscapes, from Twitter profiles and posts, to Facebook and Instagram feeds, to websites, blogs and message boards, are material semiotic ‘places of curation’ designed for rolling performances of identities, brands, personalities and, of course, value generation. How and what we should be buying, cooking and eating—and looking at and ‘knowing’—is curated, often, by powerful and influential food actors in ways that equally curate the digital spaces and places they inhabit through the opportunities and boundaries afforded to these actors by digital technologies and platforms. These actors are central to the creation of digital foodscapes: Any digital platforms without creators and curators, in addition to users and sharers, are simply useless. Furthermore, unlike cookbooks and more traditional media formats such as television which are more fastidiously curated, ‘fixed’ and highly controlled (Johnston et al, 2014), digital foodscapes afford their users with possibilities to create more immediate and affective content not restricted by rules and practices of traditional media gatekeepers and authorities (e.g. media producers, journalists, editors, editorial boards with codes and practices).

Central to our theorizing of digital foodscapes are the notions of *digital food influencers* (DFIs) and that of *grammars*. Drawing specifically on Johnston and Goodman (2015), we understand DFIs to be ‘food celebrities’ who actively and routinely engage in communication about food in digital media and work to attract wider audiences and achieve a certain level of appeal and fame. While DFIs are the key actors who inhabit a substantial portion of the flourishing digital foodscape, grammars are the set of norms and rules that these actors, assisted by digital affordances, develop to curate and expand those spaces. Our understanding of grammar therefore goes beyond its traditional definition as a set of language structures codified in grammar books and imposed on the curriculum by educational authorities. Building on Bicchieri’s (2006: x) notion of the grammars of society, here we conceptualize the grammar of digital foodscapes as a set of norms and practices that emerge not from a state

authority, but from the “decentralized interactions of agents”, i.e. the DFIs, some of whom seem to come from ‘nowhere’ to, in a short space of time, begin to interact with wider audiences and start to dominate the digital foodscape. Through digital affordances and the use of specific communicative resources (e.g. words, graphics, images) that create processual *regularity*¹, these DFIs set in motion normative practices that contribute to the creation of larger orders of expectations, meanings, knowledges or, in short, particular ‘truth discourses’ (Foucault, 1972; cf. Boykoff et al., 2009) about not just what to eat but, as we show in our analysis, *how to be* in life. Through the analysis of the discourses that DFIs regularly circulate and promote, we can identify these sets of general grammars in relation to what ‘good’ food and ‘the good life’ are that then contribute to the creation of particular kinds of digital foodscapes populated by particular DFIs.

The paper continues as follows. First, we briefly explore the key debates that situate our contributions in this paper. We target these debates in particular to not just bring them into conversation in novel ways, but to allow us to set up future research and theorizations that can build on this paper across questions of the digital, food, affect, gendered performances, value generation and audience impacts through the geographical lenses of space and place. Second, we discuss our empirical approach to data collection and analysis in the context of UK digital foodscapes. In particular we explain our use of Twitter analytics and data analysis procedures underpinned by techniques of content and discourse analysis. We then turn to what we argue is one of the first descriptive analyses of the spaces and places of digital foodscapes and the influencers who inhabit them. We initially identify who these influencers are, then explore the platforms they inhabit, how the variable social media affordances ‘work’

¹Butler (1990: 145) reminds us that normative hegemonic practices become such not through coercion or overt imposition but through means of persuasion and iteration or in her words through “a regulated process of repetition”. Iterations, whether explicit or implicit, contribute then to the formation of dominant, powerful and taken-for-granted ways of thinking and behaving in a kind of habitus that is both consciously and unconsciously produced and reproduced

through these platforms and the notions of good food they construct and share. The next section hones in specifically on Twitter to analyze the core discourses DFIs produce and those that are taken up by audiences through re-tweets and likes. We identify and explore the eight dominant thematical grammars that create these digital foodscapes and circulate through the affordances of Twitter. The paper then analyses the series of dominant themes that DFIs themselves retweeted, suggesting a series of causes and concerns they wished to be associated with or promote. We conclude with suggestions for further research on digital foodscapes for geographers and others interested in food politics and digital space.

2. Situating digital foodscapes and digital food influencers

In developing this notion of the digital foodscape and analyzing DFIs, this paper builds on a series of related, although hitherto, separate debates within Geography and beyond. The first is the growing interest in the geographies of media and communication supported by a vast body of work in media and cultural studies, such as Berger's (2008 [1972]) 'ways of seeing' and Appadurai's (1996) broad notion of the 'mediascape'. As Burgess and Gold (1985: 1) claimed over three decades ago,

the media have been on the periphery of geographical inquiry for too long . . . The institutions and practices that compromise the media have a significance that demands our attention. They are an integral part of popular culture and, as such, are an essential element in moulding individual and social experiences of the world and in shaping the relationship between people and place.

Over time, representative media and communications research in Geography has focused on the media and environment (Burgess, 1990; Burgess et al., 1998) and specifically climate change (e.g. Boykoff, 2011; Carvahlo and Burgess, 2005; Oneil and Smith, 2014; Smith et al., 2018) and what Goodman et al. (2016) call 'spectacular environmentalisms'. Most relevant to this paper – but analyzing key influencers of a different kind and in differing

media and communication contexts – recent research has focused on the mediatized ‘celebritization’ of two crucial areas of society including ‘environmental celebrities’ (e.g. Anderson, 2011; Alexander, 2013; Boykoff and Goodman, 2009; Brockington, 2009; Goodman and Littler, 2013; Goodman, 2018) and the celebritization of humanitarianism and development (e.g. Brockington, 2014; Goodman, 2010; Goodman and Barnes, 2013; Richey, 2016; Scott, 2014). Here, we look to build on these previous articulations of the celebritization of society but also move into the specifically novel – and as crucial – terrains of digitized celebritized foodscapes and the normative ideas these critical figures construct around notions of good food and wellbeing in online settings.

The second body of research relevant to this paper considers work on the ‘digital turn’ by Ash et al. (2018), specifically the growing attention given to social media. For example, Kitchin et al. (2013) and Sandover et al. (2018) analyze the ways in which social media create public geographies through dynamic communication pathways, empowerment and their ability to facilitate interventions – albeit small – on the mediascape. Büscher’s (2014; Buscher et al., 2017) research and that of his colleagues (*Geoforum*, 2017) on ‘Nature 2.0’ explore representations of nature and the politics of conservation that have colonized digital spaces and places. Theorized through the lens of critical political ecology, Nature 2.0 as a concept encapsulates the ways that ‘new online media transform and influence (re)imaginings and understandings of (nonhuman and human) nature’ (Büscher et al., 2017: 111). This focus on inequalities and the relations of power in digital space – namely in the ability of powerful actors to craft particular representations for specific ends – in Büscher’s ‘digital naturescapes’ and Ash et al.’s accounting of the geographies of the digital animates much of our description and analysis of the digital foodscapes DFIs create, share and react to.

The final set of debates this paper builds on are those related to the ‘mediatization’ of food coming from food geographers and food studies scholars traversing the media and cultural

studies of food. Drawing specifically on Foucault, analysis has focused on the ‘mediated biopolitics’ of food media’s lively ‘truth discourses’ (Goodman et al., 2017) and its ‘heterotopias’ in the ‘relationships between practice, distinction, food and media’ (Leer and Povlson, 2016: 1; see also De Solier, 2013; Bradley, 2016). The figure of the ‘foodie’ has also been explored (e.g. Johnston and Baumann, 2015) as has that of the ‘food celebrity’ as Johnston and Goodman (2015) call them. These are food media actors – including but not limited to celebrity chefs – who have developed distinct and elevated media voices about food and who often have a pedagogical role in teaching audiences about what to eat (e.g. Barnes, 2017; Rousseau, 2012, 2015; Piper, 2015; Bell et al., 2017; Hollows and Jones, 2010; Nacarrato and Lebasco, 2012; Doyle, 2016). Food celebrities and wider food-based lifestyle media (Lewis, 2014; Lewis and Huber, 2015) have opened up novel spaces in the relationalities of food and society and some, like Jamie Oliver, Gordon Ramsey and shows like *MasterChef*, routinely travel across global mediascapes. Importantly, as analyzed here, the rise of post-broadcast (Tay and Turner, 2008) digital media has meant that these more ‘traditional’ TV-based food celebrities have not only carved out digital spaces to talk about good food, but many have been eclipsed by or are in competition with the likes of food vloggers, bloggers and other personalities who originated in these digital food landscapes and then move into ‘offline’ spaces. In essence, the genesis and growth of digital foodscapes has been relational across online, digital environments and those of ‘real life’, earlier TV food celebrities. It is the aim of our study to map out more precisely these relationalities and ‘competition’ for the digital foodscapes in the context of the UK.

An expanding area of analysis – and one that sits at the very center of this paper – is that on digital food cultures and the politics these evince. Led by Lewis’s (2020) volume on digital food and Lupton’s (2018; 2019; see also De Solier, 2018) writings on issues of participation, platform convergence and big data commodification in digital foodscapes,

scholars have looked to apply feminist analytics to food blogging (Rodney et al., 2017), explore the social media networks of competitive eaters (Abbots and Attala, 2017) and understand the affective and emotional registers of digital food platforms such as FarmDrop and Farm Hack (Carolan, 2017). Others have worked to critically assess the online/offline ‘ontological experiments’ and ‘connective actions’ of digital food activism (Schneider et al., 2018; see also) and, equally, critique the very same instances of this digital food activism as the anemic and tone-deaf consumer biopolitics of online commentary (Guthman and Brown, 2016). Twitter, in particular has come under scrutiny – but in ways more limited than the present study – with Barnes (2017) analyzing the ways that the social media platform allows audiences to ‘talk back’ to celebrity chefs about not just their shared recipes but also the politicized statements they often make about good food. For Rousseau (2012: 97), Twitter as ‘social media provides us with so many more virtual locations for thinking about food, and for expressing those thoughts. As one writer put it, “a social network is not a product; it’s a *place*’ (Manjoo, 2011; emphasis in original). With food on the brain, and in near constant demand by our bellies, it is a place we “#occupy with gusto”. Showing and analyzing how these growing digital places, and indeed established digital foodscapes are occupied and developed by DFIs and what kind of good food grammars they create and disseminate is the focus of this paper.

3. Approaching digital foodscapes and food influencers

Our methodology follows a two-tier approach that combines both quantitative and qualitative procedures of data collection and analysis in order to map out the digital foodscape, its main actors and grammars. In contrast to previous research on digital spaces which often relies on online observations that can be potentially influenced by researcher’s

past online searches, our approach is algorithm independent; it can be replicated to investigate digital foodscapes and DFIs in settings other than the UK.

For our analysis, we decided to focus on DFIs who began their food-influencing activities in the UK and who predominantly live and work in a UK-context. In selecting the UK, we were motivated by the fact that many British food influencers have a wider reach beyond the UK with some operating as international or global food celebrities. However, narrowing our study to DFIs hailing from the UK allows us to ‘bound’ our data collection and detailed analysis to one specific set of DFIs who, nonetheless often have a large global presence and impact and who speak to a global, if predominately, English-speaking audience.²

In order to identify the key digital food influencers in the UK context, we started with a list of the 100 top most influential people in food in the UK produced by the agency Telegraph Hill³. We scrutinized the online behavior of all the 100 food personalities by checking their websites and examining digital platforms that they were using at the point of data collection and how often they used them. Since we were interested in DFIs, that is, only in those food personalities who engage *actively* and *routinely* with *diverse digital media platforms* to do food work, the following two criteria were applied to identify DFIs:

- 1) Engagement with diverse digital media was defined as the use of at least three different digital media platforms technologies;
- 2) Active and routine use was considered as having produced at least 1,000 posts on each of the three platforms at the time of data collection (May-July 2017) and routinely posting new content on them at least twice a week.

Considering these criteria, we identified 33 DFIs out of the 100 food personalities included in the Telegraph Hill list. To enable us to explore the extent of their digital influence that these

² In addition, we both live and work in the UK and are most familiar with UK digital foodscapes.

³ The full list can be obtained from: <https://marcommnews.com/telegraph-hill-creates-list-of-the-uks-most-influential-foodies/> (last access 10 November 2019).

33 DFIs exert, we focused specifically on Twitter metrics, since all of them have a Twitter account and they use it routinely. In particular, we feel that Twitter's extensive use by DFIs and the platform's affordance of flexibility in the context of food discourses, their dissemination and potential affective relationalities requires explicit attention in order to understand and analyze the grammars of good food curated by DFIs.

There are three main ways in which digital influence can be measured using Twitter metrics: 1) the number of followers, 2) retweets and 3) likes⁴. Whereas the number of followers is a good indicator of the size of an account's digital audience and can tell us something about the popularity of a tweet⁵, retweeting and liking can point to messages that have a wider resonance. While the magnitude of the uptake and visibility can be measured by identifying the number of retweets and likes (Vargo, 2016), exploring the contents of the most popular retweets and most liked messages can offer insights into the kinds of ideas and discourses that are particularly popular. There is, however, a fine distinction between retweeting and liking. Likes on Twitter are important indicators of appreciation and acknowledgment signaling an affective stance towards the message conveyed in a post (Beevole, 2014). Yet, users may like a post but not retweet it because the content might not entirely fit their own profile or the kind of impressions that they want to display and share; a retweet comes with a sharing function, which means that it appears automatically on the retweeter's profile. This, in turn, enhances the visibility of the retweet and the message that it conveys (Vargo, 2016). It also makes retweeting a stronger indicator of involvement because it shows that retweeter engaged publicly with the content of the retweet often indicating and sharing public affiliation and/or loyalty (boyd et al., 2010). Moreover, the practice of retweeting is essentially a practice of repeating and hence retweets can signal ideas and

⁴ The like button replaced the favourite function in 2015) (cf. Grčar et al., 2017)

⁵ Tweep is a term used to refer to the person who tweets.

beliefs that have become or are becoming dominant and possibly normative. In terms of DFIs' communicative online practices, having their own posts retweeted indicates ideas and discourses around food and other concerns that gain wider appreciation by digital audiences and online networks. Equally, the posts that the DFIs themselves retweet can show the kind of affiliations and views that they subscribe to thus shedding light on communicative practices and discourses that they engage with or want to be seen as affiliated with. We thus used Twitter metrics to establish the digital status of the DFIs. Using the number of followers on Twitter, we ranked the 33 food personalities to identify DFIs with the largest digital audiences. We also used the like metrics to establish 'the most liked' or 'appreciated' DFIs by considering the total number of likes that their accounts received by the end of the data collection (end of July 2017).

In order to understand who these personalities are and what kind of notions of food they endorse and try to promote, we scrutinized their professional websites, specifically the 'About me/About us' or 'My Philosophy' sections, which can be seen as a kind of mission statements and offer insights into DFIs' professional biographies and often explicitly highlight the kind of food diet or food preference that they follow.⁶ If the latter was not explicitly stated, we additionally scrutinized their websites for their food preference based on the type of food or ingredients that they either include or exclude (e.g. generally healthy food, vegetarian, pescatarian, vegan, paleo-diet or 'clean' eating) with which the DFIs identify and which they try to promote. If no particular food diet or trend could be identified, then the dominant food activity in which the DFI engaged was classified (e.g. general cooking, baking, cooking on a budget, weight loss, cooking ethically).

⁶ This is a similar form of data used by Sexton et al. (2019) to explore and analyse the future of food as framed by alternative protein corporations.

In order to shed light on the kind of messages and discourses around food produced by the DFIs that are particularly popular and ‘taken up’ more widely, we performed a qualitative analysis of the 100 most retweeted and 100 most liked posts produced by the top 10 ‘most liked’ DFIs during the process of data collection and analysis. Using a python script, we first retrieved historical tweets that the top 10 DFIs produced until May 2017. Because Twitter allowed us to download only a proportion of tweets produced by an account, we could retrieve around 3,000 tweets per DFI and the total number of tweets that we obtained was 108,373. We deemed this size sufficient for further analysis as it covered approximately 17% of all tweets that the DFIs produced until May 2017⁷. For each tweet, we downloaded the text, the time of posting as well as its retweet count and like count (how many likes it received). All data was stored in an excel spreadsheet. Using the sort function, we sorted the tweets in accordance with their retweet and like counts, which allowed us to identify the 100 most retweeted and 100 most liked posts. Subsequently, we analyzed these tweets by drawing on the techniques of content analysis (Krippendorff 2019) and linguistic discourse analysis (Jones 2019). Content analysis allow us to identify themes present in our data sets, while the linguistic discourse analysis focuses our attention on language use and linguistic devices (e.g. pronouns, metaphors) that underlie the construction of meanings and relationships in discourse. We proceeded by manually coding topics that the tweets conveyed with the coding developed inductively and reiteratively; first the two researchers coded the data independently and then the results were compared, and differences resolved. In this way, eight dominant themes were identified. Subsequently and drawing on elements of a linguistic discourse analysis, we examined some of the linguistic devices used to construct discourses and relationships with and around food. In order to see the kind of topics and messages with

⁷ The total number of tweets that the 33 DFIs produced until May 2017 was publicly available on their Twitter accounts. The total was 648,189.

which the DFIs themselves affiliate, we also analyzed in more detail their retweeting practices. We did so by qualitatively coding the top 100 posts that they themselves retweeted during the time of data collection. The same analytical procedures as above were adopted.

4. Digital foodscape food influencers, platforms and constructions of good food

4.1 It's no longer just Jamie, Gordon and Nigella: Who are the UK's Digital Food Influencers?

Using the criteria outlined in the Methodology section, we identified 33 food personalities in the UK who we deemed to be DFIs (see Table 1).

Insert Table 1 here

Nearly half of them came into prominence by initially using digital media to write about food on blogs or vlogs to talk and visually demonstrate their recipes and food ideas in videos on YouTube or their websites (see Figure 1). We might think of them as *digital foodscape originalists*. These include personalities such as Ella Mills (known as Deliciously Ella), Izy Hossack, Jasmine and Melissa Hemsley, Madeleine Shaw, Natasha Corran (Honestly Health) and Joe Wicks (TheBodyCoach)⁸. The second largest group are well-known chefs who have an established profile in the UK food scene. Most of them came to fame through traditional media outlets including TV food programs and cookbooks. For them, digital media are simply an extension of their offline profiles and brands. Celebrity chefs such as Jamie Oliver, Gordon Ramsay, Yotam Ottolengi and Gennaro Contaldo belong to this group. There are also

⁸ In 2017, Forbes named Joe Wicks as one of the top world influencers in the domain of fitness, <https://www.forbes.com/top-influencers/fitness/#73d89c4ff690>

three TV food personalities who were not trained as chefs but who are now prominent digital food voices including Nigella Lawson, Ed Kimber (a 2010 winner of *The Great British Bake Off*⁹) and Thomasina Miers (a 2005 winner of the British TV cooking competition *MasterChef*). Amongst the DFIs we also have two nutritionists, Amanda Hamilton and Amelia Freer, and one food writer Nigel Slater.

Insert Figure 1 here

Nearly 70% (22) of the DFIs are women (see Figure 2). If we consider gender within the categories of DFIs shown in Figure 1, it is striking that almost all DFIs who are chefs are male. This reflects an established gender bias in the profession (cf. Johnston et al., 2014) which has carried over into digital space. In contrast, those who established their DFI status as digital food originalists, that is, bloggers and vloggers, are mostly female.

Insert Figure 2 here

This shows that the digital foodscape has emerged as a space which gives voice to female food personalities who do not necessarily have a traditional professional background in cooking or who have not had space in more traditional food media outlets like television. That being said – and barring only two female DFIs (i.e. Lorraine Pascale and Jack Monroe) – these are predominately white women with middle- to upper-class backgrounds and personas. We turn to this point in the discussion and conclusion section.

⁹ The Great British Bake Off (GBBO) is a popular British TV baking competition broadcast since 2010.

In terms of the size of digital audiences, DFIs with the largest number of Twitter followers belong mostly to established chefs who are also well-known media personalities such as Jamie Oliver (more than 6 million followers), Gordon Ramsey (more than 5 million followers) and Nigela Lawson (2 million) (see Table 2).

Insert Table 2 here

The group of DFI vloggers and bloggers we identified have comparatively smaller audiences than their professional chef counterparts with the two most followed being Joe Wicks (TheBodyCoach) and Ella Mills (Deliciously Ella) (see Table 2). Given that most vloggers and bloggers started their digital activities in the last decade, they have accrued a substantial group of followers in a relatively short space of time. Interestingly, although the bloggers and vloggers do not have as large an audience as the established chefs, they outperform them in terms of total Twitter likes. As can be seen in Table 3, the top 10 DFIs who have generated most likes are primarily digital food originalists including Joe Wicks (TheBodyCoach), Jack Monroe (Bootstrap Cook) and Ella Mills (Deliciously Ella).

Insert Table 3 here

Likes on Twitter are important indicators of appreciation, signaling a more affective response to a post than just following someone. This suggests that despite smaller audiences, originalist DFIs in the form of food bloggers and vloggers might generate more affective engagement than the DFIs who are established celebrity chefs with established brands. This also suggest that those DFIs who originally rose to fame in digital spaces are potentially more skilled at evoking these affective responses in their audiences.

4.2 The work of digital food platforms: Which digital platforms do DFIs routinely use and how do they use them?

As can be seen in Figure 3, all DFIs routinely use Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. Nearly all of them (31) have a personal, professionally-produced website which is linked to their social media accounts. 24 DFIs also use YouTube and 15 have a Pinterest account.

Insert Figure 3 here

Each of these media platforms presents different socio-technical affordances which the DFIs skillfully utilize to promote their ideas about food but, importantly, *not only* food. This is the ‘work’ that social media platforms afford DFIs based on the bounded socio-technical relationships that DFIs can have with them. For example, Twitter only allows a maximum of 240 characters while Facebook provides almost unlimited space for words and images per post. Affordance also refers to the characteristics of the various platforms, such as their shareability, their possibilities for amplification of visibility and for audience engagement through retweets, comments and other forms of ‘authorization’ and evaluation.

Studying the use of different platforms by the 33 DFIs, we observed the following platform affordances. First, all DFIs have a personal website, which they use mainly for pedagogical, self-promotional and merchandising purposes. For example, the websites of the top ‘most liked’ DFIs are very similar in content and design. On the home page, most of them have large images of food and dishes and a picture of a smiley and happy looking DFI taken either in a natural green environment or in a sparkly clean kitchen (Ella Mills, Madeleine Shaw, Amelia Freer, Jamie Oliver, Lorraine Pascal). Most also have images of cookbook

covers or other products that they developed including cookware, cosmetics, life style books, apps, supplements and tools to support physical exercises (e.g. water bottles, yoga mats). Each website has a dedicated shop section where the products can be purchased. Some websites do not have images of food on their home pages (Lorraine Pascal, Niamh Shields, Nigel Slater, Clare Ptak). Instead longer descriptions of the DFI's personal philosophy or journeys about how they became chefs or food personalities are included. All websites have an inventory of recipes and are linked with DFI's social media accounts; Twitter feeds are in most cases clearly visible on the home pages. While the pedagogical purpose is served with instructions on how to cook and increasingly how to live one's life, the promotional and merchandising functions (cf. Abbots, 2015) become manifest in the display of various products that the DFIs created and are selling through their online shops.

Second, YouTube is used for pedagogical purposes as supported through short videos focusing on what and how to cook. Some DFIs including Joe Wicks, Madelaine Shaw and Ella Mills also offer videos on physical exercise. In contrast to their websites, YouTube produces a more 'relational' output in that the comment section below videos affords a para-social relationship (see below) between DFIs and audiences. People can comment and receive comments from the DFIs as well as engage in conversation with other viewers/readers. The direct promotion of DFI's products is often backgrounded in the videos but still visible in that some DFIs include images of their cookbooks as a banner or speak directly about their products in the videos.

DFIs' Facebook, Instagram and Twitter pages are directly connected to each other and mostly display identical textual and visual material. Instagram is a repository of images of food and dishes that are also displayed on Facebook or Twitter where they appear with additional cooking instructions or comments. Interestingly, in contrast to the websites and YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter include insights into the private lives of DFIs.

Routinely, pictures of partners, friends, children, pets and family events or everyday activities (e.g. nursing a child, going for a walk with a dog) appear on these social media accounts. Also, DFIs document their whereabouts by posting details of their travels whether related to their work around food or not, for example, pictures of holidays. Whereas the websites and YouTube channels maintain the DFIs' professional status, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter combine it with glimpses into their supposedly 'ordinary' life. Most of the images that offer insights into the private lives of DFIs are scenes of ordinary activities that people engage with such as walking, cooking, eating, sitting and spending time with friends and family. Yet, DFI's displays are almost always set in beautiful natural locations or high-end urban settings, which can be seen as aspirational places. There is never a 'stain' on the image: The weather is always nice, and people shown in the images including the DFIs seem healthy, happy and sprightly often shown in intimate and caring situations, for example, embracing a partner, holding a new born baby or taking a dog for a walk.

It is difficult to take these images as authentic representations of real and ordinary life. Rather, DFIs use social media platforms as performative exhibition spaces that allow them to craft and curate (sometimes by a third party) a particular image. Showing, for example, images of happy children or relaxing walks on a beach is not essentially a representation of private life but rather a carefully chosen display to create a positive impression of a DFI as a particular kind of a person (e.g. not just a skilled cook but also a happy and loving mother). Such supposedly private displays expressly without food are always positioned side by side with images of food or other products created by DFIs. In doing so, they intensify the promotional purpose in that they present certain foods as a key component of happiness, beauty and perfect relationships and at the same time develop a sense of authenticity and realness, which makes all of this accessible. It is precisely "the promise of authenticity" (Khamis et al., 2017: 2002) that social media platforms afford and that DFIs capitalize on to

increase the power and broaden the reach of their brands. Shown through the lens of their happy and intimate private moments, they fill food with the affects and aspirations of the ‘good and authentic life’. When cooking a dish recommended by a DFI, the audience cooks not just a set of natural ingredients to produce a meal to keep her or him ‘alive’, she or he gets a promise of ‘cooking up’ health, wellbeing, beauty and love that is displayed on the DFI’s social media feed. Through the blurring of private and public life that creates a sense of intimacy, ordinariness and realness, these social media platforms afford DFIs the ability to ‘serve’ a lifestyle on a plate for supposedly everyone. Yet, the relationship between the DFIs and their digital audiences is an example of a ‘para-social’ relationship (Gamson, 1994) with the audiences being no more than strangers.

Twitter has emerged as the most versatile communication channel of the digital foodscape: it is used in all the ways mentioned above but also, critically, for many other purposes. Pedagogical affordances (images of food and links to cooking instructions) are intertwined with promotional images and events such as the announcements of new cookbooks, talks and new products. Audience engagement is established through the followship and the practice of retweeting, mentions and linking. Having followers who engage in retweeting and liking enhances the visibility of DFIs contributing directly to the promotion of their products and to the increase of revenues (Khamis et al., 2017). In addition, whereas contents of DFI’s professional websites, and their YouTube and Instagram spaces focus mostly on food, food-related matters, physical exercises as well as insights from their ‘private’ lives, messages posted on Twitter address a wider range of topics. We address those in Section 5.

4.3 What notions of food do DFIs endorse and promote?

Our analysis of profiles of the 33 DFIs as indicated on their websites revealed two grammatical trends: 1) multiple notions of cooking and 2) clean eating. Twelve of the DFIs engage in multiple aspects of cooking and do not identify with any particular food trend or diet; others seem to promote either a particular national or ethnic cuisine (Thomasina Miers) or generally tend towards healthy eating (Jamie Oliver). Interestingly, all of them are trained chefs, and there is only one blogger who articulates multiple notions of cooking and good food (Niamh Shields).

The second prominent grammar is that of clean eating based on plant ingredients and the exclusion of gluten, meat and refined sugar. All of the DFIs who advocate this food preference or a form of it are bloggers or vloggers and female. It is striking that in most instances, clean eating is promoted together with physical activities. In fact, three of the DFIs (Alice Living, Ella Mills, Madelaine Shaw) who propagate ‘free from’ diets, combine it with yoga, meditation or a fitness regime that is seen as part of a larger health project to achieve, as they argue, wellbeing, mind and body balance or optimal health. In this way, food – and a particular type of eating in its ‘clean’ and ‘free from’ form – becomes part of a larger regime that includes work on and optimization of the body and the mind (cf. Johnston et al., 2018).

There are six DFIs who specialize in baking and this group includes both women and men, some of whom are bloggers (Izy Hossack¹⁰) and some are well-known UK TV personalities (Paul Hollywood). Three DFIs prioritize general healthy eating (but not ‘free from’), often in combination with fitness regimes (Joe Wicks) and general wellbeing (Amanda Hamilton). There is only one DFI who promotes budget cooking (Jack Monroe), one who promotes vegan food (Simon Roshdy) and one who offers cooking ideas for families with children (Ciara Attwell). If we combine the food/diet preference with the number of likes, it is striking that most of the likes go to vloggers and bloggers who promote a ‘free from’, plant-based diet

¹⁰ In 2017, Forbes named Izy Hossack as one of the top world influencers in the domain of food.

and combine it with a fitness regime. The only exception is the budget cook Jack Monroe. Thus, it appears that there is a greater appreciation for posts produced by DFIs who advocate a holistic, ‘wellbeing package’ based on clean eating in combination with physical and mental exercises suggesting also that this kind of collective program is endorsed by their growing digital audiences.

5. Eight variations on a food theme: A case study of DFIs’ Twitter communications

The versatility of communicative affordances on Twitter – specifically the ways in which messages and ideas can be quickly disseminated to wider audiences and the ability to build affiliations and affective engagements through the use of retweets, likes, hashtags and mentions – warrants specific attention in relation to a better understanding of DFIs’ food work in digital space. Studying retweets in particular can reveal patterns of ambient affiliations (Zappavigna, 2012) around food. For example, tweets produced by DFIs that have been retweeted can signal the kind of ideas about food and ‘other stuff’ that are taken up by wider audiences. Equally, tweets that are retweeted by DFIs themselves can point to the kind of discourses and ideas that they want their image to be associated with.

In order to shed light on the kinds of discourses that the DFIs promote and which of those are taken up by digital audiences, we qualitatively investigated the themes of the 100 most retweeted and 100 most liked tweets by the top most liked DFIs at the point of data collection. The following eight dominant themes were identified: 1) empowerment including self-improvement, 2) promotion of progressive causes, 3) environmental campaigns, 4) food as politics, 5) self-promotion, 6) food recipes, 7) humor and 8) private life events.

It is important to note that not all the themes are covered by all DFIs. While all DFIs tweet recipes and information about their products (cookbooks, events etc.), each DFI seems

to have a distinctive ‘thematic brand’ and intersperses recipe tweets with other, mostly non-food related messages. For example, Ella Mills’ most liked tweets were inspirational statements whose purpose was to empower readers. These statements were intended to establish a relationship with digital audiences by addressing them with the pronoun ‘you’. Below are representative examples of Ella Mills’ most popular non-food tweets from our sample:

- That feeling when the sun comes out and you see the first blossoms 🌞🌸🙌❤️ (51 retweets, 322 likes)
- Take constructive criticism on board but remember that, at the end of the day, you are the best judge of who you want to be in the world 🙏 (80 retweets, 216 likes)
- Hoping you all feel amazing today and have the opportunity to take some time to celebrate the love you have for you ❤️ (55 retweets, 116 likes)

As can be seen, these kinds of messages contain many affective words (*love, feel, amazing*) that convey a sense of positivity and happiness. The general positivity is further reinforced with the use of distinctive emojis at the end of each tweet. Given that the messages are retweeted and liked, the emphasis on self-empowerment and positivity seems to be quite an effective means of building an engagement with digital audiences. What is striking is that these kind of affective messages are imperatives directed at individuals (*you*) and individual efforts to improve oneself (*take constructive criticism, remember that your most*), which ties in with the neoliberal notion of care of the self (Cairns and Johnston, 2015; De Solier, 2013; Goodman et al., 2017). Similar kinds of messages are also liked by readers of tweets produced by Madelaine Shaw, Alice Liveing, Lorraine Pascal and Joe Wicks. The theme of self-improvement – outside of any direct mention of food – features especially prominently in tweets produced by DFIs who promote food together with a fitness regime or other physical activities:

- Focus on yourself and let's win 🤗👏👏 (Joe Wicks; 117 retweets, 296 likes)
- Don't compare your progress to other people. Everybody is different. Work hard and be consistent, you are making progress everyday 👏👏 (Joe Wicks; 45 retweets, 251 likes)

Although all DFIs focus on self-promotion and utilize the social media platform to promote their recipes, new cookbooks or other products, Jamie Oliver seems to be particularly liked for his self-promotional efforts. At the point of data collection, the most retweeted tweet from Jamie Oliver's account was about his new cookbook:

- I'M SO EXCITED!! I've got a new book coming all about simple cooking with big flavours using 5 ingredients!! <http://jamieol.com/JamiesQuickEasy> xx (Jamie Oliver, 2,800 retweets, 1,510 likes)

DFIs also routinely tweet about their engagement with progressive causes and charity work and these kinds of messages are also liked and retweeted. Some are simply announcements of important international events such as the International Women's Day or World Health Day, while others include direct charity appeals:

- Happy International #WomensDay everyone 🎉🎉🎉 (Ella Mills; 140 retweets, 304 likes)
- Celebrate #WorldHealthDay by making this nutritious miso broth- packed with nutrients for healthy teeth and skin <http://jamieol.com/you5jUV> (Jamie Oliver; 2,282 retweets, 508 likes)
- After visiting @womensaid yesterday I felt compelled to share this story. Please support @petegiblin with this incredible project 👏👏 (Alice Living; 25 retweets, 26 likes)
- Bake for Syria. Curated by @lilyvanillicake in aid of UNICEF's Children of Syria Appeal with traditional recipes donated by Syrian families and some of our best known cooks. All profits to charity. #BakeForSyria (Nigel Slater; 184 retweets, 420)
- In just a few hours, you wonderful people have raised enough to send 250 books and 750 tins of food to @TrussellTrust food banks all over the UK. But we have a long way to go yet! Please donate if you can, and a retweet is free! #TinCanCook (Jack Monroe; 486 retweets, 438 likes)

In doing so, the DFIs self-present as not just foodies. They enhance their image as enlightened citizens aware of progressive international causes such as gender equality or global health campaigns. Beyond awareness, they also signal their own involvement with 'good' causes. At the point of the data collection, #BakeForSyria and donations to food banks were some of the campaigns which were mentioned in the most retweeted or liked tweets.

Engagement with current affairs is often signaled through explicit political commentary, which could be in relation to food but not always. The theme of food as politics is present in some of the most retweeted or liked tweets by Jamie Oliver. Here Jamie expresses endorsements for policies that are aligned with his own campaigns, specifically his efforts to improve the quality of school dinners. Other DFIs such as Jack Monroe and Niamh Shields are involved in political critique and use Twitter to voice their views on pressing social issues:

- Lunches for ALL kids replaced by breakfasts for some? Nailed it. [#ToryManifesto](#) (Jamie Oliver; 1424 retweets, 1746 likes)
- If David Cameron is that 'bored shitless' he could go and volunteer at any of the FOUR foodbanks in his former Witney constituency. Perhaps would serve as some form of reparation for his part in the scale of their need in the first place. 🙄 (Jack Monroe; 5960 retweets, 19,085 likes)
- If you're angry about a woman saying 'fuck' on twitter, and not angry about austerity literally killing people, I suggest you've got your sodding priorities absolutely shitting wrong mate. (Jack Monroe; 1,666 retweets, 12,853 likes)
- London calling #TeresaMay and #DonaldTrump --- no to refusing refugees, no to discrimination and NO state visit. #StandUpToTrump (Niahm Shields; 127 retweets; 173 likes).

Twitter as a social media space is utilized by DFIs to offer glimpses into their private lives and this is again something that their digital audiences endorse. Announcements of births, birthdays, holidays, family events and snapshots of everyday movements or routine activities (not related to food) are amongst some of the most liked or retweeted tweets:

- And then this just happened guys!! IT'S A BABY BOY! Everyone in the Oliver family is very surprised & beyond happy (Jamie Oliver 1,546 retweets; 19,196 likes).
- 44 years old and counting (almost) embrace it ladies... you've got this. 44 is the new 44... hadn't you heard? Lift weights... it's ace (Lorraine Pascal, 21 retweets, 482 likes).
- Spring morning, kitchen window. Drinking coffee, listening to birdsong. That pile of stuff on my desk will have to wait for five minutes (Nigel Slater, 104 retweets; 1,678 likes)
- Three miles along the river this morning. What a way to start the week 🌧️ (Alice Liveing, 25 retweets, 109 likes)

Tweets that include jokes or humor are also found in the category of most retweeted or liked messages and are often accompanied with images or videos:

- What did the cheese say when it looked in the mirror? 🧀 Hallooooo me 😬 (Joe Wicks; 93 retweets, 643 likes)
- Haha and whilst we're on the topic of #bananas did you know they make great boomerangs!!! 😊👉 jo x x (Jamie Oliver; 446 retweets, 1,495 likes)

6. DFI retweets and hashtags: Building affiliation across six further themes

While the top retweets and most liked tweets produced by the DFIs tell us something about the kind of messages and themes that resonate with digital audiences, what messages the DFIs themselves retweet can indicate the kind of ideas or people they want to be affiliated with. Retweets can signal affiliations with certain views, causes, personalities and organizations. They can boost the visibility of the person or organization who posted the original tweet and equally enhance the retweeter's profile by connecting with good causes, interesting events and compelling stories. Retweeting is therefore not just a way of sharing information; it is a versatile affordance allowing digital media users to simultaneously affiliate with other users, and create and maintain a particular image and identity of themselves (cf. boyd et al., 2010). This affordance of Twitter is heavily utilized by DFIs who

routinely engage in retweeting. Here again, each DFI has a set of different affiliations and these are mostly related to non-food matters. Coding thematically the content of top 100 tweets that each DFI retweeted at the point of data collection, we identified the six following dominant grammatical themes: 1) environmental campaigns, 2) health campaigns, 3) progressive causes, 4) politics, 5) media events (also related to food) and 6) self-endorsements in the third person.

These six themes that the DFIs affiliate with relate to and boost the themes that they themselves tweet about including various national and international campaigns around health and environment as well as progressive causes including gender and sexual equality. This is demonstrated through the inclusion of hashtags such as #MentalHealthAwarenessWeek, #WorldHealthDay, #diabetes, #NoShame and #EarthHour, #ClimateChange, #plasticfree, #PrideAndPrejudice. Since hashtags are not just simple pointers to topics but an important strategy of online bonding and a marker of belonging to an ambient community (Zappavigna 2012), using these hashtags signals communities as well as ideas, stances and values that the DFIs want to be associated with. Below are some illustrative examples of retweeted posts:

- RT @WWF: It's not about what country you're from, it's about what planet you're from. Join the world for #EarthHour (Ella Mills)
- RT Today is #WorldHealthDay! Type 2 #diabetes is largely preventable. We can beat it! (Jamie Oliver)
- RT @HealthyLiving: Reminder: There is #NoShame in mental illness (Amelia Freer)
- RT In 1998 I was the victim of a homophobic attack that left me in A&E. Twenty years later I wanted to know how much had changed. Is it safer to be out and proud in 2018? And are we really living in a more tolerant society? #PrideAndPrejudice (Jack Monroe)

One DFI - Niamh Shields - had several 'political' retweeted posts in our data during the time of data collection, while Jack Monroe frequently retweeted charity appeals:

- RT @SenSanders: President Trump, you made a big mistake. By trying to divide us up by race, religion, gender and nationality you actually (Niamh Shields)

- RT @JustinTrudeau: To those fleeing persecution, terror & war, Canadians will welcome you, regardless of your faith. Diversity is our strength
- RT Food bank supplies desperately low at @maundyrelief If you're in the #Accrington area, please help x (Jack Monroe)

Yet, the most routinely used retweeting practice by all DFIs is retweeting posts that mention them personally. We classified them as self-endorsements in the third person. Below are some illustrative examples of this practice (mentions in bold):

- RT @holland_barrett: Looking for a healthy snack, but one that will satisfy your sweet tooth too? @**DeliciouslyElla** has the answer (Ella Mills)
- RT Girl Gain EPISODE 7 is here 🙌. Chatting with the wonderful @**Aliceliveing** about practical approaches to maintaining a healthy lifestyle! Have a listen and let us know what you think 😊 (Alice Liveing)
- RT Head over to @UKWomensHealth to see what @**madeleine_shaw** gets up to each week to keep in shape... (Madeline Shaw)
- RT @CherylOfficial: I'm going to be cooking with @**jamieoliver** live on Facebook tomorrow (Jamie Oliver)
- RT @BIUK: Joe Wicks @**thebodycoach** tells us his one top tip for fat loss success. (Joe Wicks)

In this way, the DFIs extend the affordance of retweeting beyond sharing information and affective affiliation for the purpose of self-branding, specifically as evidence of their popularity and growing influence. Retweets with self-mentions are sometimes statements from a member of the public endorsing a particular recipe or a product. But more often than not they are tweets produced by influential voices including media, popular magazines or other celebrities who either commend a particular activity in which a DFI was involved or recommend his or her product. In the world of attention economy, this kind of accredited self-boasting in the third person is an effective attention grabbing-device which can significantly increase the DFI's searchability, digital visibility, followability and ultimately revenues (Khamis et al., 2017).

7. Discussion and conclusion: DFIs, the grammars of good food and the shifting spaces of food in the digital realm

As Ash et al. (2018: 35) argue in their clarion call for examining the digital turn in Geography, ‘the digital is reshaping the production and experience of space, place, nature, landscape, mobility and environment’. Building on this assertion, our paper and its initial analysis above argues that it is crucial to explore, analyze and describe the ways that food is now thoroughly implicated in these digital spaces and places through the creation of digital foodscapes by DFIs who create, curate and experience them for digital audiences. Our empirical study of digital foodscapes in the context of the UK was primarily interested in identifying who these DFIs are, how they utilize the affordances of the digital to create and curate the digital foodscapes, and what kind of good food grammars emerge and are widely disseminated as a consequence of their online activities.

First, the analysis revealed that the digital foodscapes are inhabited and developed by a number of rule setters *beyond* the already well-established food personalities and celebrity chefs of the UK foodscape, e.g. Jamie Oliver and Gordon Ramsey. This not only points to the importance of novel – and perhaps very different – DFIs such as Joe Wicks and Izy Hossack in terms of their contributions to the construction of good food in the UK, but suggests that the pathways to becoming a DFI are multiple and bi-directional. In this, digital foodscapes have allowed an opening up, particularly in gender and ‘brand’ terms, of who is able to speak authoritatively about food across the larger UK foodscape and within these digital spaces. Yet, outside of the two DFI figures of Elaine Pascale and Jack Monroe – a black woman and the other self-identifying as non-binary – these spaces are predominately filled by white, male celebrity chefs and white, female wellness influencers, who almost exclusively embody and perform heteronormative, middle- to upper-class digital personas. In effect, what we are

seeing in the foodscapes originated in the UK context is a re-inscription and re-enforcement, in terms of race and class, of both the whiteness and middle-class proclivities that have been shown to continue to inhabit more mainstream versions of Alternative Food Networks (e.g. Slocum, 2007; Guthman, 2008, 2014). Thus, while the affordances of the UK's digital foodscapes are, on the one hand, providing a more frictionless stage for more female and novel food voices contra traditional media, on the other hand, these digital spaces seem to be operating in the already hegemonic and normalized white, middle- and upper-class affective and discursive registers of the flourishing wellness industries and Western societies more broadly. Given that we have only been able to introduce and initially describe these concerns in this paper, specifically how and in what ways the authoritative voices of UK DFIs re-inscribe hegemonic gender, racial and class norms and structures also across digital foodscapes that originated in different national and cultural contexts is worthy of much further critical analysis.

Second, our analysis has shown that different social media and digital platforms provide space for diverse ways of doing 'food work' online. For example, webpages are for food pedagogy but also brand promotion, while YouTube performances focus on cooking, lifestyle and health and afford more direct relationships with the DFIs and other audience members. The connected pages of Facebook, Instagram and Twitter afford branded performances of behind the scenes, private lives through which deeper para-social relations are fashioned between the DFI and their audiences in order to enhance the authenticity of their brands. Twitter, in particular, is the place where the DFIs take on non-food themes such as self-empowerment, inspiration, charity campaigning and awareness raising. The move to share intimate private movements from family and personal lives shows that DFIs skillfully utilize the affordance of recency and immediacy offered by social media. While sharing private lives is not a new media practice and indeed cookbooks and traditional broadcast media around

food do this as well, DFIs take it to a new ‘unedited’ level creating and curating ‘real’ and ‘authentic’ chronicles of their lives showing events as they are happening – something that traditional media with their time constraints and editing practices simply do not have a space for. Most of the activities they regularly update us on are the mundane everyday stuff of DFIs’ life, but it is precisely through this immediate everyday-ness that the DFIs attempt to create a sense of ‘authenticity’ positioning themselves closer to us. Unlike already established food celebrities – chefs or other food personalities – coming from traditional media who are not reachable, DFIs try to create the message that they are with us in the ‘here and now’ of digital spaces and places.

Third, in our analysis of the kind of ideas that the DFIs promote and endorse using the affordances of the digital platforms they use, the following good food grammars have emerged: first, they revolve around a range of constructions, with the most prominent related to clean eating and/or clean lifestyles that combined healthy, ‘free from’ diets with fitness regimes. Through food pedagogy and DFI lifestyle self-presentation that blurs public and private spaces, affect, emotion and inspiration, good food is clean food further equated with ‘the good life’ and aspirational politics of ‘perfection’ through exercise and healthy lifestyles. Secondly, given the focus on charities, progressive causes and campaigning through tweets, hashtags, retweeted endorsements and other posts, good food is also associated with living the *right* life of concern and care for, for example, women’s empowerment, healthy food for all, poverty and global conflict. These grammars of good food are ‘authenticated’ and ‘validated’ through self-presentations often in spotless clean and aspirational spaces. In doing so, DFIs and the grammars of good food that they create expand their repertoires – and ultimately their brands – into a more holistic *lifestyle* brand that audiences should want to be associated with, connected to and live. In short, and building on previous work on celebrity chefs and food celebrities (Johnston and Goodman, 2015; Leer and Povlsen, 2016; Rousseau,

2012), DFIs as our consciences and our muses give us not just instructions on how to cook up good foods but how to cook up the perfect, caring, ‘normal’ and ‘right’ lifestyle.

Given this blurring of food and other lifestyle and campaigning content, especially across the affordances of Twitter, these digital spaces and places curated by DFIs become a kind of rolling, staccato collage of recipes, inspiration, politics and campaigning information, emotion and pedagogy. As tweets appear at the top of various feeds and then fade down the page or app and disappear from view, there is a need to constantly replenish these feeds in ways that allow DFIs to continue to offer their audiences something new and interesting but also give them the space and time to build their brands around, for example, notions of inspiration (i.e. Ella Mills), body health guru (e.g. Joe Wicks) or poverty campaigner (e.g. Jack Monroe). The frenetic and undulating affordances of these social media spaces and places mean that the constructions and grammars of good food put forward by DFIs are never stable – if they ever were – and indeed, are in a constant state of instability and flux, albeit often within the confines of DFIs brand, which, through our findings, tend to be embodied as white, middle-class women. DFIs are, by design given the affordances of social media platforms, able to not just constantly re-invent their brands and either follow or create fashions but contribute to the ‘dietary cacophony’ of modern foodscapes and the attention economies that facilitate this cacophony (Rousseau, 2015). Thus, the changing nature of what good food one should eat—and the related good and right lifestyle one should live—is as much a function of the spatialized affordances and structures of social media and digital foodscapes as it is the brand-related, re-invented content of a particular set of DFIs.

Through this initial empirical and conceptual foray into digital foodscapes and DFIs, we have attempted to open up space for further research along these lines within Geography and beyond. In particular, it is clear that the power of DFIs and digital foodscapes to curate and share their particular grammars of food is worthy of much greater attention by food

geographers and those more broadly interested in the relationalities of food, politics and the digital. DFIs have the ability to put forward particular grammars of food, lifestyles and politics in ways that stitch together the quickly collapsing spaces and places of our online and offline worlds, the mechanics of which need to be continually scrutinized by scholars of all disciplinary stripes.

In addition, there is a critical need for research on the ‘work’ that digital foodscapes and DFIs do on various audiences but also across gender, class and racial dimensions. How do audiences of different characteristics in different places—and at different scales—engage with digital foodscapes and what do people do with this content in terms of both online and offline worlds? How are they effected emotionally and viscerally (e.g. Hayes-Conroys, 2010; Goodman, 2011)? How do these grammars impact, shift and shape behaviors across different audiences in the growing ‘lifestyle cacophony’ that is beginning to plague online spaces? Geographers are particularly well-situated to ask and explore these questions. Similarly, how do the multi-modalities of social media and digital foodscapes work and do different work across the multiple discursive and visual modalities of self-representation? Above all, and one of the things we did not address in full here is a need to systematically explore and analyze the visual imagery – on, for example, Instagram – that accompanies and adds to the grammars of DFIs and the constructions of good food.

Finally, where are the more radical DFIs and organizations that use digital foodscapes and media to create systematic change though, for example, articulations of food justice? In short, what is the potential for existing but also other DFIs and digital food voices to bring attention to other parts of the food network, exploitation and ill health in ways that can bring about positive systematic food system change? Are there perhaps, more ‘subaltern’ and more radical DFIs and voices that can use digital foodscapes for progressive change in both the digital and ‘real’ worlds and that also might confront and dislodge the predominant middle-

class whiteness of UK DFIs? It is our hope that this paper can not only work to inspire future research along these lines but also spur geographers' interests into the now inseparable but also fundamental relationalities of food, space, place and the digital in the form of digital foodscapes and their DFI curators.

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Figure and Table Captions

Table 1: UK Digital Food Influencers

Name	Known also as
1. Jamie Oliver	-
2. Gordon Ramsay	-
3. Nigella Lawson	-
4. Paul Hollywood	-
5. Raymond Blanc	-
6. Lorraine Pascale	-
7. Nigel Slater	-

8. Yotam Ottolengi	-
9. Joe Wicks	The Body Coach
10. Ella Mills	Deliciously Ella
11. Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall	-
12. Amanda Hamilton	-
13. Rachel Khoo	-
14. Jack Monroe	-
15. Natasha Corrett	Honestly Health
16. Jasmine and Melissa Hemsley	Hemsley + Hemsley
17. Madeleine Shaw	-
18. Gennaro Contaldo	-
19. Niamh Shields	Eat Like a Girl
20. Ed Kimber (GBBO winner)	-
21. Alice Liveing	Clean Eating Alice
22. Thomasina Miers	-
23. Amelia Freer	-
24. Anna Jones	We Are Food
25. Elly Curshen	Elly Pear
26. Jemma Wilson	Cupcake Jemma
27. Izy Hossack	Top with cinnamon
28. Clare Ptak	Violets Cakes
29. Jemma Andrew-Adimah	Celery and Cupcakes
30. Simon Roshdy	The Diet Kitchen
31. Annie Clarke	Mind Body Bowl

32. Ciara Attwell	My Fussy Eater
33. Charlie Mace	The Kitchen Shed

Figure 1: Categories of DFIs

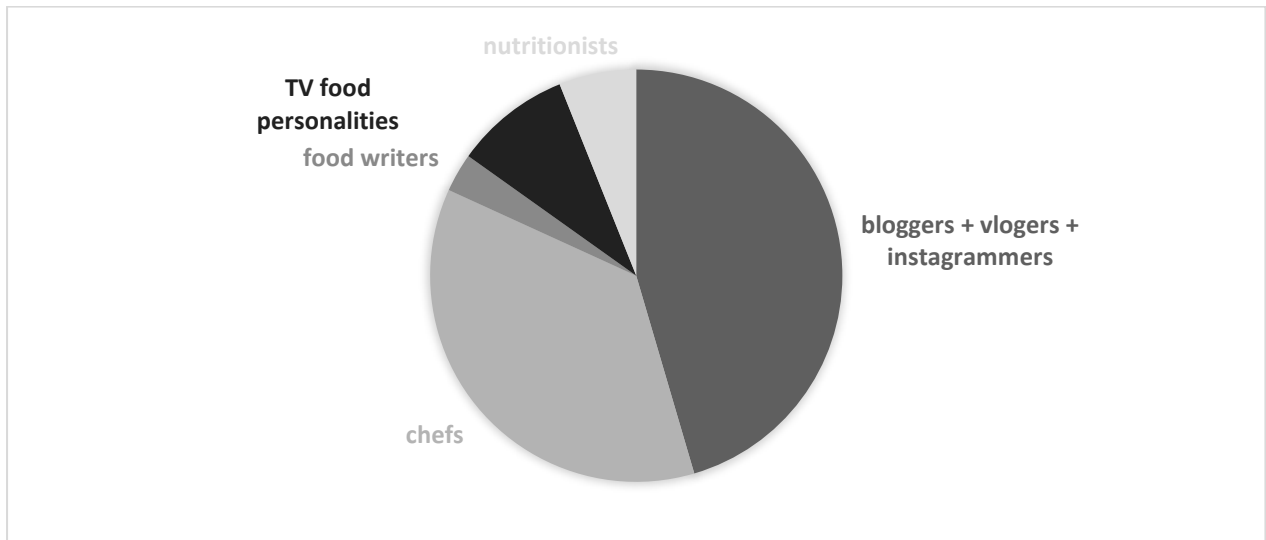


Figure 2: Gender of DFIs

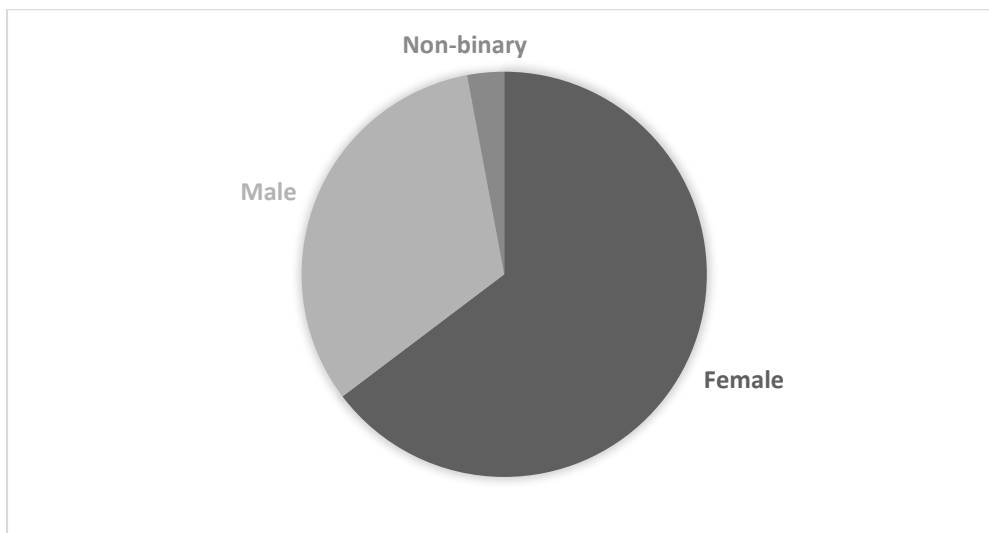


Table 2: The 10 top DFIs with the largest number of followers

DFI	No. Twitter followers	Category	Gender
1. Jamie Oliver	6,590,000	chef	male

2. Gordon Ramsay	5,190,000	chef	male
3. Nigella Lawson	2,230,000	TV personality	female
4. Paul Hollywood	603,000	chef	male
5. Raymond Blanc	446,000	chef	male
6. Lorraine Pascale	331,000	TV personality	female
7. Nigel Slater	307,000	food writer	male
8. Yotam Ottolengi	278,000	chef	male
9. Joe Wicks	270,000	vlogger	male
10. Ella Mills	178,000	blogger	female

Table 3: The 10 top DFIs with most likes

DFI	No. of Twitter Likes	Category	Gender
1. Joe Wicks	100,100	vlogger	male
		blogger	transgen der
2. Jack Monroe	62,600		
3. Ella Mills	48,300	blogger	female
4. Alice Liveing	48,200	blogger/instagrammer	female
5. Jamie Oliver	24,800	chef	male
6. Madeleine Shaw	21,300	blogger	female
7. Niamh Shields	21,100	blogger	female
8. Lorraine Pascale	10,400	TV personality	female
9. Amelia Freer	7,960	nutritionist	female

10. Nigel Slater

7,942

food writer

male

Figure 3: DFIs and their digital platforms

