

Food for Coeducational Thought

Susan Laird
University of Oklahoma

Our basic needs for food and water are biologically instinctual, common to all animal life, not learned, but our desires to eat and drink, or not, and our tastes and habits as eaters and drinkers may be learned. Contemporary food scholars have termed such cultural food practices “foodways” — what, how, with whom, when, where, how much, by what labors and whose labors, from what markets and ecosystems, and even why and with what consequences people eat and drink (or do not eat and drink). Education concerning foodways has contributed to gender’s social construction across diverse North American cultures whose members imported their own distinctive foods and tastes; sought relief from famines and hungers; or were enslaved to produce, prepare, and serve food. From historical narratives of John Dewey’s Laboratory School, Booker T. Washington’s Tuskegee Institute, and home economics, we might infer significant conceptual and normative relationships between foodways and coeducation, but inquiry published in *Philosophy of Education* reflects little interest in either foodways or coeducation. Therefore, I want to argue for reclaiming *foodways* as objects of philosophical-educational study and for thus rethinking *coeducation*.

This problem-posing essay will bring several early and late modern philosophers of education and food into conversation with a 2004 film documentary by Morgan Spurlock: *Super Size Me*.¹ The film may or may not count for you as “philosophy,” in a non-theoretical genre for nonacademic audiences concerned with learning “the art of living wisely and well.”² But in *Super Size Me*, available also in an “educationally enhanced edition” for children in grades 6–12, Spurlock challenges the United States to undertake collective self-examination regarding unhealthy foodways now aggressively marketed in public schools and on university campuses, indeed throughout the world. What leadership might philosophers of education provide for such collective self-examination with particular regard to coeducational foodways?

RADICALLY CHANGED FOODWAYS

A popular work of coeducation *Super Size Me* critiques what has come to be known in recent decades as “fast food.” That the DVD edition for the general public includes Spurlock’s interview with Eric Schlosser, author of *Fast Food Nation*,³ allies it with other critics of our well-established trend toward grabbing food on the go. “Fast food” can refer to any industrially prepared food sold ready-to-eat over the counter or at a drive-thru window to consumers who do not want to wait to eat, but its implicit conceptual meaning in Spurlock’s film exceeds the boundaries of the food itself — burgers, fries, shakes, cola — to signify also the industry that produces such food and the culture it has produced. The term implicates what Dewey might call food’s environment, conduct, habits, and customs. Fast food markets to children, employs and trains adolescents, and exploits financially strained educational

institutions. McDonald's operates its own Hamburger University! Thus fast food could pose many philosophical questions concerning education for honesty or cynicism, docility or self-assertion, creativity or conformity, as well as questions about educational ethics and justice that arise whenever commercial synergy involves curriculum, teaching, and learning. But foodways themselves are my present educational concern.

Super Size Me cites a dramatic rise in U.S. obesity since 1980, and its ruthless objectification of countless over-fed, malnourished human bodies can make a compassionate viewer uncomfortable. Ironically, an industrial foods lobbyist whom Spurlock interviews claims that "education" could solve this problem, whereas *Super Size Me* makes obvious many contradictions between fast food and education, with some commendable gender-sensitivity.⁴ The film documents well-known media pressure that teaches women to hate ourselves if we are not slim, framing its critique of fast food as a sympathetic outraged response to two obese teenaged schoolgirls' unsuccessful lawsuit against McDonald's. But as Susan Bordo observes, now "young guys...are developing the eating and body image disorders that we once thought only girls had,"⁵ so Spurlock also films men's testimonials of immense weight loss, gastric bypass surgery, and fatal malnutrition. Such cases raise many questions he does not consider, which philosophers of education could pursue. For example, those who have questioned whether IQ measures intelligence might now similarly question educators' increasingly frequent use of Body Mass Index to measure educational achievement of healthy foodways. Could and should other perhaps more accurate health and fitness indicators constitute coeducational aims regarding foodways?

Both Schlosser and Spurlock document many facts from which we might infer that fast food merits designation as "cultural miseducation,"⁶ as Jane Roland Martin has analyzed that concept, since it has constituted a particular political-economic configuration of "multiple educational agency" that damages human bodies and social relations, posing "a problem of generations": Which foodways can and should be preserved as "cultural assets" and transmitted as "cultural wealth"? Which foodways can and should be remembered only as "cultural liabilities" and set aside as "dead relics"? Spurlock clearly has such "cultural book-keeping" questions in mind when he remarks on the commonplace contemporary practice of eating out and flashes across the screen a picture of his own mother in her West Virginia kitchen explaining that she cooked for his family everyday.

With similarly troubling sentimentality, my father called the kitchen where my mother prepared our daily dinner her "office," and I remember my family's daily dinner table as the primary site of my own childhood education for knowledge and love of self, others, and world. Yet I also remember Puerto Ricans who harvested our vegetables, skinny men laboring too far from home to enjoy sitting down to dinner with their own children, men for whom many white farmers in my neighborhood provided no means even to sit down to dinner with one another after their hard days' work. Although I will advance no normative argument here for maternal kitchen or family dinner table, such cultural liabilities and assets do pose important

philosophical questions about coeducation and foodways. In *School and Society* Dewey declared, "it is useless to bemoan the departure of the good old days...if we expect merely by bemoaning and by exhortation to bring them back. It is radical conditions which have changed, and only an equally radical change in education suffices."⁷ What imagination or wisdom might philosophers of education impart to coeducational transformation that these radically changed foodways make necessary?

EDUCATION TO EAT AND DRINK

Spurlock's *Super Size Me* implicitly poses questions about education and foodways that modern philosophers have posed, long before fast food's invention. He films children choosing only fries and milk for lunch in school cafeteria lines and submits school cafeteria workers to an inquisition about their methods of preparing food for children. In contrast to schools that contract with a major industrial food service, he films one Wisconsin school for troubled youth that has witnessed improvements in children's mindfulness by serving locally produced, fresh, organic, healthy food. Recognizing physical activity as integral to foodways' health-value, he criticizes schools' abandonment of physical education and praises one high school's model physical education program. With these film case studies of school foodways (including physical education) and a bewildering litany of medical conditions and diseases associated with obesity, Spurlock is asking viewers to think about what education to eat and drink can and should be, as if such questions were brand-new. Yet if he were to read John Locke's *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693) and Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Emile* (1762), Friedrich Nietzsche's *Ecce Homo* (1895) and Michel Foucault's *The History of Sexuality* (1985), he would learn that such questions have a philosophical history worth studying, although all these works are pre-coeducational in outlook.⁸

Both Locke and Rousseau recognize foodways as educational concerns. Despite their differences, both conceive children's dietary education as controlling their dietary choices rather than as engaging their empirical observation and rational reflection. Reminiscent of Plato's vexing argument for literary censorship, their educational thought on foodways merits close scrutiny. Could this apparent contradiction within their Enlightenment conceptions of education reflect epistemological devaluation of "taste and its bodily kin" that Carolyn Korsmeyer has analyzed and critiqued in the western philosophical tradition?⁹ Wary of oversimplification, Korsmeyer notes also "a gender dimension" to this epistemological devaluation of taste insofar as that tradition assumes "the paradigmatic knower is male, while the female is regarded as more governed by the senses and by emotion."¹⁰ Rousseau's account of Sophie's education makes that premise explicit, and Locke acknowledges he is thinking primarily about young gentlemen's education, "which in all things will not so perfectly suit the education of *daughters*; though where the difference of sex requires different treatment, it will be no hard matter to distinguish."¹¹ Yet young gentlemen whose bodies and minds Locke proposes to educate will, like Rousseau's *Emile*, be eating food they will not themselves learn to produce, prepare, or serve, and studying a variety of subjects their servants' children and perhaps even their own sisters will have less opportunity (if any) to study also.

Famously misogynist, Nietzsche writes later of centering his philosophical project in self-educative nutritional self-examination for health, strength, and virtue. Like Locke, albeit in this Nietzschean spirit as a critical participant in AIDS-afflicted culture, Foucault reconstructs ancient philosophical dietetics, or “regimen,” from Stoic and Epicurean traditions, citing it as a critical genre of written self-examination for men’s learning to live, which links their capacities for pleasure and self-care with their self-education, both gastronomically and sexually. Although pre-coeducational, such late-modern thought may remind us that foodways have long posed self-educational concerns for men no less than women. What might such thought contribute to philosophy of coeducation in a fast food world?

Studying philosophical life-practices of Dewey, Foucault, and others without particular attention to educational questions about foodways, Richard Shusterman has nonetheless helpfully begun to conceptualize what it might mean to take what he calls “the somatic turn” in philosophy.¹² He has named and theorized a discipline *somaesthetics*,¹³ defining it provisionally as “critical, ameliorative study of one’s experience and use of one’s body as a locus of sensory-aesthetic appreciation (*aesthesis*) and creative self-fashioning.”¹⁴ He closely studies Simone de Beauvoir’s somaesthetic thought,¹⁵ and although he studies the Alexander Technique, the Feldenkrais Method, and other such educative body disciplines as instances of somaesthetic practice, he mentions dieting as yet another possible instance. Moreover, just as Spurlock’s film emphasizes physical activity as a crucial dimension of nutritional health, specific dietetic disciplines often become integral to somaesthetic practices studied with extended devotion, such as yoga or strength training — and sometimes even cause severe eating disorders in their most assiduous practitioners whose somaesthetic thought does not extend to foodways. Could philosophers of education deploy somaesthetics to theorize means of teaching and learning discernment of hungers, tastes, and satiety? Could we deploy somaesthetics to formulate gender-sensitive coeducational alternatives to modern philosophical conceptions of men’s education to eat and drink — approaches to educating people’s foodways that engage dietetic study, experimentation, and self-examination within the context of introspective physical activity rather than just dietetic prescription, censorship, and habituation?¹⁶

Spurlock’s *Super Size Me* invites such inquiry implicitly but dramatically. Its disturbing, even revolting hilarity depends upon its irony and hyperbole, as a work of pedagogical art that satirizes fast food by taking it seriously as a diet: the absurd basis for quasi-somaesthetic practice, the exact opposite of a non-harming dietetic discipline or the regimen a yogi or yogini might undertake. Spurlock films an experimental demonstration study of his own sensory-aesthetic appreciation of fast food and of the many physical and emotional transformations he experiences as he lives through thirty consecutive days on a self-censored diet, totally consisting of food purchased at McDonald’s, with no more physical activity than the statistically average American — a couch potato who never requests a “Super Size” meal, but always says “yes” to the McDonald’s worker’s query, “Do you want to super size that, sir?” At his film narrative’s start, Spurlock is happy, fit, slim, and athletic, a man

who eats well, runs, and works out — healthy by all medical measures, a man already apparently skilled at physical and even some emotional introspection. Then, in consultation with three medical doctors, a nutritionist, and a fitness trainer, he studies his own rapid physical and emotional decline as he experiences this regimen of food excess and activity deficiency from day to day, week to week — his sensations of taste, fullness, stomach ache, and nausea, inexplicable heart and lung irregularities; his feelings of depression, lethargy, and addictive cravings for more food; his vomiting, his increasing sexual impotence, and his weight gain of 25–30 pounds, as well as increasingly worrisome, even frightening results from his medical tests. Thus he experimentally demonstrates fast food’s unhealthy effects on himself, at the same time commending his chef-friend Alex’s healthy home-cooked vegan fare, planned for Spurlock’s “detox” afterwards.

Shusterman explains that, as the philosophical study of educative bodily disciplines, somaesthetics may be analytic, pragmatic, or practical; and pragmatic somaesthetics may involve experiential, representational, and political critique. Similarly, Spurlock’s quasi-somaesthetic reflections before the camera may raise for his film’s philosophical viewers some analytic questions that he does not ask about the concept of hunger, some pragmatic questions he does not ask about the interdependent experiences of eating and inactivity and the representation of body images, and some political questions he does not ask about race, class, gender, domestic, and corporatist foodways. Philosophers of education reading his artful film can therefore infer how Shusterman’s somaesthetics may present one postmodern discipline by means of which we could engage philosophical questions about foodways’ now-ignored coeducational significance.

Spurlock’s critical experiment using his own body, which also radically alters many other habits besides his eating, critically enacts risky and destructive self-distorting rather than ameliorative or creative self-fashioning, as his film parodies countless Americans’ unexamined self-destructiveness, whose anonymous bodies across differences of culture, class, age, and gender figure also in this critical documentary as aesthetic objects of pity, disgust, and horror — whether awkwardly going about their daily lives or undergoing graphically depicted gastric bypass surgery. Akin to Foucault’s punitive spectacles, such symbolic violence poses complicated philosophical questions about aesthetic curricular politics in relation to foodways and body images, which may demand “embodied” criticism and pedagogy such as Deanne Bogdan has theorized.¹⁷

HUNGER FOR COEDUCATIONAL THOUGHT

Just as *Super Size Me* gives new life to philosophical questions that Locke, Rousseau, Nietzsche, and Foucault have posed concerning education and foodways, the film also reproduces those philosophers’ inattention to various degrees and kinds of hunger that make food provision, no less than consumption, an educational concern. In “Hunger as Ideology,” Bordo explains the same ideology *Super Size Me* conveys over a decade later: “‘Men eat and women prepare.’ At least in the sphere of popular representations, this division of labor is as prescriptive in 1991 as in 1891.

Despite the increasing participation of women of all ages and classes in the 'public' sphere, her 'private' role of nurturer remains ideologically intact."¹⁸

In *Super Size Me*, Spurlock eats, and his fiancée prepares; her food is his proposed alternative to fast food. A middle-class, childless, white single woman, she is Alex Jamieson, a professional vegan chef and nutritional counselor, who has authored a mass-market paperback outlining her nutritional prescription for Spurlock's recovery from his McDonald's binge.¹⁹ Parallel to the film's opening snapshots of Spurlock's mom, he portrays his fiancée as a living example of Rousseau's Sophie grown up: "She understands the kitchen and the pantry. She knows the price of foodstuffs and their qualities... She can substitute for the domestics in the performance of their functions, and she always does so gladly."²⁰ But as an autonomous woman educated in nutritional science, sufficiently educated to engage Spurlock in critical dialogue about his reasons for eating meat and her own reasons for choosing a vegan diet, Alex also in some sense exemplifies an alternative to Rousseau's Sophie that Mary Wollstonecraft proposed in 1792. While Martin has analyzed both those broad ideals of the educated woman in *Reclaiming a Conversation*,²¹ I bring Wollstonecraft into *this* conversation concerning coeducation and foodways because, while Spurlock preaches about home cooking as the healthy alternative to fast food, he never appears in *Super Size Me* even making himself one sandwich, much less a full meal for himself and Alex.

Despite the recent brief but brilliant burst of gender theorizing about education, philosophers of education still rarely pose questions about coeducation, as if that concept were just too thin to merit much thought. Coeducation's commonsense practice today is indeed conceptually thin, as Spurlock's film illustrates. This thin concept of coeducation bears an enormous human, social, and environmental cost, for it mystifies the conceptual complexity of that challenge which Spurlock's cinematic critique of fast food poses, the challenge of conceiving coeducation for food provision. *Super Size Me* is a work of public coeducation insofar as it addresses people of both sexes to a national food problem felt by both sexes and produced by both sexes, but its proposed solution of feminized food provision makes its conception of coeducation problematic. In an age of global agribusiness, this simplistic solution denies attention to food provision's ecological dynamics and to the national and worldwide crises of hunger as malnutrition and starvation, masked by fast food's cheapness, popularity, and omnipresence on the world landscape and not least by the obesity it causes. What transformations of coeducation could pragmatically respond to the many miseducative effects of fast food that *Super Size Me* so artfully critiques?

Wollstonecraft is one major early modern philosopher of education who has in fact constructed a thick concept of coeducation, premised upon her revolutionary critique of the monarchist property system's cultural miseducation in *A Vindication of the Rights of Men* and *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*.²² She faults patriarchal education for neglecting women's education and denying their pedagogical agency, which Spurlock's film does celebrate. Arguing *ad populum* that child care and child rearing are mothers' duties,²³ she explains why those duties

require intelligence and are educationally consequential, arguing that girls and women should become, like Spurlock's fiancée, scientifically educated about health and medicine so that they might care effectively for their families *and* work as scientists. Thus Wollstonecraft justifies cultivating and recognizing women's coeducational agency as mothers of daughters and sons, as friendly educators of their fathers, as schoolteachers of girls and boys, and as public writers for both women and men readers. If we take into critical account that today women can practice contraception without lactation, infant feeding no longer requires breastfeeding, and same-sex couples of both sexes often raise children together, Wollstonecraft's coeducational theorizing may become adaptable to contemporary concerns about teaching and learning food provision. Rereading it as philosophers of coeducation and foodways, we might begin to address hungers of various kinds upon which fast food often capitalizes, but which *Super Size Me* neglects.

Apart from her discussion of infant feeding, Wollstonecraft's thought about education concerning foodways is also evident in her critique of boys' schools for cultivating their gluttony and in her castigation of Africans' enslavement for the British sugar trade. She also follows Locke with her understanding that education for a sound body is basic to education for a sound mind. Moreover her critique of the property system's cultural miseducation resembles Schlosser and Spurlock's recent critiques of the global fast-food political economy insofar as she conceptualizes that system's educational agency as institutionally multiple, as both private and public, with miseducative cultural effects. Specifically, dishonesty, poor health, mental laziness, hatred, and violence of various sorts, serve what Virginia Woolf's later coeducational treatise *Three Guineas* calls "the dance around the sacred tree of property."²⁴ Wollstonecraft constructs her thought experiment in coeducation as an antidote to the monarchist property system's miseducative effects upon both men and women, whose distinctive moral faults she analyzes with even-handed gender symmetry.

Critically updated and applied to foodways, Wollstonecraft's conception of coeducational agency would require teaching and food provision by both men and women equally while sustaining also her insight that feeding has potential to educate and miseducate human affections — potential that Korsmeyer also studies philosophically in literary "narratives of eating."²⁵ Such transformed coeducation would aim to resist sexual essentialism and inequality by exemplifying mutuality between pedagogical partners who encourage mutuality among learners rich and poor, male and female. Whereas she theorizes that such coeducational agency requires education in health and medicine, *Super Size Me* makes plain that such education must include food science and nutrition and knowledge about addiction and the host of diseases that fast food and obesity can cause. But Wollstonecraft's thought experiment in coeducation suggests much more.

Perhaps her most subtle, complex, and therefore variously understood proposal is her coeducational remedy for sexual essentialism, itself an expression of metaphoric hunger: "I do earnestly wish," she writes, "to see the distinction of sex confounded in society, unless where love animates the behaviour."²⁶ Sparing neither

ladies nor military officers from accusations of weakness, she condemns monarchist cultural preoccupations with body image, akin to those upon which Spurlock's film images of obesity capitalize. Looking upon eighteenth-century counterparts of today's most aesthetically self-obsessed girls, women, and young men (anorectics, bulimics, yo-yo dieters, and body-builders), she commends coeducation that confounds the distinction of sex by cultivating both bodily and mental strength in everyone. As critical of "docile bodies" as Foucault ever was and as adamant as Spurlock in her advocacy for physical education, she distinguishes healthy strength from brute strength and mental beauty from seductive beauty, also recommending that children run wild out of doors in order to develop their rational capacities. Editorial constraints forbid my critical exposition here of somaesthetic inquiries integral both to her critique of sexual essentialism and to her revolutionary conception of coeducation's potential to confound false distinctions of sex without denying diverse self-expressions motivated by love. But could new somaesthetic inquiry on foodways — exploring the interdependence of learning to prepare foods and learning to discern their tastes, of learning to balance physical activity and diet within a regimen — help to construct a contemporary concept of coeducation that confounds the sex distinction without tyrannizing sexual self-expression, that resists the self-destructive aesthetic hungers which produce and are produced by sexual essentialism?²⁷

As both end and means, sex equality is Wollstonecraft's coeducational remedy for the miseducative sexual economy that categorizes women in all walks of life as men's property. Though sharing her friend William Blake's concern about hungry children to whom men of the propertied classes were indifferent,²⁸ she does not critique children's status as men's property, but she does critique the sexual economy's damages to children. That sexual economy flourishes still throughout the world, especially in contexts afflicted by famines, epidemics, wars, and religious fundamentalisms. Loretta Swartz-Nobel's *Growing Up Empty* shows that remnants of that sexual economy are evident also in the United States, in hunger prevalent among those women who feel driven to steal food for their children, among those who work long hours for starvation wages, among single mothers and their children (even when absent fathers are middle-class), or among military spouses and their children, among immigrants and refugees, many of whom work to produce or sell fast food. "The hidden epidemic in America is hunger," Swartz-Nobel argues: "Now, in the new millennium, once again it is running rampant through urban, rural, and suburban communities. It is affecting blacks, whites, Asians, Christians, Jews, and nonbelievers alike."²⁹ Coeducational foodways' transformation will therefore require pedagogical and curricular attention to hunger as a disease of malnutrition in light of its frequent origins in both public and private indifference to the sexual economy's human abuses and to the aim of sex equality. Hunger prevalent among those expected to provide food for children makes analysis of food provision within the sexual economies of global corporatism and war a morally necessary curriculum inquiry for philosophers of coeducation. To reduce coeducation for food provision to coeducation for mere shopping and cooking — although such coeducation

remains necessary³⁰ — is a grievous conceptual error in such contexts. Food insecurity and hunger also make Spurlock's suggestion that we all should just say no to fast food and instead consume organic vegan fare sound something like Marie Antoinette's "Let them eat cake" when you consider Bordo's insightful note that "Millions of Americans exist on fatty, fried, carb-loaded fast food because it's the cheapest way to feed their families."³¹

As both end and means, mutuality is Wollstonecraft's coeducational remedy for the sexual double standard and its attendant sexual intrigues and abuses, entailed by sexual essentialism and the sexual economy. If boys and girls, rich and poor, play together, they can befriend one another; and if women and men can befriend one another, they can become educative partners in parenthood, Wollstonecraft reasons, also urging upon Englishmen similar mutuality with their Indian brothers. Her optimistic reasoning has some biographical origins in vibrant intellectual mutuality she experiences perhaps for the first time — as a woman-loving adult survivor of childhood domestic violence — at village suppers with broad-minded men engaged in religious dissent who are uncommonly respectful of women. One of her particular concerns is mothers' use and abuse of their children to satisfy emotional needs unmet by marriages achieved via flirtation, seduction, and romance and sustained without mutual friendship. Psychologists have cited such disordered nurturance as a possible cause of later eating disorders.³² Reiterating that same observation in *A Hunger So Wide and So Deep*, Becky Thompson analyzes her interviews with women of varied ages, racial identities, cultural origins, and sexual orientations who suffer from addictions to eating and to dieting, and reports that such addictions arise commonly in response to emotional needs produced by failures of mutuality: encounters with sexism, heterosexism, racism, and other forms of bigotry. She explains that women in the throes of such oppressive emotional needs may become addicted to eating or to dieting through their logical, good-girl efforts to avoid addictions to alcohol or drugs.³³ *Fast Food Nation* and *Super Size Me* leave no doubt that fast food offers malnourishment and causes addictive eating as well as many harmful conditions and diseases, including obesity, in both sexes. Its cheap, ubiquitous availability may, however, make it seem to offer the commodity of fast mutuality — recently depicted in a television advertisement for Kentucky-fried Chicken as a working mom's way to keep the family dinner ritual intact. What healthy, affordable, coeducational means of food provision might offer the gift of intersex, same-sex, interclass, and cross-cultural mutuality that might temper those emotional hungers which produce eating disorders?

ECOLOGICAL FOODWAYS AND COEDUCATION

Super Size Me is a work of public coeducation that teaches something about the possible human costs of failing to teach, learn, and think about our foodways — costs of uncritically accepting fast food as a national or multinational cuisine. This educational film exemplifies the documentary practice "cultural book-keeping" that Martin recommends as a strategic educative response to cultural miseducation, detailing the cultural liabilities that fast food transmits, especially to schoolchildren. It offers good reasons to reclaim as cultural wealth Locke's educational focus on

children's health habits along with Rousseau's educational aim to cultivate children's tastes for simple, "natural," peasant foods and to question the ethics of eating meat. Thus it raises philosophical questions for us to consider about dietetic control and censorship as pedagogical and curricular strategies regarding children's foodways.

Consonant also with Nietzsche's philosophical pursuit of nutritional self-examination and Foucault's interest in regimen as a philosophical exercise aimed at maximizing pleasure, this satirical film dramatizes a possible self-educative value for adults in Shusterman's somaesthetics as a philosophical discipline that could integrate ameliorative and introspective bodily movement with dietetic inquiry. But Spurlock falls into impractical nostalgia for dependence upon the maternal kitchen. That premise conceptually thins his film's coeducation, mystifying the gendered economic complexity of food provision and of hunger, much as fast food itself does. Thus a challenging agenda now confronts us as philosophers of education, to transform coeducation concerning foodways.

Ecological educators are now conducting coeducational experiments that respond to our radically changed foodways. Such experimental efforts do not always directly address obesity, but do introduce students to localized foodways — such as eating "within the foodshed" — at direct odds with fast-food values. Foodways have captured ecological educators' attention largely because, as Lisa Heldke explains, "food is first and foremost an agricultural product; the most important context in which to situate food is therefore the agricultural one."³⁴ In contrast to the global market, the foodshed is the bioregion that a particular food supply can reach, a context constituted not only by soil and climate conditions but also possibly by moral values and social and cultural heritages of people who live there. Heldke argues: "Cuisines belong in a foodshed as long as they are the home cuisines of people now living in that foodshed," which she theorizes must be "both deeply local and deeply international."³⁵ Various interpretations, the foodshed is a basic concept in ecological curricula that aim to teach critically reflective foodways.

Recent experimental projects in ecological education have engaged students in academic studies as well as outdoor physical activity and various phases of food provision in garden and kitchen, sometimes also in eating and drinking together at the table. In Portland, Oregon, Dilafruz Williams has developed a "Learning Gardens Laboratory."³⁶ In Detroit, Michigan, Rebecca Martusewicz has collaborated with citizens in eco-justice education to reinvigorate the "cultural commons," an ecological concept of shared patterns and traditions that include foodways.³⁷ In Berkeley, California, Alice Waters of Chez Panisse restaurant has worked with Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School to convert its playground into an "Edible Schoolyard," establishing an organic garden and kitchen classroom; she has also founded a "Sustainable Dining" program at Yale, now replicated elsewhere.³⁸ These and other ongoing educational innovations motivated by ecological concerns merit philosophical study.³⁹ The educational thought of Chet Bowers and David Orr,⁴⁰ in which many of these projects claim their ecological grounding, merits careful philosophical examination as well.⁴¹ What might philosophers of education learn from these experiments about education to provide food, to eat and drink within the

foodshed? How do they resist or reproduce the miseducative formula “men eat and women prepare”? Coeducational in at least a thin sense, all these efforts merit further analysis regarding foodways’ confounding of the sex distinction, fostering of sex equality and all-around mutuality, and developing coeducational agency. To whose hungers and to hungers of what kinds and degrees do (and could) these ecological coeducational initiatives respond?

Such experiments challenge philosophers of education also to relearn or reinvent the pragmatist discipline of philosophical construction from critical engagement with imaginative experimental educational practices. How can education in and about foodways meaningfully integrate coeducational agency and somaesthetic discipline into its ecological practice? Could students learn from such integration how ameliorative, self-fashioning disciplines might confound the sex distinction and sustain healthy, ecologically sound living with sex equality? What might those disciplines be? What foodways might such disciplines and such living require or best support? How could such integration foster mutuality and temper obsessive self-preoccupation with body image? How could such integration respond to real hungers, both physiological and emotional? How might such integration help rethink coeducation’s meaning and value? Foodways pose myriad challenges to philosophers of coeducation.

-
1. *Super Size Me*, directed by Morgan Spurlock (New York: Hart Sharp Video, 2004).
 2. Richard Shusterman, *Practicing Philosophy* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 1–15.
 3. Eric Schlosser, *Fast Food Nation* (New York: HarperCollins, 2002).
 4. On “gender-sensitivity”: Jane Roland Martin, *Changing the Educational Landscape* (New York: Routledge, 1994); Ann Diller, Barbara Houston, Kathryn Pauly Morgan, and Maryann Ayim, *The Gender Question in Education* (Boulder: Westview, 1995).
 5. Susan Bordo, *Unbearable Weight* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), xxiii.
 6. Jane Roland Martin, *Cultural Miseducation* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2002).
 7. John Dewey, *The School and Society/The Child and the Curriculum* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 12.
 8. John Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, eds. Ruth W. Grant and Nathan Tarcov (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1996); Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile*, trans. Allan Bloom (New York: Basic, 1979); Friedrich Nietzsche, *Ecco Homo*, trans. Thomas Wayne (New York: Algora, 2004); Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume 2*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage, 1985), 95–139; and Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume 3*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage, 1986), 37–68 and 97–144.
 9. Carolyn Korsmeyer, *Making Sense of Taste* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 11.
 10. *Ibid.*, 30
 11. Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, 12.
 12. Shusterman, *Practicing Philosophy*, 30–6.
 13. *Ibid.*, 157–77.
 14. Richard Shusterman, “Somaesthetics: A Disciplinary Proposal,” *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 57, no. 3 (1999), 302; also Richard Shusterman, “Somaesthetics and the Body/Media Issue,” in *Performing Live* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000), 138.
 15. Richard Shusterman, “Somaesthetics and *The Second Sex*: A Pragmatist Reading of a Feminist Classic,” *Hypatia* 18, no. 4 (2003): 106–36.

16. Alven Neiman, "Self Examination, Philosophical Education, and Spirituality," *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 34, no. 4 (2000): 571–90.
17. Deanne Bogdan, *Re-Educating the Imagination* (Portsmouth, N.H.: Boynton/Cook Heimemann, 1992).
18. Bordo, *Unbearable Weight*, 119.
19. Alex Jamieson, *The Great American Detox Diet* (Emmaus, Penn.: Rodale, 2006).
20. Rousseau, *Emile*, 394.
21. Jane Roland Martin, *Reclaiming a Conversation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), chapters 3 and 4.
22. Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Men*, with *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman and Hints*, ed. Sylvania Tomaselli (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).
23. To dismiss Wollstonecraft's thought for assigning childcare definitively to mothers is to commit the fallacy of anachronism, for in 1792 few infants could survive without breastfeeding, and lactation provided perhaps the only means by which women thought they could practice contraception.
24. Virginia Woolf, *Three Guineas* (San Francisco: Harcourt, 1938), 74.
25. Korsmeyer, *Making Sense of Taste*, 185–223.
26. Wollstonecraft, *Vindication of the Rights of Men*, 132.
27. Bordo, *Unbearable Weight*, 160: "the anorectic is terrified and repelled, not only by the traditional female domestic role — which she associates with mental lassitude and weakness — but by a certain archetypal image of the female: as hungering, voracious, all-needing, and all-wanting....this image...shapes and permeates her experience of her own hunger for food as insatiable and out of control."
28. Blake illustrated Mary Wollstonecraft's *Original Stories from Real Life* (London: Joseph Johnson, 1796), facsimile reprinted in Janet Todd and Marilyn Butler, eds., *The Works of Mary Wollstonecraft*, Volume 4 (New York: New York University Press, 1989), 353–450.
29. Loretta Schwartz-Nobel, *Growing Up Empty* (New York: Perennial, 2002), 4; Elizabeth Telfer, *Food for Thought* (London: Routledge, 1996), 5–23.
30. Peter Singer and Jim Mason, *The Way We Eat* (Emmaus, Penn.: Rodale, 1996).
31. Bordo, *Unbearable Weight*, xxxv, n. 21.
32. Jean M. Goodwin and Reina Attias, "Eating Disorders in Survivors of Multimodal Childhood Abuse," in *The Good Body*, eds. Mary G. Winkler and Letha B. Cole (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), chapter 1; compare Marion Woodman, *Owl Was a Baker's Daughter* (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1980).
33. Becky W. Thompson, *A Hunger So Wide and So Deep* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994).
34. Lisa Heldke, *Exotic Appetites* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 194.
35. *Ibid.*, 212–4.
36. Dilafruz R. Williams and Sarah Taylor, "From Margin to Center: Initiation and Development of an Environmental School from the Ground Up," in *Ecological Education in Action*, eds. Gregory A. Smith and Dilafruz R. Williams (Albany: SUNY Press, 1998), 79–102; Dilafruz R. Williams, "Reconnecting Body and Mind with Earth," *Philosophy of Education Yearbook 2002*, ed. Scott Fletcher (Urbana, Ill.: Philosophy of Education Society, 2003), 53–6; Portland State University, "Portland International Initiative for Leadership in Economy, Culture, and Learning," <http://www.piecl.pdx.edu/>.
37. Rebecca Martusewicz, "Eros in the Commons," *Ethics, Place, and Environment* 8, no. 3 (2005): 331–48.
38. Frances Moore and Anna Lappé, *Hope's Edge* (New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher, 2002), 37–62; Singer and Mason, *Way We Eat*, 140; The Edible Schoolyard, "The Edible Schoolyard" (2006), <http://www.edibleschoolyard.org/homepage.html>; David Kamp, *The United States of Arugula* (New York: Broadway Books, 2006), 353.

39. Laurie Thorp, *The Pull of the Earth* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2006); Ann Cooper and Lisa M. Holmes, *Lunch Lessons* (New York: Collins, 2007).
40. C.A. Bowers, "Changing the Dominant Cultural Perspective in Education," and David Orr, "Reassembling the Pieces: Ecological Design and the Liberal Arts," both in *Ecological Education in Action*, eds. Smith and Williams, 161–78 and 229–36; C.A. Bowers, *The Culture of Denial* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1997), *Educating for Eco-Justice and Community* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2001), *Revitalizing the Commons* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2006), and "Writings on Education, Eco-Justice, and Revitalizing the Commons" (2007), <http://cabowers.net/CAPress.php>; David W. Orr, *Ecological Literacy* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1992) and *Earth in Mind* (Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 2004).
41. Huey-li Li, "Rethinking Terrestrial Pedagogy," *Teachers College Record* 108, no. 12 (2006): 2450–73.

The University of Oklahoma's generous support made this research possible. Dana Cesar, Steven Mackie, Joe Meinhart, Deborah Shinn, and Sarah Tracy offered useful sources for it. Thanks also to Deanne Bogdan, Lady Branham, Nance Cunningham, Beth Darlington, Mary Dolan, Susan Franzosa, Jim Garrison, John Green, Wendy Kohli, Huey-li Li, Jane Martin, Al Neiman, Barb Stengel, Robin Stroud, Lucy Townsend, and students in six courses at the University of Oklahoma for their generous listening, reading, and critical discussions of this inquiry in progress, whose flaws are all mine.