Regarding The Lesbian Potluck

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The potluck dinner has played a pivotal role in modern lesbian life. It is a free-form style of dining that waves aside rules and conventions, while simultaneously inviting an efflorescence of judgment and self-regulation. At least, this is how the lesbian potluck is parodied: in Alison Bechdel’s *Dykes to Watch Out For*, the ‘time-honored tradition of culinary collectivity, that gastronomic game of chance, the POTLUCK’ is not complete without ‘soy cheese [. . .] an unsweetened dessert item [. . .] hummus-in-a-box’ and an ‘impassioned vegetarian diatribe.’

Certainly within lesbian cultures, the potluck elicits a peculiar combination of tender nostalgia and self-parodic eyerolling.

The problem with potlucks is that they are not always fun. Lesbians are often characterized as a ‘big drag’ on the more glamorous category of queer, notes Elizabeth Freeman. One of their failings? They are ‘potluck givers.’ In 2009, a queer feminist journal even called itself ‘No More Potlucks’, signalling commitment to queer media- and culture-making as separate from old-school lesbianism and its penchant for ‘eating hummus and layered dips’.

Lesbians keeping alive the flame for eating from a common pot, and baby dykes eager to claim their lesbian heritage, protested. Both Freeman and the journal editors had to reassure potluck-loving graduate students and emailers that their satire was also an ‘homage’ to prior generations of lesbian feminists and that potlucks, while possibly embarrassing, are nevertheless to be respected as an expression of ‘our roots’.
The history of the term ‘potluck’ dates to at least the sixteenth century, when it meant dining with friends without much special preparation while taking one’s chances about whatever turns up at the table. That definition remained in place through the nineteenth century. ‘Will you take pot-luck with me that day?’ writes Charles Dickens to an actress in 1845, about squeezing a meal in before rehearsal. Pot-luck is an invitation to hospitality without ceremony, circumstance without pomp. ‘To take pot-luck is for an unexpected visitor to partake of the family dinner, whatever it may chance to be’, observes Samuel Fallows in his 1885 *Progressive Dictionary of the English Language*. The ‘luck’ of the matter regards whatever emerges from the pantry or kitchen: it is likely to be modestly prepared, perhaps even leftovers. It sets aside social expectations about hosting and guesting, eschewing ceremony.

In North America, from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards, the informality inherent in the British definition of ‘potluck’ shifted to impact the structure of the meal. The term came to refer specifically to a communal meal, for which all those invited bring a dish to share, or to ‘pass’. The ‘potluckery’ of this version is that no-one is managing how – or if – the dishes go together. It is possible that everyone will bring the same casserole, or no-one will bring dessert, or there will be *only* dessert. A communal potluck meal is, therefore, a ritual about eschewing other kinds of rituals and social expectations. There is no set menu, no hierarchy of dishes, no sequencing. No one person is chef; the roles of cook, server, and diner are all rolled together. There is a sense that everyone is host to each other, that no one person is responsible for the success or failings of the event. Or, indeed, for the washing up.

As Alice P. Julier observes, from a ‘structuralist perspective’ the potluck denies conformity to the expectations of an ‘ordered meal’. We have long known that the food we eat expresses who we are. The same could be said of when we eat. Whether we eat our meals early
or late, with our main meal midday or in the evening; when we fast and feast; or who is forced to seize calories whenever possible, the temporality of eating shapes and is shaped by our ethnic and national identities, race, socio-economic class, and even gender. The order in which we eat dishes is similarly expressive. Julier observes that the American potluck dinner often offends English preferences for formality, citing fellow sociologist Joseph Gusfield’s analysis of potlucks as a practice of collectivity that to the British feels like ‘dereliction of social duties’. The potluck’s horizontality of labour – no-one person is host, or chef – doesn’t line up well with British class hierarchy and its persistent belief in great chains of being. Being unprogrammed and unsequenced unmoors, Julier writes, the ‘form of the meal and the normative expectations of hospitality’. This lack of normatively sequenced courses can be seen as symbolic of the historic association of queerness with the antisocial; the dishes at the table might not all go well together, just as the queer has often been cast as the ‘misfit’. I borrow the term from Octavio González, who glosses the term’s association with ‘nonconformity, nonbelonging, or maladjustment’. He shows, however, that the misfit is also essential and desired; González himself borrows the term from Wallace Thurman’s (1929) novel The Blacker the Berry, the title of which is completed in its epigraph ‘. . .The sweeter the juice’. González analyzes a passage in Nella Larson’s 1928 novel Quicksand, in which the ‘despised mulatto’ protagonist Helga Crane, who has no home, steps out into a ‘moving multicolored crowd’ in Chicago, in which ‘there came to her a queer feeling of enthusiasm, as though she were tasting some agreeable, exotic food – sweetbreads, smothered with truffles and mushrooms, perhaps’. This gustatory sensation makes her feel ‘that she had come home’. The imagined dish that makes Helga feel at home is itself mulatto; a mix of creamy browns, celebrated as luxuriant and earthy.
Julier notes that the term ‘potluck’ is rarely applied to family and extended-kin events, and she focuses on the ritual’s importance for clubs, teams, churches, activist and interest groups, and other loosely institutional organizations. The potluck, she points out, is always thought of as bringing people together, outside of family structures, and is most often associated with the word ‘community’. ‘Community’ is never associated with the social rituals of the dinner party or the cocktail party. For Gusfield, this is because the structure of the potluck is more ‘egalitarian;’ the diners are ‘less homogenous’ and no one person ‘assumes the role of management and social authority’. One shared interest might be the prompt for the gathering, but the potluck’s choreographies of informality can bring people together across broad categories of difference – class, race, ethnicity, sexuality – and other more granular differences; it doesn’t matter much if a diner is partnered or single, an accomplished cook or not, has dietary limitations or aversions, is emotionally or physically capable of cooking on that day or any day, or is conversationally confident or shy.

A potluck substantially – if not completely – unhitches one’s social position or identity from the organization of dishes, if not the dishes themselves (whether one is vegan, likes spice, keeps kosher, etc. still pertains). Potlucks thus challenge the rule asserted back in 1972 by Mary Douglas: ‘The rules which hedge off and order one kind of social interaction are reflected in the rules which control the internal ordering of the meal itself.’

Potlucks were centrally important to lesbian community building across the 1970s, 80s, and 90s precisely because they threw over social rules and celebrated improvisation. In *Lesbian Etiquette*, Gail Sausser co-opts a classic Marxist tenet: ‘They’re such egalitarian events – they enable everyone to prepare according to their abilities and to receive according to their needs.’ Janey A. Flammang, author of *Table Talk: Building Democracy One Meal at a Time*, agrees:
‘potlucks were community glue for lesbians.’ ‘The potluck epitomizes the idea of how much more you can have when you grow together,’ says Karla Jay, a pioneering lesbian activist.

‘That’s for me the essence of political togetherness.’ Women were raised to understand the feeding of families as central to their heterosexual destiny. But for lesbians who were socially and – importantly – economically marginalized, the potluck helped redefine and democratize food preparation while maintaining its deep connection to ‘womanhood’.

The potluck has been a way for lesbians to make a place at a table, have a say about what’s on the menu, and accommodate or adjudicate differences of diet, health, and ethics. For lesbians, the potluck is an affordable community ritual, establishing a relationship between dining and sexual orientation that enacts utopian visions of community, creating belonging in the face of erasure, censure, and the constant threat of despair.

The ritual power of the lesbian potluck is explored in a short film by Liberian American Cheryl Dunye, *The Potluck and the Passion*. In the film, a meal shared by a group of lesbians (and soon-to-be lesbians) is structured by what Beth Freeman calls ‘queer time’ rather than ‘chrononormativity’. The party is being hosted by a couple to mark their one-year anniversary, even though one of them doesn’t ‘like [the word] anniversary . . .but it’s our one-year thing’. The informality and communality of the potluck (just having ‘everyone over to hang out and meet and eat’) suits the couple’s squeamishness about the normativity of celebrating an anniversary. The film suggests that living and loving happens in unscheduled intervals; the action takes place across the one evening, with the different phases of the event marked by time-stamped intertitles such as ‘6.20pm Homoplace’, ‘7.15pm Failing the Chittlin Test’, and ‘8.07pm A Pot Can’t Call A Kettle Black’. The timing and sequencing of a more formal dinner party are replaced by these uneven intervals honouring the improvisations of both Black time and queer time. One
couple is so late – because they have sex and then get lost – that they start eating their pasta salad in the car, and only arrive at their hosts’ front door right as the film ends. One Black guest, Tracy, tells her white girlfriend Megan they have to leave early because she has a paper to write. Megan complains, riding roughshod over her lover’s needs, but then announces that she’s thinking of going to Ethiopia to ‘learn about the third world’. Her privileging of her own temporal rhythm (a two-year Peace Corps rotation) lines up with her racial chauvinisms (Africa plays ‘third’ world to her ‘first’). Tracy, meanwhile, has started flirting with another guest, a straight woman named Evelyn who is more in touch with her Black heritage and cultural politics. Evelyn wants to leave, saying to Tracy ‘I thought you had a paper to write … ?’ Tracy replies, ‘I just wanted to stay.’ Desire makes time stretchy; deadlines become something to be fucked with. In a to-camera shot, Tracy explains her white lover walked out because she ‘saw something happening … she saw the seed of something happening with Evelyn and me’. This potluck has outperformed the hosts’ goal: hanging out and meeting and eating has turned into flirting.

Does Dunye’s potluck, however, perform or outperform the sociological thesis that potlucks are rituals of egalitarianism and the overcoming of differences? At the beginning of the film, one of the hosts worries that this blended group of friends ‘might not get along because they are from different schools, different worlds’. The meal does indeed bring together, or at least assemble, the vegetarian and non-vegetarian, slow foods and fast food, spicy chicken and lamentably bland tofu, all followed by dessert of ‘ambrosia’ whose name invokes the mythic food of the gods. This particular iteration of ambrosia has a somewhat lurid appearance, and not much of it seems to have been eaten by the end of the meal. But ambrosia is about more than nourishment: the original dish was brought to Olympus by doves, served by Hebe or Ganymede or a nymph who was nurse to Dionysus, and was said to confer immortality.
The ritual of the lesbian potluck is overlaid, then, with a sense of the mythic. The film pays homage to the hodgepodge domestic interiors of (non-wealthy, youthful) lesbian life; ‘homoplace’ is about assemblage and collation. One gay male friend (played by theorist of race and sexuality Robert Reid-Pharr) critiques the apartment’s décor and his lesbian friend’s clothing, but badly arranged flowers and barely-dusted second-hand furniture match the potluck’s haphazardness. Together it becomes a celebration of what we might call ensemble life – such as Greek gods might enjoy. Ensemble life aligns with feminist political practices such as ‘go-round’ and ‘checking-in’ and consensus-making. Dunye’s cinematography evokes these kinds of participant democracies; her panoramic shots of the dining table travel first clockwise and then later anticlockwise. As the (minor) dramas of the film make clear, these aesthetics and practices are by no means tension- or conflict-free; much as the lesbian potluck might resist the domestic rituals of heteronormativity, it is perfectly capable of generating oppressive dogmas of its own. Nonetheless, the potluck does that elusive thing of bringing lesbians together, around a table of pleasure, honouring their love for each other.

For a counterweight to lesbian attachment to potlucks, I turn to the example of Alice B. Toklas, of whom food writer Naomi Barry says, ‘She was extremely French in her treatment of guests. Potluck even for close friends was absolutely alien to her.’

Toklas’s culinary writings certainly display a reverence for the distinct roles of hosts and chefs, and for the formality of the dining experience. In fact, she unblinkingly articulates the erotics of eating in her reverence for menus and sequencing: ‘In the menu there should be a climax and a culmination. Come to it gently. One will suffice.’ Such correlation of food and sensuality is to be expected from the author whose famed recipe for hashish fudge promises ‘ecstatic reveries’ and ‘ravishment.’ The fudge recipe appears in *The Alice B. Toklas Cook Book*, which Toklas published in 1954, eight
years after her lover Gertrude Stein died. Kyla Wazana Tompkins calls *Cook Book* ‘perhaps the seminal text in the modern literary history of food culture’.  It is a cookbook, but it is also a memoir of her life with Stein, a chronicle of their tastes, preferences, and desires.

*Cook Book* ‘mingl[es] recipe and reminiscence’ so completely that the title of each recipe is enjambled into sentences:

> At our inn they made a most satisfactory

**SOUP OF SHALLOTS AND CHEESE**

The recipes are carefully categorized by course; sometimes an entire menu is documented. Perhaps, then, Naomi Barry is correct in asserting that Toklas hated potlucks. But since many of Toklas’s memories are from the first and second world wars, when she and Stein were living in an occupied country, some of the meals are perforce haphazard. Toklas recalls a lunch in a presbytery that had been bombed to smithereens except for one room the Abbé used as both dining room and bedroom. She also remembers fleeing German gunfire in 1940 with two uncooked hams that they were forced to cook in the precious Eau-de-Vie of the region to preserve them for the ‘long lean winter that followed’. Her portrait of life in Paris after the Germans retreated in 1918 is similarly one of improvisation and ensemble:

> Our home was filled with people coming and going. We spoke of each other as the chauffeur and the cook. We had no servant. We were largely overdrawn at our banks to supply the needs of soldiers and their families […]. We would live like gypsies, go everywhere in left-over finery, with a *pot-au-feu* for the many friends we should be seeing.
The war temporarily levelled and intermixed social roles and occupations, turning everyone into refugees. Social hierarchy in tatters, their finery loses all sense of occasion; their clothing and their food are similarly bricolaged. It is all ‘left-overs’, and – accordingly – they eat ‘pot-au-feu’.

A pot-au-feu (pot on the fire) is the French dish that is made in one pot but served in two courses. The Oxford Companion to Food calls it ‘a meal in itself’; slowly simmered meat and vegetables produce a flavourful broth (bouillon) that is usually served first, followed by the plated meat (bouilli) and vegetables. It is a self-saucing dish, eucharistic in its blending of body and liquid, and it treats every drop and every morsel as precious. Nothing is drained off or wasted. It is also a dish with a ‘catholic spirit’, to quote a nineteenth-century commentator, because, in many peasant kitchens, it was made from whatever ingredients came to hand: ‘The perpetual pot au feu [was] always ready […] always prepared […] to receive any addition which good fortune may bring, animal or vegetable.’ In other words, potluck is the very heart of the ever-changing recipe for pot-au-feu.

Pot-au-feu is also dish that performs a kind of miraculous transubstantiation between one and two, or one and many; not only does one pot become two dishes, but it can expand to accommodate more diners (‘people coming and going’) or be turned into leftovers to feed future diners (‘friends we should be seeing’). As such, it expresses the bricolage of ‘two people, one couple, with many friends’ that was Toklas and Stein; together they were a famous couple, who were welcome at many a dining table. In her notebook Stein used a term that underscored and redoubled the couple they formed: ‘Mr and Mrs Reciprocal’. They also were, textually and domestically, each other’s ventriloquist. This voice-throwing is best exemplified by The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas that was in fact authored by and about Stein. In Autobiography, Stein is a ‘ghost writer, an invisible hand’, as Leigh Gilmore puts it. The title The Alice B.
*Toklas Cook Book* echoes that of the *Autobiography* and, given that Toklas wrote it after Stein’s death, the cookbook turns the not-there-ness of Stein into a there. The two women were, to use Stein’s own wordplay, ‘Gertrice/Altrude’; they could be both collated and spliced.  

In *Stanzas in Meditation*, the autobiography that Stein was writing alongside *Autobiography*, Stein writes, ‘I wish once more to say that I know the difference between two’, the wit lying in the pairing of ‘once’ with ‘two’; ‘once more’ is not a singular. And this itself is an echo of the earlier observation: ‘Now that I have written it twice / It is not as alike as once.’  

*Cook Book* merges the first-person singular with the first-person plural; using the first-person perspective we are told repeatedly about what ‘Gertrude Stein’ thought and felt and tasted and liked and did, and then the pronoun ‘we’ consolidates their shared experiences and feelings. It reads like a *pot au feu* of coupled life: a broth of shared jokes and feelings – ‘we were despondent’ – in which their very different personalities and social roles float, but it is by no means clear which is flavouring and constituting which.  

As Gilmore argues, even when Alice was sitting with the wives, and Gertrude was being the genius, these roles and their counterpointed gendering were as much parodic as anything, and more likely a stylized performance of coupledom and camped-up ‘party behavior’.  

The chapter in which the *pot-au-feu* description appears is titled ‘Food to which Aunt Pauline and Lady Godiva Led Us’. Pauline and Godiva are the names of the two cars that Gertrude drove through France, with Alice beside her in the passenger seat. ‘Auntie Pauline’ caused no end of problems, and she was replaced by a Ford so basic that Alice said she looked ‘nude’ and thus was ‘baptized’ Godiva (75). These godmotherly automobiles shuttled Gertrude and Alice between meals held in city and country, at friends’ houses and inns and restaurants; the couple’s welcome to all manner of dining scenarios is unremarked; the hospitalities they enjoy
are myriad. It is thus a chronicle of what might be called lesbian *inclusion*, except that word is too anachronistically pallid. Lesbian *entré* is more appropriate, because *Cook Book* is a recitation of invitations such as ‘to a lunch party […] at a house whose mistress was a well-known French hostess and whose food was famous’, or another from ‘an exquisite hostess [with] impeccable taste in choosing her guests and her menus’.\textsuperscript{31} One chapter is titled ‘Dishes for Artists’, but in truth the whole book is littered with dinner and tea engagements with artists and literati. The chapter ‘Recipes from Friends’ includes contributions from Natalie Barney, Mary Oliver, Mercedes Da Acosta, and Cecil Beaton, along with various Princesses and Lords – each attached to a location that together form an almanac of the cosmopolitan: ‘Paris, London, New York, Milan […]’. *Cook Book* memorializes the salon life that Toklas and Stein enjoyed and provides the texts (recipes and memories both) for its recreation, revisitation, or imitation. This elite and monied life is not, of course, available to all readers (or even, as I shall show, its author), but, as the theorist of queer archives Ann Cvetkovich describes coming to realise, archives of the elite life can still preserve precious ‘histories of queer intimacy and their everyday dimensions’.\textsuperscript{32} Cvetkovich ‘remain[s] convinced that the point of following in search of lost salons is to make one’s own’, but also recognizes that the documenting of ‘everyday life of queer affiliations and networks’ is foundational to that subsequent DIY.\textsuperscript{33} And what genre of text is more devoted to ‘making your own’ than the cookbook?

As Katharine Vester observes, Toklas’s collection of recipes that have been gifted or remembered blend with her memoir of a lesbian marriage to queer the cookbook. Vester writes:

*When Toklas wrote a cookbook in such a way that it included memories of her life with Stein, she not only replaced the heterosexual couple that had been so often at the core of American cookbooks with a lesbian one, she also in a way...*
queered the cookbook genre. Instead of framing recipes as instructions for the perfect dish, she framed them as recollections of perfect moments.³⁴

Perfect moments, like Marcel Proust’s, in which a whole queer life can be found in a drop of tea, a crumb of madeleine, or even toast: recollection itself feeds the senses.³⁵

Rafia Zafar underscores the structural importance of recollection to *Cook Book*. Zafar reminds us that Toklas’s foreword says she wrote the book out of ‘nostalgia for the old days and old ways’.³⁶ Cookbooks are, Zafar posits, elegiac; collections of recipes express what Max Cavitch calls ‘collective heritage’.³⁷ Zafar notes that *Cook Book* ends in 1943, a year followed by many points of no return – the war was ongoing and Stein would die in 1946. For the Jewish Toklas writing her cookbook in 1954, the losses caused by the Hitler she calls ‘very strange indeed’ were all too clear.³⁸ *Cook Book* is, as Zafar writes, an elegy ‘for departed loved ones and absent communities’, a compendium of ‘deaths recalled’ and ‘acts of consolation’.³⁹ This elegiac mood is in full throat at the close of *Cook Book*, when Toklas recalls leaving the couple’s country home just as its vegetable gardens was heavy with harvest – ‘enough vegetables’, Gertrude had observed, ‘for an institution’.⁴⁰ Toklas writes:

> Our final, definite leaving of the gardens came one cold winter day, all too appropriate to our feelings and the state of the world. A sudden moment of sunshine peopled the gardens with all the friends and others who had passed through them. Ah, there would be another garden, the same friends, possibly, or no, probably new ones, and there would be other stories to tell and to hear. And so we left Bilignin, never to return.⁴¹

This is definitely elegy for a point of no return for Gertrude/Altrude. But it is neither an end nor a beginning for the formation of ‘friends and others’. The plenitude of the vegetable garden finds
its equal in the plenitude of friends and lovers brought to this lesbian table, or found at the tables
and the estates around which this lesbian couple processed. The ‘friends and others’ pass
through, pass around, and pass around the recipes that bring dishes to pass.

*Cook Book* portrays a world in which a married lesbian couple is not only welcome at the
table, but are highly sought-after guests who will be gifted with precious family and regional
recipes from all over the (Anglo, cosmopolitan) world. It was a glamorous queering of the notion
of ‘pot luck’ in the sense of an assemblage of recipes, and in the sense of its admixture of
domesticity and fame. It was not, for example, like *Pot-Luck of the British Home Cookery Book*,
a title published in 1914 addressed to the ‘everyday, common-sense character, such as any
housewife’ and reifies the family and familial culinary inheritances.\textsuperscript{42} Toklas’s *Cook Book* was
anti-familial in the sense that she was forced by financial need to write and publish it; her
widowed life had been rendered precarious when Stein’s family seized the couple’s art
collection. They used the lack of legal protection for lesbian couples to dispossess Toklas of the
personal effects, the domestic and artistic remains, of her shared life with Stein. *Cook Book*,
however, is a collection – and recollection – of heirlooms. In its assembly of memories and
recipes from friends far and wide, it is itself something of a potluck. It is an embodiment of how
lesbian lives and loves are made from assemblages of plenitude and good fortune, loss and
marginalization. It is about how exiles and expatriates can still make homes – stylish,
welcoming, accommodating domestic spaces in which a good meal is more about communal
collation than dining table conventions.
Notes

1 Alison Bechdel, *Dykes to Watch Out For* <https://dykestowatchoutfor.com> [accessed 31 January 2024] [238, 1996]


7 Julier, p. 150.


9 Qtd. by González, p. 86.

10 Julier, p. 152.

11 Gusfield, 301.

12 Communal meals’ relationship to ethnic or cultural ‘difference’ cuts several ways. Although potlucks might encourage dining across differences, at a table that blends together a range of cuisines, they can also be a means to shoring up ethnic specificities that are under threat from homogenization. Harvey Levenstein points out that potlucks and other communal meals
‘provided ethnic groups with the chance to join together in spirited rearguard battles against the relentless Americanization of their cultures and diets’ *(Paradox of Plenty: A Social History of Eating in Modern America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), p. 43). The potluck, in other words, might or might not serve as a melting-pot.


14 Dunye was the first Black lesbian to ever direct a feature film (*The Watermelon Woman*, 1996) – a film which has been inducted into the Library of Congress’ National Film Registry as a landmark in New Queer Cinema.

15 Valerie Smith points out that Dunye employs an extended verité method in which she ‘refus[es] to separate diegetic from extra-diegetic material’ (*Not Just Race, Not Just Gender: Black Feminist Readings* (New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 103) This commitment to showing the process of film-making in the film itself mirrors the form of the pot-luck meal, in which preparation, serving, and cleaning up are not done off-screen from guests.


17 Alice B. Toklas, *Aromas and Flavours of Past and Present: A Book of Exquisite Cooking* (The Lyons Press, 1958), xxvi. If dining is about erotic sequencing of events, Stein’s *Tender Buttons*, which has a whole section on ‘Food’, has a companion formulation about cooking: ‘Cooking, cooking is the recognition between sudden and nearly sudden very little and all large holes’ (*Tender Buttons: Objects, Food, Rooms* (New York: Claire Marie, 1914), p. 47).


22 Toklas, *Cook Book*, p. 72.


27 ‘Gertice/Altrude’ is a doodle that appears in the manuscript of ‘Lend a Hand’: see Gilmore, p. 57. It is worth noting Stein’s use of the slash or slice here – not unlike the hyphen sometimes used in ‘pot-luck’. Carolyn Burke’s article ‘Getting Spliced: Modernism and Sexual Difference’ quotes Stein in *G.M.P.*: ‘a splice is something that causes a connection’, pointing out that Stein was playing on the meaning of ‘splice’ as ‘marriage’ (*American Quarterly*, 39:1 (Spring 1987), pp. 98-121 (p.101). There is a relationship, in other words, between collage and cohabitation. We might remember, too, that Alice and Gertrude are buried next to each other, with Alice’s name inscribed on the back of Gertrude’s gravestone. In death, they were each other’s verso/recto.

28 Gertrude Stein, *Stanzas in Meditation and Other Poems* (Los Angeles: Sun and Moon Press, 1994), Part 5, Stanza LXXX; Part 5, Stanza LXX.
29 Toklas, *Cook Book*, p. 94.

30 Gilmore, p. 65.

31 Toklas, *Cook Book*, p. 32.


33 Cvetkovich, pp. 61, 62. As the Toklas/Stein domestic could produce poetics, poetry was also capable of producing/reproducing domesticity. Shari Benstock wrote of Stein’s *Tender Buttons* as ‘composing a grammar of lesbian domesticity’ (*Women of the Left Bank: Paris 1900-1940* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), p. 162).


37 Zafar, p. 34.

38 Toklas, *Cook Book*, p. 43.

39 Zafar, p. 45.

40 Toklas, *Cook Book*, p. 45.

41 Toklas, *Cook Book*, p. 280.