From Nonna's Kitchen to the Virtual Table: Preserving and Safeguarding Intangible

Cultural Heritage through Social Media - A Case Study of Pasta Grannies

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Abstract

This study examines the role of social media in preserving and safeguarding intangible cultural heritage (ICH) by looking at the case of Pasta Grannies, a social media channel that features women over 65 who hand-make pasta, a cultural practice that is quickly dying out in Italy. By using intersectional theory, this research uses content analysis, semi-structured interviews, and autoethnography to explore whether social media can help women over 65 overcome barriers they may face in preserving and safeguarding their food-related ICH.

The findings reveal that the women featured in Pasta Grannies face obstacles that stem from the grey divide that prevents them from using social media to share their intangible cultural heritage. The channel helps them overcome these barriers in several ways. Firstly, by respectfully representing the women and giving them autonomy over their stories, the channel actively involves them in the preservation and safeguarding efforts. Secondly, the channel follows best practices in using social media for ICH. Thirdly, the channel has become very popular by connecting with its audience emotionally, making it an effective medium for transmitting ICH. The study fills the gaps in the existing research by employing intersectional theory to investigate an often overlooked demographic, demonstrating the potential of using social media channels like Pasta Grannies to help older women preserve and safeguard their ICH.

Keywords: intersectionality theory, communications, social media, case study, older women, intangible cultural heritage, safeguarding, transmitting, digital access, digital inequality, gendered ageism, grey divide, content analysis, interviews, autoethnography

Introduction

It's late summer in the late-1980s in Alberta. It's morning, the sky is blue, the birds are chirping, and the grass is green outside. Inside our bungalow, however, the air is hot and stale. As lovely as it is outside, there is work to be done in the house.

My dad places his favourite well-worn stool on the brown patterned linoleum in the middle of the kitchen floor next to a 40-pound sack of green cabbage. He goes to the basement and lugs up a comically large ceramic crock, huffing and puffing along the way up the creaky stairs because it's heavy and it's hot as hell in the house. I'm no help because I'm just eight years old; this is not a kid's work. He returns to the basement and comes up with a wooden contraption with giant blades that looks like some sort of an ancient mandoline. The thing seems dangerous, and those blades look awfully sharp, but he's proud of it and holds it up triumphantly to me. It's a cabbage shredder. He inherited the crock and the cabbage shredder from his mother long ago, and they must have been at least 80 or so years old. He nods at me, gesturing to his setup, and says, "It's time to make the sauerkraut. You may need to know how to do this one day, so I'm going to teach you how."

He places the wooden cabbage cutter on top of the crock and tells me to pull up a chair so that I can watch what he's doing. He picks up a head of cabbage out of the sack, walks to the counter, rinses it under cold water in the sink, and cuts it into large wedges, which he places into an orange plastic Tupperware bowl. I slide my chair up, he sits on his stool with his bowlful of cabbage, and the yearly sauerkraut production commences.

He pushes a cabbage wedge over the blades, and fine shreds fall into the bottom of the crock. I watch him repeat this motion over and over again. The blades are sharp, but the cabbage is hard, and shredding it is back-breaking work. His arm muscles flex with every pass, and he starts to sweat. The smell of fresh cabbage wafted through the air. When he has what he deems a sufficient amount of shredded cabbage in the bottom, I watch him sprinkle handfuls of coarse salt on top, followed by pickling spices, then he bashes it all down with a 2-litre Pepsi bottle filled with water. Amazingly, the cabbage softens before my eyes and releases a lot of juice. "You just do this over and over again until the crock is full," he says, "you can go out and play now. I'll call you back inside whenever that is".

To my eight-year-old mind, it takes all day for that crock to fill. I had a grand old time outside playing with my friends at the playground half a block from our house. He calls me back into the house in the afternoon. He's drenched with sweat, out of breath, and looks sore. I peer into the crock, and it's full, alright. Just at that moment, one of my older brothers comes home. "Could you help me bring this back to the basement?" he asks my brother. They each grab a wooden handle on either side of the crock and carry it down the creaky stairs to the basement together, with me following closely behind. They set it on the cool cement floor of the laundry room. Dad weighs the top of the cabbage with a wooden board and a rock that he keeps specifically for this purpose and covers it with a cloth. "Now," he says, "we wait for it to ferment."

We give it a peek daily to ensure it isn't going rotten and check on its progress. You'd think 40 pounds of raw cabbage stewing in brine would stink up the entire house, but it didn't. A few weeks later, it was ready. He drags the crock back up to the kitchen and takes the rock off the

top. "Try it!" he says. We both take a pinch of sauerkraut in our fingers and give it a taste. It's crunchy, salty, tangy, slightly spicy and full of flavour. It tastes like home. I help him carefully pack it all into freezer bags, ready to be stored in our freezer and shared with friends and family.

Making sauerkraut was something that my dad loved to do, partly because it fed our family for a long time over the cold winter months and helped connect him with my grandma, who was no longer with us.

As you may have gathered from that memory, I come from a working-class background. My dad was an autobody technician, and my mom was a homemaker. We were a family of six: there were my parents, my three older brothers, and me, and we all loved to eat. My mom did most of the everyday cooking when I was very young. She enjoyed cooking simple meals on our limited budget with the ingredients that were available to her. She was always trying new recipes that she would find in magazines and newspapers, all of which were "questionable" at best. One of her favourite dishes to cook was a concoction of beef sausages, onions, and peppers baked in canned tomato soup and served over mashed potatoes, a dish that she ended up making so often that everybody in the family soon got so tired of it that we could barely stand it anymore. We ate it anyways because we loved her. Her cooking days ended when she was diagnosed with primary progressive MS, a particularly aggressive and disabling form of multiple sclerosis, when I was ten.

My dad took over the cooking when my mom couldn't do it anymore, which was unusual for the accepted gender roles at the time. He was a fantastic cook and much more adventurous than my mom. He loved to cook various foods from different cultures, but he especially loved to cook the traditional German food his family raised him on. The recipes he used were passed

down to him by his mother and not written in any book but tucked away in his memories. Some old-school dishes passed down to him might be considered a bit odd in these modern times but were born out of the hard times and necessity of the Great Depression and World War II. Nothing went to waste in those days. My family preserved vegetables to make them last through the winter, and if they were lucky enough to have meat, they used all parts of the animal. These dishes included turkey stuffing made with livers and gizzards, pork hocks, and head cheese, often served alongside our favourite homemade sauerkraut. These dishes took a lot of time and effort, and he took a lot of pride in preparing them, just as we took a lot of pleasure in eating them. My father became ill with type 2 diabetes as I became a teenager, but he never lost his love for cooking and eating. He had to adapt some of his recipes to be healthier, and my brothers and I pitched in with the cooking. He abandoned his most time-consuming dishes in favour of easier-prepared foods, but I still remember how to make them.

My parents passed away within a year of each other: my mom in 2014, followed by my dad in 2015. As you can imagine, my brothers and I were devastated, but we had to find the strength within ourselves to pick up the pieces as best as possible. We had to sell our childhood home and deal with everything they'd accumulated over their lives. There was an overwhelming amount of stuff to deal with, all tangible reminders of our lives together. It was difficult, but we split things up as evenly as possible. The kitchen items I inherited included the family cookbook, which contained recipes my parents and grandparents compiled, and items like the Pyrex dishes and the good china and silverware my parents got as wedding gifts. One of my brothers took the cabbage cutter and crock, even though he didn't know how to make sauerkraut.

Although we all have fond memories of the foods we grew up eating, I'm the only one in my family who knows how to make many of the foods I grew up eating. My brothers no longer cook any of those things; my niece and nephew have deemed these recipes "gross." Still, these recipes remained at the heart of our family and helped us bond with each other, our past, and our cultural heritage. My husband has grown to like some of the traditional recipes when I cook them, but I've often wondered what will happen to the recipes and cooking traditions when I'm gone. Despite having many children in our lives, I don't have anybody to pass them on to.

The world has changed significantly since I was a child in the 1980s. Never in our wildest dreams could we have predicted that the internet would transform our world entirely and touch every aspect of our lives, even the foods we eat. I love to watch videos online, particularly videos about food, which is now one of the most popular content genres on social media, with users posting, sharing, and engaging with all sorts of recipes and instructional videos. One day, I was randomly watching Youtube videos and came across a video of an Italian nonna making pasta by hand. She must have been at least 90 years old. I watched as she measured out the flour, added eggs, kneaded the dough with her wrinkled hands and rolled it out with a rolling pin that seemed as long as she was tall. While the pasta boiled, she prepared a sauce using homegrown tomatoes and some tasty-looking olive oil. It didn't matter that I didn't speak Italian because the video was narrated by an English woman who told the story of who the nonna was and gave instructions on how to make the recipe. At the end of the video, the nonna proudly showed off her dish, and the narrator signed off the video with the happy exclamation of "bon appetito!" I was positively smitten and wanted to watch more.

The video interested me because it reminded me of all the times I spent with my family, bonding through the production and consumption of our traditional family foods. For me, food and family are concepts that are so intertwined that it's often difficult to separate the two of them. My grandmother on my father's side of the family passed away in a car accident when I was two years old, and my grandmother on my mother's side of the family was disabled, so I didn't grow up with memories of baking cookies with my grandmothers as so many of my peers have. Nevertheless, many of my foundational childhood memories are of my immediate family bonding over food, which was the primary love language in my home.

I found out that the social media channel that produced the video was called Pasta Grannies. The channel features older women (over the age of 65) in Italy preparing pasta by hand, a cultural practice that I later learned is quickly dying out (Severson, 2019). Like me, many of the women featured in these videos are the sole keepers of their family pasta recipes, and if they don't pass their knowledge to subsequent generations, it will be lost forever. The channel has proven very popular, so much so that Youtube has even featured it in its spotlight series (Youtube, 2019). I watched video after video, hungry for more.

Another reason I was so interested in the videos produced by Pasta Grannies was that, in a way, I could see my future self in those nonnas. At first glance, the identities and experiences of the women featured in the Pasta Grannies videos are worlds apart from mine. Firstly, I'm not Italian; I'm Canadian with mixed Swedish and German heritage. And although I love to cook and eat Italian food, I certainly don't cook or eat it daily. At 41 years old, I'm much younger than the women in the videos. I'm married, but my husband and I decided long ago that we don't

want children, and I'm certainly not a grandmother. Yet, I am getting older and watching the

video felt like looking through a window into my future.

As I watched the video, I thought of all the barriers these older women must have faced

and overcome throughout their lives and how different life must be for them in today's

fast-changing technological world. Participation in the digital world has gotten pretty much

mandatory. Every facet of our lives seems to be touched by the digital age, including

employment, schooling, and banking, all done online. These women did not grow up with

technology like I did, yet they are sharing their pasta-making skills with the world via social

media. I wondered what role the channel played in helping them share their cultural traditions.

By looking at the case of Pasta Grannies, this research asks the question:

RQ: Can social media help women over the age of 65 overcome barriers that they may face in

preserving and safeguarding their food-related intangible cultural heritage?

The main goals of this research were to understand these older women's motivations for

participating in Pasta Grannies and their participation's impact on breaking through the barriers

they may face to help keep their food traditions alive. I was also interested in how the channel

raises the visibility of older women in media and whether it helps blast through stereotypes or

reinforces them. I was also determined to learn something from Pasta Grannies' stories and

experiences to make sense of my experiences as an aging woman in a changing digital world and

whether social media can help me pass on my food knowledge before it is too late.

Literature Review

This chapter outlines the current literature related to the research question. First, I outline my methodology and process when performing a systematic library search. I then present the findings of the literature review, organized by theme.

Although the topic was deeply personal for me, I had no previous knowledge about it, so I based the literature review on the following literature review research question: What role does social media play in preserving cultural food heritage, and what does this mean for women over the age of 65? By answering this question, I gained a clearer and more complete understanding of the academic discourse, foundational literature, and key concepts to position me better to answer my research question.

Systematic Library Search - Methodology and Process

I started my literature review with a scoping search, which is done to "(i) identify existing areas in your topic area and (ii) estimate the existing quantity and quality of relevant primary studies (Booth, 2022, p. 23). Starting with a scoping search helped me understand the latest academic discussions surrounding the topic, the quantity and quality of previous research, significant authors, and any foundational literature I could find. The scoping search also helped me to identify relevant keywords since "the identification of keywords of a research study is the first essential step in identifying the relevant literature" (Oliver, 2012, p. 41). For a list of keywords, see Appendix A: Keywords. The scoping search also identified the existing gaps in the literature that my research could fill.

After finishing the initial scoping search, I did a systematic library search "conducted using a 'system,' planned from the start and clearly reported" (Booth et al., 2022, p. 3). I took a pragmatic approach since "this process is an art rather than a science: the researcher may not follow all the steps for every enquiry; guidelines can be given, but circumstances may dictate changes in direction" (Rumsey, 2008, p. 1). I found this out the hard way when some tools I developed, such as a complicated project management spreadsheet with a Gantt chart, were cumbersome and not very helpful. I switched direction and abandoned my complex tools in favour of more straightforward tools like Google Calendar and Microsoft Word. I refined the research question to reflect my findings as I progressed through the literature review. All the while, I was guided by Booth et al.'s SALSA framework, which outlines four critical steps of a systematic literature review (Search, Appraisal, Synthesis, and Analysis) (Booth et al., 2022).

I searched the keywords identified during the scoping search using the University of Alberta's library website and various academic databases, such as Google Scholar, Scopus, and Web of Science. I also combined the keywords and searched them using BOOLEAN logic. As I found more sources and analyzed them, I identified more keywords, which were added to the search, reflecting Rumsey's argument that the literature review process is iterative and heuristic (Rumsey, 2008, p. 6). I searched each keyword until I found the theoretical saturation point, described by Booth et al. as the point that "you lose little by omitting papers that represent 'more of the same'" (Booth et al., 2022, p. 129). Where the relevant literature was sparse, I took inspiration from Oliver's concept of concentric circles, where "the harder it is to find relevant literature, then the more you will need to move outwards to the peripheral circles" (Oliver, 2012, p. 31).

I evaluated the collected sources against an eligibility criteria checklist that I had developed to ensure that they were both relevant and manageable in number (see Appendix B: Eligibility Criteria Checklist). Sources that passed the eligibility criteria were collected and managed within Paperpile, a resource management software solution, and kept within folders according to topic. I carefully considered finding alternative viewpoints to avoid selection bias, "where a reviewer selects primary research studies that support their prior beliefs" (Booth et al., 2022, p. 32). I prioritized the most credible and current sources, preferably peer-reviewed and from academic journals. I also considered grey literature sources where the academic literature was scarce, which I included if they came from a reliable source, provided evidence for their claims, were relevant to my research and appeared to be free of bias.

Once I evaluated the collected sources, I did a qualitative synthesis, which "involves identifying patterns within your data – patterns related to concepts, ideas or themes" (Booth et al., 2022, p. 236). I did this using a best fit framework, whereby "starting with a 'good enough' framework, you populate it with as much data as possible without forcing the data to fit. Following the initial deductive phase, you handle the remaining data inductively, creating new themes until all the data is processed" (Booth et al., 2022, p. 247). I decided this framework was the best approach since it allowed the flexibility to add themes to the a priori themes identified in the scoping search. I coded and summarized the sources by topic in a simple Word document, which also served as a working draft of my literature review.

Literature Review/Analysis

Theoretical Framework

This research is grounded in intersectionality theory, an analytic framework first proposed by Kimberly Crenshaw in 1989 to describe how a person's multiple identities combine and overlap to create new forms of privilege and oppression, such as racism and sexism (Crenshaw, 2018). Crenshaw initially used the term to describe how race and gender intersect to create new systems of oppression for Black women in the American legal system. Since then, "scholars and activists have broadened intersectionality to engage a range of issues, social identities, power dynamics, legal and political systems, and discursive structures in the United States and beyond" (Carbado et al., 2013, p. 304). Intersectionality theory has expanded to encompass other identities such as race, gender, class, sexuality, disability, nationality, and other social categories (Runyan, 2018).

The intersectionality of age and gender leads to a new kind of marginalization called gendered ageism (Krekula et al., 2018), which poses unique challenges for older women. For example, older women are more likely to experience poverty, disability, lack of housing, poor access to transportation, and elder abuse than older men (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2022). This marginalization is further compounded when additional factors such as race, sexuality, class and disability are included. As people are more likely to become disabled as they age, UN Women points out that "this discrimination, bias and marginalization is only further compounded for older women with disabilities (UN Women, 2022, p. 1)".

I chose intersectionality theory because it sounded like the perfect lens to examine the topic since it talked about the challenges that older women face, which is the demographic featured in the Pasta Grannies videos. I hoped that intersectionality theory could help me understand how age and gender shape the experiences of the women featured in the Pasta Grannies videos and how gendered ageism contributes to the systemic barriers they may face in transmitting and safeguarding their cultural food knowledge. To do this, I needed to examine the roles that gender and age play in home cooking for the family closer.

Gender and Age Roles in the Kitchen

Women play a crucial role in food production, inside and outside the home, and are "the true invisible hand in the world food system" (Blumberg, 1981, p. 31). Within the home, women have traditionally played the primary role in home cooking, responsible for the entire food cycle (Sachs, 1991) and preparing proper family meals for men and children (Charles & Kerr, 1988). These food practices are critical "to maintain and reinforce a coherent ideology of the family throughout the social structure (Charles and Kerr, 1988, p. 17).

The notion that women are responsible for feeding the family is especially true when preparing traditional foods, which often take time and effort. For example, concerning French food, Bourdieu & Bourdieu (1984) argue that "a taste for elaborate casserole dishes (pot-au-feu, blanquette, daube), which demand a big investment of time and interest, is linked to a traditional conception of woman's role" (Bourdieu & Bourdieu, 1984, p. 185). Making kimchi, a traditional Korean fermented cabbage dish, was found by Chi-Hoon Kim to be accepted by many Koreans as women's work. When asked about gender roles in relation to making kimchi, an interview subject "simply said, "They do the eating; we do the making." (Kim, 2016, p. 41).

Women are also typically responsible for passing their food knowledge to others. Transmitting culinary knowledge through the generations epitomizes women's traditional role within the home (Timothy, 2015). V.A. Swinbank pointed out that "traditionally, knowledge of food and cooking has been handed down from grandmother and mother to daughter and granddaughter in a long continuous line linking the generations" (Swinbank, 2021, p. 86). In addition, each generation puts its spin on family recipes to adapt them to their tastes, which Supski (2005) refers to as an intergenerational layering of knowledge.

These traditional roles women play in the kitchen are changing with the times. Younger people now have less time to devote to cooking, relying on convenience foods rather than cooking from scratch, but the frequency of cooking increases with age (Gatley et al., 2014). Women are still the main household cooks, but the division of labour is shifting, and men join them more often in the kitchen (Taillie, 2018). The way that food knowledge is transmitted is changing too. Although Bessière argues that "the daughter or granddaughter no longer inherits secret family recipes and modern home cooking goes beyond traditional family dishes (Bessière, 1998, p. 25), the ways culinary knowledge gets transmitted may have simply adapted to the digital age. Women used to pass down their cherished recipes through family cookbooks, but now "modern technology allows filial food heritage to be copied, tweeted, video recorded and posted online for the entire world to see, making global what was once very personal" (Timothy, 2015, p. 73).

The majority of the literature exploring home cooking by older people is focused on health outcomes, such as weight loss (Tani et al., 2020), maintaining independence (Edfors & Westergren, 2012), and longevity (Chen et al., 2012).

Representations of Older Women in the Media

The intersectionality of age and gender spills into how older women get represented in the media, where they are rarely represented. Lemish and Muhlbauer argue that "women vanish from the screen in central and powerful roles as they mature and do not occupy a significant role in narratives even in comparison to older men" (Lemish & Muhlbauer, 2012, p. 167). They further argue that on the rare occasion we see them portrayed, "representations of older women are characterized by double marginalization, that is, by age as well as gender" (Lemish & Muhlbauer, 2012, p. 167). In another study, Edström (2018) looked at how older people are represented across various media types, which she refers to as 'media buzz.' and found that media buzz reinforces gender stereotypes and contributes to ageism because people are no longer represented in media buzz as they age.

In particular, food media stereotypically portrays older women. For example, Leer (2022) looked at the portrayals of barbecue chefs on the Netflix series Chef's Table: BBQ. The study found that it portrayed male chefs as innovators and female chefs as keepers of tradition, illustrating two opposing archetypes of chefs in the food media landscape: the innovative young male chef and the tradition-keeping grandmother (Leer, 2002, p. 14).

I'll now switch gears to talk about intangible cultural heritage (ICH): key definitions and concepts, examples of food-related ICH, transmission and safeguarding efforts through official and unofficial channels, and the role of social media.

Intangible Cultural Heritage

UNESCO defines intangible cultural heritage (ICH) as "the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage" (UNESCO, 2020, p. 5). Some examples of cultural practices considered to be ICH include oral traditions and language, performing arts, social practices, rituals and festivals, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe, and traditional craftsmanship (UNESCO, 2020, p. 5). Food practices are also considered ICH. Some of our most important cultural practices revolve around food – which foods are consumed, how they are prepared, and by whom. Arvela noted that "what makes food part of intangible heritage is not the food per se, but the narratives, meanings, and attitudes attached to it, which, communicated through generations, become constitutive of national ethos and cultural identity" (Arvela, 2016, p. 24).

ICH gets passed down through the generations, from grandparents and parents to children, and is constantly recreated by communities and groups, providing them with a collective sense of identity and continuity (UNESCO, 2020). Transmitting ICH by handing down knowledge to subsequent generations is one of the ways that these cultural practices survive over time. Since it is constantly recreated and practiced, ICH is always dynamic and can be considered a living practice. Rather than being preserved in time, ICH is "a cultural space which must be the object of a twofold safeguarding strategy, aiming at simultaneously fostering its preservation and its constant adaptation to the cultural evolution of its creators" (Lenzerini, 2011, p. 109).

The 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

In 2003, The UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was established to recognize the need to provide guidance around safeguarding intangible cultural heritage to governments and community groups. The Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, composed of 18 state party members, oversees the convention's monitoring, examines requests to recognize ICH formally, and provides guidance and best practices around safeguarding (UNESCO, 2020).

Governments are responsible for inventorying ICH within their borders. UNESCO created an official list of ICH called the "Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity" (UNESCO, n.d.). Since "the main objective of the Convention was to prevent humankind's intangible heritage from disappearing" (Bedjaoui, 20014), those ICH practices in grave danger of dying are placed on a list called the "List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding" (UNESCO, 2020, p. 11).

UNESCO now includes food practices in their lists. The first food practices included in the Representative list were traditional Mexican cuisine, the French gastronomic meal, and Northern Croatian gingerbread craft in 2010 (Mac Con Iomaire, 2018). The number of food practices added to the list has increased dramatically, but pasta-making still needs to be included (Scola, 2021). The most recent addition was the French baguette (Goodyear, 2022). Due to the ongoing war with Russia, the culture of Ukrainian borscht cooking was also recently listed on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding (UNESCO, 2022). The academic study of food practices in ICH is relatively new. de Miguel Molina et al. (2016) found

very little academic research on gastronomy as ICH and argue that the UNESCO convention

needs to provide a more firm definition of gastronomy as ICH for the future.

Safeguarding ICH.

In the context of ICH, the practice of "Safeguarding" is defined as:

"measures aimed at ensuring the viability of the intangible cultural heritage, including the

identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion,

enhancement, transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education, as

well as the revitalization of the various aspects of such heritage" (UNESCO, 2020, p. 6).

Safeguarding efforts ensure the maintenance of ICH over time, preserving meaningful

cultural traditions for subsequent generations. Documentation, in particular, is essential to

safeguarding because "it helps to ensure the longevity of invaluable customs and practices, [and]

it also validates the life experiences of older members of a community" (Canadian Heritage

Information Network, 2017).

Criticisms of the Convention.

Critics of the UNESCO Convention argue that getting an ICH officially recognized on the

Representative list is a process that is heavily steeped in politics and economics. It is often the

case that "who gets to define what food or foodways is worthy of being recognized as a cultural

heritage of humanity can and does often involve a great deal of politico-cultural policy-making

process" (Lum & le Vayer, 2016, p. 6). Unfortunately, the Representative list is often little more

than a global competition rather than a helpful tool to safeguard ICH. It implies "that the

communities whose ICH is listed are more valuable than others" (Lenzerini, 2011, p. 110).

Part of the problem is that despite the emphasis that the UNESCO Convention places on

community involvement, which requires state parties to actively involve the people within the

communities as much as possible in creating, transmitting, and managing their ICH, local

communities often get left out of the process. Critics have pointed out that sometimes state

parties do little to engage with the local communities where the practices live. For example, a

recent attempt to get Peruvian cuisine recognized on the Representative List showed that

community involvement was brushed aside by the state party to favour commercial interests

(Matta, 2016). Pietrobruno argues that "the sovereignty granted to nations may lead to the

exclusion of community expressions that do not conform to the political aims of national

governments" (Pietrobruno, 2013, p. 1266). Richard Kurin, who created the Convention,

believes that safeguarding efforts need to be a shared responsibility, involving close partnerships

with the communities in which the ICH exists (Kurin, 2007).

Another criticism is a need for more representation in safeguarding efforts through

official channels. Although the Convention states that "the State Party shall pay special attention

to the role of gender" (UNESCO, 2020, p. 61), it often doesn't go far enough to address gender

inequality in safeguarding efforts. For example, an analysis of Youtube videos of the Mevlevi

Sema ceremony, also known as the whirling dervish ceremony, in Turkey found that videos

uploaded through official government channels primarily featured men, but videos uploaded by

users featured women (Pietrobruno, 2013). Women must be more directly involved in

safeguarding efforts, or discrimination can arise (Moghadam & Bagheritari, 2007). Surprisingly,

despite the critical role that older people play in transmitting, I found no studies that examined

the representation of older people in safeguarding efforts through official channels.

The Slow Food Movement.

Some grassroots movements safeguard endangered food practices through community

initiatives. Founded in Italy in 1989, Slow Food International is one of these movements (Slow

Food International, 2015). With local chapters worldwide, Slow Food is dedicated to preventing

the disappearance of local food cultures and traditions by promoting locally produced foods and

various community initiatives, including public education on food production and the associated

environmental impacts. Some of these initiatives include the Ark of Taste, a listing of

endangered food practices similar to the UNESCO Representative List, and the Indigenous Terra

Madre (Mother Earth) network (Timothy, 2015).

Critics of the movement call it elitist and out of touch with the economic realities of

families who have to feed their families (Restaurant Agent Inc., n.d.). Others have argued that

the movement does not do enough to address gender inequity since "there is silence on the fact

that unless the workday is altered, the slow preparation of food may be impractical or an added

burden, presumably for women" (Meneley, 2004, p. 171). Despite these criticisms, the Slow

Food movement exemplifies how communities can band together to safeguard food-related ICH

without getting governments involved.

Transmitting and Safeguarding ICH Through Social Media

Social media has brought exciting new opportunities for ICH. Since it's participatory,

social media is particularly suited to transmitting and safeguarding ICH because it helps to break

barriers and enables communities to be more involved in conserving and disseminating their cultural heritage (Gaitan, 2014). Social media empowers the community to share their ICH without having to rely on governments or official channels since "if a community feels strongly identified with its heritage, and feels the need to protect it, social media can be a great instrument to protect it" (Gaitan, 2014, p. 42). Social media can also safeguard alternative viewpoints of heritage, including those that challenge existing power structures (Pietrobruno, 2013, p. 1272). Users can share their recipes and family food heritage, "opening what was once a very personal heritage to the entire globe to become the food heritage of the world" (Timothy, 2015, p. 70). Social media also lets community groups form a collective memory (Silberman & Purser, 2012, p. 17). Social media tools "offer not only the possibility to gather different translations of a cultural element into a unique space of fruition (by respecting the 'bottom-up' nature of ICH) but also the possibility to leave transcriptions open for further transformation (by respecting the 'living' nature of ICH)" (Severo, 2015, p. 407). Also, since it's flexible and changeable, social media suits ICH's always-changing nature. It is also a great way to involve young people (Severo, 2015, p. 407).

Social media content is often multimedia, and when it comes to cultural heritage, audiences prefer multiple types of media, especially more dynamic media like videos, than static media like text (Wang et al., 2021). Videos are a great way for viewers to learn new cooking skills since people learn cooking skills better through video than written instructions (Surgenor et al., 2017). Using multimedia also helps to tailor ICH communication to accommodate different learning styles, keeping learners engaged and creating more meaningful transmission experiences, which leads to more effective safeguarding (Mitchenson, 2015).

Social media allows communities to come together and form online groups that community members can use to share cultural heritage practices. Botangen et al. (2018) looked at the use of Facebook groups by Igorot migrants, and they found that the groups helped community members share their culture and sustain their Indigenous knowledge. For the Igorot migrants studied, "social media became a tool to show-off exemplary practices that others would appreciate and replicate which could likewise contribute to sustainability and propagation of indigenous knowledge leading to its preservation" (Botangen et al., 2018, p. 2310).

Community groups creatively use social media sites to share their culture during times of crisis. For example, social media allowed Indigenous peoples to still participate in virtual powwow ceremonies and share other cultural practices like jingle dancing, sheep sheering, and harvesting traditional medicinal plants during the COVID pandemic (Reardon, 2021).

Research identifies some best practices when using social media for safeguarding ICH. Firstly, social media is most effective when used in conjunction with non-digital preservation methods. When looking at the experiences of Norwegian boatbuilders in sharing their craft via digital technologies, Stuedahl and Mörtberg found that although social media is excellent at creating shared community spaces, continuity is maintained in non-digital forms (Stuedahl and Mörtberg, 2012). Social media is not the magic "fix-it" when preserving ICH and needs to be thought of as only one tool of many.

Secondly, to be effective, social media needs to be participatory. Silberman & Purser argue that active participation by people is essential to safeguard ICH or else top-down views of cultural heritage are reinforced. They said that "the technologies that animate them must be used with caution, lest they merely enhance the dominance of the authorized, official narratives that

have degraded and in many places have replaced the creative power of both individual and collective memory" (Silberman & Purser, 2012, p. 17).

Thirdly, social media content must also be kept up-to-date. Khalid and Chowdhury (2018) explored how Facebook is used to transmit ICH in Bangladesh. They compared videos by official and unofficial channels and found that official channels lacked both a strategic direction and an active presence. Unofficial channels, they found, had a more active presence and were, therefore, more effective. This active presence ensures that social media is used to its full potential.

Barriers That Older Women Face When Using Social Media

Research by the Pew Institute found that while people over 65 are the least likely to use social media sites, their participation has increased fourfold since 2010 (Faverio, 2022). Still, many older women face significant barriers related to digital inequality, preventing them from using social media to transmit and safeguard ICH. Sofia Ranchordás described digital inequality as "a new type of digital divide, that is, the gap between those who participate in the digital age and those who do not (Ranchordás, 2022, p. 7).

Digital inequality disproportionately affects women. There are many reasons why, "ranging from gender inequality in the economy and education to cultural expectations and traditional gender roles to policy failures to tackle systematic inequalities; these differ across countries and contexts" (Acilar & Sæbø, 2021, p. 9). These digital equalities are compounded when other factors like age are factored in.

The digital divide that older people face is known as the grey divide (Friemel, 2016). Some barriers that prevent older people from participating in the digital world include a lack of access to devices, motivational indifference, and deficient knowledge (Peacock and Künemund, 2007). Even though more older people are using the internet, factors like the presence of a computer at home, a job requiring a computer, age, education, and ethnicity determine whether older people use the internet (Chang et al., 2015). As more basic services are moving online, the need to close the grey divide is more important than ever (Nash, 2020).

Summary

To summarize: gendered ageism presents unique problems to older women, the demographic portrayed in the Pasta Grannies channel. Although gender norms in the kitchen are changing, women are still the primary food providers within the home and social norms mean that they are expected to transmit their food knowledge to the next generation. There is a lack of representation of older women in the media, and when they are represented, it is often stereotypically. The politicization of ICH and a lack of representation through official channels suggest that older women face systemic barriers in transmitting their ICH. Research shows that when used properly, social media is an effective tool to help transmit and safeguard ICH, but older women also face barriers to using social media. My research question is, therefore:

RQ: Can social media help women over the age of 65 overcome barriers that they may face in preserving and safeguarding their food-related intangible cultural heritage?

This research will fill some gaps that I found in the academic literature. Firstly, there has yet to be any research that looks at ICH through the lens of intersectional theory. Secondly, given

the critical role of older women in transmitting traditional food knowledge, little academic

research focuses on this demographic.

Research Design and Methodology

This chapter outlines the research design and methodologies I used to study the research

question. First, I outline the three data-gathering strategies: content analysis, a semi-structured

one-on-one interview, and autoethnography. Then I summarize the study population and

sampling methods used for each strategy.

I used a qualitative approach to this research to gain a deep understanding of the subject

matter. I used a cross-sectional research design, where "…a sample of data is collected at one

point in time in order to draw inferences about the topic under study" (Merrigan et al., 2012, p.

76). I utilized three data-gathering methods: content analysis, semi-structured one-on-one

interviews, and autoethnography. Combining these three methods helped to ensure data

triangulation since "…using multiple sources, settings or strategies will compensate for the

weaknesses found in any one source, setting, or strategy" (Merrigan et al., 2012, p. 77).

Data Gathering Strategies

Part 1: Content Analysis

The first portion of this study utilized content analysis. By doing a content analysis on

viewer comments left on a Pasta Grannies video, I had hoped to gain some valuable insights into

how the audience is reacting to the videos and to find out what sorts of things people were

talking about by identifying major themes, which could then also help me get an overarching understanding of the topic.

I decided to do my content analysis on the most popular video on the channel, "91 year old Maria shares her lasagna recipe with Pasta Grannies!" (Pasta Grannies, 2020), which has received 8.4 million views, 180 thousand Likes, and over 6,000 comments. I chose this video to achieve a representative sample of comments on the Pasta Grannies' videos, which helps achieve external validity (Merrigan et al., 2012, p. 140).

I first contacted the producer of the Pasta Grannies channel, Vicky Bennison, to gain her permission to analyze the viewer comments. After receiving her approval, I collected the YouTube comments through YouTube Data Tools (Rieder, 2015). I ensured the viewers' anonymity by removing their usernames from the data and intentionally leaving out direct quotes from this research. Replies to comments made by the Pasta Grannies channel were also removed so that the data contained only user comments.

I used an inductive strategy to code the data qualitatively. Qualitative coding is "the process of identifying persistent images, words, phrases, concepts, or sounds within the data 'so that the underlying patterns can be identified and analyzed" (Morse & Field, 1995, pp. 241). The comments were coded in NVivo until I reached the saturation point, which was 2,600 comments. I grouped the comments into categories, which I then grouped into overarching themes. In addition to helping understand the topic from the audience's perspective, the resulting themes from the content analysis helped to inform the questions in the second part of the research, a semi-structured one-on-one interview with the producer of Pasta Grannies, and to help develop the coding frame for the interview.

Part 2: Semi-structured One-on-One Interview

The second part of this study was a semi-structured one-on-one interview with Vicky Bennison, the producer of the Pasta Grannies channel. In-depth interviews "…are an effective qualitative method for getting people to talk about their personal feelings, opinions, and experiences. They are also an opportunity for us to gain insight into how people interpret and order the world" (Mack et al., 2005, p. 30). Vicky was targeted as a participant using a purposive sampling method, which "…intentionally focus on the target group to the exclusion of other groups" (Smith, 1988, p. 85). I recruited Vicky via email, and she completed a consent form before participating, and she also gave her permission to be directly quoted in my research. Resources did not allow for any incentive for participating.

My original plan was to interview a few of the women Pasta Grannies featured in their videos, but several challenges stood in my way. First, the language barrier proved to be a major challenge. I don't speak Italian, and most women don't speak English. I'd considered using a translator for my research as a solution, but I didn't have the resources, and it didn't work out logistically. Vicky had given me the contact information of a woman featured by the channel that lived in the US and spoke English, but I didn't receive any response to my recruitment emails.

I conducted the interview online over Zoom, which lasted a little over an hour. I used open-ended questions so Vicky could give her full thoughts on the topic and elaborate however she wished. The audio and video of the interview were recorded so that both verbal and non-verbal cues could be analyzed. I transcribed the audio recording using Otter.ai, an online transcription tool. I reviewed the resulting transcript for accuracy before sending it to Vicky so

that she could also confirm that it was accurate. The transcript was then imported into NVivo for qualitative analysis.

Part 3: Autoethnography

Finally, the third data-gathering strategy I used is autoethnography, which "extends the interpretive values of subjectivity and rich description to include the ethnographer's own sense making in a cultural situation or setting. Thus the key informant is the researcher himself or herself (Merrigan et al., 2012, p. 201). I decided to use autoethnography because of my highly personal connection with the topic. There is no possible way I could have approached this material without trying to make sense of my own life experiences in the context of my research.

Study Population and Sampling Method

Since this is a case study of the Pasta Grannies channel, I limited the scope of this research to those that have an existing relationship with the channel, namely Pasta Grannies' viewers who chose to comment on their most popular video, the producer of the channel, and, of course, myself.

Part 1: Content Analysis

Analyzing all of the Pasta Grannies' videos was unreasonable, so the content analysis focused on one particular video. Analyzing all the comments on the video sampled was also unreasonable since there were thousands of them. It is important to note that even though Pasta Grannies' Youtube videos can be watched by anybody, even without an account, a Youtube account is required to comment on the video. Viewers also do not need to Follow the Pasta

Grannies account or Like the video to comment. The audience can also view the videos without commenting, which means that people who have watched the video without commenting were excluded from this study. The comments selected for this study fell within the timeframe between the date the videos were uploaded to Youtube and the date the comments were downloaded for this research.

Part 2: Semi-Structured One-on-One Interview

I conducted only one interview with Vicky Bennison, the producer of Pasta Grannies. I kept the sample size intentionally small to fit within the resource and time constraints of the project. Vicky was selected because interviewing the channel producer led to a deeper understanding of the topic. Pasta Grannies is, after all, her channel, and there was no better person to give important backstage insights into the channel than her.

Part 3: Autoethnography

The autoethnographic portion of this study focuses on myself and my own experiences with the subject matter. My experiences and views are my own and cannot be generalized to anybody else's experiences.

Findings and Discussion

In this chapter, I present and discuss the main themes that emerged through the content analysis and interview. I also discuss my own experiences with the findings through autoethnography.

Distribution of Themes across Content Analysis and Interview

The five main themes that resulted from the content analysis of the Youtube video are outlined in *Appendix C: Major themes and categories identified in content analysis*, and the five main themes that resulted from the interview are outlined in *Appendix D: Major themes and categories identified in interview*. There were four common themes between the content analysis and the interview: Social Identities, Food Preparation and Its Outcomes, Culture, and Family. The Social Reactions theme was unique to the content analysis, while Social Media was unique to the interviews.

Figure 1 indicates the distribution of the themes across all coded comments.
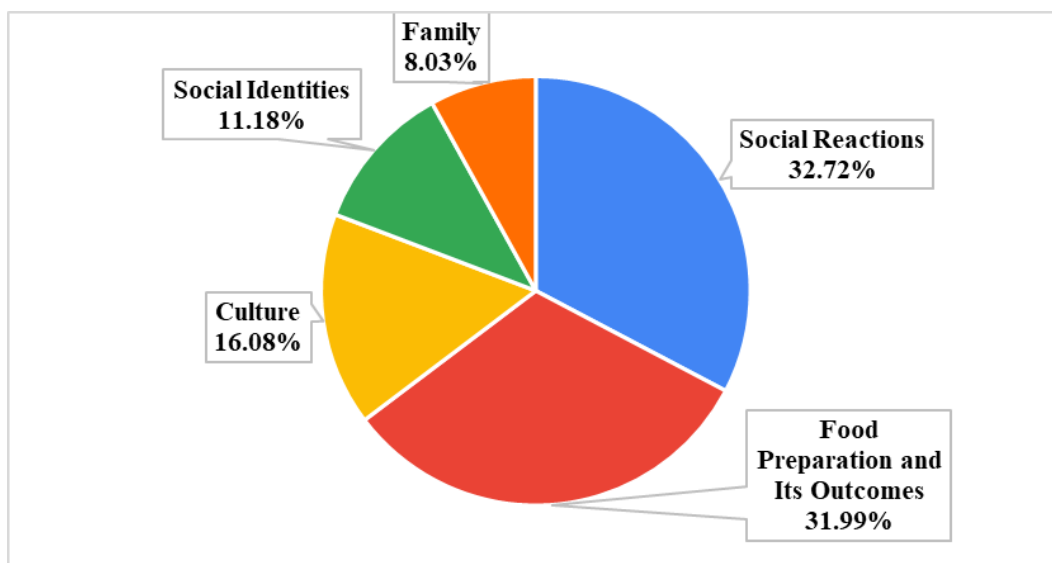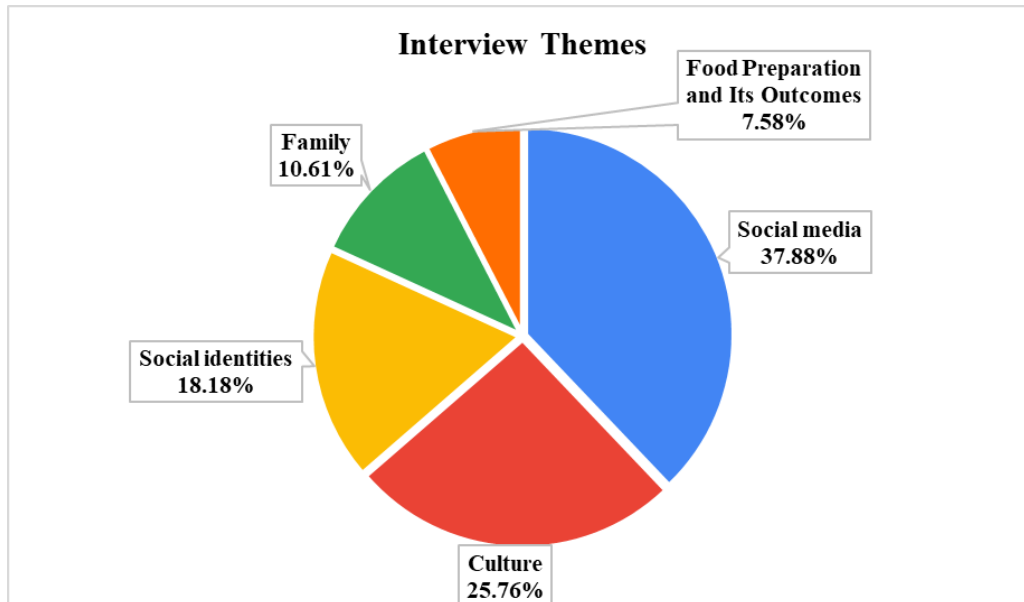
Figure 1

Distribution of Youtube Comments Themes

Figure 2 indicates the distribution of themes for the interview.

Figure 2

Distribution of Interview Themes

Thematic Analysis and Discussion

Social Identities

Since I approached this research using intersectional theory, which argues that a person's multiple identities combine and overlap to create new forms of privilege and oppression (Crenshaw, 2018), the findings of this theme were particularly interesting to me. The Social Identities theme was a minor but common theme between the content analysis (11.18%) and the interview (18.18%). The distribution of categories within this theme for the content analysis are shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3

Distribution of Social Identities Categories in Content Analysis
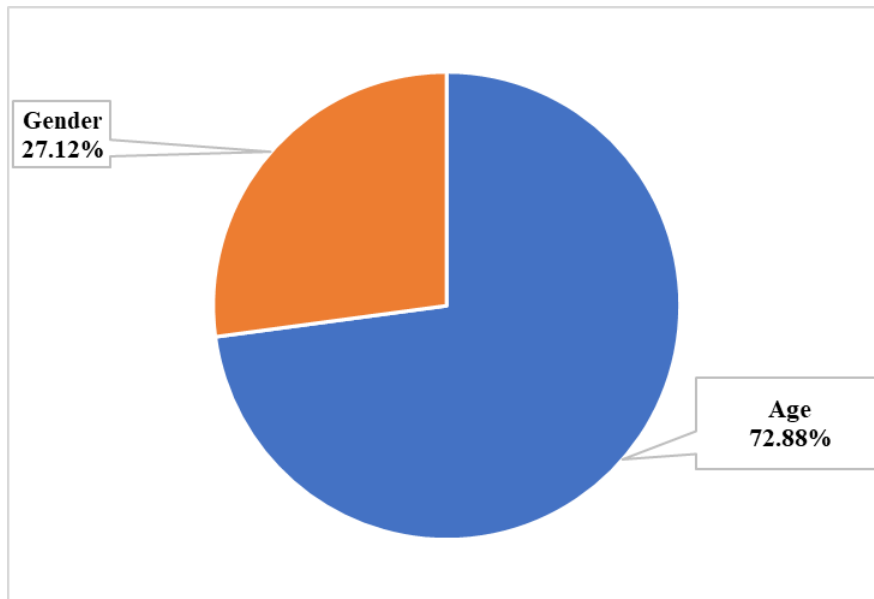
It was surprising that none of the comments touched on how the intersection of age and gender affects digital inclusion or the effect of gendered ageism on the experiences of the women in the video. Figure 4 shows a breakdown of the categories in the interview. Looking at the categories in greater detail brought additional insights.

Figure 4

Distribution of Social Identities Categories in Interview
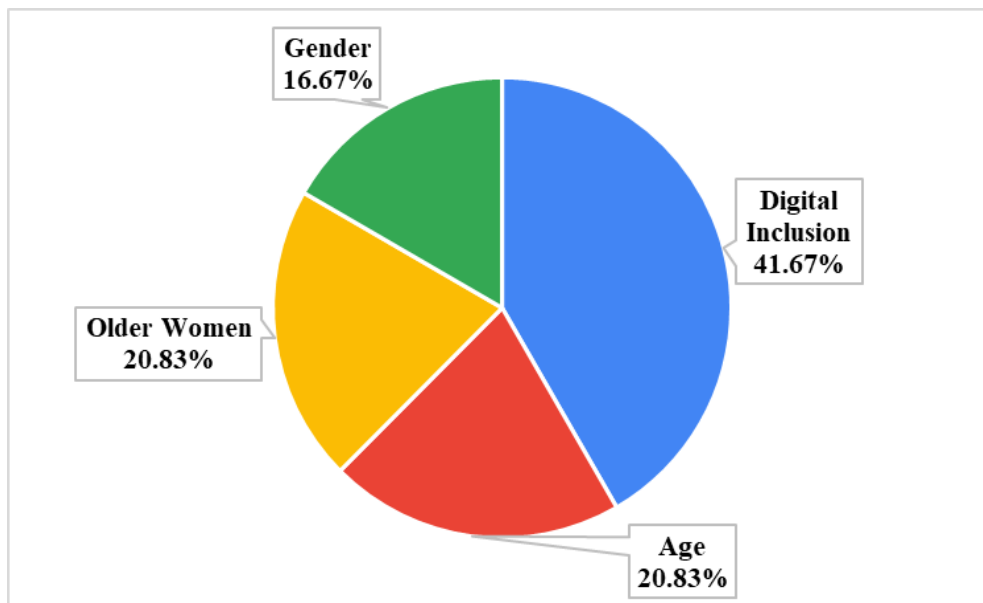
Age.

The audience's comments regarding age suggest that viewers view older people positively. Viewers discussed the keys to living a long and healthy life, showing that they have a particularly positive attitude toward aging and are interested in how people can maintain health and achieve longevity as they age. This echoed the findings of the literature review, which showed that most of the literature about older women cooking focuses on health outcomes. They also talked about how older people are important and worthy of appreciation, showing their deep-seated respect for older people and the value of their contributions to society. Some viewers also indicated that they believe that older people are more capable than younger people, thinking they have more valuable skills than their younger counterparts.

During my interview, our discussions around age were more focused on comparing the different attitudes that older people and younger people have regarding pasta and its preparation. Unlike older people, younger people are busy with their careers and rely on store-bought dried

pasta. They sometimes eschew pasta altogether because they view it as unhealthy. Vicky explained that "even though they're their grandmothers have lived to a long, healthy life, eating all these things that are now bad for you. It's sort of, "oh, I'm not going to make pasta, it's fattening." It's not that younger people are not interested in making pasta; the biggest difference between older and younger people is their motivations for cooking it in the first place. For the women featured in the channel, Vicky noted that "the pasta making is/was for this generation of women, sort of economic necessity. It's a sort of household chore. There is no sort of self-actualization in it". These women "will master one or two techniques and that will see them through their lives." In contrast, for younger people, "there is a choice involved in whether you make it or not. And so, you know, young people are keen to do it. It will be once a week, once a month or something like that".

Like the Pasta Grannies, the older women in my family made what seems to us now to be overly complicated recipes that took a lot of effort to prepare, not because they wanted to, but because they had to. My mother used to tell me stories about how when she was growing up, she was responsible for baking bread for the family every Sunday. Bread was available in the stores, but times were tough, and baking bread from scratch was much more cost-effective. It was an all-day affair that wasn't always a pleasant experience, especially in the summer months. My own experiences align with Vicky's observations: nowadays, I bake bread because I want to, not because I have to, and it's more of an occasional weekend project for me because I work during the week.

Gender.

Just as viewers view older people in a positive light, the content analysis revealed that they view women positively as well. The vast majority of the discussion on gender in the Youtube comments was related to an appreciation for the women in their lives, especially their mothers and grandmothers, not just in the kitchen but in general. These viewers have expressed the overall positive impact that the women they cherish have on their everyday lives, which often goes unnoticed. A few viewers also discussed gender roles in cooking, highlighting that some viewers are aware of traditional gender roles in cooking, women's role in producing food in the home, and gender stereotypes. Still, there was no discussion surrounding power dynamics in cooking. Vicky and I discussed gender roles in cooking in greater detail during our interview.

In line with the findings of Sachs (1991) and Charles & Kerr (1988), Vicky said these women were the primary home cooks in their households. Pasta is a crucial part of their family's lives, and they make it both for everyday meals and for elaborate meals for special occasions, borne out of the need to feed their families during hard times. Making the pasta is the glue that holds the family together.

Regarding gender roles in the kitchen, my experiences echo the findings of Taillie (2018), who found that the division of labour between men and women is shifting. My immediate family was an anomaly. My father did most of the cooking because my mother was disabled. Had she been able to do the cooking, it would have remained her primary responsibility. For the most part, the other women in my family still do all of the cooking within their families, not because we are explicitly told that it is our responsibility, but because it works out that way out of convenience. Traditional gender roles in cooking are still alive in my world, but they are

changing. I, too, do all of the cooking in my home, but only because my husband doesn't like to.

He does have certain dishes that he likes to make a few times a year, though. He also contributes

to other household chores, like vacuuming and laundry, so the household's work is evenly split

between us.

The women Pasta Grannies features are also responsible for transmitting their knowledge

about food since, as Vicky put it, the "mode of transmission remains, being in the kitchen with

your, with your family." Their recipes get passed down through their families and adapted since

"everybody has their own tweak" through the intergenerational layering of knowledge mentioned

by Supski (2005).

The women in my family are also primarily responsible for transmitting cooking

knowledge. Typically our large get-togethers, like family reunions, are potluck dinners, where

we each bring a dish to be shared. Our gatherings are never complete unless certain dishes are

around, like my aunt's famous butter tarts. One year she created a minor scandal when she made

the butter tarts with currants instead of raisins because that's how she preferred them. Some of

my family members refused to eat them, declaring them an abomination, but those brave enough

to give them a taste were delighted. Some of my family members continue to make them this

way, demonstrating the intergenerational layering of knowledge and the living nature of ICH.

Digital Inclusion.

Vicky and I talked about the barriers faced by the women featured in Pasta Grannies that

prevent them from participating in social media to share their ICH. She confirmed that they face

some of the same barriers previously identified by Peacock and Künemund (2007) and Chang et

al. (2015): motivational indifference, lack of education and deficient knowledge, and the additional barrier of lack of coverage in rural areas.

The most significant barrier that the women featured in the channel face is a motivational indifference or a simple lack of interest. This generation of women did not grow up with computers, so computers do not play a part in their everyday lives. Vicky pointed out, "I mean, obviously, their grandchildren know all about it, but for all the women, they honestly don't see the point." The women often live in smaller rural communities. They are more focused on local matters than the outside community, with Vicky saying, "You've lived in the same village all your life; you do not actually have any interest in anything beyond that." They consume their news from the television, rather than the internet, with Vicky noting that "sometimes people worry about the war and Ukraine and that kind of thing because they see it on the news. They've got a telly, you know".

The second barrier they face is a lack of education. Vicky explained that for this generation of women, the events of World War II halted their education and "a lot of the women that we interview had to leave school at 10. So they're not readers, that's why they don't wear glasses". This lack of education has led to deficient knowledge about the digital world, and it "doesn't cross their minds that they might be using it" and "their education generally probably stops them from thinking about it in those terms."

The third barrier they face is lack of coverage in rural areas, which "can be very patchy and see, we quite often end up in places where there is no mobile signal, so you know, they don't even know what YouTube is."

She told the story of one woman on the show who, unlike others, received an education and moved away to America, meaning she had adequate internet access and a working knowledge of computers. Participating in Pasta Grannies has inspired her to start her own social media channel, assisted by her granddaughter, to share her pasta-making knowledge.

Along with receiving an education, moving to an area with better internet access, and being helped by their younger family members, Vicky believes that her channel is an important way to help bridge the grey divide, bringing the stories of women that face barriers to using the internet by bringing their stories to a broader audience that they usually wouldn't be able to reach.

Intersectionality theory argues that a person's multiple identities combine and overlap to create new forms of privilege and oppression (Crenshaw, 2018). My social location is very different from the women featured in Pasta Grannies, which means that my identities do not combine similarly. The result is that I have different privileges and do not face the same barriers to digital inclusion that they do.

The internet has been around for much of my life, and I grew up using computers. Even though my family couldn't afford a home computer when I was younger, I went to school, where I could access it. My ability to access technology and learn about it in the classroom was pivotal to my inclusion in the digital age. As an adult, I can purchase the latest technology whenever I choose to. My husband and I both work full-time and the fact that we do not have children means that we can spend our disposable income on technology. If you can name a device, I probably already have it, and I can access the internet and social media in one way or another through all

these devices. I also live in a big city with some of the best internet connectivity in the world, and I'm privileged enough to afford internet access.

However, technology is changing quickly, and I can't keep up with it like I used to. When I was younger, and social media first came along, I eagerly signed up for it, loving how I connected with other people and shared knowledge through posting, sharing, and discussing content. At the time, I didn't understand why older people didn't stay caught up with new technology, but now that I'm getting older, I'm starting to understand. I don't feel compelled to keep up with it all that much anymore. For example, I tried using Tiktok, but it seems much more targeted to younger people than me, and I don't understand its appeal or how to use it. The motivational indifference of the Pasta Grannies is something that I'm starting to relate to. I am aging, and my identity is changing. I can't help but think that when I identify as an older woman, the grey divide will be something that I will need to face myself in the future.

Older Women.

Pasta Grannies was developed in part to raise the visibility of underrepresented older women who are home cooks because, as Vicky said, "these days on food media, the gastronomies are all represented by chefs. And they all kind of go, oh, yeah, it's my art, my mom or whatever, but we never see them". The home cooking done by the older women shown in the channel is the antithesis of the male-dominated culinary world, where "the guardians of gastronomy are usually men that want things to be a certain way." The pasta itself, while an essential focus of the channel, is a vehicle for documenting the women featured in the channel, with Bennison saying that "pasta is important, preserving those, but it's also about that particular

generation of women, they don't make them like that anymore. So… I thought that they needed visibility".

Vicky acknowledges the stereotypes of older women in the culinary world, with the archetypes of the innovative young male chef and the tradition-keeping grandmother, as discussed by Leer (2002). When I asked her about the stereotypical ways that the media portrays men and women, Vicky replied, "Pasta Grannies is the antithesis of most cookery shows, which are usually men kind of slamming boards down and chopping very fast and it's all competition and Jeopardy and all that kind of thing, whereas cooking isn't about that. I mean, what women are doing is putting love on the table every day, you know, it's the absolute antithesis of that".

The channel attempts to portray the women as they truly are rather than playing into the stereotypes. Vicky says, "We're respectful in how they're presented and represented and stuff like that." She also gives the older women agency over how they're portrayed in the videos, allowing them to tell their stories themselves on their terms. She finds the limitations that YouTube puts on video length on YouTube challenging because it "stops you from doing a long-form on them and interviewing them. And I think actually, you know, you're in media, and you have to entertain, so you can't kind of go into a sort of deep in-depth thing around their childhoods or whatever. You know, you have to let them sort of reveal what it is that they want to reveal, as and when."

I do not see the older women in my life represented in food media as I know them. Yes, some are keepers of tradition but they are also curious about unfamiliar ingredients and keen to try new things. I am multifaceted, and as I age, I hope people do not see a particular stereotype

when they look at me. Sharing content on my cooking knowledge on social media, either by myself or with the help of others, will help tell my story so that people can see me as I am.

Food Preparation and Its Outcomes

Food Preparation and Its Outcomes was another common theme in the content analysis (31.99%) and the interview (7.58%). For the distribution of categories within this theme for the content analysis, see Figure 5 and Figure 6.

Figure 5

Distribution of Food Preparation and Its Outcomes Categories in Content Analysis
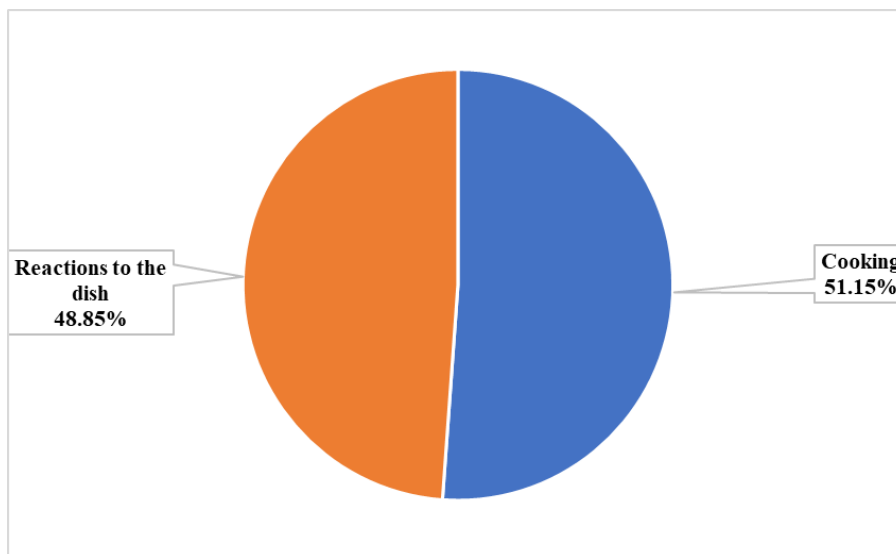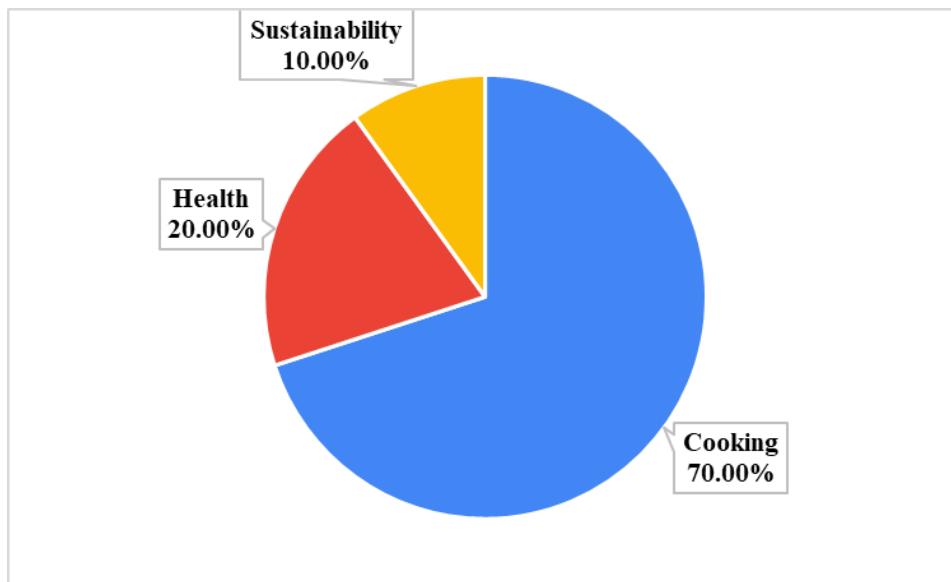

Figure 6

Distribution of Food Preparation and Its Outcomes Categories in Interview

Food Preparation and Its Outcomes was a significant theme for viewers, which was not surprising, considering that the video is an instructional video on making lasagna. There was a lot of discussion around cooking, particularly about cooking skills and tools, ingredients, cooking tips, and saving money, suggesting that viewers were interested in pasta and how it is made. Viewers were amazed at how skilled the woman in the video was at making pasta, just like I was when I first watched the videos. Some people mentioned how amazing it was that she could work through the dough with her hands, a skill she acquired through a lifetime of careful practice and experience.

The viewers' other discussions about cooking were about cooking with love, homemade food, adapting cooking to one's tastes and cooking as an art form. These categories indicate that the viewers have a strong emotional connection with food and view food as more important than mere fuel.

In contrast, the Food Preparation and Its Outcomes theme only represented 7.58% of the codes in the interview. For her, the pasta itself, while important, is the least important part of the whole channel. Everything that surrounds the pasta is more important and infinitely more interesting. She said, "Pasta is the vehicle for me, but these women? …yes, pasta is important, preserving those, but it's also about that particular generation of women; they don't make them like that anymore". It's not just about the food, but "the context in which that food is served. The thing that matters in families and great huge family get-togethers and that kind of thing". She also said that for these women, cooking these meals "is putting love on the table every day."

Vicky's observation that the food itself is less important than everything surrounding it rings true for me. Thinking back on the times I spent with my father making sauerkraut, the sauerkraut was the least important part of the experience. I even think fondly of those sausages cooked in tomato soup my mother cooked for the family, even though I didn't like them. More important than the food was the time spent with my family, learning from them, and the associated memories. Cooking, in my experience, is more of a bonding experience than anything.

Culture

Culture was another common theme in the content analysis (16.08%) and the interview (25.76%). For the distribution of categories within this theme for the content analysis, see Figure 7 and Figure 8 for the distribution of categories within this theme for the interview.

Figure 7

Distribution of Culture Categories

Figure 8

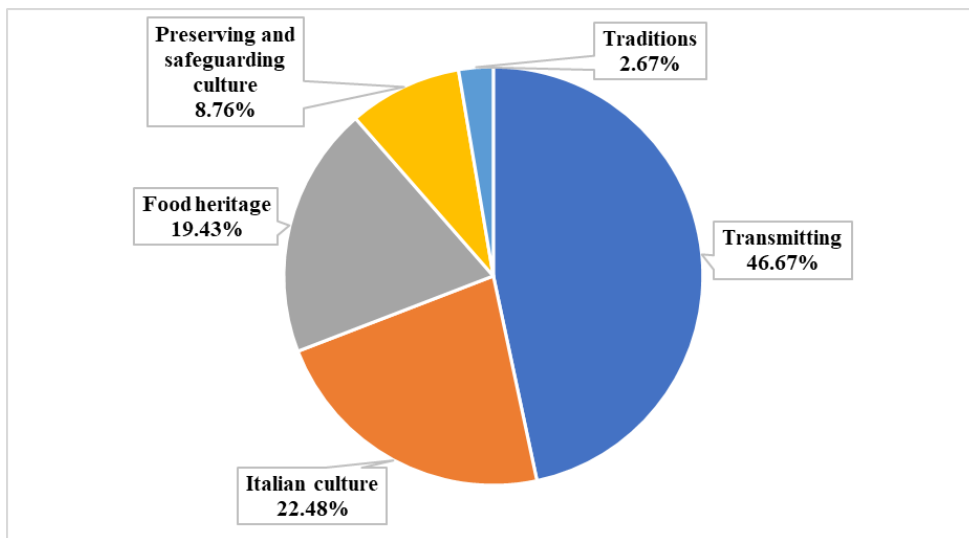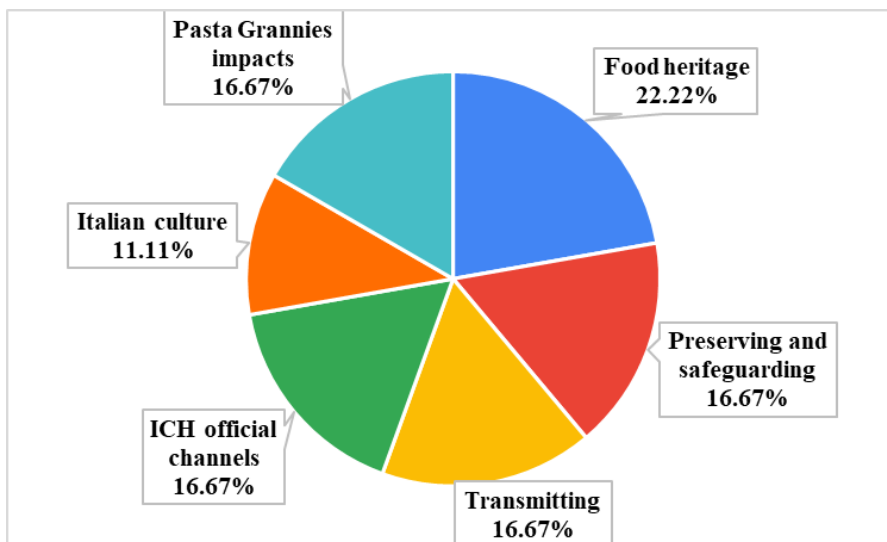*Distribution of Culture Categories*

The transmission of culture was an important category in the Youtube comments.

Viewers talked about how much people can learn from the woman in the video, the passing down

of recipes, the sharing of food knowledge, and grandmothers' role in transmission. Interestingly,

some viewers were so inspired by the video that they tried making the recipe themselves after

watching the video and shared their experiences in the comments section. Many people that had

good experiences making the lasagna said that they enjoyed it and that it was delicious. Even

though we have no way of knowing where these audience members live, the fact that some

audience members are making the recipe means that the pasta-making knowledge of the woman

in the video is being transmitted to people in the audience, confirming that Pasta Grannies

channel is helping the older women in the video transmit their food-related ICH to people

outside of their families.

Vicky and I also discussed the role that her channel plays in the transmission of ICH.

When I asked her if channels like hers help pass down knowledge within their families or

communities, she said, "Not that I'm aware of." From her point of view, she doesn't believe that

her channel has any impact on transmission within the women's families. She said that "after

filming is complete, I don't think they then go, "look, this is how you make pasta," because mode

of transmission remains, being in the kitchen with your, with your family. It's not that you then

get out your iPhone and say, "this is, you know, watch this, this is how you're going to learn."

She also believes that the channel doesn't really impact transmission within Italy. Although the

videos are popular in Italy, she pointed out that "Italians love and are totally into their own

region… so you can show a video to a grandmother in Liguria about what's happening in

Calabria, and they go, "hmm."

Instead, she views social media as a more general way to transmit knowledge to a broader

audience than the family or community that the women live in. We went on a tangent and talked

about my love of knitting, and she told me about her sister-in-law, who loves to knit and

participates in knit-a-thons and follows knitting influencers on social media. She said, "That's another way of… social media being used to sort of transmit knowledge".

My experiences using social media to transmit food knowledge differ, particularly when it comes to Facebook. I am connected with most of my family members and inner circle through Facebook, and we are constantly sharing and documenting our food knowledge by posting recipes, tips and tricks, and videos. For example, at one point, my cousins and I were reminiscing about one of our departed great aunts, and we remembered how she loved peanut butter and onion sandwiches, which we all thought was a bit strange. Inspired by Facebook challenges, we each filmed ourselves preparing and eating peanut butter and onion sandwiches, much to the delight of our relatives and followers. However, I have not considered using Facebook to document and transmit my food-related ICH, such as my family's traditional recipes.

Pasta Grannies reflects the constant recreation and practiced living nature of ICH. The cooks featured on the show often change the recipes to suit their tastes and the tastes of their families. She says, "Housewives, well, it's a thing of, you know, the cooks will make adjustments because their grandson doesn't like garlic or whatever it is; that's how recipes evolve and change." Another example can be found in a recently filmed video featuring a woman who happened to be a twin. The woman put "pork into the lasagna because their older sister was a pork butcher, and so it's a way of honouring her, and they don't care that there's this official recipe because they're going to do it their way anyway." Her twin sister does not put pork in her lasagne, "so the twins don't even agree on what the recipe is because she does it a different way." Different ingredients are used according to what is available, as well, especially as people move. She pointed out that if "you send a lasagna recipe over to California or something, and of course

it has to change because the meat is going to be different." Viewers of the video also talked about

how the lasagna demonstrated looked authentic. Vicky, however, views authenticity differently.

The way that cooks always change recipes to suit their tastes has led her to believe that "there's

no such thing as authenticity, I don't think. I never use the word authentic. Traditional? Yes."

Viewers are interested in how cultural heritage is preserved and safeguarded. They

expressed concern about losing endangered cultural food traditions. They discussed the

important role that the Pasta Grannies channel plays in preserving the cultural practice of

hand-making pasta through documentation. These comments are echoed by Vicky, who believes

that the documentation done by her channel is important work, made ever more urgent because

this "generation of women is practically gone. And it will be more difficult to find them". She

believes that the need to document the food heritage of older women all over the world is

important because "all these old ways of doing things are all disappearing, whether it's Thailand,

Turkey, Mexico, Slovenia, you know, it's all disappearing. So I think celebrating it is important".

She recalled when she spoke to an Indian man who was telling her about his mother, who makes

lunch for over 300 people in her community every day. She asked him, "Who was filming it? It's

like we've got to get out there!" Documenting older women worldwide is one of the future

directions she wishes to take the channel.

Vicky said the channel's experiences working with governments and official

organizations to promote ICH have been mixed. On the one hand, the channel often works

closely with local governments and food organizations within the communities to help find older

women who would like to be featured by the channel, "and they're usually very helpful." On the

other hand, attempts to work with larger organizations such as the Food and Agriculture

Organization of the United Nations (FAO) have gone nowhere. Vicky argued that "no one cares" about the official recipes recognized by the UNESCO conventions.

Family

Family was also a common theme between the content analysis (8.03%) and the interview (10.61%). Figure 9 breaks down the distribution of categories within the Family theme for the Youtube videos. Figure 10 breaks down the distribution of categories within the Family theme for the interview.

Figure 9

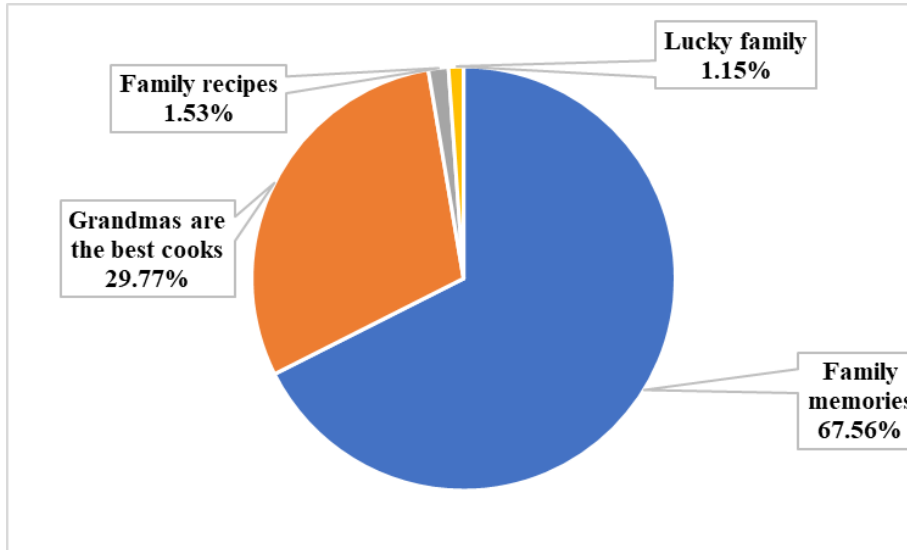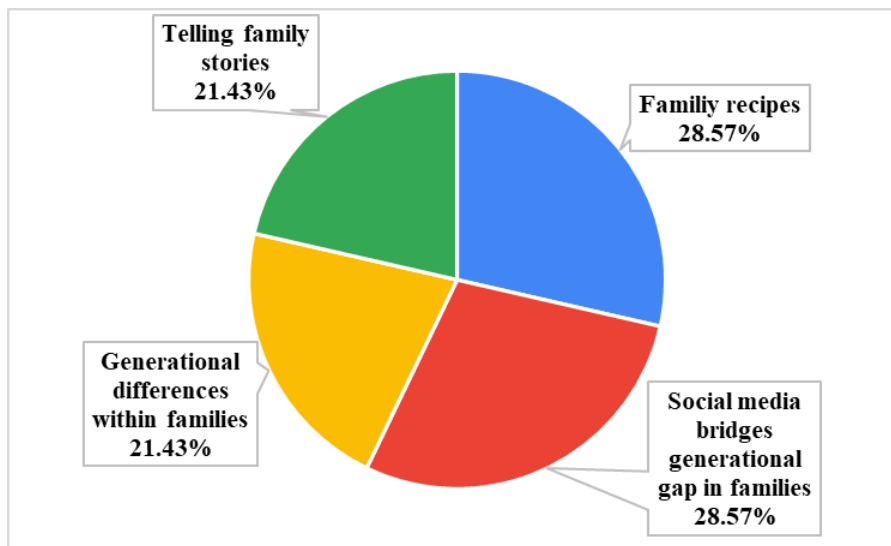*Distribution of Family Categories in Content Analysis*

Figure 10

Distribution of Family Categories in Interview

Watching the video evoked strong family memories and nostalgia for many of the

viewers, emphasizing the strong emotional connection that people have between food and family.

Viewers shared their family memories, including personal stories and anecdotes about their own

family members and family recipes, particularly about time spent in the kitchen with their family

members and grandmothers and the food shared during these times. For the viewers, spending

time preparing food with family members allowed people to bond and connect. The woman in

the video also reminded viewers of their grandmothers who passed on. Viewers also talked about

how grandmothers are the best cooks, further emphasizing grandmothers' critical role in home

cooking within the family. When taken together, these categories highlight the important role the

family plays in home cooking for the viewers, and grandmothers in particular.

For Vicky, family is a central theme for the Pasta Grannies. As mentioned previously, for

her, the actual food doesn't matter. She taps into the viewers' nostalgia by sharing cherished

family recipes and telling the women's stories, "so you know, putting grandmothers in the

context of their community and their families and stuff."

Vicky views social media as a way to effectively bridge the gap between older and younger family members, allowing them to bond and connect. Family members are often eager to have their grandmothers featured on the channel "because we always work through families has persuaded the grandmother to appear." The entire family enjoys seeing their grandmothers on social media.

Like the viewers, watching the video tapped into a sense of nostalgia for times spent with my own family. Although I do not have any memories associated with spending time with my grandmothers in the kitchen, I could imagine a world in which I could, and watching the video made me miss my grandmothers terribly. I am also reminded of my legacy and how my family members, particularly my nieces and nephews, will remember me after I pass away.

Social Reactions

Social Reactions (32.72%) was a theme unique to the content analysis. Figure 11 indicates the distribution of categories within the Social Reactions theme.

Figure 11

Distribution of Social Reactions Categories in Content Analysis
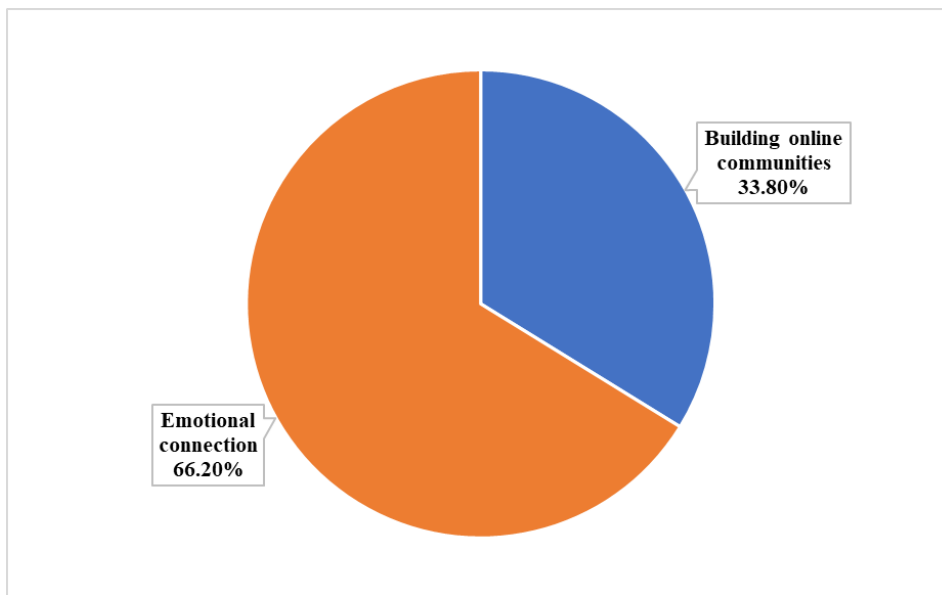
Viewers are actively engaging with the video and forming online communities around it: they say how much they love the video and the channel and want to see more. They are also thankful to the channel for sharing. The video also has them talking about social media in general and how the ways that they came across it. Silberman & Purser (2012) found that active participation is one of the requirements for social media to be effective at safeguarding ICH. The Pasta Grannies' audience actively participates in the channel, as evidenced by their interaction with it, ensuring that top-down views of ICH are not reinforced.

Notably, the video resonates with the viewers and evokes strong emotional reactions, allowing them to connect with it on a deep emotional level. They feel particularly connected to the woman featured in the video, as evidenced by the many viewers sending their well wishes to her. There is a strong positive sentiment in the comments since the vast majority of the reactions to the video are positive. Part of the reason why the comments are so positive is because Vicky moderates them. "I do monitor them," she said, "thank goodness, it doesn't happen, you know, on

a daily basis or anything, but you know, I remove disrespectful or unkind comments because that's the nature of the internet."

Social Media

Finally, Social Media (37.88%) was a unique theme to the interview. Here we discussed the ins and outs of running the Pasta Grannies social media empire, online social communities, storytelling, and the women's motivations for participating in the channel in the first place. The breakdown of the categories in this theme can be found in Figure 12.

Figure 12

Distribution of Social Media Categories in Interview
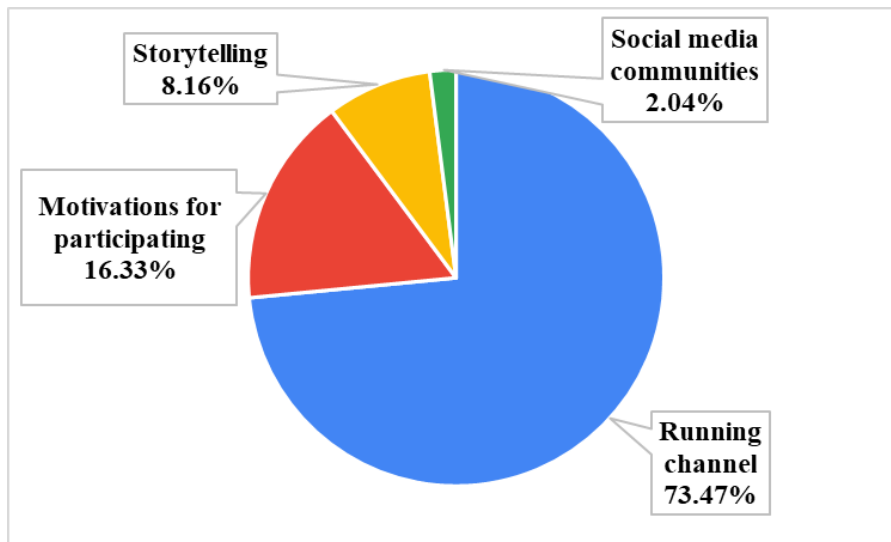
We talked about her experiences with running the channel: how she initially set it up, the practicalities of running it, lessons that she learned along the way, and her hopes for future directions.

Vicky is a management consultant and author who moved to Italy from the UK around ten years ago. She was "looking at what the food pathways were, and all that kind of thing, and noticed that it was only older women who were making pasta by hand on a daily basis. And I thought, "Oh, you know, someone needs to make a record of this." And it turned out to be me." She first approached the topic wanting to write a book about these women but was persuaded by her publishers to build an audience first via social media.

Building the channel from the ground up was a steep learning curve for her. She recalls that "initially, it was quite sort of slow going," and that "you can tell from the early videos that I'm completely frozen." She quickly found that she needed to learn many new things to make the channel a success, like learning how to film, communicate in different Italian dialects, and use social media. She found that as time passed, "the algorithm draws you in," and she found her stride. Her team now includes a cameraman, three freelance editors, an assistant, and a person who she calls a "granny finder" who helps her find women to feature. She sees the channel as "a passion."

Storytelling is one of the primary aims of the channel, with Vicky saying, "The thing that interests me is storytelling. So I kind of pay attention to analytics because I have to, but I didn't kind of go into depth about it. I was perhaps I should, but I don't. I'm more interested in getting the videos out and telling a good story and that kind of thing." One of her future visions for the channel is to "do a TV series, so you can do long-form storytelling. I really wanted to sort of be able to do that and kind of spend more time with grandmothers." Being able to tell longer stories would help her to put "grandmothers in the context of their community and their families and

stuff. Hopefully, people will find it entertaining as well." Producing a television series would

also help to expand her audience, providing yet another form of documentation.

We also discussed why the grandmothers chose to participate in Pasta Grannies in the

first place. She has never had a circumstance where an older woman has approached the channel

to be featured, saying that "the grandmothers never volunteer themselves. You know, they're

certainly amazed that anyone is interested". The women are always persuaded by somebody else

to appear, usually by family members. When Pasta Grannies approaches a woman to be filmed, it

is explained to them that being involved is a way to preserve their heritage "because they can see

their own lives that their daughters have gone off to work and that they're not cooking pasta. So

that when it's explained to them that way, then they are happy to participate".

Severo (2015) noted that social media is a great way to get young people involved in

transmitting and sharing ICH. As Vicky said, young people view it as cool to have their

grandmothers featured on a popular social media channel, helping younger generations to see

their grandmothers in a new positive light. She recalled one particular time when a woman's

grandson featured "suddenly saw her as a kind of a star, you know! Which of course, you always

a beloved grandmother. But then suddenly, it's a star granny. So the kids love it when their

grandmothers are on the internet on YouTube and thoroughly enjoy it". She also recalled a time

when the channel was approached by Disney to film the women's reactions to the Pixar animated

film Luca, which takes place in the Italian Riviera, and "the kids thought it was fantastic! They

were just bowled over because not only were they on, you know, they were famous because they

are associated with Disney. And they had a ball with that one!", This "cool factor" has inspired a

recent trend of grandchildren filming their grandmothers and posting the videos on social media,

so younger people are getting more involved. The women like the attention, too. They receive a

lot of attention from their community members, with "the whole village going, "Oh, yeah, we

saw you!"."

Some of the things that have contributed to Pasta Grannies' ongoing popularity are the

same things that make it such an effective tool for sharing ICH. The channel follows all of the

best practices identified by the literature review.

Firstly, Stuedahl and Mörtberg that social media is best used with non-digital forms

(Stuedahl and Mörtberg, 2012). Vicky has written two cookbooks to accompany the channel that

has been well-received (Bennison, 2019) (Bennison, 2022). These cookbooks also help to fund

the videos. She believes the cookbooks and the videos complement each other. Whether

somebody learns the recipes from the videos or the books "depends on the individual and how

competent a cook they are." Having both the website and the cookbooks accommodates the

different learning styles for her audience and keeps them engaged leading to more effective

safeguarding (Mitchenson, 2015).

Secondly, the channel is an effective safeguarding tool because its audience actively

participates. Pasta Grannies' audience has formed online communities around their shared

interest and love for the channel, providing a way for people to interact with each other. Vicky

said that the audience has "formed his own community. I mean, it's like people will help each

other when they got questions and things, so it's not as quite as sort of sweet community on

them". Fostering online communities is a direction that Bennison sees the channel going in the

future, with plans to create a paid Pasta Grannies Club subscription for those who would like to

support the channel and receive more content and experiences, where members can "get more

content and closer to the grandmothers." Possible directions for this include products and experiences like pasta-making nights and Ask the Nonna, where members can ask the older women about particular pasta dishes and techniques. Another way the channel keeps its audience actively engaged is by incorporating feedback into its videos, such as suggesting background music or filming locations. Incorporating feedback from her audience and encouraging participation prevents top-down views of cultural heritage from being reinforced.

Thirdly, Pasta Grannies keeps the materials on their channel up-to-date, making it more effective and ensuring it is used to its fullest potential. Postings are scheduled regularly and at a frequency that helps maximize engagement. New videos are posted to Youtube every Friday and adapted for other platforms. Videos are posted to Instagram twice a week, and for Facebook, Vicky says, "YouTube video is turned square, and then you kind of recycled the popular ones, and that seems to keep everybody happy." Another way that Pasta Grannies keeps their materials up to date is by keeping up with new platforms and features. They have recently started a TikTok channel and are experimenting more with short-form videos, with mixed audience reactions. "Everybody moans," Vicky says, "the ones who are kind of long-time fans of the old videos kind of moan like crazy about them, but it helps increase views to do that."

Conclusion

Social media has provided exciting new opportunities for safeguarding and transmitting intangible cultural heritage; however, research shows that the marginalization of certain groups prevents equal access and representation in ICH. This research looks at the case of Pastas Grannies to answer the following question:

RQ: Can social media help women over the age of 65 overcome barriers they may face in preserving and safeguarding their food-related intangible cultural heritage?

In this chapter, I summarize and highlight the significant key findings of the study contextualized in relation to the research question and theoretical framework. I then detail the study's limitations and recommend opportunities for future research.

Key Findings

Krekula et al. (2018) argued that gendered ageism poses unique challenges for older women. My research found little evidence that the women featured in Pasta Grannies experience any gendered ageism caused by the intersection of their age and gender, which would prevent them from using social media to preserve and safeguard their food-related ICH. The content analysis revealed that although viewers view older people and women positively, the gendered ageism they may face is not a topic of discussion from the audience's perspective. Gendered ageism, however, may negatively affect these women in other areas of their lives, as found in the literature review, as older women are more likely to experience poverty, disability, lack of housing, poor access to transportation, and elder abuse (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2022) and disability (UN Women, 2022).

Contrary to the findings of the literature review, which suggested that older women may face additional systemic barriers in transmitting their ICH due to the politicization and lack of representation through official channels, this research found no evidence that these systemic barriers exist for women featured in Pasta Grannies. Although the channel's experiences with larger official organizations like the FAO and the UNESCO conventions have been poor, the

channel often successfully collaborates with local governments and communities eager to help find and document the women. Should any systemic barriers exist through official channels, Pasta Grannies, like other grassroots movements, empowers older women and their communities to be more involved in safeguarding and preserving their cultural heritage.

The interview with Vicky revealed that the main barriers these women face to using social media are related to the grey divide rather than to gendered ageism. These barriers include motivational indifference, lack of education and deficient knowledge, and lack of internet coverage in rural areas. By participating in Pasta Grannies, the older women featured in the channel can overcome these barriers. Regarding the research question, the evidence found here confirms that social media is an effective way to help older women overcome barriers to preserve and safeguard their ICH.

There are many reasons why Pasta Grannies is successful in helping older women overcome the obstacles they face to share their cultural heritage with their communities and beyond. The channel helps to address the lack of representation of older women in the media, particularly in the culinary world, as identified in the literature review. The greatest thing that Pasta Grannies accomplishes is it documents a generation of women who otherwise wouldn't have had their stories told. By spotlighting the women as they truly are and respectfully presenting them, the channel gives them a voice and autonomy over their portrayals, which not only allows them to avoid the typical stereotypical representations of older women that we often see in the media, but as they are often the sole keepers of their culinary knowledge, it also gives them a chance to be actively involved in the safeguarding and preservation of their ICH before it is too late.

The channel is also effective because it follows all the best practices for using social media to safeguard ICH. The social media accounts and the books complement each other, allowing for digital and non-digital forms to work together. The channel also encourages active participation from its audience members, and Vicky keeps it current by posting regularly and keeping up with new technology.

Lastly, the channel's ongoing popularity with audiences is one of the main driving forces behind the channel's success. The videos are successful because the audience connects with them on a deep emotional level. When watching the videos, viewers are reminded of their grandmothers, the roles that they played in their lives, and the good times spent together with family around the dinner table eating delicious family food. Most importantly, they can learn about a generation of phenomenal women and a way of life that may be gone soon. And along the way, they may pick up a recipe and give it a go, ensuring the legacy of the women and the continuation of food knowledge.

The results of this study have given me much to think about when it comes to my future. I have no way of seeing into the future. Still, as intersectional theory suggests, as I age, my identities will change and grow, overlapping in unforeseen ways that will inevitably provide me with unforeseen privileges and oppressions. I might eventually face similar barriers that the women featured by Pasta Grannies and other older women face. I may not know how to overcome all of these barriers, but at least I have learned what to do regarding my family's culinary heritage so that it doesn't become lost over time. I can share my knowledge on social media, helping me find a community of people interested in carrying on my family traditions. If technology moves too quickly and I cannot keep up with it, as long as there are channels like

Pasta Grannies to help, I can overcome the obstacles that stand in my way. My niece and nephew

may be young now and uninterested in my family recipes, but they may become more interested

if I share them via social media. Who knows? Maybe one day I can be so lucky to be privileged

enough to become a "star granny."

Limitations of Study

There are some limitations to the study which could be improved in several ways,

especially with more time and resources. Firstly, it could have been improved had I studied more

than one video and across more than one social media platform. Secondly, the sample size was

much smaller than initially anticipated, hampering my ability to gain different perspectives. It

would have been better if more than one person was interviewed, particularly one or more of the

women featured by Pasta Grannies. Interviewing some of the women who participated directly

could have given additional insights into the barriers they may face that prevent them from

transmitting and safeguarding their ICH and the effect their participation in the channel has had

on breaking through those barriers. If the language barrier were not an issue, I would have had

more opportunities to interview some women directly involved. Thirdly, this study only looked

at the case of Pasta Grannies, so the findings cannot be transferred to other social media channels

or non-food related forms of ICH, nor can they be transferred to different cultures. Lastly, my

personal experiences and insights cannot be transferred beyond this study.

Areas for Future Study

Through the results of this study, we can identify some exciting opportunities for further

related research. One possibility for further research would be to study older women from other

countries, ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds, and cultures, as their intersecting identities

would mean that the barriers they may face might differ from those faced by older women in

Italy. It would also be interesting to study other social media platforms, like Facebook,

Instagram, and TikTok, as each platform has different uses and demographics of people who use

them, leading to different audience perspectives. Similar social media channels like Pasta

Grannies that feature older women sharing their food-related ICH can also be studied. Another

possible area of research would be to explore the efficacy of social media in other areas of ICH,

such as handicrafts, music, and dancing.

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Appendix A: Keywords

Intersectional Theory

- Intersectional theory (related: intersectionality, intersectionality of age and gender, stereotypes, power, disadvantage, voice, marginalization, older women, representation)
- Gender (related: women, women's roles, gender roles, traditional gender roles, food and gender)
- Age (related: older, elderly, food and age)
- Gendered ageism
- Portrayals of older women (related: media portrayals of older women

Food heritage

- Food heritage (related: food traditions, traditional food, food practices, culinary heritage, food culture, foodways)
- Recipes (related: instructions, methods)
- Family recipes
- Food communication

Intangible Cultural Heritage

- Intangible cultural heritage (related: ICH, cultural heritage practices, cultural traditions, heritage, food customs)
- Safeguarding (related: protecting, conservation, continuation)
- Endangered (related: threatened, vanishing, extinction, jeopardized, at-risk, dying)

- Intergenerational knowledge transmission (related: passing down knowledge, passing down information, passing down skills, passing down, intergenerational communication)

- UNESCO

- Slow Food

- Social media (related: social networks, Facebook, Youtube, Instagram, TikTok)

- Engagement (related: Likes, Shares, sharing)

- Videos (related: media, channels, food videos)

- Audience (related: viewers, watchers)

Appendix B: Eligibility Criteria Checklist

Question	Yes	o	Unsure	Comments
Is the source peer-reviewed?				
Has the source been cited >5 times? If not, is it because the article is very recent?				
If the source has to do with social media, has it been published within the last ten years?				
Does the methodology make sense for the research question?				
Does the theoretical framework make sense?				
Are the arguments valid?				
Does the source appear to be biased/have ulterior motives?				

Appendix C: Major themes and categories identified in content analysis

Theme	Categories	Details
Food Preparation and Its Outcomes	Cooking	Comments related to cooking, including cooking skills, tools, tips and ingredients, cooking with love, cooking as an art form, and cooking to one's own tastes.
	Reactions to the dish	Viewer reactions to the dish demonstrated, both positive and negative.
Social Reactions	Emotional connections	Comments indicating emotional reactions to the video and an emotional connection to the woman featured.
	Building online communities	Comments referencing the Pasta Grannies online community, including appreciation for the video and channel, social media discussions and in the media.
Culture	Transmitting	Comments related to the transmission of cultural traditions, including passing down recipes, learning, sharing knowledge, and the role that grandmothers play. Also includes viewer's experiences with trying the recipe.
	Italian culture	Comments related to Italian culture, including the regionality of Italian cuisine, language, and the role of grandmothers in the culture.
	Food heritage	Comments about food heritage, including authenticity and traditional food.
	Preserving and safeguarding culture	Comments about the preservation and safeguarding of culture, including preservation, documentation, legacy, and endangered cutural traditions.
	Traditions	General comments on cultural traditions.

Social Identities	Age	Comments related to age, including discussions around living a long and healthy live, older people being important and worthy of appreciation, and how older people are more capable than younger people.
	Gender	Comments about gender, including viewers' appreciation for women and discussions around gender roles in cooking.
Family	Family memories	Viewers are reminded of family memories, including time spent with family members and food memories.
	Grandmas are the best cooks	Comments about how grandmothers are the best cooks and better than professionals.
	Family recipes	Comments about family recipes.
	Lucky family	Viewer comments on how lucky the woman featured in the video's family is to be enjoying her cooking.

Appendix D: Major themes and categories identified in interview

Theme	Categories	Details
Social Media	Running channel	Discussions around running the channel, including its creation, recruitment tactics, incorporating viewer feedback, keeping content fresh, challenges, and future directions.
	Motivations for participating	Discussion around the various reasons why people participate in Pasta Grannies.
	Storytelling	Discussions about storytelling, including the importance of telling the women's stories accurately and respectfully and longform vs. shortform storytelling.
	Social media communities	Discussion around viewer social media communities built around Pasta Grannies.
Culture	Food heritage	Discussions around authenticity, traditional food, and how recipes are an evolving lived practice.
	Pasta Grannies impacts	Discussions around the impact that Pasta Grannies has had on the women featured, their families, and the communities in preserving and safeguarding ICH.
	ICH official channels	Discussions about the involvement of official channels in sharing ICH, including government involvement, UNESCO, and official recipes.
	Italian culture	Discussions around Italian culture, including language and regional cuisine.
	Preserving and Safeguarding	Discussions around preserving and safeguarding ICH, including the importance of preservation, documentation, and endangered cultural practices.
	Transmitting	Discussions around transmitting knowledge, including forms of transmission and the role of the family in transmitting knowledge.

Social Identities	Digital Inclusion	Discussion about the barriers that older women face in using social media, and ways to overcome those barriers.
	Age	Discussion about age, including the differences between older people and younger people regarding communication preferences and cooking habits.
	Older women	Discussion around older women, including the importance of increasing their visibility via documenting their stories on social media, while giving them agency over the way they're depicted.
	Gender	Discussion about gender roles in cooking, the different ways that men and women are depicted in the cooking world, and how the power in gastronomy is held by men.
Family	Family recipes	Discussions around family recipes.
	Social media bridges generational gaps in families	Discussions around the ways that social media helps to bridge generational gaps between younger and older family members.
	Generational differences within families	Discussions around generational differences within families
	Telling family stories	Discussions around family storytelling.
Food Preparation and Its Outcomes	Cooking	Discussions around cooking, including cooking skills, cooking with love, cooking out of necessity, and cooking to one's own tastes.
	Health	Discussions around the health of food.
	Sustainability	Discussions around food sustainability.