

OFF COURSE:
A CREATIVE EXPLORATION
OF CARTOGRAPHY, CUISINE
AND NARRATIVE
COMPILED BY
TIMOTHY LANSE

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To Lauren, I hope you find what it is you are looking for.

ABOUT THE EDITOR

Timothy Lensed grew up in Massachusetts and attended University of Massachusetts for his undergraduate studies in Cartography. He obtained his PhD in Geography with an emphasis in Cartographic Studies from the Pennsylvania University of Ohio. He is currently a professor at the Pennsylvania University of Idaho and is the author of several books including *An Atlas of Atlases*. He has spoken at several conferences and is considered one of the world's top scholars on representations of longitudes. His work has been featured in *Maps Monthly*, *Where Are We Now?*, and *The Cartography Quarterly*. He lives alone with a Labrador he sees on alternating weekends, and enjoys playing war board games.





FOREWORD

As many readers may be aware, I have been involved in the academic world of cartography for some time now. However, I feel that this academic lens has held me back from fully exploring the creative side of my interest in maps. While many of my previous works have examined the inherent bias and distortion of mapmaking, I've always approached these biases as flaws, signs of how these elements prevented certain maps from accurately portraying reality. Until now, I haven't had the opportunity to explore how maps can use this same distortion to present a unique perspective. Over the course of my research, I've been compelled to think about how maps can tell stories. I'm an *immensely* creative person which is something that may not be obvious from some of my past works. This project is something I've wanted to put together for many years now and I recently found myself with some time on my hands to make it a reality.

Many would classify this work as a collection of art pieces rather than maps. For those of you, including my publisher, who were hoping my next publication would be *Longitudes: A Legacy Volume 5*, I'm sorry to disappoint. I've chosen to compile this collection because I felt the need to step back and ask what is a map. While as cartographers we spend a lot of time debating the merits of various mapping techniques, we spend comparatively little time delving into what makes a map a map. Again, though our work is highly visual, some might say we are not particularly creative. However, I believe that perception should change. Mapmaking has an important creative component. Whether you're an academic in cartographic studies or a first time reader I ask you to set aside your preconceptions of what a map is for now, as I think you'll be pleasantly surprised.

I picked these maps because each pushes the boundaries of what we would conventionally call a map. They all also talk about another passion of mine — food. Some are unusual specimens I've found over the years during my research, but others I stumbled across in unexpected places. Some of their authors would not consider themselves to be mapmakers. I've opted to focus on American authors, as that's my area of expertise. The first map in this anthology was found at the Iowa Tourism bureau.

Ultimately, even though there is much creativity that goes into completing a map, there is perhaps even more creativity that goes into the analysis of creative maps. This compilation is not intended to be comprehensive; there are always more courses to take, but I think this one has proven worthwhile. I'm very glad my creativity has allowed me to see the value in this project and that I had the strength of will to keep at it. I'm thankful to my publisher for letting me take this journey off course. I hope you enjoy reading it as much as I've enjoyed compiling it.





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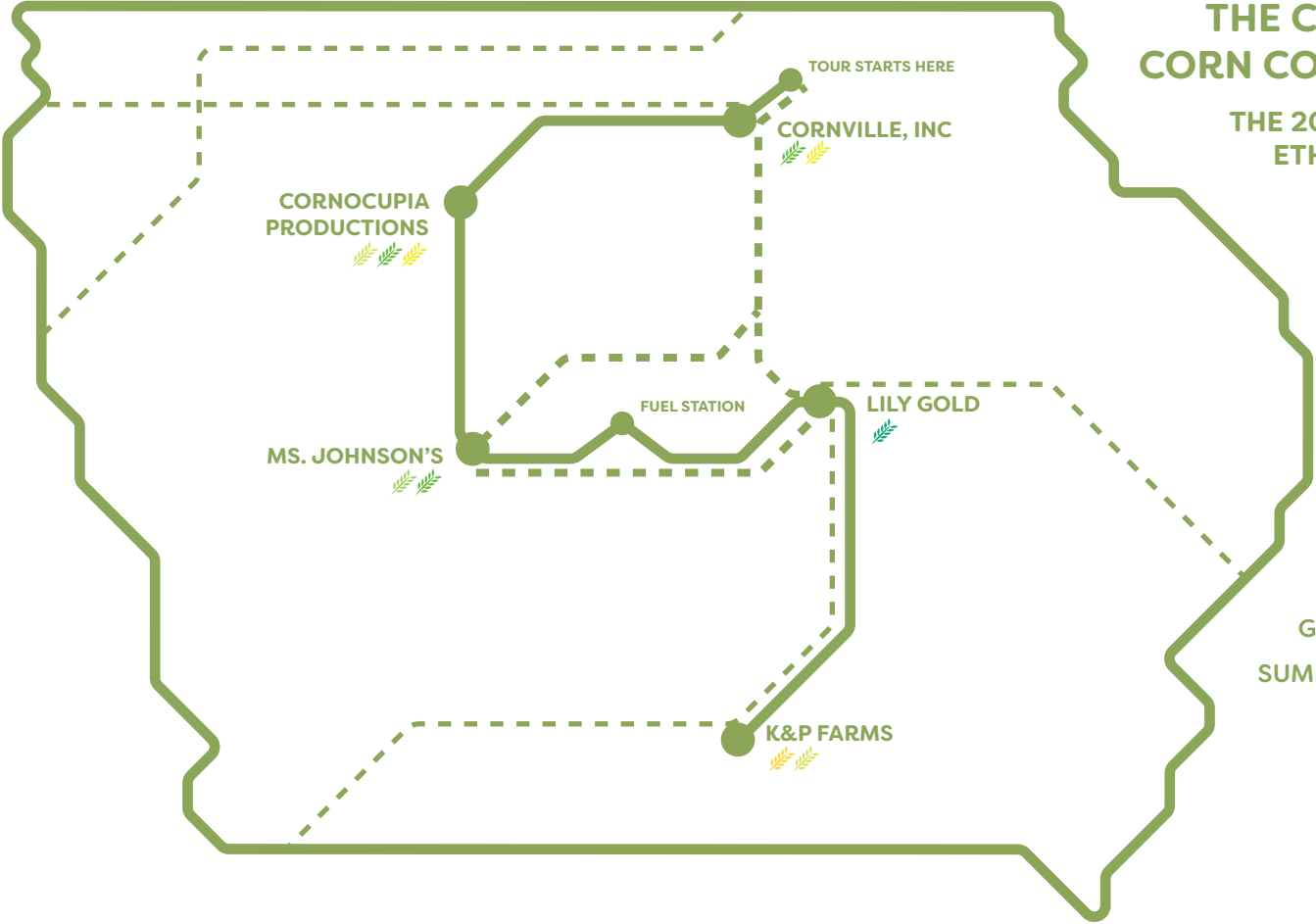
01

The Central Iowa Corn Country Guide was initially created as an agritourism guide for corn farms, much akin to the wine tasting guides of Sonoma's vineyards. It was intended to demonstrate the subtleties in varieties of corn. It stands out in this collection due to its exclusively functional nature. The rich key allows us to understand some of the details even without the shading that might have been used to indicate the topography. The color scheme is used to evoke the yellowness of the corn. I've always wanted to attend such a corn tour but failed to do so while I lived in the area and was pleased to come across this reminder of my time there. This map does seemingly emphasize visual appeal over accuracy, but despite the breaking of conventions it is clear and easy to read. Even given the huge amount of information, each piece is easily found, like an orchestra composed so carefully you are given the impression it's being thought of on the spot. Too many maps today are composed like jazz — haphazardly improvised — producing the opposite effect, whereby, at first, it may appear cohesive until you discover they've failed to document a road or a change in incline. Here, the work is clean and smooth. The thinking is as pure and sweet as the corn.



THE CENTRAL IOWA CORN COUNTRY GUIDE

THE 2015 BROCHURE FOR
ETHANOL PRODUCERS



- BUTTER CRISP 
- GREAT WHITE 
- FLAXEN DELIGHT 
- GOLDEN DELICIOUS 
- SUMMER SWEETHEART 
- JUBILEE GOLD 
- AMBROSIA 
- SIDE ROADS 
- TOUR ROUTE 

02

When I was a boy my father took me to see Vincent Price star in *War-Gods of the Deep*. It was a tremendous story about how, off the coast of England, sea creatures battled humans. It was the first time I'd heard of England and perhaps the first moment where I understood there were places very very far away.

At the time, it seemed a stretch that the world existed beyond my neighborhood, or even that parts of the neighborhood continued to function autonomously when I wasn't there. As we sat in the car after the movie, my Dad pulled out one of those huge map books that was necessary before GPS. It only showed our region of Massachusetts, but almost as wishful thinking there was also a world map inside the front cover. My Dad flipped to the world map and pointed to England, and then pointed to Arkham, Massachusetts. I didn't know it then, but that map was terribly inaccurate. The map of the world we typically use dramatically distorts the sizes of the continents. There are several versions of the global map that attempt to amend this. The one I favor is the Waterman Butterfly Projection. While unfortunately this Vincent Price map shares these flaws of distorted global geography, I decided to include it given its attempts to graft fictional occurrences onto our real world.



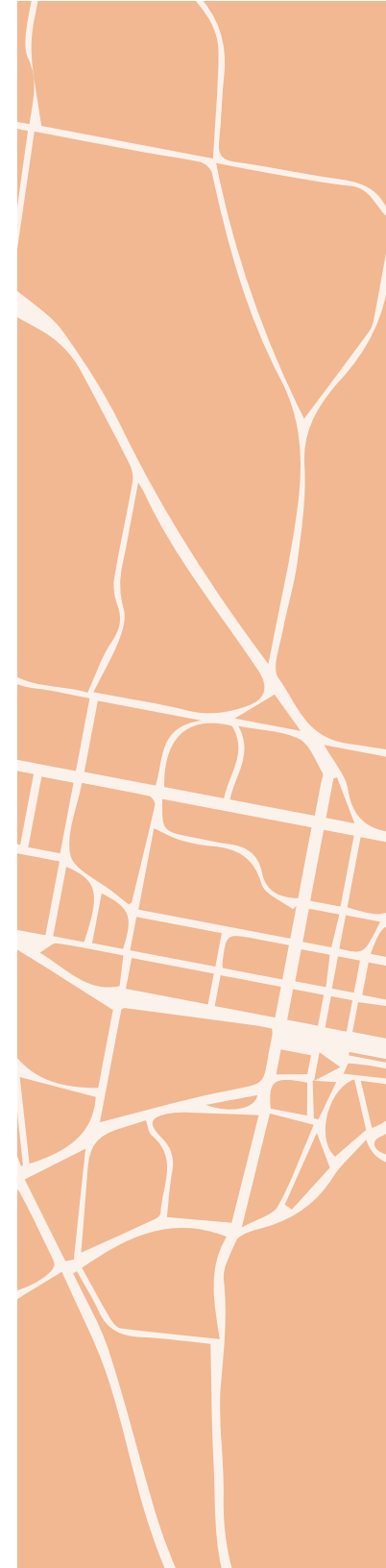
VINCENT PRICE'S TRAVELS THROUGH REALITY & THEN SOME

VINCENT PRICE WAS AN ACTOR BEST KNOWN FOR PERFORMANCES IN THE HORROR GENRE. WHILE HIS ACTING MADE HIM AN ICON FOR A GENERATION, HE ALSO HAD MANY REAL LIFE CULINARY ADVENTURES. THEY ARE DOCUMENTED IN HIS GLOBAL COOKBOOK, A TREASURY OF GREAT RECIPES. THIS MAP IS A COLLISION OF HIS TRAVELS.

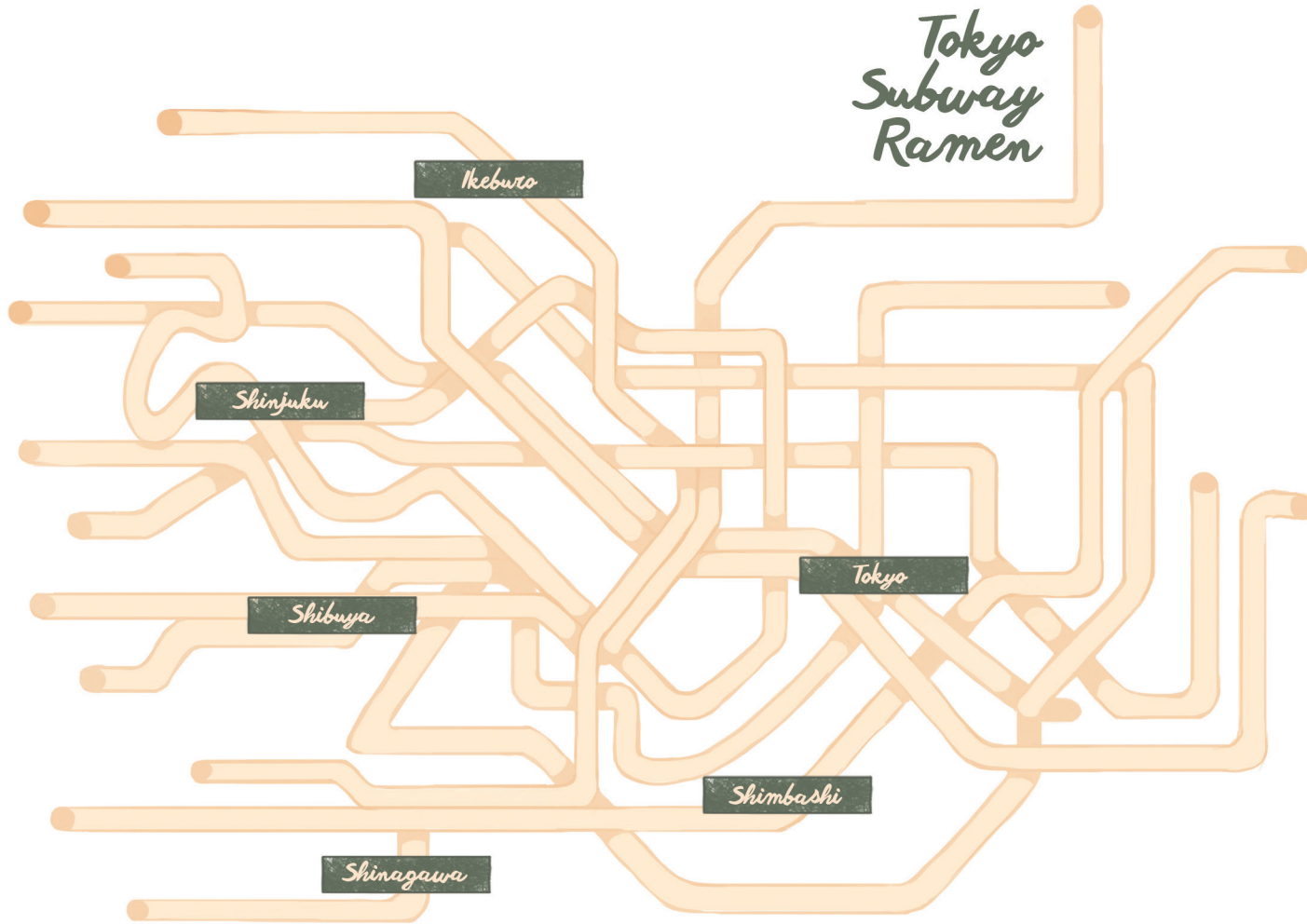


03

On our first big trip together, to London, I remember remarking on how all the stops appeared to be equidistant on the map, but the time we spent passing between them was highly irregular. This is not unusual with subway maps. Someone went to the trouble of mapping the actual London subway lines in a geographically correct fashion and ended up with a bunch of curved patterns reminiscent of rivers all clumped up in the center. Subway maps are largely the product of designers — and make no mistake these are designers, *not* cartographers — so obsessed with order, with consistency and complementary color schemes that they sacrifice functionality. Order is important, but not at the cost of being true to the source material. When we become so intent on fitting everything into a neat rectangle with rigid lines we lose some value. Much like how if you were on vacation and someone insisted on spending every instant exploring, even if you were quite tired already and didn't fancy a visit to Big Ben, that would be problematic. It would be them just fitting your experience into the box they'd shown up with, ready-made. This map turns the convention on its head. A subway map is wrong because it is utterly useless for navigating a city on foot, but it can guide you between subway stops. As this map shows locations that are exclusively in subway stations, this map is functional.



Tokyo Subway Ramen



Ikeburo

Taiyo no tomato men next
Sandaime Nekashi
Yondaime Nekashi

Shinjuku

Katsukura
Mimiu

Shibuya

Tokyu Food Show

Shinagawa

Nantouttei
Nakamoto
Setagaya
Kibi
Saijo
Tetsu
Keisuke

Tokyo

Rokurinsha
Honda Ramen
Hirugao Ramen
Ramen Mutsumiya
Keisuke Kitanosho
Ikaruga
Junk Garage
Shichisai

Shimbashi

Buta Daigaku
Totoya

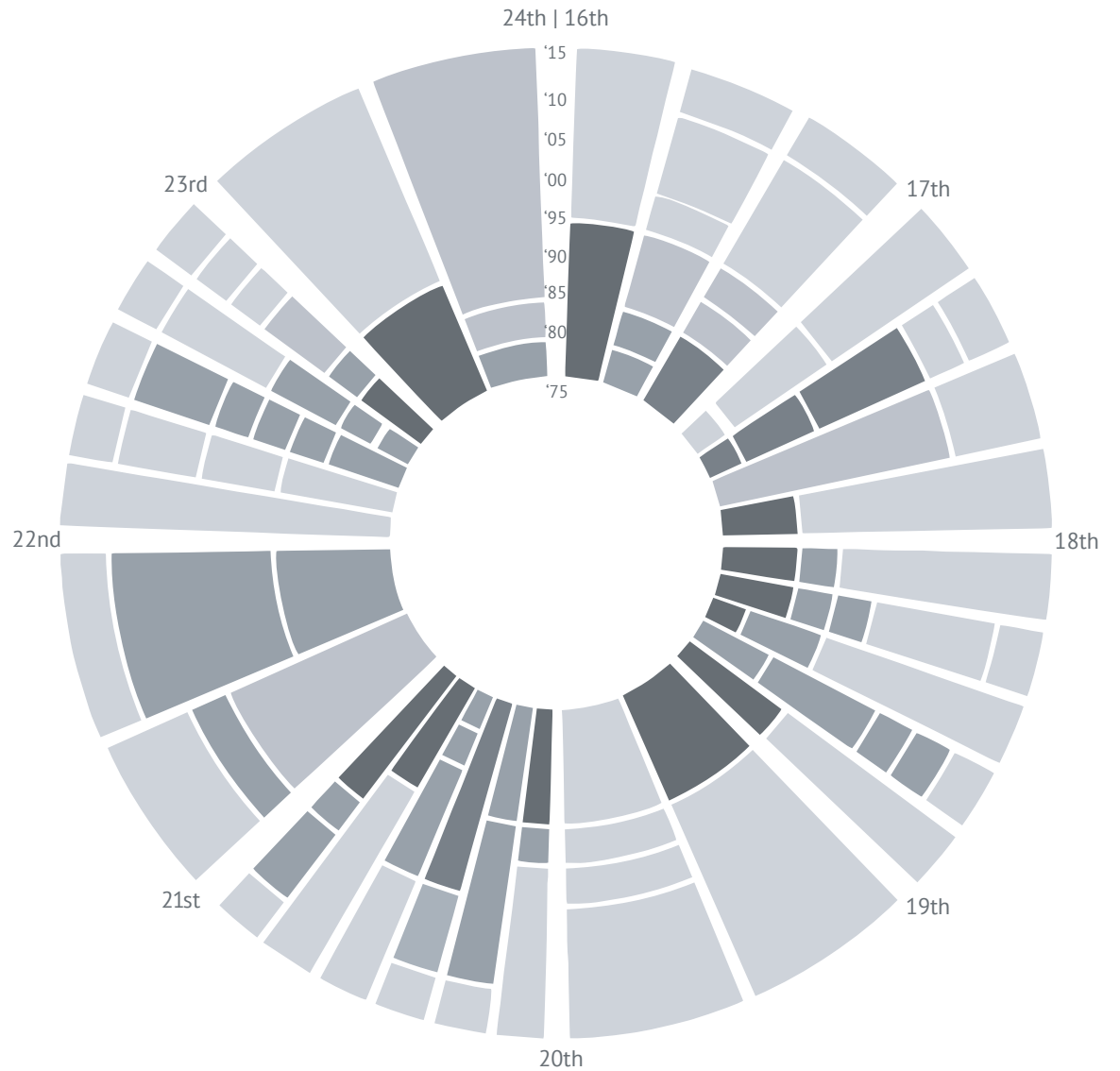
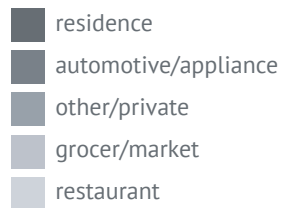
04

I found myself in San Francisco many years ago for a conference on the evolution of hachuring. Mind you this was quite early in my career, and I was travelling alone, so I made the mistake of joining some colleagues at a bar called The Elbo Room. It was an abysmal experience. If ever jazz could have a smell this would be it. It was stuffy, with undertones of stale beer and overly-medicinal gin. We didn't arrive until 11 and didn't leave until someone threw up on my shoes. These were not leather shoes: they were sneakers of the sort that have a porous exterior. I returned to my hotel room reeking of pot and vomit, without any desire to return. It was the only pair of shoes I'd brought with me. When I came across this map, I did some digging and was amused to note that, had I come just a few years earlier, I might have been spared this heinous experience as it was previously a place called Amelia's, which at least sounds more respectable. This map is unusual in that it represents time in addition to space and has the interesting conceit of representing a street like the rings of a tree. It's also unusual in that it does not claim complete objectivity, given that the point at which businesses become gentrified is highly subjective.



THE EVOLUTION OF VALENCIA STREET

If you walk down San Francisco's Valencia Street today, in between the painfully-hip vintage clothing stores, you'll find two chocolatiers, a couple of juice peddlers and innumerable "organic" stores. It hasn't always been that way. Valencia Street is part of San Francisco's historically Hispanic Mission District. Many say gentrification first took hold here when Valencia Street got bike lanes and the police station was moved back in the early 2000s. This map shows how the neighborhood has changed since 1975.



05

This map is more like a blueprint than a traditional map. I've chosen to include it, as I appreciate the level of detail used. I think generally maps could benefit from being more like blueprints. The high stakes associated with a blueprint ensure they must be precise and incredibly functional. Imagine how much more accurate maps would be if any misstep would result in a million-dollar building collapsing. How much more careful we might be in general if we treated every action we took as if it mattered.

This map is admittedly frustrating as the overlapping layers obscure some information. Beyond the design though, I was drawn to this map because I appreciate the challenges of sharing a small kitchen. Even the most spacious of kitchens can feel crowded with too many cooks. While completing my doctorate I lived with a man who consumed nothing but Hot Pockets and Otter Pops and in perpetuity left a film of grease in the microwave. Now, I am fortunate to live alone, but I'm always surprised by the number of people who aren't familiar with even basic fridge etiquette. Obvious things — like the milk should never be stored in the door or that shelves need to be cleaned weekly. Some people will even insist on keeping yogurt starter (basically a jar of living bacteria) in your fridge when you haven't really moved in together yet.

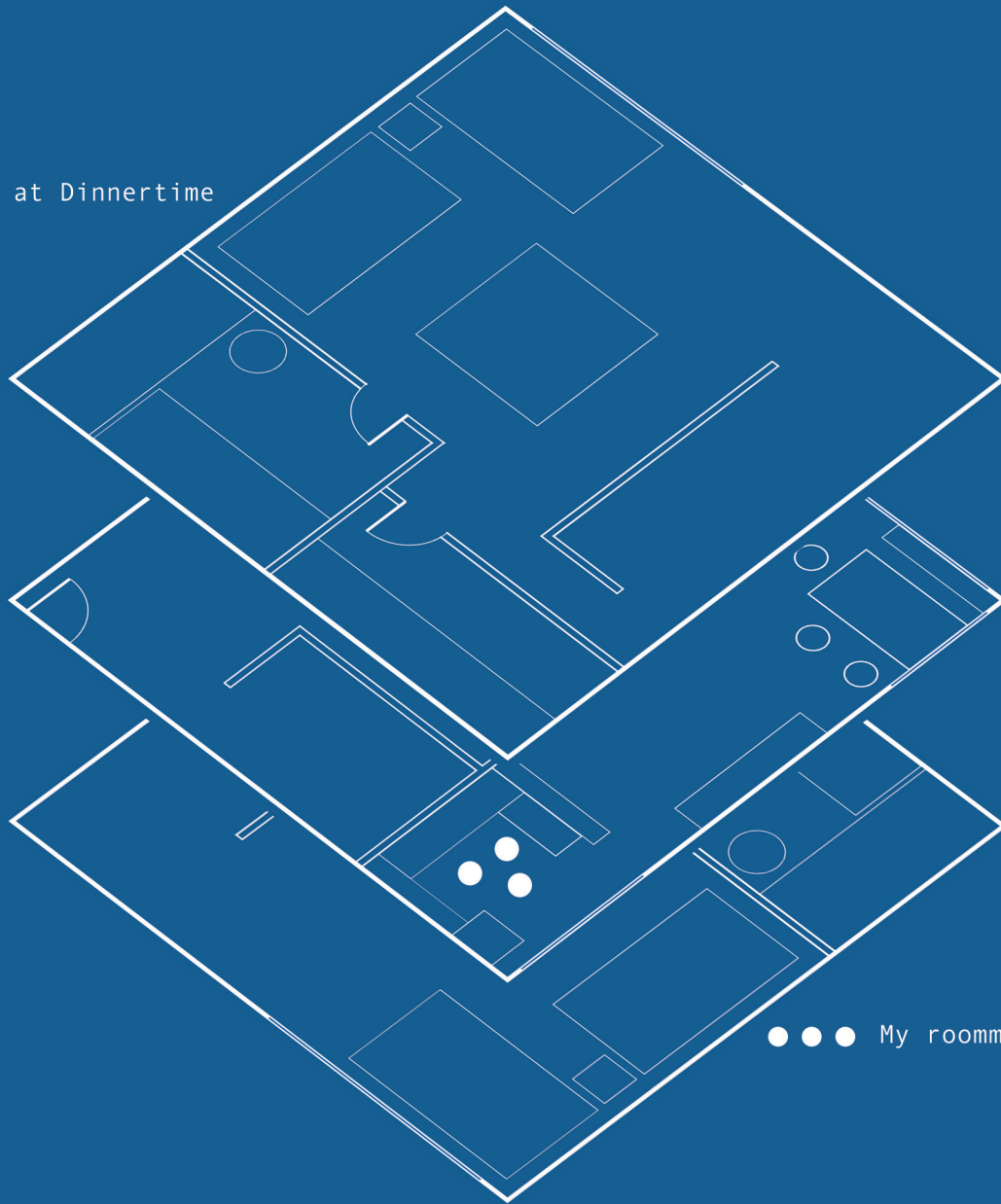


My House at Dinnertime

03

02

01



● ● ● My roommates and me

06

Perhaps more so in New York than anywhere else in the world, when it comes to fine dining, attention to detail is paramount. It is the mapmaking of the culinary world. The process must be approached with a clear vision and steady hands. After my father died, I visited New York briefly with a friend and had the pleasure of dining at Daniel. I still remember every course, the *foie gras* followed by the *escargot* with *beurre blanc* and the endive salad. I was beyond embarrassed that my dining companion was a vegetarian and sat there patiently dissecting the meal, but even her share of *lardons* didn't go to waste as we brought them back to my father's Labrador who went absolutely mad for them. You can imagine my delight so many years later, Charlie the Labrador still at my side, at finding this map, which has some information about New York City's critics, but first and foremost has information about the kinds of fine dining establishments New York has to offer.

This map is structurally interesting as it again attempts to incorporate temporal elements in addition to more traditional spatial components. I doubt I'll have occasion to return to New York, as these small moments of order are too far and few between, given the large moments of chaos — of drug deals and jazz clubs and reckless youths — but in some ways I find it that much more impressive that the authors were able to find and organize restraint in this city of excess.



MICHELIN

- 1** A very good restaurant in its category.
- 2** Excellent cooking, worth a detour.
- 3** Exceptional cuisine, worth a special journey.

In 1900, with fewer than 3000 cars on the road in France, Michelin tires put out a guide to denote restaurants worth a journey. Many years later, the first US city they'd acknowledge would be New York. **Le Bernadin, Jean-Georges, and Per Se** are the only restaurants to have held onto 3 stars since then. Some have accused Michelin of favoring French establishments but even that trend has been changing.

ZAGAT

3 scores out of 30. Service, Food, and Decor.

0-9 poor to fair **10-15** fair to good **16-19** good to very good **20-25** very good to excellent **26-30** extraordinary to perfection Before there was Yelp, there was Zagat, the survey-based voice of the people in restaurant reviewing. Zagat has generally upheld the status quo with top marks going to restaurants like **Per Se** and **Bouley**. However, they included a wider range of restaurants long before *The New York Times*. In 2011, Zagat was acquired by Google and they changed the rating system to be three 5 star scores available through Google maps.

YELP

- 1** Eek! Me thinks not. **2** Meh. I've experienced better.
- 3** A-Ok. **4** Yay! I'm a fan. **5** Woohoo! As good as it gets!

Yelp is an online reviewing site that took off in 2005 because it allowed users to leave unsolicited "real" reviews. Unlike its predecessors where inclusion was endorsement, all restaurants were reviewed no matter how small or sub-par. Yelp is interesting because users have varied standards depending on their expectations. None of the restaurants included on this map have higher than a 4.5. Many that take top marks are comparatively inexpensive.

THE NEW YORK TIMES

0 Poor **1** Good **2** Very Good **3** Excellent **4** Extraordinary With the internet they've introduced a separate system for users to review restaurants:
1 Poor **2** Satisfactory **3** Good **4** Very Good **5** Excellent Notice that only a critic can label a restaurant as extraordinary. More on their critics in a minute.

UNDER REVIEW

The stars don't always align.

The New York restaurant scene is one of the most influential in the world. Since restaurant reviews first took hold here, the world has been watching. But while reviews have always shaped the restaurant scene, the restaurant scene has also shaped its critics.

CRAIG CLAIBORNE | 1957 — 1972

The first *New York Times* food critic, Craig Claiborne made reviewing what it is today. Before him, reviews were thought of as something for the advertising department. Long after his tenure, a *New York Times* review could make or break a restaurant. While he was hugely influential, the star system came later. He mostly chose french restaurants like **Le Cirque**, which is one of the few that has been open since his tenure.

BRYAN MILLER | 1984 — 1993

Bryan Miller upheld the tradition of the critics who preceded him, including Craig Claiborne, by favoring expensive, usually French, establishments. He was the first critic to give **Le Bernadin** 4 stars, which has maintained its rating ever since. He also gave **Le Cirque** 4 stars, whose path has been more volatile. He turned to **Craig Claiborne** for advice when he first took on the post.

RUTH REICHL | 1993 — 1999

Ruth Reichl was the first *New York Times* critic to break the status quo. There was outrage, particularly from Bryan Miller, when she awarded the noodle shop **Honmura An** 3 stars and, more scandalously still, she took one of **Le Cirque's** stars. Ruth Reichl was particularly known for dining in disguise, attempting to duplicate the average diner's experience. She still visited traditional establishments, like **Daniel**, but made an effort to visit less traditional ones as well.

FRANK BRUNI | 1999 — 2009

Frank Bruni was the first *New York Times* critic to compete with internet-based rating systems. With these new systems came questions about how much the *Times's* opinion mattered. Some have accused the *Times* of writing bad reviews because they're entertaining. Bruni found himself reviewing establishments that **Craig Claiborne** never would have considered like **Momofuku Ko**, a restaurant utterly lacking in atmosphere that still received 3 stars.

✿✿ DANIEL



4.8

4.5

✿✿✿ PER SE



4.7

4.5

✿✿✿ LE BERNADIN



4.8

4.5

✿✿✿ JEAN-GEORGES



4.7

4.3

LE CIRQUE



4.4 | 3.4

THE FOUR SEASONS



4.7 | 4.0

HONMURA AN



4.0 | 4.5

MOMOFUKU KO ❁❁



4.5 | 4.6

KEY MICHELIN STARS

MILLER



REICHL



BRUNI



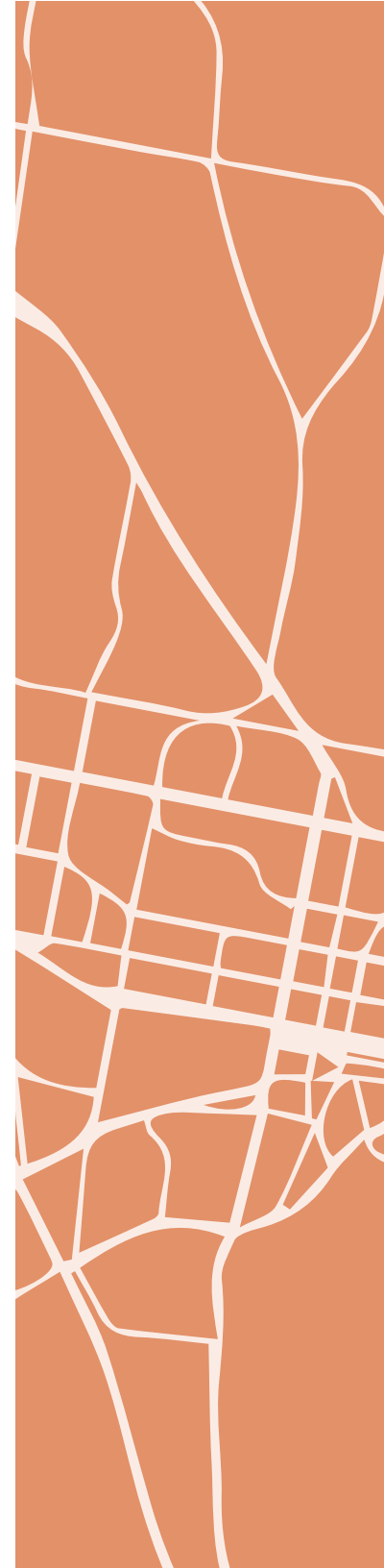
ZAGAT RATING

YELP RATING

07

The town I grew up in had precisely one pizza place. It was one of those franchises where a different family owns each, but the dough and marketing materials are all sent down from corporate. It was a buffet style restaurant with novelties like macaroni and cheese pizza and chicken alfredo pizza, as if that might make up for everything sitting under a heat lamp leaching grease. I worked there through high school and the smell permeated all of my clothing. While I could never give up meat, and I doubt I could fully give up dairy, to this day I'm tempted to give up cheese.

On our first trip to New York together, back before Dad died, I told Lauren I hated pizza, so she suggested we try a juice cleanse, so we got pizza. New Yorkers are particular about their pizza. Dad sent us to his favorite place, which did happen to be a Ray's. It was her first time meeting him, though I'd long since passed the age where that kind of thing merited ceremony. I think she might have thought I brought her because I was planning to propose. We came home with a bleak pizza that was just red sauce with a smattering of peppers. It was the kind of pizza the restaurant I worked at in high school might have served, to appease the suburban mothers' consciences, but which would have sat, ignored by the children, just getting soggy. My Dad ate two slices. I think he might have thought I was going to propose to her too.



08

This map represents something as it was remembered rather than as it was. The use of scale is negligible, the lines irregular, and yet, it is at once revealing of the author's personal attentions and the stories of a place. It is a map of a physical space but also a map of a memory. This map portrays shortcuts and best friends and children's legends. I particularly appreciate how clearly multiple kinds of information are conveyed and intertwined with spatial information on this map. As I examined it, I thought back on all the places I've lived and whether I'd be qualified to create such a map. I considered how each semester I'd find new routes between my classes and new corners of campus to inhabit in between them, but that seems shallow. I'm not sure I've ever lived anywhere, even as a child, that absorbed my attentions so completely. It's strange to consider what merits mapping. I have always been more focused on people. I wondered if perhaps I could ever create such a map of a person. Design it to encompass her likes and dislikes, her pockmarks and scars, her dreams and despairs. I don't think I could.



Julie's Island

to Daddy's house

THE FAIRY KINGDOM

Mama taught us to find fairy rings. We'd bury our lost teeth in their centers. The following morning, among the acorn piles and mossy beds, we'd find flower crowns that made our hair smell like wild anise and dew.

THE OCEAN
Mama used to say the sky was just a reflection of the water. That if you swam long enough and strong enough, past the horizon you'd find puffy white fish the size of clouds. The mammoth of halibut, she used to say.

THE SOMETIMES BRIDGE

Once, when Mama came to pick us up, she and Daddy had a long talk. By the time we headed back, the bridge's jaws were open swallowing shrimp boats. We had to wait a long time before someone was able to calm it down. Mama cried into the steering wheel, and we sucked our grape popsicle sticks long after the popsicles were gone.

THE MAINLAND

THE LIGHTHOUSE

Our town was built on a shipwreck. A long, long time ago in the middle of the night, a boatful of young men training to be in the Navy crashed into the island. A lot of people died, so they put up a lighthouse. For a long time, that was the whole town. Just one lighthouse keeper and a couple of lonely ghosts.



MS. HANSEN'S CABIN
Ms. Hansen was 200 years old. The kids said she was a witch who ate kids, but Mama knew better. She said she was a sad old lady whose body had mistaken her heart for a clock that had forgotten how to tick. A withered, wind-up woman.

the best spot to dig for clams

PAIGE'S POINT

Grownups told us the cliffs were dangerous. Whispered about how Ms. Hansen's twin Paige, had slipped on the rocks a while back. The spray that crashed into the cliffs tasted like tears. Mama always said Paige dove.

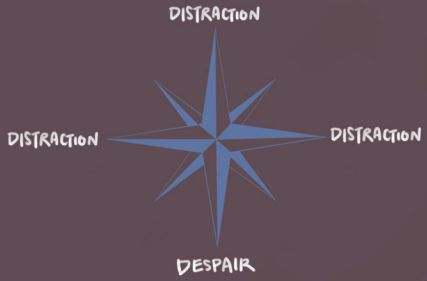
09

This map juxtaposes the traditional characteristics of a map with a frozen dinner. This map has been executed not from above but rather in a three-quarter perspective. This has the disadvantage of obscuring some of the information in the back. The colors are blended and the scale of some of the objects (for instance, the cabin in relation to the mountain) is distorted.

However, I chose this map not for its form, but for its insight into the human psyche. I think this map is incredibly relatable. I often find myself facing the distraction/distraction/distraction/despair conundrum. In fact, compiling this book itself is a kind of distraction for me, as I've never watched much television. Lauren's new boyfriend, Paul, watches a lot of television. Lauren never used to watch television but I guess that goes along with giving up "giving up red meat" and throwing away her yogurt starter and smoking a lot of pot and being about to move to New York with him and our dog. Paul is going to be an adjunct professor at NYU even though he says he's really moving because his jazz band has taken off, which is a load of — anyway. I've been eating a lot of frozen dinners lately and found this map insightful. At least my fridge is clean.



The ANATOMY of LONELINESS



REMOTE ISLAND

BITTER BROCCOLI FOREST

FLICKER OF HOPE

GRITTY MASHED POTATO MOUNTAIN

CAVE OF SUPPRESSED MEMORIES

MUSHY MICROWAVED BROWNIE SWAMP

OCEAN OF SCOTCH

THE INTERNAL RETREAT

DOWNWARD SPIRAL STAIRCASE

CRISPY CHICKEN CLIFFS

BOTTLE OF WASHED-UP EMOTIONS

SOBERING THOUGHTS

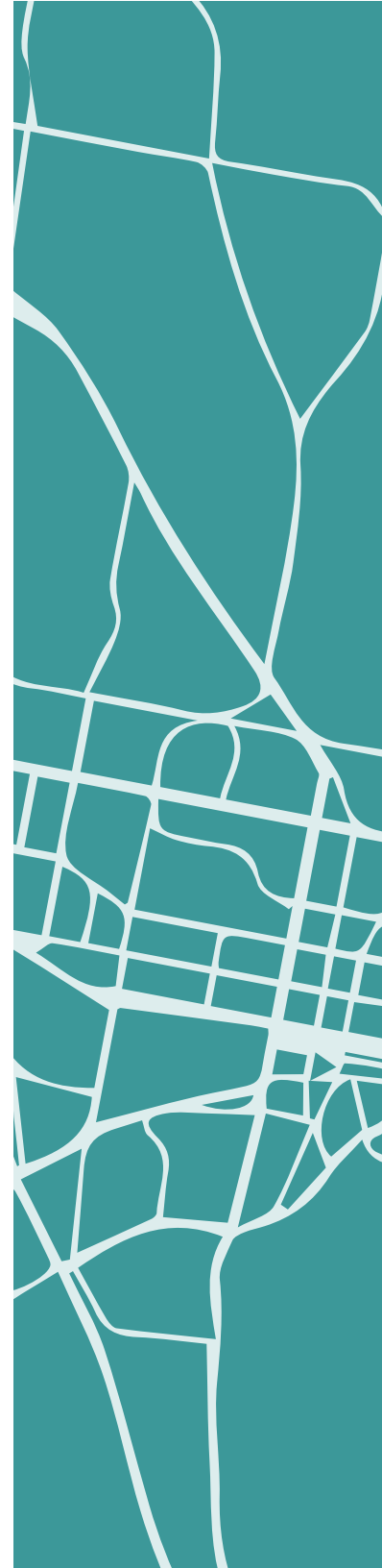
SEA MONSTER OF SELF DOUBT

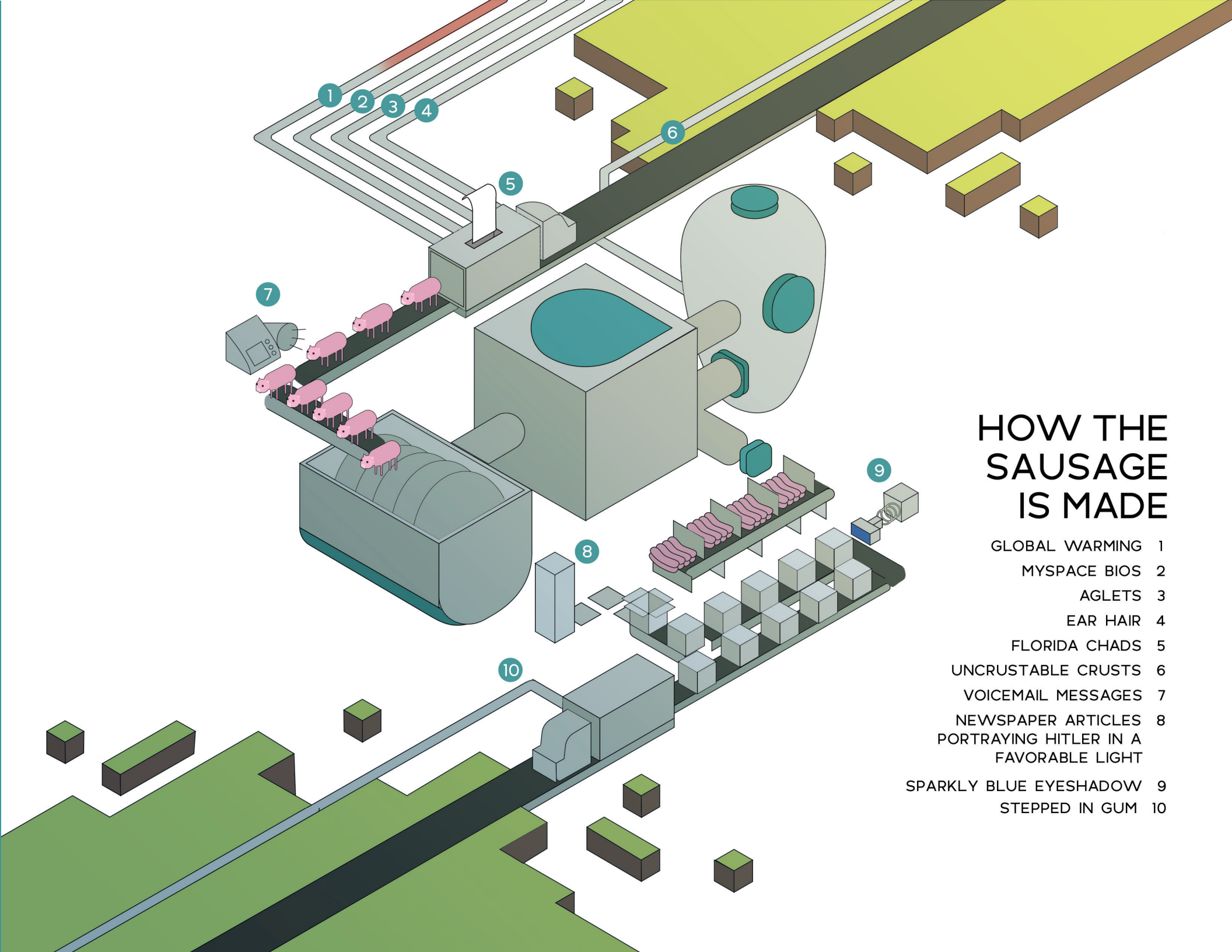
TWELVE STEPS TO NOWHERE



10

There are lots of parts of life we don't like to think about. We want to eat our sausages in peace without being reminded of the pieces they came from. We want to sit down to dinner in peace without being reminded of how our lives are in pieces. A slow build of minor skirmishes over how often the ceiling fan ought to be cleaned, or how often the dog ought to be walked, or how often you work late, or how often she pretends to work late and you both work to keep up the pretense of fighting over work, preferable to working through the affair and the bullying and passive aggressive skirmishes and passive aggressive battles over nothing in particular. She pretends that the shift of the calm order of your life from maturity to monotony hasn't bothered her. But you can't help but be bothered by how she's changed. By how she's grown as a person, by how you've grown apart as people. This is a map of a metaphor. It literally shows how the sausage is made without reaching for gristle or gore, instead seeking a deeper truth about how we don't like to think about things we don't like to think about. We'd rather continue along in our neat, orderly bubble ignoring the homeless man on the corner, and the news on the radio, and the last bag in our — *my* — closet that means it's really over.





HOW THE SAUSAGE IS MADE

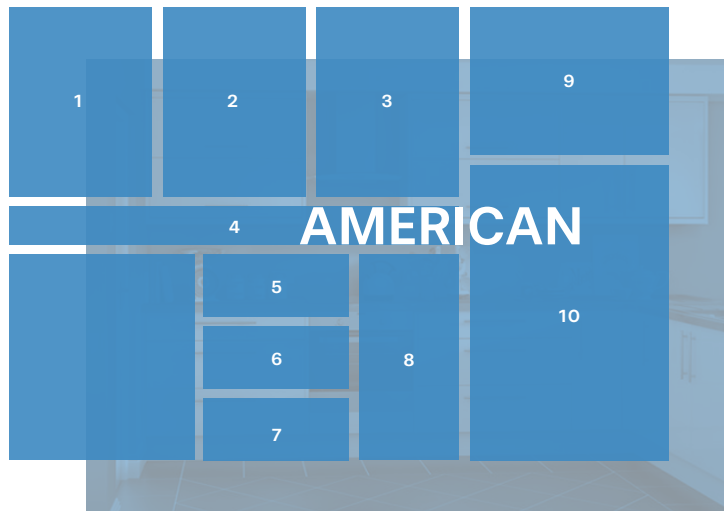
- GLOBAL WARMING 1
- MYSPACE BIOS 2
- AGLETS 3
- EAR HAIR 4
- FLORIDA CHADS 5
- UNCRUSTABLE CRUSTS 6
- VOICEMAIL MESSAGES 7
- NEWSPAPER ARTICLES 8
- PORTRAYING HITLER IN A FAVORABLE LIGHT 9
- SPARKLY BLUE EYESHADOW 9
- STEPPED IN GUM 10

11

This work is someone imagining what someone from the future would think of us looking back. It's a useful device as it allows the author to comment on some of today's food trends while also showing the deeper flaw in all food trends. In the future, they might feel superior remarking on our food trends (as we do looking back on the 50s) but without acknowledging how arbitrary their own food trends are. It's like when you were a kid and you flipped your cheap binoculars around and suddenly everything looked far away even though it was still at arm's length. I wonder sometimes how that might manifest itself in relationships. Perhaps in how we project into the future, imagining far off years in an instant. Perhaps in our inclination to bend the past to our current impression, remembering only the worst of what ended badly, looking back from a good place and saying we've always known she was the one. But mostly, I wonder if relationships have microtrends of their own. If even as we take pause and notice our patterns and work to break them we create new ones, such that no matter how we think we've changed, or our partner has changed, in retrospect we will always fall short.



AN



KITCHEN CIRCA 2016

This exhibit hopes to convey an idea of the typical American kitchen in 2016, based on a survey of 100 homeowners at that time.

1. LEFT CUPBOARD

Big Paw Mission Fig Balsamic.

Purchased at farmer's market. Used as a base for dressing and marinade.

> **Ume Plum Vinegar.** Multipurpose Asian condiment.

Coconut Oil. Homeowner purchased this item because they "heard it was supposed to be good for you, but we only tried it a couple weeks ago." Following use, homeowner reconsidered its benefits as coconuts are "not inherently good for you" and it "made everything taste like coconuts."

2. MIDDLE CUPBOARD

> **Tiki Cup.** Purchased from bar in neighboring town where predetermined group annually shared a large drink named after virgins.

3. RIGHT CUPBOARD

Jackfruit Chips. Purchased on trip to Malaysia, unconsumed.

Candied Ginger (bought in bulk).

Chopped fine and added to whipped cream to top pumpkin pie.

> **Matzo Meal.** Added as binder for latkes.

Vanns Spices Brandied Pepper. Initially purchased on trip to New York at Zabar's, subsequently bought at specialty store, finally ordered online directly from Baltimore, used in place of regular pepper, particularly on roasts.

Vanns Spices Bourbon Pepper.

Discovered when ordering brandied pepper online. Slightly inferior to brandied pepper but virtually the same.

> **Cavender's.** All purpose seasoning favored for preparing steak, one homeowner reported using it on eggs "in spite of my wife's disapproval."

4. COUNTER SPACE

Quarter Loaf San Luis Sourdough.

Stale.

> **Holiday Cliff Bars.** Iced Gingerbread and Spiced Pumpkin Pie flavors. A precursor to our modern CPRM (Cricket Protein Ready Meal), "energy bars" were often used as snacks or a last minute lunch, though they contained comparatively high levels of fat and sugar.

5. TOP DRAWER

> **Cheese Knife.** Used for cutting cheese.

Clip. Attached to edge of pot to hold a spoon, or used to clip things.

Butter Mold.

Assorted Tupperware.

6. MIDDLE DRAWER

Stick. Used for making Mexican hot chocolate, source unknown.

Ice Cube Mold. Intended to create cubes resembling ships from Star Wars (American movie franchise [1977-2023]).

> **Orange Peeler.**

7. BOTTOM DRAWER

Better Than Gravy. Selected as it came from the makers of Better than Bouillon, brand "preferred by mother."

> **Knox, The Original Unflavored Gelatin.** One of many general purpose items, unused.

Assorted Sauce Packets. Acquired from various fast food establishments.

Freeze Dried Red Onion. Convenience measure, substituted for fresh red onion in dishes like chili.

8. BAKING CUPBOARD

Super Grain Pasta. At this time, carbohydrates were out of favor.

Pure Vanilla. During this period, the carcinogenic properties of vanilla were as yet unknown.

> **Baking Soda.** A successful advertising campaign convinced homeowners that baking soda could absorb odors.

Water Bottle. Labeled with child's name and phone number.

Rose's Sweetened Lime Juice. Mostly empty. Used to make lager and lime.

Homeowner had heard this beverage was "particularly good with Corona."

Peppermint Creme Oreos. Seasonal item.

9. FREEZER

Ragu.

Ziploc Container of Puree. Orange, unlabeled, undated, freezer burned.

Ziploc Container of Puree. Yellow, unlabeled, undated, freezer burned.

Ziploc Container of Puree. Green, unlabeled, undated, freezer burned.

10. FRIDGE

Whipping Cream. The Winter 2016 shortage of nitrous oxide prompted many to make whipped cream from scratch.

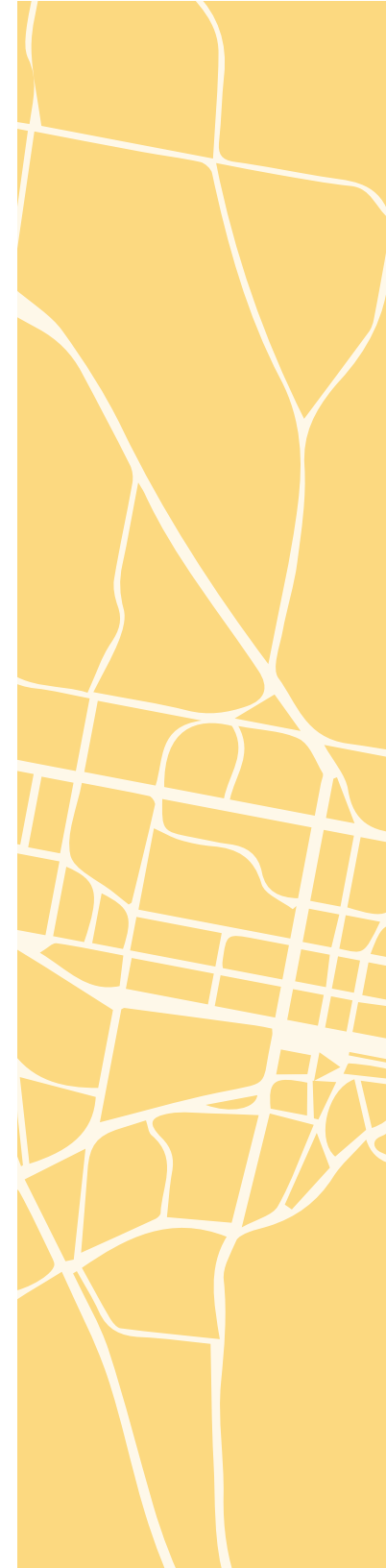
> **Bottle of Champagne.** Half empty.

Almond Beverage. Vanilla.

12

Lauren is moving out in this passive aggressive fashion where she waits until she knows I will be out and comes to collect her things a couple bags at a time. It's all the more amusing because she is, as she always has been, sloppy in her mindset, forever forgetting things just when she thinks she has finished. More entertaining still, I noticed a pattern in the midst of her normally flighty behavior. She'd taken to always coming by on Thursday afternoons when I've typically gone to the gym. With laser-like precision she would show up fifteen minutes after I left. This from a woman who is routinely forty-five minutes late to movies. So, in turn, I shifted my schedule to be more erratic, dropping by home for lunch some days, going to the gym on Tuesday.

Anyway, since she's leaving in two weeks I finally gave it up and put together a bag with the last of her things. Most of it was scarves and trinkets but I came across a zine titled *Lost Sock* that included this delightful map. The author was actually surprised when I contacted her about including her work in a compilation of maps, but graciously agreed. Anyway, Lauren is supposed to collect it for real when she drops off Charlie this Thursday. Though she was supposed to last Thursday. At any rate she should be by soon. He is my father's dog after all. Paul has asked me to stop calling. I might just keep the rest of it.



Pairings

Amy

tasted like a shiny penny, a wish gone sour, a corroded memory.

Paired with: Maldición 2014



Carmen

tasted of the ocean, of harsh salt, and soft tears and longing tides.

Paired with: East Wind 1964



Adriana

tasted of manchego cheese, of nutty rind and illicit desire and ticklish craving

paired with: La Dame 2002



13

It takes an unusually creative mindset to recognize a piece like *How to Bake a Cake* as a map. Many of my colleagues would argue that a map has to be visual. After all, when we think of maps, we think visually. We picture a globe, or one of those atrocities you pull down over a blackboard. But even those maps feature text correlated to images: how else could we tell Slovenia from Slovakia? To this end a map is, at the very least, a correlation between text and image. But what if the text alone could conjure the image? Say, when we give directions and tell someone to turn left at the blue house, or the diner, or the Sheraton with the broken “h” where you had your first date, or maybe it was your first fight — might that be a map? Or when the subway announcer proclaims “Times Square” and you look out on the familiar platform and picture your path up the steps and around the corner to a small jazz club that smells like tobacco that might actually be pot where your boyfriend plays, might that be a kind of map?

Or when we had our last fight in the back of a French bistro that added garnish with tweezers and I exclaimed that the joy of an In-N-Out was its simplicity, that in each location even the location of the bathroom remained unchanged — wasn’t that a kind of map? Or when Lauren told me I could never be open-minded enough to love her. Maybe that was a kind of map too.

After much reflection, I’ve broadened my conceptions and adopted a freer flowing definition. A map is simply a representation. The only thing that is not a map is the world.



Vanilla Cake

This moist vanilla cake is a simple crowd pleaser. It pairs well with a variety of frostings and fillings.

1 cup butter
2 cups white sugar
4 eggs
2 ½ cups self rising flour
1 cup milk
1 tbsp vanilla extract
3 8-inch cake tins

1. Remove pans from oven. Set aside 2 cake pans. Place rest of pans on top of stove. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C).
2. Retrieve butter dish from fridge. Discover bits of jam adhered to butter have begun to mold. Open fresh stick of butter. Grab 4 eggs and quart of milk. Butter pans.
3. Microwave butter in a bowl for 10 seconds.
4. Find butter is still too hard. Microwave it for another 10 seconds.
5. Find butter is still too hard. Microwave it for another 10 seconds.
6. Find butter has completely melted. Retrieve more butter. Repeat steps 3-5.
7. Open top drawer. Remove orange peeler, turkey thermometer and wooden spoon and place them on counter before finding beaters. Retrieve hand mixer base from above the sink.

8. Use step stool to access cabinets above the fridge. Retrieve sugar. Look for self-rising flour husband was supposed to acquire the previous Wednesday.

9. Google substitutes for self-rising flour.

10. Return to cupboard above fridge to move french roast coffee beans, cornmeal, cornstarch and gluten-free cake box mix to top of fridge to confirm there is no self-rising flour.

11. Mix flour, baking powder, sugar, milk, eggs and baking powder into butter.

12. Taste batter.

13. Curse profusely.

14. Pour batter down drain. Cram gluten-free cake box mix, cornstarch, cornmeal, sugar, flour, baking powder, salt, and whole-wheat flour into cabinet above fridge. Toss wooden spoon, turkey thermometer and orange peeler, back in drawer. Place butter dish and milk back in fridge. Leave cake pans, bowl and beaters in sink. Place frying pans back in oven.

15. Take french roast coffee beans and prepare a cup.

16. Purchase birthday donuts on the walk to school.

