Entertainment, Provisioning, and Shopping Habits at North Market, Columbus, Ohio

Thesis

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

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2012

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Abstract

While many anthropologists have conducted substantial studies of consumer behavior in public markets around the world (e.g. Mintz 1989; Bestor 2004; Cook 1976), the same cannot be said of the study of public markets within the United States. Few studies have been conducted examining consumer behavior in public markets in the United States. Built around survey data collected by North Market in 2009 and using Daniel Miller’s *Theory of Shopping* as a theoretical framework, this thesis presents a brief history of public markets in the United States and examines how customers use North Market in Columbus, OH for provisioning, thrift, and entertainment.

Public Markets are a “group of locally owned, primarily owner operated, private retail businesses leasing space in a shared facility with an emphasis on fresh foods and community services” (Brown 2001: 660). The facility, typically an enclosed building or a group of buildings, may be public or privately owned with rented stalls. Although for much of the history of public markets the vendors at the market were local farmers who were selling goods which they had produced, in most modern public markets, the vendors are resellers who sell goods which they do not make and which may not have been locally produced (Brown 2001: 660).

Housed in a renovated former farm machinery warehouse, North Market is home to thirty-four vendors, including butchers, bakers, a green grocer, snack shops, a fish
monger, a cheese shop, and a plethora of prepared foods. Although North Market was originally created for provisioning, its role has become more diverse since its inception. For this reason, this market is a public space well suited for the study of shopping habits. The presence of vendors who trade in snacks and desserts suggests that North Market is designed for those seeking treats/entertainment. On the other hand, the market also contains vendors who specialize in groceries, produce, and fresh meats which must be taken home for preparation before they are consumed; this suggests that the market is attempting to attract people who wish to supplement or eliminate shopping at typical grocery stores. The prepared foods vendor adds yet another dimension to the shopping experience at North Market as they sell foods which may be eaten on the premises or taken to the customers’ homes/office. The prepared food vendor resides in the nebulous area between the extremes of provisioning and treat and we can argue that prepared foods are provisioned because they replace the food a customer would have otherwise prepared. The goal of this thesis is to explore these complementary aspects of shopping at North Market and better define the market’s role for consumer.
Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the students and faculty at The Ohio State University and to my parents for their endless support. I would also like to dedicate this work to the staff, vendors, and customers of North Market.
Acknowledgments

I wish to express my deepest appreciation to my thesis committee, especially my advisor Dr. Jeffrey Cohen, for their advice and motivation throughout my studies and writing at The Ohio State University. I am also indebted to the faculty and staff of the Anthropology Department for their support and infectious love of the discipline.

I would also like to acknowledge the work of Krystle Klein for her assistance in collecting data and conducting research.

Finally, I am indebted to North Market for allowing access to the data from their customer surveys which were so pivotal to this thesis. Additionally, Mr. David Wible, Executive Director at North Market, deserves special acknowledgement. Thank you, Mr. Wible, for taking time to discuss the market with me and for sharing your thoughts so freely. Without you, this thesis would not have happened.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

North Market sits nestled between the Downtown and Short North neighborhoods of Columbus, OH. Housed in a renovated former farm machinery warehouse, the market is now home to thirty-four vendors, including butchers, bakers, a green grocer, snack shops, a fish monger, a cheese shop, and a plethora of prepared foods. Originally opened in 1876 only a few blocks away from its current location, the market boasts a million visitors a year, but who are these million visitors? Why do they visit North Market? Although North Market was originally created for provisioning, its role has become more diverse since its inception. In this paper, I will be examining the role that North Market plays in Columbus and how customers utilize this remarkable establishment for their provisioning and entertainment needs.

North Market is a public space well suited for the study of shopping habits. Generally, its vendors fall into six categories: desserts/snacks, staple foods, cookware/gifts, toiletries/cleaning, prepared foods, and beverages. The presence of vendors who trade in snacks and desserts, such as Jeni’s Splendid Ice Cream and Pam’s Popcorn, suggests that North Market is designed for those wishing to treat themselves. On the other hand, the market contains vendors who specialize in goods which must be taken home for preparation before they can be consumed: The Greener Grocer, The Fish Guys, Curds & Whey, and North Market Poultry & Game. Similarly, the presence of
Better Earth, a vendor who specializes in vitamins and earth-friendly cleaning supplies, suggests that the market is attempting to attract people who wish to supplement or eliminate shopping at conventional grocery stores, such as Kroger or Giant Eagle. The prepared foods vendor adds yet another dimension to the shopping experience at North Market. These merchants sell prepared foods which may be eaten on the premises or taken to the customers’ homes/office. I argue that the prepared food vendor resides in the nebulous area between the extremes of provisioning and treat. One may argue that prepared foods are provisioned because they replace the food a customer would have otherwise prepared for him/herself. Nevertheless, these types of foods are also a “treat” because they save the customer from the hassle of cooking a meal and thereby creating additional leisure time; additionally, these meals may also be a treat because they are not generally an everyday occurrence. Other merchants – the sellers of housewares, gifts, and beverages – fall into the nebulous area between provisioning and treats. It is the goal of this project to study these aspects of shopping evident at North Market and define the market’s role in provisioning and entertainment.

In A Theory of Shopping, Daniel Miller defines three kinds of shopping: the treat, provisioning, and thrift. Provisioning encompasses the bulk of shopping. It may include the purchasing of clothes, personal care items, or – as in this particular study – general grocery and household items. This type of shopping takes care of immediate needs. Most provisional shopping is “a highly routinized activity”, and typically, it consists of regular, usually weekly, trips to a local supermarket to purchase food and household items (Miller 1998: 44). Miller’s second category of shopping, thrift, takes into account
the strategies that a shopper uses to save money and time. Generally, shoppers avoid overspending and many people shop around to find the best price for their goods, but time is also a consideration. Just as shoppers tend to avoid overspending on their goods, they also tend to avoid wasting time while shopping by making unnecessary shopping trips or by wasting time at a place that does not sell what a shopper needs. People tend to shop when they have something specific that they need/want to purchase, and outside of specialized situations, such as vacations or weekends, people rarely partake in non-provisional shopping. This unwillingness to waste time represents another type of thrift (Miller 1998: 162).

The treat is the most complex of these three shopping categories. Personal provisioning essentially covers the necessities of modern existence, and thrift is the practiced to make the most out of one’s time and energies; however, the treat is more complicated. Miller defines “the treat” as “any special purchase made with respect to a particular individual or group, often including the shopper” (Miller 1998: 5). He elaborates: a treat may be rather simple, such as a bar of chocolate, or it may be a trip to a department store where the shopper purchases an item with “no reason behind it other than the desire to possess” (Miller 1997: 45). A treat may include a vacation or a weekend excursion, but ultimately, treats encompass only a small portion of the actual shopping experience. As Miller states, treats are typically understood as a “personal indulgence”. Treats “help to define the rest of shopping as based around sacrifice and need” (Miller 1997: 45). For some people the most common type of treat is “understood as a kind of reward that the shopper deserves for having gone through the task of the weekly supermarket shop” (Miller 1997: 45). The treat, furthermore, does not just have
to be for the shopper. A parent may purchase a treat for a child who has behaved well during the shopping excursion or it may serve as a reward for some other behavior such as doing chores or getting a good grade.

In this study of North Market, I build upon Miller’s ideas. Specifically, I examine the role that North Market plays in the Columbus community as a place where customers go to both provision and treat themselves. The study will also go beyond Miller’s work and explore these categories as they relate to leisure and entertainment. People go to North Market to provision and treat themselves, but they also go for entertainment or leisure.
Chapter 2: Defining the Public Market

“Public Markets are a “group of locally owned, primarily owner operated, private retail businesses leasing space in a shared facility with an emphasis on fresh foods and community services” (Brown 2001: 660). The facility, typically an enclosed building or a group of buildings, may be public or privately owned with rented stalls. For much of the history of public markets, the vendors were local farmers who sold goods which they had produced. In most modern public markets, the vendors are resellers with goods they do not make and which may not have been locally produced (Brown 2001: 660). Modern public markets aim to satisfy the needs of their shoppers. Some public markets, such as West Side Market in Cleveland and Central Market in Lancaster, PA, sell produce, meats, seafood, baked goods, and other staple foods – in other words, they aim to attract provisional shoppers. Other public markets, such as Pike Place Market in Seattle, attract tourists and leisure shoppers by offering a range of gifts, arts, eateries, and souvenir items. Typically, there is overlap between the categories; Pike Place Market does sell provisional goods and West Side Market sells souvenirs. Public markets may not be open every day of the week, but typically they are open through all four seasons.

Public markets are distinguished from other kinds of markets such as farm stands or farmers’ markets in several ways. Farmers’ markets appear regularly at fixed locations. Typically, they are not open every day of the week or year round. At a true
Farmers’ market, a majority, if not all, of the products are sold by the people who produced them. Often, modern farmers’ markets allow craftspeople and hot food vendors to participate, but traditionally these are places where “farmers congregate to sell their own products” (Brown 2001: 658). Because of their limited scale, farm stands are differentiated from farmers’ markets. Farm stands, often called roadside markets or farm shops, are typically served by a single family or a couple of farms (Brown 2001: 660). The main distinction between public markets, farmers’ markets, and farm stands is that public markets often feature resellers instead of farmers/producers themselves and are open year round rather than just during farming and harvest seasons.
Chapter 3: Anthropology and the Public Market

From my first visit to North Market, I realized that it was a unique place. North Market, like most public markets, consists of a consortium of independent vendors enclosed in a unified building. This atmosphere distinguishes it from the typical grocery store because it creates a setting where some vendors compete with other vendors, but rather than building a hostile atmosphere, the space is convivial and pleasant. Regular customers greet their favorite vendors with familiarity, and new customers are greeted by knowledgeable staff who are willing to offer helpful suggestions. Before I began visiting North Market regularly, I stopped there to purchase some eggs and butter. I purchased both items at Heil’s Family Deli. The proprietor inquired whether I was planning to bake with the eggs and butter, and when I replied “yes”, he explained that I should use considerably less butter than I usually would because the fresh butter was much richer than the kind usually found at the grocery store. This type of helpful advice is typical of the public market atmosphere, but this helpfulness also extends to the customers. During my visits, especially on weekends, I saw countless customers ask for advice from other customers. I watched a woman holding two butternut squashes ask a man who had purchased some of his own how he planned to cook them. Customers regularly asked for advice on which prepared food vendors to visit or where to find a certain product.
Over the centuries since public markets were adopted in the United States, the social dynamics of public markets have changed significantly. While early public markets were marked by social differentiation and class division (higher class individuals were given priority at early public markets), most modern markets are a space where customers of diverse backgrounds are welcome. Much of the modern ethnographic research on public markets examines the role of these markets as a pleasant and hospitable social space (Anderson 2004, Bell 2007, Hampton, et al 2010). One such study was conducted by Elijah Anderson who explored Philadelphia’s Reading Terminal Market. This hundred and twenty year old market occupies a full city block and offers a large array of shops, restaurants, and kiosks (Anderson 2004: 16). In short, it is a larger version of Columbus’s North Market. Anderson’s focus in his essay was to look at the market as a zone where “anyone could expect civility” even in times when society was strife with ethnic and racial tension (Anderson 2004: 17). He argues that the market is a space which exists under a “cosmopolitan canopy”. Canopies are locations where the atmosphere is calm and pleasant (regardless of the surrounding unrest). People go about their business and often greet or assist one another with a civility that is much less common in other public areas. Places such as Reading Terminal Market – and, as I would argue, North Market – are “neutral social settings, which no one group expressly owns but all are encouraged to share, situated under this kind of protective umbrella, represent a special type of urban space, a peculiar zone that every visitor seems to recognize, appreciate, and enjoy” (2004: 22). Under the canopy all visitors are welcome and strata of society can mingle without fear; however, this does not mean that North
Market is a racially diverse space. According to the 2010 census, 62% of people living in Columbus are white. The neighborhoods where over a quarter of visitors reside, Clintonville and Short North, are predominantly white as well, 88% and 75% respectively\(^1\).

Other studies (Bell 2007 and Hampton, et al 2010) have examined urban public spaces as locations for democratic and social engagement. In their 2010 article, Hampton and his colleagues examined the use of wireless internet in parks, plazas, and markets in four different cities to explore how these public locations contribute to broader participation in public activities by visitors (Hampton, et al 2010: 701). The authors argue that internet connectivity in these public locations can reshape the public realm and create a place where people of differing backgrounds, ethnicities, and viewpoints may gather to interact, shop, and relax. This co-location of individuals “may increase social cohesion, tolerance, and exposure to diverse messages” (2010: 701). David Bell’s 2007 article “The Hospitable City: Social Relations in Commercial Spaces”, examines “spaces of hospitality”. These are spaces that serve a dual purpose: they are designed to welcome guests and they provide a taste of local food and drink. They cater specifically to “gastrotourists,” people who aim to try new foods when traveling (Bell 2007: 9). These studies are significant for three reasons: 1) the welcoming and pleasant atmosphere discussed in these articles provide perspectives that may explain why customers who are not provisioning are eager to spend time at North Market, 2) they provide insights about alternative uses of social spaces such as found in North Market, and 3) these perspectives provide insights which may lead to future areas of study.

\(^1\) Data sourced from U.S. Census Bureau’s American Fact Finder according to zip code.
The public market can be studied in a variety of ways, from analyzing the social habits of those who shop at the market to examining how people use the market. Studies analyzing the public market as a place for social interaction explore the social aspects of public markets (Anderson 2004, Hampton et al 2010, Bell 2007). The public market represents a space where a welcoming and civil atmosphere is the background for social interactions (Anderson 2004); however, these social interactions are also performed in a space created for economic interactions and it is this realm that these authors do not discuss.

Karl Polanyi, in *The Great Transformation*, argues that there are three basic exchange systems in economies: reciprocity, redistribution, and market exchange. Reciprocity is the nonmarket exchange between social equals, such as gift giving. Redistribution refers to the collection and re-allotment of surpluses at a local level, as seen in the collection of taxes by the government or the assembly of goods by a charitable institution. In both cases, moneys and goods are reallocated and redistributed. Market exchange refers to transactions of goods or services in the short-run, monetarily driven exchanges which are governed by the principle of gains and profits (Polanyi 1957; Berdan 1989). All three of these exchange systems are apparent in any given society; however, the dominant economy in modern Western societies is the market exchange system. According to Polanyi, this system of exchange eschews long-term relationships between the vendor and the customer and instead favors short-term, impersonal relationships. Stuart Plattner (1982; 1989A) argues against this idea and explores the reasons why some customers and vendors aim to establish long-term, reciprocal economic relationships in some situations while avoiding them in others.
Short-run exchanges tend to be impersonal because there is no economic advantage in having a relationship between the parties involved because the transaction has few implications for the future. These transactions are generally closed-ended (Plattner 1989A). For example, at Giant Eagle, it will probably be a few days or weeks before I see the cashier again (if I ever see him/her again). I have no vested interest in a lasting relationship because the transaction is completed when I pay my bill and receive my goods. The public market, however, attempts to create a different, less impersonal atmosphere. Even if a customer is a first time buyer, the vendors often engage them in conversation and often offer advice. This more personal relationship may not be as strong as those shared between friends or family members, but the relationships forged between customers and vendors at public markets aim to establish long-run economic relationships which tend to increase customer satisfaction and create the potential for future transactions.

During my visits to North Market, especially on farmer’s market days, I watched customers interact with vendors in a way more typical of long-run relationships. While a majority of interactions revolved around the merchandise on offer (i.e.: inquiries about when a certain type of produce would be available or questions about harvest quantity/quality), often customers would ask about the family members of vendors or ask why a certain vendor or family member who usually participated in selling was absent. It seemed as if these customers had a vested interest in the vendors. They often visited the same vendors repeatedly, gravitating towards those who were more eager to converse while avoiding those whose service was more impersonal. Stuart Plattner found a similar trend when he explored Soulard Market in St. Louis, MO. He explains that while Soulard
Market facilitates “economically efficient, profit-maximizing behavior”, the vendors choose to emphasize long-run relationships which emphasize long-term security over short-term profits (Plattner 1982: 399). In his study, he found that many vendors were eager to maintain regular customers, and a handful of vendors were even willing to stock items of low profit just to satisfy the needs of their regular customers and to maintain relationships. This emphasis on building long-run relationships makes shopping at a public market more similar to shopping at the peasant market places described by Sidney Mintz in *Caribbean Transformations* (1989) and Stuart Plattner in “Markets and Marketplaces” (1989B) than it is to shopping at a large-scale grocery chain or the local mall.

Another way of examining public markets is to examine the market as a form of capital. In “Forms of Capital”, Bourdieu lays out three basic types of capital: economic, social, and cultural (Bourdieu 1997; Smart 1993). Each type of capital has its inherent powers. Economic capital refers to material assets such as money, commodities, and the means of material production. This form of capital has two perspectives: the vendor and the customer. The vendor provides the commodities which are purchased and ultimately control availability of goods and services available at the market, but economic capital is also represented by the customers at the market. From the very origins of the public market, customers display their economic capital through their purchases, and in the early days of public markets, those with the most wealth were given preferential treatment and access to goods (Mayo 1991). Today, the prices at public markets vary, but at the higher end markets, the ability to afford the superior goods at the public market constitutes a type of conspicuous consumption, a term coined by Thorsten Veblen. Conspicuous
consumption is the purchase of luxury or quality goods as a display of economic power (Veblen 2006). In the public arena of the public market, individuals in the higher economic tiers of society are able to purchase goods which are viewed as superior and therefore are more expensive. These individuals can purchase foods grown without pesticides and chemical fertilizers, they have the means to drive to farmer’s markets to purchase freshly picked goods straight off the farm, and they can do so in a public way. This permutation of capital ties into the idea of social capital. Social capital includes building obligation through connections, social position, and trust. Those who have the means to visit the market more often have a greater potential to build these connections.

While social capital may establish social relationships in the short or long term, in most cases social capital is built upon long-run economic relationships which are created through the familiarity gained by frequent, repeat visits.

Cultural capital is also represented in the interactions at public markets. This type of capital built through a process of education and cultivation, and it is demonstrated through an individual’s ability to navigate in a culture (Bourdieu 1997). By shopping at the modern public market, customers can demonstrate cultural knowledge. They may choose to shop at the public market because it is fashionable, because they believe that it is an eco-conscious decision, because they wish to support local businesses, or because they know that they can find superior/healthful produce and grocery items. Each of these motivations exemplifies a different type of cultural capital and cultural knowledge.

Similarly, different vendors may play on this idea of cultural capital to manipulate the customers. For example, an environmentally conscious shopper might be drawn to a vendor named The Greener Grocer or Better Earth because the shop names imply an
environmentally conscious attitude. This manipulation, however, is not necessarily a malevolent force; it may just be a way of informing the customers that the ethical mindset of the vendor is consistent with – or at least it can be assumed to be consistent with – the mindset of the environmentally conscious consumer. Both The Greener Grocer and Better Earth are vendors at North Market, and both of these vendors sell products which are environmentally friendly. The Greener Grocer sells organic and locally grown produce, and Better Earth sells petroleum-free and biodegradable household cleaners and toiletries.

Forms of capital are manipulated at the public market. The building of long-term relationships forms a unique version of social capital. It behooves the vendor to manipulate this relationship to help ensure further business with the individual. Even if the vendor does not recognize the customer as a repeat customer, they may behave in a friendly or familiar manner. For a vendor who is successful at this manipulation of social capital by making each customer feel valued or special, there is a potential for increased economic capital. The customer may not only return for repeat business, but they may also tell other people about their experience at the market which will ideally increase business for the vendor.
Chapter 4: The History of the American Public Market

In many ways, the American public market was born out of necessity. The first public markets, typically located in town centers or town wharfs, were open air collections of vendors. The first public market on record in the United States was established in Boston in 1639 (Mayo 1991: 41). This and other markets provided a place where Native Americans, rural agriculturalists, and hunters could sell their food products. Over time open air markets gave way to indoor markets. This provided a permanent location for local butchers and country people to do business without concern of foul weather. By establishing market houses, city officials provided a much needed service for their citizens, but they also generated valuable revenue by charging rent to the individual vendors. These arrangements also allowed cities to establish health standards (1991: 42). The earliest market houses were open air sheds, and over time, these gave way to enclosed structures. Building interiors were typically divided into sections for meats, fish, and produce, and a market master or market committee was hired to enforce sanitation rules, collect rent, and reassign empty stalls (1991:42).

While many modern ethnographers who examine public markets (Bell 2007, Hampton 2010, Anderson 2004) emphasize the role of contemporary markets as spaces where a diverse clientele can interact socially, early markets helped to reinforce the disparities within America’s social class system. Butchers and produce vendors were
among the most profitable vendors and were able to afford the costs associated with the best locations, typically at the end of the building. The locations at the end of the building are typically the ones closest to the entrances and therefore these locations receive the most foot traffic from customers. Country folk and those who did not trade every day were given the less desirable middle stalls (Mayo 1991). Class divisions were not restricted to vendors. The upper classes, including owners of elite boarding houses, hotels, and restaurants, were given the opportunity to shop early in the morning to get the best wares available. These people paid a premium, but they were also given the choice of the best selection. As the day wore on prices and selection continued to drop. Wives and daughters of the middle class citizens came in to shop followed by the poorer classes. By ten or eleven o’clock in the morning, the poorest members of society, racial minorities and the blind, were left to pick through bony carcasses and bruised fruit which merchants sold for very little or nothing (1991).

At the turn of the twentieth century, markets begin to modernize to suit the changing needs of their customers. Most markets took on the added expense of offering electricity, and some, as in the case of West Side Market in Cleveland, added public baths to compensate for the lack of indoor plumbing in some neighborhoods (Mayo 1991; Lewis 1981). Indeed, the 1918 US Census Bureau found that half of the cities with populations over 30,000 maintained a public market (Zade 2009). However, even as markets became more modernized, changes in American business and increased presence of independent grocery stores began to affect profits at public markets. Public markets thrived on their ability to provide fresh goods to their customers at a centralized location,
but at the turn of the century grocery stores began popping up in residential areas, and many offered home delivery. In 1946, grocery stores were responsible for only 28 percent of the total share of grocery sales. Eight years later this figure had risen to 48 percent (Zade 2009: 28-29). This is primarily due to the fact that grocery stores were close to residential areas and provided complete and reliable service. These stores also offered more competitive and consistent pricing. For example, A&P opened its first store in 1912, and by 1930 it had opened nearly 16,000 stores. Because of the sheer quantity of stores, the Hartford family, A&P’s founders, was able to make deals with manufacturers and distributors which undercut the prices of their smaller scale competitors, such as corner stores and public markets (Levinson 2011). Consistent and competitive pricing, along with heightened accessibility, were some of the advantages that these new grocery stores imparted, but they also created a purpose-built, clean public space that allowed shoppers to satisfy their “functional, social, and aspirational needs” (Woodruffe-Burton, et al 2002: 257). Public markets were unable to fulfill these new consumer demands, and over the decades, they declined in numbers (Mayo 1991; Zade 2009). This was the case in Columbus. North Market was the second of four public markets to open in the city, yet it is the only one that still remains (“North Market - About Us” 2012).

While many public markets did close over the middle decades of the 20th century, they did not completely disappear. Markets in Philadelphia, Cleveland, and St. Louis fought for survival, and with the help of preservationists, advocates, and often the vendors themselves, they were able to survive. Some markets, such as Pike Place Market
in Seattle and City Market in Indianapolis, faced lengthy battles with urban renewal organizations and ended up on the National Register of Historic Places (Zade 2009: 28).

The story of North Market is filled with similar difficulties. In 1948, North Market was destroyed by a fire. Facing the closure of the market, the merchants pooled funds to purchase a Quonset hut to house the market, and that was its home for nearly fifty years. Over the decades, the market faced temporary closures and threats of demolition but it continued to survive (“North Market - About Us” 2012).

Today, the public market movement has been revitalized. With increased public consciousness about the importance of local food production systems, public markets provide an opportunity for direct sales and interaction between producers and consumers (Gillespie 2007: 65). As Zade discusses in his 2009 project, local food systems are not restricted to produce sales between a farmer and consumer. They may include direct sales between local cheese makers, coffee roasters, bread bakers, butchers, and patisseries. In this way, the benefits are fourfold: public markets increase the visibility of local food producers, encourage diversification in food production, support local businesses, and create a space where producers and consumers may interact directly (Zade 2009: 34; Gillespie 2007: 65). It is for these reasons that so many advocates have fought to preserve public markets throughout the United States.
I had been living in Columbus for a week when I first heard about North Market. I had spent the previous four years teaching non-culinary courses at a culinary school and somehow the atmosphere rubbed off on me and I became a bit of a foodie. The moment I heard about the market from one of my former colleagues, I knew I had to go. Having been to West End Market in Cleveland, I thought that I knew what to expect: a huge building filled with a staggering array of meats, seafood, poultry, produce, pastries, and bread. I expected to be overwhelmed with the sheer mass of goods. During the
A mile-and-a-half walk from my apartment to the market, I daydreamed about the treats that lay before me. When I walked in, I was initially underwhelmed. North Market was not the enormous Mecca of food-dom that I had imagined, but as I meandered around the facility, the charm of the place began to show through. The vendors are friendly and courteous. They are always willing to lend a hand, and the food that they offer is delicious, delightful, and fairly diverse.

Today, North Market contains thirty-four permanent vendors inside of the warehouse with additional vendors occupying outdoor pavilions during “Farmers’ Market Saturdays” throughout the summer. The permanent vendors fall into six categories with some overlap:

**Desserts/Snacks:**
- A Taste of Belgium – bridging the realms of prepared foods and snacks, A Taste of Belgium makes fresh sweet Belgian waffles, a variety of sweet and savory crepes, and coffee.
- brêzel – the newest addition to North Market, brêzel features a variety of flavored Bavarian pretzels, such as slow-roasted tomato & basil, apple-cinnamon, original, and onion.
- Jeni’s Splendid Ice-Cream – A Columbus based ice-cream manufacturer which features 30+ varieties of ice-cream, sorbets, and frozen yogurts.
- Pam’s Market Popcorn – Offering a variety of flavored popcorns, Pam’s Popcorn sells flavors, such as Chicago cheddar, caramel, classic butter, and other specialty flavors of popcorn.
- Pure Imagination Chocolatier – creates a wide range of chocolates from chocolate-peanut butter buckeyes to flavored truffles.
- The Candy Shack – this stall is devoted to bulk and nostalgic candies. It is the perfect place to find Bottle Caps, jelly beans, and wax lips.

**Prepared Foods:**
- Best of the Wurst – offering a selection of paninis, hot dogs, and sausages,
Best of the Wurst sells both ready to eat meals and sausages to prepare and consume at home.

Clever Crow Pizza – another fairly new addition to the market, Cleaver Crow Pizza creates signature and seasonal pizzas and handmade sodas.

Expressly Market Bakery & Bistro – part pastry shop, part sandwich shop, Expressly provides an array of vegan, vegetarian, and gluten-free pastries along with their homemade soups and sandwiches.

Firdous Express – one of the new additions to the market when it reopened in the Advanced Thresher Warehouse, Firdous Express has been with the market since 1995 (Martineau 2005). They offer a selection of Mediterranean specialties including entrees and desserts.

Flavors of India – another transplant from the Quonset hut, Flavors of India has been with the market for just over two decades (Martineau 2005). It offers vegetarian and meat-based curries, as well as samosa (pastry filled with spiced potatoes and vegetables). Flavors of India also offers a small selection of Indian pickles, relishes, and spices.

Heil’s Family Deli – originally opened in 1968, Heil’s Family Deli is the longest operating vendor at the market and one of the few vendors that date back to the days when the market was housed in the Quonset Hut (Martineau 2005). While Heil’s sells eggs and butter, they primarily offer handmade deli salads and sandwiches.

Holy Smoke BBQ – providing a plethora of smoked meat sandwiches and sides, Holy Smoke boasts beef brisket that has been smoked for over 15 hours and sides such as collard greens and coleslaw.

Hubert’s Polish Kitchen – pierogi, cabbage rolls, and kielbasa are just a few of the offerings at Hubert’s.

Lan Viet Market – creates Vietnamese dishes such as pho (spiced beef broth based soup), summer rolls, and grilled meat. Lan Viet also offers a small selection of Vietnamese and Asian grocery items. In 2010, this shop changed hands and changed names. It was previously called Lac Viet Market.

Nida’s Sushi at North Market – Nida’s sells not only freshly prepared sushi, but also glutinous rice cakes and seaweed salad. It also boasts a selection of Japanese sweet treats and pocky.

Pastaria – a transplant from the Quonset hut, Pastaria has been with the market since 1993 (Martineau 2005). It is devoted to offering Italian entrees, including eggplant parmesan and lasagna, as well as desserts.

Sarefino’s Pizzeria and Deli – offers a selection of pizzas and deli sandwiches. Sarefino’s also sells deli meats for home consumption.
Grocery/Cook at Home:

Bluescreek Farm Meats – Bluescreek Farm Meats is an outlet for Bluescreek Farms and is one of the few permanent vendors at North Market that sells direct from the farm. Their beef, pork, lamb, goat, and veal are raised locally and are antibiotic and hormone free. They have been selling at the market since 1993 and one of the vendors which were transplanted from the Quonset hut.

CaJohn’s Flavor & Fire – specializing in hot sauce, CaJohn’s boasts 180 varieties of hot sauces, BBQ sauces, seasonings, and salsas (and the tortilla chips to go with them).

Curds & Whey – as the name implies, Curds & Whey offers cheeses from around the world, but they also provide a selection of specialty grocery items, including Marmite, as well as milk and bread.

North Market Poultry & Game – an outlet for local farms, North Market Poultry & Game sells chicken, bison, turkey, pheasant, rabbit, and venison for home for home cooks. It opened in 1995 when the market moved to its new location (Martineau 2005).

North Market Spices – a relatively new addition to the market, North Market Spices offers a selection of spices and spice blends.

Omega Artisan Baking – while the main emphasis at Omega’s is a selection fresh baked bread, this bakery also offers a small selection of sweet pastries. They offer standard French baguettes, croissants, focaccia, and a selection of whole grain bread, but they also sell fresh baked challah bread on Fridays.

Pastaria Seconda – a sister store to Pastaria, Pastaria Seconda was initially opened in 1998 (Martineau 2005). It straddles the line between prepared foods and grocery because it offers grab-and-go prepared sauces, pasta, and pizza which can be taken home, prepared, and served quickly. They also offer a selection of dried pastas and other Italian groceries.

The Fish Guys – offering fresh, line-caught fish from sustainable fisheries, The Fish Guys also sell a selection of homemade soups and salads.

The Greener Grocer – produce is the bread and butter of The Greener Grocer, but they also sell milk, eggs, grains, peanut butter, and dried beans.

Cookware/Kitchen Supplies/Gifts:

Market Blooms – presenting a collection of greeting cards and fresh flowers, this stall is a holdover from the days at the old location.

The Source by Wasserstrom – a long-time purveyor of restaurant supplies, the owner of The Source loved the market so much that he wanted to open a
shop there. At market, The Source offers a rotating selection of china and
glassware from producers such as FiestaWare and Oneida. They also sell a
selection of cookware, serving ware, and kitchen supplies.

North Market Cookware – like its name suggests, cookware, kitchen gadgets,
tea accessories, and kitchen supplies are the key good sold at North
Market Cookware.

Beyond Beads – offering a selection of necklaces, earrings, and rings Beyond
Beads shares space with Better Earth. Before it merged with Better earth,
it was in the corner currently housing North Market Spices.

**Household Cleaning/Toiletries:**

Better Earth – first joining the market in 1991, Better Earth originally
appeared in the Quonset hut and made the move to the new location in
1995. It offers a variety of eco-conscious products, including toilet paper,
vitamins, and cleaning supplies. In 2009, it was in housed between Lan
Viet Market and Jeni’s Splendid Ice-Creams.

**Beverages:**

Bubbles: The Tea and Juice Company – Bubbles offers a selection of fresh
brewed teas, flavored iced tea, smoothies, fresh squeezed juice, and bubble
tea (flavored tea with tapioca pearls).

A Touch of Earth – a wide variety of sustainable teas and coffees are sold at A
Touch of Earth.

The Barrel & Bottle – a relatively new vendor, The Barrel & Bottle sells a
variety of foreign and domestic craft beers and wine.

While many of the vendors have remained the same, there have been a number of
changes since North Market changed locations. Of the thirty-four merchants that were
present when North Market was reborn in the renovated Advanced Thresher warehouse in
November of 1995, fifteen were still there on the tenth anniversary of the new location.
Of those fifteen, twelve remain today: A Touch of Earth (now merged with Beyond
Beads), Bluescreek Farm Meats, Curds & Whey, Flavors of India, Heil’s Family Deli,
Market Blooms, Pastaria, Serefino’s, The Fish Guys, Firdous Express, and North Market
Poultry & Game. I point this out because much of my data was collected in a survey conducted by North Market in 2009. Since that time, a number of merchants have left the market while others have joined the ranks. The merchants that have joined North Market since 2009 are The Barrel & Bottle, Hubert’s Polish Kitchen, brēzel, Clever Crow Pizza, and North Market Spices. These shops will not be reported on the survey. Conversely, a number of shops also left the market: Mozart’s North Market Bakery, El Paraiso, Barry’s New York Deli, and Grapes of Mirth. Since these shops will be mentioned in the data, a short description of each follows:

**Desserts/Snacks:**
Mozart’s North Market Bakery – cookies, pies, buckeyes, European tortes, and coconut-covered rum balls the size of your fist were sold at Mozart’s North Market Bakery. This stall has been replaced by a seating area.

**Prepared Foods:**
El Paraiso – burritos, tacos, and other Mexican specialties were offered at El Paraiso. They also sold a collection of Mexican groceries. This vendor was replaced by Hubert’s Polish Kitchen.

Barry’s New York Deli – Barry’s sold deli sandwiches, potato salad, knishes, and cheesecake. It was located where Better Earth and Beyond Beads currently resides.

**Beverages:**
Grapes of Mirth – purveyed in wines and beers. This shop was replaced by The Barrel & Bottle.
Chapter 6: Data

In 2009, North Market conducted a survey of customers in order to gain insights and prepare for long range planning. The survey was conducted through a popular online survey service which allowed any North Market customer with internet access to complete the twelve to fifteen minute survey. Respondents were entered into a drawing for a North Market gift card. During the time that data was collected, 1,262 surveys were completed by customers leading to valuable data related to the development of the market. During the summer of 2011, I met with David Wible, the Executive Director of North Market, to discuss a possible research project examining how customers use the market. After he heard my research proposal, Mr. Wible told me about the 2009 survey. While the goals of the survey and the direction of my research did not mesh perfectly, there was sufficient overlap to provide a firm footing for exploration.

Data – Customer Demographics

The typical customer at North Market is female, married/partnered, and has no children (figures 2-4). She is most likely in her late-twenties or early-thirties. While the mean age of a visitor to North Market is thirty-seven years old, 43% of respondents are between twenty-five and thirty-four (Figure 5). Nearly half of the respondents live in Columbus neighborhoods, and my “typical” customer in all probability lives relatively
close to the market – most likely in Clintonville, Short North, Downtown, Grandview, or German Village. She spends between $10.99-24.99 at the market which is approximately 1-9% of her total food budget (Figures 6 and 8). She probably visits on Saturdays – the most common day for a customer to visit – and identifies herself as a shopping and dining customer, but she may also attend special events at the market. She visits the market at least once every other month but probably more often.

Data – Spending at North Market

While a handful (7.7%) of customers estimated their 2009 income as less than $25,000 a year, 38.7% of customers report earning between $50,000-$100,000 a year and another 22.4% reported earning more than $100,000 (Figure 7). Just under half (46.5%) of all respondents report spending between $10-25 per visit at North Market, and while spending at the market tends to increase as household income increases (Figure 9), the vast majority of respondents (72%) state that they spent only 1-9% of their food budget at the market (Figure 6 and 8). The respondents report visiting fairly regularly in the year prior to taking the survey with 61.9% of respondents visiting at least six times and 22.3% visiting more than twenty times (Figure 10). Most respondents also report that they have visited the same or more than they had in previous years.

But where do these customers spend their money? The survey asked the respondents to categorize their behavior at the market. They were asked to indicate whether they were “shopping”, “dining”, or attending “special events”. While the survey
did not explicitly define each of these terms, the intention was to discover how customers categorized their trips to North Market. Did they come to the market to purchase prepared food either to consume at the market (or possibly at home)? Were they visiting for provisional foods, cookware, gifts, or other goods? Or did they come to the market for one of the many special events offered throughout the year, such as Artisan Sunday, Cinco D’Ohio, the Columbus Microbrew Festival, or the Food & Ohio Wine Festival? Categories presented in the survey were not discrete and the respondents were able to select more than one response. A majority (75.8%) of respondents indicated that they were diners, suggesting that they purchase prepared foods at the market to consume on the premises, at home, or at work. “Shopping” visitors were the second largest group at 66.7%. This suggests that a smaller majority of customers define themselves as purchasers of provisional or other goods. The smallest category was the “Special Events” visitors which encompassed 47.6%. North Market hosts a number of special events throughout the year, and these were visitors who attend at least one or some of those events. Many of the customers indicated that they participated in more than one category or activity. Over one-quarter (23.8%) of respondents indicated that they were shopping/dining customers, and nearly one-third (31.6%) indicate that they classify themselves in all three categories (Figures 11-12).

When asked which five North Market vendors they visit most frequently, nearly half (47.5%) of those surveyed responded that they visit Jeni’s Splendid Ice Cream (represented by the brown on figure 13). The next most frequently visited shop was The Greener Grocer at 21.6%, followed by Flavors of India at 20.5%. In short, over twice the
number of respondents indicate visiting Jeni’s Ice Cream than the next most popular
vendor, The Greener Grocer (figures 13 and 14); however, when divided categorically
according to types of goods sold – desserts/snacks, prepared foods, grocery/cook at
home, etc – a majority of respondents indicate that they purchase prepared foods while at
North Market. The next most common category is grocery followed by desserts/snacks
(figure 13).
Chapter 7: Analysis

Now that I have presented the general characteristics and overall behaviors of North Market visitors, I can move on to answering my questions: how do people use North Market? Do people use it primarily for entertainment or provisioning? Does thrift come into play when purchasing goods at the market?

People shop for a variety of reasons. Personal motives for shopping include the fulfillment of socially expected roles (being a good spouse/parent and satisfying the needs of the family), diversion or entertainment, to alleviate boredom or loneliness, or for physical activity. There are also social motives for shopping: shopping may provide an opportunity to socialize with friends or even strangers while browsing through the aisles and even a solitary shopper may be drawn to the attraction of a good bargain so that they can brag about it with friends (Woodruffe-Burton 2002: 263). Ultimately, shopping typically falls into three categories: provisioning, the treat, and thrift. These three categories are not discrete and there can be considerable overlap. As Miller notes, a person may buy a treat because it is a bargain or they may go to the high end store for provisional shopping as a treat. Miller uses the British supermarket chain Marks & Spencer to illustrate his point. Marks & Spencer is noted for its extraordinary range and quality of goods, but it is equally noted for its high prices. A middle-class individual who would ordinarily avoid Marks & Spencer because of its prices may purchase a pre-packaged meal from this shop as a treat in lieu of dining at a restaurant (Miller 1998).
While this is not explored by Miller explicitly, it is possible to build on this idea of the treat and argue that the auxiliary reasons for shopping – exercise, the thrill of the bargain, socializing with friends – will fall into the treat category because they are something extraordinary or something beyond mere provisioning. In other words, even if a person does not need to go shopping, they may set up an outing with friends to walk around the local mall to socialize and get exercise. Productive provisional shopping may occur on these outings, but the true justification for the excursion is socialization.

To fully understand North Market, my analysis focuses on four questions using Miller’s theory of shopping as a theoretical model. First, I explore the meaning of provisioning at North Market. Second, I examine thrift as a concept among shoppers in general and at North Market in particular. Finally, I analyze treats and how they are interrelated with ideas of entertainment and leisure. Chapter eight brings everything together and examines how North Market compares to other public markets, including Reading Terminal Market in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh Public Market in Pittsburgh, West Side Market in Cleveland, and Pike Place Market in Seattle.

*Provisioning*

Provisioning typically encompasses the bulk of shopping (Miller 1998). Generally, it includes the purchase of personal care items, household items, grocery items, and clothes. Because North Market does not sell clothes, I will focus on the first three items on that list. Provisional shopping takes care of immediate needs, and typically, it consists of regular, usually weekly, trips to a local supermarket to purchase
food and household items for fairly immediate consumption throughout the week (Miller 1998: 44). For the sake of clarity, and because of the potentially complicated nature of prepared foods, I will save its discussion for the third section.

In his 2007 text, *Economies and Cultures*, Richard Wilk argues that there are three major components to economy: production, exchange, and consumption. North Market is a place where all three converge. Producers and consumers can interact directly in the market. While many of the goods sold at North Market are produced off site, a number of vendors do produce and sell their own goods at the market (i.e. most of the prepared food vendors, as well as březel and Omega Artisan Baking). The market also provides a location where producers sell directly to customers; for example, Bluescreek Farm Meats is essentially an outlet where the owners of Bluescreek Farm sell directly to their customers straight from the farm. Many of the participants in the farmer’s market are also producers who wish to sell directly to their customers.

North Market is also a place where exchange occurs; specifically, the market is a place where money is exchanged for goods and services. In the survey conducted by North Market, 66.7% of customers indicated that they are shopping customers, but does this mean that they are provisional shoppers? On figures thirteen and fourteen, I broke down which vendors the respondents visit most often. These data are collected from the question asking respondents which five merchants they visit most often. Of these respondents, 61.3% (or 773 people) indicate that they frequent at least one – and 32.5% indicate that they frequent at least two – of the merchants that sells primarily grocery food items (bread, dried pasta, sauces, produce, cheese, etc). Additionally, 64% of respondents indicate that they have attended at least one farmer’s market at North Market
in the twelve months prior to taking the survey with approximately 20% claiming that they have visited at least five farmer’s markets. Indeed, the farmer’s market is a place where a majority of the visitors complete at least part of their provisioning. However, this is not the only place where they provision: 72% of respondents indicated that spending at North Market is only 1-9% of their household food budget, and just 23 of the 1,262 individuals who completed the survey (1.8% of respondents) state that they do a majority of their shopping at the market. In short, many of the visitors are provisioning at North Market, but the amount that they spend is a small percentage of their overall household food budget.

*Thrift*

Thrift encompasses all of the strategies that a shopper uses to save money and time while shopping, but is North Market a place where people go to be cost-conscious? Of the 33.3% of survey respondents that indicated that they do not consider themselves shopping customers, only 3.9% indicated that cost was the major deterrent; however, the story is more complex.

To discover whether cost is a factor at North Market, I compared prices between the goods at North Market and other local food stores. First, I identified stores that may compete with North Market for customers. I selected eight local stores (all within 11 miles, and most within 5 miles, of North Market) where a customer might do provisional shopping: Giant Eagle (Neil Avenue), Kroger (High Street), Wal-Mart (Main Street), Target (Olentangy River Boulevard), Trader Joe’s (Easton, OH), Whole Foods (Upper Arlington, OH), Fresh Market (Henderson Road), and Hill’s Market (online). If a store is
part of a chain and has more than one location in Columbus, I chose the location closest to North Market. I also chose one convenience store, Turkey Hill, where shoppers might stop for emergency provisional items on their way home or if they realize they need something quickly. To establish whether prices were consistent, I also chose two chain stores in Pittsburgh, PA – Trader Joe’s and Giant Eagle. I also selected a cross-section of eleven grocery stores that ranged from what I refer to as “conventional grocery stores” (Wal-Mart, both Giant Eagle stores, Target, Kroger, and Turkey Hill) to what refer to as “elite/specialty markets” (Hill’s Market, Fresh Market, Whole Foods, and both Trader Joe’s locations). I visited stores in a relatively short span of time – between January 11, 2012 and January 27, 2012 – in order to avoid seasonal changes in produce prices.

After choosing the stores that I would visit, I devised a “shopping list” of thirteen items. The items on my list fell into three categories: produce, protein/dairy/eggs, and household items (Figure 15). Because I wanted to be thrifty with my hypothetical purchases, and in order to be as consistent as possible, I chose the cheapest option at each location regardless of package size. This decision was mostly intended to compensate for the lack of consistency in the sizes available for dish detergent and toilet paper. The package sizes of these items available for purchase were not consistent across brands and not all brands were available at all stores. To overcome this problem, I chose the cheapest product available regardless of size. Often larger sizes would have been more cost effective, but I did not want to complicate matters by calculating cost per ounce. I treated the research as if I were shopping on a very strict budget and trying to find the cheapest option. I also did not use sale prices in my calculations. If an item was on sale, I used the regular price to maintain consistency. The Broad Avenue location of Turkey
Hill did not carry boneless, skinless chicken breasts, and therefore I eliminated it from the graphs analyzing the protein/eggs/dairy and the table reporting the final price breakdown.

It is important to note how produce was priced in some of the stores. Some stores sell their produce by item and others sell their produce by weight. In order to control for this and create consistency, I calculated an average weight for each item and used those numbers to calculate the prices for each item sold by weight. For example, I purchased twenty-four bananas from different stores, calculated their total weight, and then averaged the total to arrive at an average weight for each banana (0.39 pounds). This gave me a constant from which to calculate the price of two bananas. I did the same for Granny Smith Apples (0.67 pounds per apple), and Navel Oranges (0.84 pounds per orange). Cucumbers were priced per item at all of the stores, but both Trader Joe’s locations had only English cucumbers which are typically more expensive than the more common Burpless variety. When both conventional and organic varieties were available, I chose the conventional varieties because they were typically the more thrifty option.

Ultimately, I found that the prices at North Market were considerably higher than those at conventional grocery stores. The totaled price at North Market was over twice that of the least expensive location (Wal-Mart). When the prices of all of the items on the shopping list were combined, the price of my shopping excursion at North Market totaled $47.92, while the same items were only $20.56 at Wal-Mart. The second most expensive store among conventional grocery stores was Target, but even there, my visit only totaled $28.26 – $18.66 less expensive than comparable items purchased at North Market. The price difference was apparent in all categories, but it was most apparent in the cost of general household items. At North Market, the cost for my list of general household
items was over triple the cost at Wal-Mart. This difference is mostly due to the sheer quantity of products available at Wal-Mart and the other stores. Wal-Mart devotes considerable aisle space to laundry and dish washing detergents, offering a huge selection of brands and sizes. Better Earth at North Market does not have that luxury. They have limited shelf space and must be more selective about the products they provide. Better Earth also sells only environmentally friendly detergents that are biodegradable and petroleum free which further reduces the variety of options available. These products are typically more expensive, which also adds to the overall price of the shopping excursion. Wal-Mart does not restrict itself exclusively to products that are “eco-conscious.” But how does North Market compare to shops that practice the same ethos in selecting their products? How do stores that focus on sustainability and eco-awareness that characterizes elite/specialty shops such as Whole Foods and Trader Joe’s compare to North Market?

While the prices at North Market were much closer to the other shops in the elite market category, they are still on the high end of the spectrum. The only store that was more expensive than North Market was Fresh Market. The total cost of the items on my shopping list was $46.92 at North Market; at Fresh Market, the same items cost over $52. Fresh Market was less expensive in the protein/dairy category, and only $0.37 more expensive in the produce category. The major difference in prices between North Market and Fresh Market was due to the cost of general household items. Fresh Market had a very small selection of household items. While North Market had two types of laundry detergent, Fresh Market had only one laundry detergent option. At Fresh Market, the only laundry detergent available was $14.99 for 64 ounces, while at North Market the
least expensive of the three options available was just $7.79 for 50 ounces. Indeed, it was this lack of alternatives that affected the total costs of the items on the list.

In short, North Market is generally not the least expensive option when it comes to money, but can it be an economical choice? If a customer is at North Market for a special event or to purchase a prepared meal, it may be the thriftiest option when it comes to time. In other words, for those who are at North Market for other reasons (e.g. to purchase lunch or attending a special event), the market provides an excellent opportunity to multitask. An individual can socialize with coworkers and make purchases to be prepared for a meal later at home. Indeed, it seems that many of North Market’s customers are multitasking while they are there: 60.3% of survey respondents indicated that they are shopping/dining visitors, shopping/special events visitors, or shopping/dining/special events visitors (23.8%, 5.5%, and 31% respectively; figure 12). In other words, it may be a thrifty option for some visitors because a visit to North Market may be a multi-tasking event where customers grab a quick meal and complete some provisioning at one time.

The Treat

While there is some degree of overlap between treats and provisioning, generally what defines a treat is what it is not: a treat is extraneous, not something regular or mundane. The treat, however, can take many forms. A treat may be a chocolate bar that is a reward for completing the task of shopping or it can be a stop at a special shop to buy something that is wanted but not necessarily needed. Just as chocolate bars and pretty shoes may be a treat, leisure can also become a treat. Leisure is a time free from the
obligation of labor (De Graza 1964); it is, in its own way, an indulgence or a reward for completing the obligations which are necessary for survival in modern society – work, cooking, cleaning, or provisioning.

When a person attends a special event or takes an excursion to North Market, they may be treating themselves. Miller argues that “shopping under the constraint of necessity is likely to be viewed as work, while the unconstrained freedom to browse and choose is experienced as a relatively free expression of agency” (Miller 1998:69). This “unconstrained freedom” to just enjoy walking around the market may be a draw for many of the “special events” visitors. Last year, I attended the Food and Ohio Wine event. This event was the epitome of Miller’s vision of the treat because visitors had the opportunity to taste some wine and browse the available goods without pressure or obligation. The day that I attended coincided with a farmers market, and I observed many visitors wandering between the two sections enjoying the atmosphere. This opportunity to absorb the surroundings (and partake in tasty wine from local wineries) freely and without obligation may be justified by the consumer as a treat for completing a week of work.

Eating out or purchasing prepared foods for consumption at home or at work can also be another form or kind of treat. Miller argues that dining out is “understood as a treat in the sense of a personal indulgence for the shopper” (Miller 1998: 43). “Eating out” does not have to be a formal or structured occasion. It can be as simple as stopping at a particular store for a cup of coffee or having a meal at a food court attached to a shopping establishment. Miller argues that, “For many families, to eat out is itself a treat, quite apart from any relation to shopping. For the housewife, in particular, the treat
element may be represented as a release from the work involved in cooking for the family” (Miller 1998: 43). Indeed, in his argument, Miller makes a salient point: eating out may be a treat because it represents a departure from the labor of cooking a meal for oneself or for one’s family, but is that always the case?

While preparing for this project, my research assistant, Krystle, and I visited North Market in order to observe the behavior of the customers. Over lunch, we watched customers go about their business. The majority of the customers fell into three categories: office workers from nearby buildings, construction workers from a construction site less than a block away from the market, and out of town visitors. While members of the three groups are purchasing treats, the situation is more nuanced. For office workers and construction workers, a trip to the market represents a treat, but it is also provisioning. The trip to North Market for lunch fulfills a need. Granted, these workers could have brought a lunch from home, but by going out for lunch, they reinforced social bonds with their coworkers. They were fulfilling both a biological and a social need. Building on Bourdieu’s conception of capital (1997), this fulfillment of a social need forms a type of social capital within the group. It establishes a situation where all of the members of the group are unified as a cohesive whole thereby strengthening social bonds and status as a member of the group.

The third group of people that we observed at the market was a group of high school students on a class trip. I would argue that this group was also involved in provisioning. The market is a convenient location for school students. The diverse offerings and quick service satisfies their needs and time allotments. Students were able to go to whichever vendors they wished, get their food, and eat it in a relatively short
amount of time. For the trip organizers, the market is a convenient and safe location for the students to fulfill a biological need. The organizers may have thought that the location was a safe, interesting, and/or entertaining place for the students to stop, but the primary concern was most likely biological. For the students, the market fulfills both a biological and social need because it provides is a special and unique place where they can socialize and eat during their trip.

In the evenings, customer shopping is even more nuanced. Often customers stop at multiple locations as they travel through the market. On different occasions, both my assistant and I visited the market in the evening and observed the same pattern. As many of the customers wandered among the stalls, they purchased provisional items. A number of customers made their rounds from The Greener Grocer for vegetables to Bluescreek Farms for beef to North Market Poultry for chicken, before stopping at the Barrel & Bottle for a bottle of wine, but even these provisional shoppers typically purchased some hot food to take home before leaving the market. For these visitors, their shopping experience falls into both the provisional and the treat. The prepared food is a relief from the burden of cooking. Another example of this phenomenon occurred when Krystle visited the market alone. She noticed that a family of four arrived at the market together, divided to get their meals from different vendors, and reassembled in the balcony dining area where they ate together as a family. After dinner, the family divided again to purchase desserts – two decided to buy Jeni’s Splendid Ice Cream and two decided to indulge in Belgian waffles at A Taste of Belgium. The occasion removed the burden of cooking from the parents and gave the family an opportunity to dine together as a family unit. This was a social occasion where the family reinforced their shared social identity.
and reinforced bonds.

This building of reciprocation and bonds ties into Mauss’s idea of the gift. Mauss was primarily interested in gifts as a means of producing social relationships (for example kinship relationships and ritual relationships). The giving and sharing of food, especially in the case of potlatches, creates a reciprocal relationship between the giver and the receiver (Mauss 1966). A potlatch is a gift-giving festival typically practiced by indigenous peoples on the northwest coast of Canada and the United States. Meals shared in a public location by a family, a group of friends, or a clutch of coworkers serves a similar function as the potlatches discussed by Mauss: they reproduce and reinforce social bonds. Godilier (2004) builds on this idea by arguing that when an object is sold, it is completely separated from the person; however, when an object is given it implies a lasting relationship that must be passed on. Meal sharing in a public place away from home or office potentially builds lasting relationships, and over time it may become ritual for the individuals in these groups to gather and dine. Again, like the potlatch, this dining experience is established as something out of the ordinary. It is away from the typical surroundings for a meal (i.e.: the kitchen table at home, the office break room, or a cafeteria). It is also generally an irregular occurrence. According to the National Restaurant Association, on average a person will consume 14.2 privately prepared meals but only 2.1 commercially prepared lunches and 0.7 commercially prepared dinners per week (Ebin 2002). Dining out removes the obligation to prepare dinner (labor), but it also provides an opportunity for individuals to gather and share a social experience be it with friends, co-workers, family, or even a date.

Although North Market is a place where many customers spend their some of
their leisure time, it is not exclusively used for that purpose. As discussed in the previous section, 60.3% of visitors to North Market indicate that they are shopping/dining, shopping/special events, or shopping/dining/special events customers which implies that they are multitasking while they are at the market. They are not exclusively attending events or dining, they are engaging in what I call “productive leisure”. These customers are using their leisure time not only to relax but also to procure produce, meats, grocery items, and household goods. This propensity for customers to multitask in this way may occur for a couple of reasons, but I believe the main culprit is thrift. Thinking back to my observations at the Food and Ohio Wine Event, many customers may have come exclusively for the special event, but finding themselves in the midst of a farmer’s market, they chose to make the most of their time and provision while they were there; however, it is possible that they were merely unable to resist the allure of fresh fruits, cheeses, and vegetables when faced with a veritable cornucopia of deliciousness. Another motivation for customers to multitask may be to conserve time. It is possible that the customers realized that they needed to purchase some food items, and rather than make a special trip to another store, they decided to complete their shopping at the market. This second explanation is especially plausible when one takes into account the price of gas, and the additional cost that it may entail for a customer to make multiple trips.
Customers use North Market both for provisioning and for entertainment/leisure, but how does it compare to other public markets? In order to answer this question, I compared the offerings at North Market to the offerings at four other public markets: West Side Market in Cleveland, OH; Reading Terminal Market in Philadelphia, PA; Pittsburgh Public Market in Pittsburgh, PA; and Pike Place Market in Seattle, WA. For each of these markets, I consulted the list of vendors on their websites and categorized the vendors according to the merchandise they sold. While categories that I found at North Market were present, I had to consider how to best represent a wider range of potential offerings. My new categories of goods are: bread, produce, meat/dairy, general grocery (including canned goods, sauces, packaged items), beverages, prepared foods, pasty/sweets/snacks, clothing/accessories, kitchenware/kitchen items, bath/body, arts/crafts/books/gifts, flowers, and miscellaneous/services (Figure 27).

While categorizing the vendors, I also found that many did not fall into discrete categories. Often a vendor sells more than one category of goods. In order to overcome this problem, if a vendor offers more than one category of goods, they are counted multiple times. For example, if a vendor sells fresh fruit, flowers, and t-shirts, they are categorized as selling produce, flowers, and clothing/accessories. Because I changed my categories to better represent the range of goods available at other markets, I also had
to reorganize the vendors at North Market. I had categorized the vendors according to their primary offerings. In this model, I organized them according to all of their offerings. For instance, Lan Viet Market primarily sells prepared foods, but they also have a small selection of Asian grocery items for sale; therefore, Lan Viet Market is counted in both the general grocery category and the prepared foods category.

By categorizing the products available at each market, I was able to create a clear picture of how each market was used. In other words, I was able to discover whether customers use the markets for provisioning or entertainment. For instance, a large quantity of vendors at Pike Place market sell clothing, accessories, arts, crafts, and gift items. It is also, according to the Pike Place Market website, one of the most popular tourist attractions in the state of Washington (“Market History – Pike Place Market” 2012). This suggests that Pike Place Market is primarily a leisure/entertainment destination; even though there is a substantial presence of produce, meat, and grocery vendors. The quantity of vendors selling staple goods is actually belied by figure 27. There are 501 vendors at Pike Place Market. Only 8% of these vendors sell produce, for example, but that means that there are forty vendors which sell produce. At Pike Place Market, twenty-one vendors sell meats, seafood, dairy, or cheese, and twenty-seven sell general grocery items (“Market Map & Directory – Pike Place Market” 2012). There may be a substantial number of customers visiting Pike Place for leisure or entertainment, but the data suggest that there is a large group of people provisioning as well. Reading Terminal Market in Philadelphia is also a tourist attraction. Of the seventy vendors,
thirty-three sell prepared food, and it has nearly as many sweet treat vendors (10) as meat/dairy vendors (14). There is also a presence in the general grocery category (“Merchants – Reading Terminal Market” 2012). All of this leads me to believe that this market is primarily entertainment driven.

The story is much different at West Side Market in Cleveland. Of the 115 vendors at this market, 29 sell produce and 41 sell meats/dairy. This suggests that this market is primarily aimed towards staple goods. There are some vendors that offer prepared foods and sweets/snacks, but it is a smaller presence in the overall makeup of the market, suggesting that provisioning is the main role for the market with entertainment and prepared foods playing a secondary role (“Market Vendors – West Side Market” 2012).

Pittsburgh Public Market, the smallest of the markets discussed in this paper, is also the most difficult to categorize. It is located in a vibrant shopping district which offers a wide variety of ethnic foods, prepared foods, gifts, arts, and specialty groceries; however, Pittsburgh Public Market is hidden from the main thoroughfare. Unless one knows where it is, it is easy to miss. It is open only on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays and has just thirty vendors. Many of these vendors are only available on Saturdays or only during the summer and fall. Some of the permanent vendors sell fresh meats, dairy, general grocery items, or charcuterie, but clothing, bath/body care, and gift items are also a substantial presence (“Meet the Vendors – Pittsburgh Public Market” 2012). The main purpose behind Pittsburgh Public Market is to provide a stable space for producers to interact with purchasers, but much of the market’s offerings are too irregular for it to be
used strictly for provisioning. It is most likely that many of the visitors use it as a
diversions, as a place to leisurely wander as they enjoy a day out in the strip. This usage
may vary throughout the year as more fresh produce is available.
Chapter 9: Conclusion and Future Areas of Study

The public market, initially born out of necessity, still has a role in American society; however, in many cases that role has evolved from one exclusively centered around provisioning to one centered on leisure. North Market falls into both categories. It has offerings for both the provisioning visitors and for others seeking entertainment. North Market is a public space well suited for an analysis of shopping habits. On one hand, there are vendors who trade in snacks and desserts; while on the other hand, the market also contains vendors who specialize in goods which must be prepared before they are consumed. The prepared food vendor has a role in serving both types of visitor.

With the growing interest in the environmental and health impacts of food production, many consumers are attempting to become more conscious about where and how their food is being produced; furthermore, often these factors have weight in the decisions that consumers make. This study has many areas which may be expanded for future research. I used existing survey data as the platform for my research, but this data may be inherently skewed because the respondents were self-selected and had internet access. Because of the quantity of respondents, and the fact that they represent visitors from a variety of income levels and backgrounds, this concern is minimal. For future study, it may be useful to distribute a truncated version of the survey on response cards which may be both dispensed and collected from customers in one day. This may either
corroborate the existing data or disprove the data by allowing for a more accurate cross-section of visitors. Additionally, this study could be built upon by collecting data from other markets. I chose in this project to focus on North Market; however, this is just one of the public markets in the United States. Aside from studies in urban planning and social interaction, modern American public markets are largely unstudied ethnographically. The impact of studying public markets is three-fold: it can provide a deeper understanding of consumer behavior and economic decision-making, it can help public markets serve their customers more effectively, and it can bring awareness to consumers about food production.

Additionally, rather than examining the visitors to the market, value may be found in the study of local food supply systems. Community supported agriculture, farmers’ markets, and farm stands provide excellent opportunities for producers and consumers to interact in the public sphere, but they also provide a valuable source of revenue for local farmers. This area of research is valuable because it not only raises awareness of sustainable and local agriculture, but it also opens additional areas of study to understand the many pathways that food may take to get from the farm to our plates.
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Appendix
Figure 2: Gender of North Market Visitors

Figure 3: Marital Status of North Market Visitors

Figure 4: Number of Children in the Households of North Market Visitors

Figure 5: Ages of North Market Visitors

Figure 6: How much money do you spend during your average visit?

Figure 7: Estimated Household Income for 2009
Figure 8: What percent of your household shopping is done at North Market

Figure 9 represents the amount of money visitors spend on average during a visit to North Market. The information is divided according to their projected 2009 household income. The Y axis represents the dollar amount that visitors are spending, and the X axis represents the percent of customers.

Figure 10: Visits to North Market in the Past 12 Months
Figure 11: Types of North Market Visitors

Figure 12: Types of North Market Visitors

Figure 13: Respondents were asked to indicate which five merchants they visit most frequently. The responses have been organized by the types of goods each vendor primarily sells. Each vendor is represented by a different color. Percentages for this figure can be seen in figure 14.
Figure 14: Below is the name of each vendor accompanied by the percent of respondents who indicated that vendor as one of the five they visited most frequently. Figure 13 is a graphic representation of this data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vendor</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Vendor</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jeni's Splendid Ice Cream</td>
<td>47.5%</td>
<td>Bubbles</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Greener Grocer</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
<td>Best of the Wurst</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flavors of India</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>Pam's Popcorn</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omega Artisan Baking</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
<td>CaJohn's</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Fish Guys</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
<td>A Touch of Earth</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firdous Express</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>Heil's Family Deli</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastaria</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>Taste of Belguim</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lac Viet Market</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
<td>Holy Smoke BBQ</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarefino's Pizzaria</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>Pastaria Seconda</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curds&amp;Whey</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>Pure Imagination Chocolatier</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bluescreek Farm Meats</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
<td>North Market Cookware</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Market Poultry &amp; Game</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Expressly Market Bakery</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mozart's North Market Bakery</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td>El Paraiso</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grapes of Mirth</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
<td>The Candy Shack</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market Blooms</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td>The Source by Wasserstrom</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barry's New York Deli</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
<td>Better Earth</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nida's Sushi</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
<td>Better Earth's Beyond Beads</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 15: “Shopping List”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Produce</th>
<th>Protein/Dairy/Eggs</th>
<th>Household Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two Granny Smith Apples</td>
<td>One pound chicken (boneless, skinless breasts)</td>
<td>Dish washing detergent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Cavendish Bananas</td>
<td>One pound ground beef (ground chuck or 80/20)</td>
<td>Laundry detergent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Navel Oranges</td>
<td>One gallon milk (skim or fat free)</td>
<td>Toilet paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two cucumbers</td>
<td>One jar of peanut butter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One pound of carrots</td>
<td>One dozen eggs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figures 16 & 17: Comparison of prices in all three categories at conventional markets and elite/specialty markets to prices at North Market. A more detailed breakdown of the price comparisons can be found in figures 18-26.
Figure 18: Comparison of Produce Prices at Conventional Grocery Stores to Prices at North Market. Figures 18-26 represent the price comparisons between North Market and local grocery stores. Prices recorded January 11-27, 2012.
Figure 19: Comparison of Produce Prices at Elite/Specialty Markets to Prices at North Market. Figures 18-26 represent the price comparisons between North Market and local grocery stores. The Prices were recorded January 11-27, 2012.
Figure 20: Protein, Meat, Eggs, and Dairy Prices at Conventional Grocery Stores to Prices at North Market. Figures 18-26 represent the price comparisons between North Market and local grocery stores. The Prices were recorded January 11-27, 2012.
Figure 21: Comparison of Protein, Meat, Eggs, and Dairy Prices at Elite/Specialty Markets to North Market Prices. Figures 18-26 represent the price comparisons between North Market and local grocery stores. The Prices were recorded January 11-27, 2012.
Figures 18-26 represent the price comparisons between North Market and local grocery stores. The prices were recorded January 11-27, 2012.

Figure 22: Comparison of General Household Item Prices at Conventional Grocery Stores to Prices at North Market. Figures 18-26 represent the price comparisons between North Market and local grocery stores. The prices were recorded...
Figure 23: Comparison of General Household Item Prices at Specialty/Elite Markets to Prices at North Market. Figures 18-26 represent the price comparisons between North Market and local grocery stores. The Prices were recorded January 11-27, 2012.
Figure 24: Comparison of Prices in All Three Categories at Conventional Grocery Stores to Prices at North Market. Figures 18-26 represent the price comparisons between North Market and local grocery stores. The Prices were recorded January 11-27, 2012.
Figure 25: Comparison of Prices in All Three Categories Elite/Specialty Markets to Prices at North Market. Figures 18-26 represent the price comparisons between North Market and local grocery stores. The Prices were recorded January 11-27, 2012.
Figure 26: Comparison of prices in all three categories to conventional grocery stores and elite/specialty grocery stores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Store Name</th>
<th>Produce Total</th>
<th>Protein/Dairy Total</th>
<th>Household Total</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turkey Hill (Broad Ave., Columbus)</td>
<td>$7.11</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>$7.13</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wal-Mart (Main St., Columbus)</td>
<td>$5.35</td>
<td>$11.09</td>
<td>$4.12</td>
<td>$20.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kroger (High St., Columbus)</td>
<td>$5.81</td>
<td>$13.20</td>
<td>$5.50</td>
<td>$24.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giant Eagle (Neil Ave, Columbus)</td>
<td>$7.59</td>
<td>$13.09</td>
<td>$5.26</td>
<td>$25.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giant Eagle (Pittsburgh, PA)</td>
<td>$8.42</td>
<td>$12.96</td>
<td>$5.07</td>
<td>$26.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target (Olentangy River Blvd., Columbus)</td>
<td>$6.37</td>
<td>$12.39</td>
<td>$9.52</td>
<td>$28.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trader Joes (Easton, OH)</td>
<td>$8.01</td>
<td>$13.65</td>
<td>$11.97</td>
<td>$33.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trader Joes (Pittsburgh, PA)</td>
<td>$7.41</td>
<td>$14.85</td>
<td>$11.97</td>
<td>$34.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole Foods (Upper Arlington, OH)</td>
<td>$9.07</td>
<td>$17.05</td>
<td>$10.77</td>
<td>$36.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hill's Market (Online)</td>
<td>$8.67</td>
<td>$18.15</td>
<td>$13.27</td>
<td>$40.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Market (Spruce St, Columbus)</td>
<td>$9.79</td>
<td>$22.16</td>
<td>$14.97</td>
<td>$46.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresh Market (Henderson Rd., Columbus)</td>
<td>$10.16</td>
<td>$17.25</td>
<td>$24.97</td>
<td>$52.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 27 is based on the percentages of vendors offering each category of goods. The vendors did not always fall under discrete categories, so when a vendor offers more than one category of goods they are categorized according to each product type of product they sell.