

Te de Boba:
Food, Identity, and Race
in a Multiracial Suburb
by
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ABSTRACT

With the push towards interdisciplinary approaches, there has been tremendous growth of scholarship in the comparative ethnic studies field. From studies on multiracial people, to residential segregation, to the study of multiracial spaces, there is a lot to say about cross-cultural experiences. “Te de Boba” explores the relationship between identity, race, and ethnicity of millennials through a food studies lens. In particular, I analyze the role of food spaces and food pathways in developing identity and conceptions of race and ethnicity. My research site consists of a small business, a boba tea shop in Baldwin Park, California: What happens when a boba shop opens up in downtown Baldwin Park, a predominantly Latinx community? How do interethnic relationships shape the structure and city landscape of Baldwin Park, and how do these experiences in turn shape self-identity among millennials? I draw from qualitative interviews, cognitive mapping, and surveys conducted within the boba shop to understand millennial identity formation in Baldwin Park. Millennials growing up in Baldwin Park experience unique relationships between cultures, foods, and lifestyles that cross ethnic and racial barriers, creating new forms of community, which I call hub cities. I develop “hub cities” as new terminology for discussing suburban spaces that foster a sense of community within suburban areas that challenges and break down popular discourse of race and ethnicity, giving way for youth creation of alternative discourses on race and ethnicity, consequently shaping the way they form self-identity.

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Chapter 1, Introduction

I first heard about Boba Time (pseudonym) through high school friends in 2014 and was pleasantly surprised to find out that Baldwin Park, California finally had its first boba shop. While previous businesses such as donut shops offered boba and tea drinks, a true boba shop had not yet been opened in the city of Baldwin Park. Walking into the boba shop, I felt a resemblance to boba shops in the nearby West San Gabriel Valley (SGV). Boba, or *te de boba*, as my mother calls it, is very popular on the West side compared to the Central San Gabriel Valley. Boba Time is a very small shop, has several drink flavors, and offers ice blended, slush, or iced tea drinks. Some tea shops in the U.S. serve food and drinks, but most boba shops in Taiwan exclusively sell drinks. Boba Time follows the latter.

As I approached the ordering station, I realized the shop had a buy-one-get-one-free special. Shocked that I could get two boba teas for about three dollars and change, I quickly ordered two milk teas with pudding and boba. The menu was fairly simple and did not offer an extensive selection like other shops in the West San Gabriel Valley, but they did have a good variety, including pineapple, strawberry, milk tea, green tea, and other options. I placed my order and waited for my drink. I noticed several young customers enter the shop and immediately ask for the “buy one get one free” special. Was I the last person to hear about it?

A Chinese couple was preparing drinks for customers at a very fast pace. The vibrant, neon chalk marker menu stood out behind them as they prepared drinks.



Figure 1. Boba Time, Milk Tea and Boba.

Although boba is sold in several Asian countries, it is traditionally a Taiwanese drink. Having lived in Taiwan for a couple of months, certain foods and drinks bring back nostalgia of my days in Taipei. I became used to having certain foods, including Taiwanese pancakes with green onion for breakfast, and steamed rice with lean beef for dinner. Most reminiscent of Taiwan for me has been boba tea. My daily interactions and outings with coworkers almost always involved boba tea, either as a lunch drink or as a mid-day treat. Coming back to Los Angeles and readjusting my life left me missing one thing: the comfort of a mid-day pick-me-up of boba tea. Hearing about the shop's opening made me immediately think of Taiwan, believing it would bring a little piece of the city to the place I grew up in.

Finding myself at Boba Time for the first time, I quickly walked up to the pick up area as they called out my order. I delicately pierced my cup with a jumbo straw, and

indulged in the flavors of milk tea and sweet pudding. I started reminiscing about my favorite boba shop in Taiwan: Coco. Boba shops in Taiwan are small, kiosk-like shops that consist of an outdoor ordering area, a register, and a small back kitchen where the workers prepare drinks. Rather than being a full-sized business that one can walk into, one simply approaches the ordering area (usually a storefront on the street) and the drinks are prepared behind the register. Boba tea in Taiwan is inexpensive when compared to American-priced boba tea, costing about 19 NT, equivalent to about 58 cents.

What first intrigued me about Boba Time is the large population of Latina/o customers. While the city is multiracial, Baldwin Park is a predominantly Mexican-populated city. Eighty percent of its residents are Latina/os. How has this boba shop developed a strong Latina/o clientele and how can this boba shop serve as a base for beginning to uncover the Latina/o-Asian American relationships of the city? How do interethnic relationships shape and influence identity formation among millennials in Baldwin Park? What happens when a boba shop opens up in downtown Baldwin Park, a predominantly Latinx community? Rather than discuss separately, this project seeks to explore the intersectionality of identity, race, and ethnicity through a food studies lens. By observing a food establishment in the city of Baldwin Park, this project takes a new approach to not only exploring the relationship between race, ethnicity, and identity formation but also how this relationship impacts millennials within the city landscape.



Figure 2. San Gabriel Mountains Overlooking Pasadena. Image taken by Natalie Santizo,

2015

Chapter Two, Literature Review

The San Gabriel Valley (SGV), with its iconic San Gabriel Mountains looming over the municipalities, consists of 46 cities. Furthest west, you will encounter La Canada Flintridge, an unofficial outskirts of the SGV, and furthest East you will encounter Claremont and LaVerne (Los Angeles Times). Finally, furthest South lies Rowland Heights and South Diamond Bar, and furthest North lies Sierra Madre and Monrovia. But at the center of the SGV, you will find Baldwin Park, nicknamed the “Hub of the San Gabriel Valley” (Figure 3). The Central San Gabriel Valley, including Baldwin Park, El Monte, Whittier, and West Covina are often overlooked when discussing the San Gabriel Valley as a whole. Research from prominent scholars including Leland Saito, Wei Li, and Wendy Cheng include immense knowledge about residential and political relationships among Asian Americans and Latina/os unique to the SGV. Wei Li typifies the San Gabriel Valley as an “ethnoburb,” which she defines as “multi-ethnic communities in which one ethnic group has a significant concentration but doesn’t necessarily comprise the majority” (Li, 1998, p.490). Li (1998) emphasizes the importance of suburban, multiracial communities that tend to be typified as ethnic enclaves. Her work in the San Gabriel Valley challenges the popular portrayal of SGV as a suburban Chinatown, emphasizing the importance of socio-spatial analysis on multiracial spaces. Li’s work opened up the discussion of SGV as a multiracial area that encompasses more than ethnic enclaves, but unique multiracial spaces that show dynamic interactions between race, ethnicity, class, and culture.

The West San Gabriel Valley, as characterized and studied by Wendy Cheng, includes Rosemead, San Gabriel, Monterey Park, and other cities. As a suburban ethnic

enclave for Asians and Asian Americans, the West SGV is well known for its extensive Asian markets, restaurants, and stores. According to Cheng (2013), a large influx of Asians migrated to the area of the West San Gabriel Valley during the 1950's and 1960's, as the San Gabriel Valley had less stringent restrictions on settlement, race, and housing than other suburban areas (Cheng, 2013, p. 15). At the same time, populations of Latinxs began inhabiting the area, forming interracial friendships and exchanges. As the years went by, the San Gabriel Valley opened up opportunities for more people of color to move into the area. Typically, Latina/os who could "pass" as White were granted opportunities to purchase and rent homes in the San Gabriel Valley. Consequently, the West SGV has had a consistent growth of Asian Americans and Latinx residents.

Clearly, the San Gabriel Valley is a rich multicultural space to study. As Cheng points out, "The SGV thus constitutes not only an important site of Asian American and Latina/o suburbanization in the contemporary period but also a place rich in multiracial political, economic, and social history" (Cheng, 2013, p. 9). The West San Gabriel Valley has also been studied through analyzing multiracial collaborations in politics. Leland Saito (1998) finds connections between Latina/os and Asian Americans in collaborating to support redistricting in the San Gabriel Valley in order to provide adequate, responsible, and fair representation for its residents (Saito, 1998, p. 50). Their collaborative efforts not only showed us the rich multiethnic makeup of the San Gabriel Valley, but also allowed both groups in the mid 1950s, and early 1960s to elect city officials that met their needs. The recent research on the San Gabriel Valley not only opens up a discussion about the importance of space and place, but also develops a theoretical framework of regional racial formation, emphasizing how neighborhood and

regions are important units of analysis in understanding the creation of race (Cheng, 2013). Cheng sheds light on the importance of analyzing everyday interactions and institutions such as high schools and how they influence conception and creation of racial hierarchies of race, ethnicity, and class, which this paper will use to discuss the relationship between identity formation, community, and food (Cheng, 2013). The recent research conducted on the San Gabriel Valley is crucial for giving voice to residents of the area, but also in understanding and acknowledging Asian-Latinx relations, moving from the black-white dichotomy that is often emphasized in sociology. Analyzing and acknowledging these relations further help us untangle the complex relationship between, race, ethnicity, and identity. However, recent research based in the SGV is heavily focused on the West side, including Arcadia, Monterey Park, San Gabriel, and Pasadena, leaving out the Central San Gabriel Valley. This project further seeks to fill the intellectual and geographical gap of research on the San Gabriel Valley.

Te de Boba: Millennial Identity Formation in a Multiracial Suburb explores the Central SGV, an often overlooked and misunderstood area of the SGV. The Central SGV tends to be typified as a predominantly Latinx and immigrant area, hardly receiving attention from researchers. *Te De Boba* explores a piece of the central SGV while also exploring new channels through which we can further develop the field of ethnic studies. I theorize a new sense of community, which I call hub cities, multiracial suburbs that produce a strong sense of community, while challenging conventional notions of race in the United States. Hub cities expose residents to different cultures, foods, and lifestyles that go beyond surface level interactions of multiculturalism. Instead, hub cities are

spaces that allow for a new type of identity to form, challenging divisive notions of racial categorization.

Chapter Three, On Baldwin Park

History and Demographics

In the 1800s, the city of Baldwin Park was originally part of Vineland, land of the San Gabriel Mission. A project for creating a new town was set into development in the late 1890s, which was to be named Vineland (Benbow, O'Brien, and Baldwin Park Historic Society, 2011). A smaller town was hoping to establish their community as a city, but had a competitor, Lucky Baldwin. To establish their community, committee members decided to invite Lucky Baldwin to the local grocery store, holding a big town event. Committee member D.J. Shultis brought along his wife, Mrs. Shultis (Baldwin Park Historic Society, 1969). Lucky Baldwin ended up slipping, but was saved by Mrs. Shultis who caught him before he reached the floor. Being over 70 years old, Lucky Baldwin could have sustained severe injuries from the fall. Lucky Baldwin showed his gratitude by seceding his projects to build a town nearby, which would have thwarted the Vineland community from prospering. Rather than be called Vineland, the town took the name of Baldwin Park.

In 1906, Baldwin Park officially became the 47th city incorporated into California. In the same year, the Baldwin Park Water Association was created, restoring water to a good operating condition (Baldwin Park Historic Society, 1969). As the years went by, the city kept growing, and developing, and would later see the first hamburger drive-thru be established.

Baldwin Park was known for being an agricultural area, which then became largely populated. The city spans 7.6 square miles, making it smaller than other SGV cities (United States Census Bureau, 2010). With a current 80.1% Latinx population,

Baldwin Park can be seen as an ethnic enclave for recent immigrants and first generation children (United States Census Bureau, 2010). In fact, 70.1% of the Latinxs residing in Baldwin Park are of Mexican descent. While Baldwin Park is predominantly made up of Mexican Americans, the Central American population is a total of 4,065 residents, or 5.4% of the Latinx population as of the year two-thousand and ten (United States Census Bureau, 2010). More specifically, Guatemalans make up 1.2% of the Latinx population, and Salvadorans make up 3% of the Latinx population (United States Census Bureau, 2010). However, Baldwin Park was not always predominantly Latinx. Visiting the Baldwin Park Historic Society Museum, and interviewing a founding member, I uncovered some details about the city.



Figure 3. City of Baldwin Park Flag with Original Logo. Image taken by Natalie Santizo.

Taken at the Baldwin Park Historic Society Museum.



Figure 4. Baldwin Park Historic Society Museum Entrance. Image taken by Natalie Santizo.

The historic society created three historic books about Baldwin Park (privately binded, not published) that they now sell copies of for a donation price.

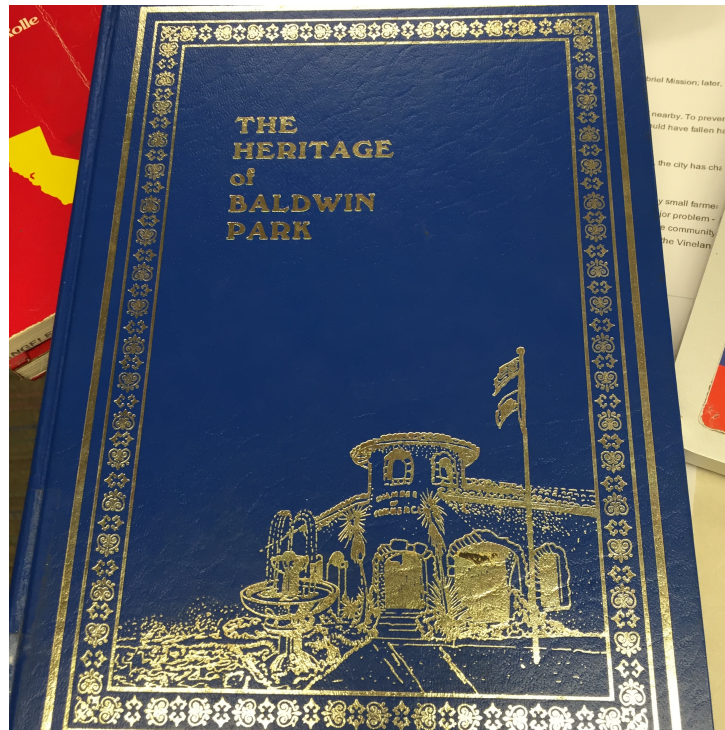


Figure 5. Baldwin Park History Book, Privately Binded. Image taken by Natalie Santizo

Analyzing these books, I found that Baldwin Park was made up of poor, White families (Baldwin Park Historic Society, 1969). Pictures in volume one of these books show school children outside, most of which did not have shoes on. Randy, a founding member of the historic society, let me know that it was normative for kids to be walking around without shoes because of poverty (Santizo & Randy, March 29, 2016).

Geographer Doreen Massey (1994) points out that there is an “accumulated history of space” where multiple histories and identities are shared. These shared identities in fact help people make sense of the world, according to Massey. In other words, spaces are often permanent but change over the years and with new residents (Massey, 1994).

Similarly, Baldwin Park was a predominantly poor, White community, now characterized for being predominantly Latinx. Spaces like Baldwin Park and their food and drink shops

have evolved, encompassing several identities and several cultures which in turn influence people's experiences in Baldwin Park. Socioeconomic barriers to achieving education and crossing class lines still affect residents today, however, the demographics have changed to a multiracial community with a larger concentration of Latinxs and Asian Americans. I found it difficult to build a timeline of Baldwin Park history and changing demographics between 1906 to present day, but I was able to find details that help discuss some of the city's development.

Latinxs in Baldwin Park trace back as early as 1906, when Cruz Baca first arrived in the city (Benbow, et.al., 2011). Randy also knew some history about Baca, stating that he hitch hiked to Baldwin Park with his wife, and ended up being a successful community member (Santizo & Randy, March 2016). Baca lived near Francisquito Avenue, where he farmed land that he eventually expanded into a one-hundred acre estate, allowing him to raise chilies, corn, yams, and tomatoes, among other produce. He also was able to produce cheese through his cattle. Interestingly, Baca was the only supplier of dried chilies and cornhusks in the San Gabriel Valley (Benbow, et. al., 2011). In addition to being a successful farmer, Baca also was heavily involved in the community, helping neighbors farm and helping feed the poor. Baca represents the essence of Baldwin Park: community. Although Baca is no longer alive, his generosity and success still lives through Baldwin Park, honored by the Metro link stop titled "Cruz Baca Transit Center." The story of Cruz Baca shows us an early connection between food and Mexicans in the San Gabriel Valley, also emphasizing the status and power that Baca had not only for being successful but also sharing in his wealth and forming a strong community in Baldwin Park. As the city continues to grow and change, I believe that this

strong sense of community has been built and shaped in a unique way, reflecting current residents ethnic ties and relations to food.

Baldwin Park has rich ties to food, food pathways, and consumption unique to the suburbs of Los Angeles. As the only producer of dried chilies and cornhusks in the San Gabriel Valley, Cruz Baca created importance and prestige for the city of Baldwin Park (Benbow, et.al., 2011). Baldwin Park not only became a place that people needed in order to obtain certain foods, but also a place where people wanted to be. This city is also home to the first In-N-Out, a popular Southern California burger joint, opening its doors in 1948. As the first drive-thru hamburger stand, In-N-Out has also shaped the city landscape and structure, and further developed the complex relationship between food, identity, race, and ethnicity. Through the companies' involvement in the community from providing field trips to local school children, to building community centers and facilities, In-N-Out demonstrates that food has larger implications within a community that go beyond merely consuming food. Harry and Esther Snyder, creators of In-N-Out, donated countless amounts of money to the city, building the local community center, and helping build the teen center and skate park, as well as fund other city programs (Benbow, et. al., 2011). Although In-N-Out is considered fast food, it also implements health practices including the use of sunflower oil, fresh and locally grown vegetables for the burgers, and never-frozen meat. In addition, In-N-Out has kept their prices reasonable over the years, with a burger combo costing at about five dollars and ninety cents. Elementary school children growing up in the city are also taken to the In-N-Out University for an annual field trip where they are not only told about local Baldwin Park history, but also the processes of making food at In-N-Out. The fieldtrips and inception of this business in

Baldwin Park provide residents with the ability to connect to local food sources, think about food pathways, and develop a sense of community with the space of the city.

The creation of In-N-Out gave way for other fast food establishments to develop in the city, which have had effects on childhood obesity rates (Weber, 2009). Although scarce research has been conducted in the city on health rates and environment, several organizations have developed in order to combat health issues. Healthy Teens on the Move, a non-profit organization, provided young teens with the opportunity to be leaders and take charge of their health. This organization, which I was a part of in my youth, supported teens in creating policies for the school district to eliminate unhealthy foods from the public schools and add alternative such as salad bars and vegetarian entrees. Clearly, youth of Baldwin Park have dynamically changed their environment and helped bring about change.

As of 2010, about 14.2% of Baldwin Park's population identifies as Asian (U.S. Census Data, American Fact Finder, 2010). Of this group, 3,439 are Filipina/o (4.6%), 3,871 (5.2%) are Chinese, and 1,895 (2.5%) are Vietnamese (United States Census Bureau, 2010). Although Baldwin Park is a diverse area, it is represented and portrayed as a Mexican neighborhood, heavily influenced by Mexican American culture, as seen with the participant interviews (Santizo & Alvin, March 15, 2016). As I will discuss in the analysis, several participants describe interracial experiences with friends, classmates, and neighbors. But why isn't this relationship acknowledged?

The Mexican roots of residents in Baldwin Park are represented in the city landscape as seen through the stores on Ramona Boulevard, where the prominent restaurants include King Taco, El Taco Nazo, and Bionicos, in addition to a Latina/o

catering barber shop and flower shop. While the city tend to be typified by the Mexican restaurants of the city, a significant amount of Asian and Asian owned restaurants exist as well, including Red Top, SK Donuts, 626 Hawaiian BBQ, and Orchid Thai. When the relationships and interactions between Asian Americans and Latina/os in Baldwin Park are explored, it gives us the ability to discuss place-based, cross-ethnic relationships in Baldwin Park, and for residents to share their experiences growing up in the city, and how these experiences have shaped their perceptions of identity, race, and ethnicity. The multiraciality of Baldwin Park has shaped the city landscape, where space in the city has come to incorporate the cultures and foods of its inhabitants.

Boba Time

In 2014, Boba Time opened its doors in Downtown Baldwin Park and became the first boba shop in the city. While other establishments such as SK Donuts on Baldwin Park Boulevard have previously offered boba tea on their menus, Boba Time was the first establishment in the city to officially name themselves a boba tea shop, and exclusively sell boba. The shop is small in size, located in a shopping strip that includes taco shops, burger joints, a barber shop, and dentistry office. Boba Time exclusively sells boba tea drinks, attracting residents with a buy one get one free special. This shop offers an array of drinks, from slushees, to milk tea, to adding pudding and aloe for an additional cost. While the menu is not as extensive as well known tea shops in the San Gabriel Valley like Coco, a Taiwanese franchise, it provides access to a widely known drink that people in Baldwin Park often drive out of the city to enjoy. The second boba shop to open up in Baldwin Park is Banana Boba and Tea, which opened in the summer of 2015, the first competitor for Boba Time. Their store has a mascot, a pilot pug puppy, complete with

pilot goggles. He is paraded along the shop walls, glass front of the shop, and on the paper menu as well. The menu is in Chinese, with English translations.

Baldwin Park, Food, and Culture

Baldwin Park is a predominantly Latinx community. However, a strong concentration of Chinese, Vietnamese, and Filipinxs reside in Baldwin Park. It is interesting to find two recently opened boba shops in Baldwin Park. While there are established Asian restaurants and businesses that surround the community and reflect the multiracial makeup of the city, there still had not been a boba shop until 2014. As I continue to discuss the importance of space in the relationship between race, ethnicity, and identity, it is important to mention the ways institutions inform these relationships as well. While sociological research in the past has discussed this relationship in regards to school performance rates, inequality, and poverty, I analyze institutions' roles on influencing these relations via public school lunches. Items offered in Baldwin Park include Tapatio salsa packets as a regular condiment, and the "ethnic" menu items ranging from Salvadoran pupusas to Mexican tamales. The menu also offers orange blossom chicken with steamed rice, which participant Netty referred to as a "Chinese food" (Santizo & Netty, Mach 2016). The only "ethnic foods" offered in this school include pupusas, tamales, and orange blossom chicken (Santizo & Netty, March 2016). When discussing food options given to public school students, it is important to ask the following: Who gets to decide what public school children consume? Who defines what "ethnic foods" are, and how are the food items selected? It is no feat to state that orange blossom chicken is an "Asian cuisine." In fact, it is not a traditional meal, rather an American-created ideal of what Chinese cuisine entails, now portrayed as a Chinese food

staple. The answers to these questions can help determine power roles in regards to food and race, and explain the ways in which popular notions of race and ethnicity give certain people power over defining ethnic foods and controlling what children of color consume, consequently racializing the body, as it has been discussed in previous research (Williams-Forson, 2006; Tompkins, 2012). Race and ethnicity heavily influence the landscape of this city.

From having bus notices in Spanish, to having the *Baldwin Park Now* magazine distributed in English and Spanish, the residential population of this city heavily influences the daily interactions of residents with space, and the way the city supports its residents. For example, the Baldwin Park Adult School also offers English, cosmetology, and food services classes, while also provide free childcare during classes (Baldwin Park Unified School District, 2016). The adult school is aware that students are in need of free childcare in order to attend classes, so this is a great example of the city tailoring itself to the needs of its community. While Baldwin Park is a supportive environment that encourages success, there are inevitable stressors and occurrences that take place in all cities.

Michael Omi and Howard Winant (2015) have developed a theory of racial formation, arguing that race is socially constructed, and not in fact biological. Omi & Winant encourage us to reevaluate racial meanings and the process of racialization. They make us aware that racialization affects several forms of social discourse, in addition to the bodies of people of color (Omi & Winant, 2015). In other words, bodies of people of color become a form of social discourse that is often omitted from research. Bodies have been racialized throughout history, specifically by being equated and compared to food,

much like the perception of African Americans consuming fried chicken, as discussed in *Building Houses out of Chicken Legs: Black Women, Food, and Power* by Psyche Williams-Forsion (2006). Similarly, the Asian American body has been racialized through tropes of the “dirty immigrant” (Ji-Song Ku, Manalansan, and Mannur, 2013). When Southeast refugees came to America in the 1970s, they were given “tips” on hygiene. Lessons included reducing food smells from frying fish and using “exotic” spices, and being aware of the “problem” created by the smells (Ji-Song Ku, Manalansan, and Mannur, 2013).

How does the racialization of bodies impact people in Baldwin Park? Do stereotypical and sometimes inaccurate images of Mexicans eating tacos and Asians consuming orange chicken or rice impact the interactions, relationships, and discussions of residents? Food gives us an interesting lens through which we can understand interracial interactions, relationships, and networks, but also provides a lens through which we can understand the process of body racialization. Williams-Forsion (2006) interrogates the relationship between African Americans, food culture, and racism. In her book, Williams-Forsion (2006) uncovers the complex relationship between the black female body and chicken, and how stereotypical images of food further racialize black bodies in America (Williams-Forsion, 2006). Not only do African American women labor to cater to White patrons, but this working relationship with chicken begins during slavery, where female slaves were often sent to town to sell live chickens (Williams-Forsion, 2006). Interestingly, she analyzes how these racialized images of food create identity, and how black women define themselves in these spaces. Similarly, I interrogate spaces of food and try to understand how a drink item, boba, can not only be an important

site of discovering interracial interactions, but also how the image of boba may possibly promote stereotypical images of Asian Americans and promote a racialization of Asian American bodies. Similarly, I ask how the images of Mexican food within Baldwin Park can racialize Latinx bodies through images of tacos and other items. Although I believe that food is a space through which we can uncover the relationship between race, ethnicity, identity, and ideologies, it is also important to address possibilities of exploiting and stereotyping people of color through food.

Chapter 4, Food Studies

Food studies is a growing field incorporating food production, consumption and food pathways into the discussion of political, economic, social, and racial issues. Food studies research involves the understanding of labor and field workers in relation to food, the socio-economic barriers to healthy food in poor communities, and the racialization of bodies, as discussed earlier (Feenstra, 2002; Weber, 2009; Williams-Forsen, 2006).

While it is important to study and discuss how social issues are connected to food and food pathways, I focus on identity development, and seek to uncover how food and food spaces help us understand identity formation among millennials in a particular geographic area. In order to discuss identity formation and its connection to food spaces, I must first address the current work that has been conducted exploring the connection between food, race, and ethnicity.

Positioning food in dialogue with race, ethnicity, and social issues can create a false multiculturalism. There are frenzied debates about the term multiculturalism itself, for example, and what value it brings to school curriculum, often leaving people asking: What is multiculturalism anyways? (Diner, 1993). Several arguments state that food cannot be the sole way of learning about a culture because it creates a superficial multiculturalism that celebrates diversity by experiencing and consuming food (Ji-Song Ku, Manalansan, and Mannur, 2013). This view addresses food festivals in particular.

While food studies moves ethnic studies in a dynamic train of thought, I believe that food studies particularly leaves out the importance of studying intersectionality *within* spaces of food. By this, I not only mean conducting research at food cites such as restaurants, but also the interaction of food pathways with people, such as the school

lunches provided at public schools and people's encounters with food in homes.

Tompkins (2012) creates an argument in food studies that focuses on the action of eating. Rather than analyzing social issues revolving around food, she specifically analyzes the action of consuming. Tompkins (2012) moves from asking the what of food to the how of eating, which "reveals something larger about the relationship between eating and racial identity between bodies inscribed with the marks of race and food" (Tompkins, 2012, p. 1). Tompkins argues that eating and food cultures play a significant role in creating racial difference and political inequality (2012). By asking "What is eating?" She connects food studies to critical race theory, further connecting cultural and biological ideologies in her research (Tompkins, 2012).

Food studies allows us to interrogate what we eat, where it comes from and in what spaces we consume, and who gets to eat what and why this is so (Tompkins, 2012). In her particular research, she argues that moral bodies were historically produced by forcing people of color to eat foodstuffs of Euro-America, "Eating is central to performative production of raced and gendered bodies in the 19th century" (Tompkins, 2012, p. 7). Similarly, I ask questions about the "ethnic foods" mentioned earlier. Who has the power to decide what foods are considered "ethnic" and what school children will eat? By assuming orange blossom chicken is a Chinese food (which it is not), we not only continue racial definitions and categorizations, but also we racialize the bodies of young students of color, forcing them to adopt these perceptions and definitions, which further get reproduced later on in their lives. These definitions, perceptions, and ideologies then transcribe into other spaces they enter. Tompkins (2012) further discusses the labor of food, and how bodies in the kitchen become food in the unconscious mind, specifically

analyzing cookbooks and literature of the nineteenth century. Who does the production of food, from picking foods to cooking/preparing meals? It is no surprise that women of color tend to be the faces behind kitchen labor (Tompkins, 2012). It is this line of work in food studies that challenges one to rethink race and racialization, and move beyond traditional notions of what race is, as Omi & Winant (2015) encourage us to do.

In this thesis, I do not argue that food is a means to achieving multiculturalism, but instead that food is a lens through which we can understand race relations between groups and also understand how self-identity is formed locally through food interactions and pathways. Erin Curtis' research on Cambodian donut shops asserts that food helps immigrants establish successful businesses. He states, "the ability for immigrant entrepreneurs to successfully negotiate, adapt, and modify business practices and consumption patterns" (Curtis, 2013). He goes on to state, "Immigrants can also reshape our understanding of the role of food and food enterprises and contestation of ethnic, cultural, and urban identities" (Curtis, 2013, p. 15). Although there is a push and pull in regards to food exploration versus exploitation, food itself proves to be a pathway for immigrants to establish a business and be successful, given their non-Western skills and knowledge. This is similarly seen with the shop owners of Boba Time. As immigrants to America, they first started in the food service industry by working part time at a boba shop in Monterey Park, eventually becoming managers (Santizo & May, February 2016). After a couple of years, they decided to open their own shop in the city of Baldwin Park. With their wonderful marketing on Yelp and the buy one get one free special, their business has become very successful and continues to thrive in the city. The American definitions and ideals of knowledge, power, and skill do not always coincide with

immigrant notions of knowledge, power, and skill. By being able to have agency with entrepreneurship in America, immigrants can be successful agents of business, power, and sites for understanding identity formation. Scarce research has been conducted on the relationship between food, identity, and immigrants.

Researchers Janet Chang and An-Tien Hsieh conduct quantitative research on the psychological needs and leisure motives addressed by eating out at night markets. Conducting 272 surveys in Taiwan, they found that leisure motives for eating out at night markets are focused on self identity (Chang and Hsieh, 2006, p. 1276). They found that most people (76%) visited the night markets because of the wide variety of food, and 60% attended with family and friends (Chang and Hsieh, 2006, p. 1276). With survey questions asked, researchers found that the way food is thought and idealized by customers also makes food a part of their cultural identity. This study shows the importance of food to identity, culture, ethnicity, race, and the need for further research to be conducted. While this project is not centered on night markets, it explains to us the crucial component food creates in the process of identity formation. There has also been a creation of stigmas surrounding food consumption. We are often stigmatized by what we ingest, as Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin's famous phrase states, "Tell me what you eat, and I will tell you what you are" (Brillat-Savarin, 2011). We can put this in dialogue with current research on food and racialization,

"To define a person or a group of people principally by the food they eat is, however, to uncritically and narrowly essentialize them through the corporeal terms of gustation and digestion. Also, those marked in such a way come to

embody the foods and the corresponding values and meanings attached to them”
(Ji-Song Ku, Manalansan, and Mannur, 2013).

Again, who has the power to define foods and consequently define colored bodies? People of color become inscribed with certain meanings and definitions that they themselves may not agree with. This leads to questions of authenticity, and who has the power to define what is and is not ethnic food, leading to legitimizing certain foods. The controversy regarding who defines food attests to the power roles that create the American imaginary and standard of what a person or groups is defined by. For example,

“Words like ‘chop suey’ ‘sushi’ ‘curry’ and ‘kimchi’ have become part of the American popular imagination to the extent that contentious notions of ethnic authenticity and authority are marked by culinary and alimentary practices, images, and ideas. Dishes like General Tso’s chicken, California roll, SPAM musubi, tandoori chicken, and Korean tacos have come to signify the confused and ambivalent relationships between mainstream American consumptive desires and Asian American assimilative dreams”

(Ji-Song Ku, Manalansan, and Mannur, 2013, p. 4). While certain foods become iconic and representative of a culture or race the interesting development of what are jown as traditional foods is a reflection of the willingness and desire to fit in as people. Certain foods and delicacies are hyperexposed in American culture, making the American imaginary compose certain images and stereotypes of racial and ethnic groups based on foods that have been extorted from certain groups. Authenticity itself is problematic because there is a refusal to recognize different interpretations of “authenticity” in food. Editors of *Eating Asian America* ask, “To what extent does the notion of authenticity

become both a refusal to engage difference on its own terms and a form of nostalgia?” (Ji-Song Ku, Manalansan, and Mannur, 2013). As one can see, discussing food in relation to race and ethnicity is complex, and a difficult relationship to untangle. I myself discuss feeling nostalgic when I drink boba tea, so I find myself perplexed by the tropes of authenticity: is it a tool used to dismiss difference, or does it serve as a way to reminisce on a traditional part of a culture and/or race? Authenticity should not rely on what Americans believe to be “culturally correct” but should rely on what that ethnic group perceives to represent their culture adequately. This also leads to the discussion of who has the power to define and legitimize food.

The Eurocentric ideology heavily embedded in American society once again shapes ethnic peoples’ definitions of food, culture and identity. As Tompkins (2012) points out, “foodie culture is founded on problematic racial politics in which White, bourgeois, urban subject positions are articulated... through consumption and inform mastery of foreign performance through romanticized attachments to ‘local’ organic foodways, at times echoing nativist ideological formations” (p. 2). The issues arising out of foodie culture are indicative of power relations experienced by racial groups today. Who has the power to police and who is policed? Similarly, who determines what one eats and what one will be characterized by? In this case, people tend to overlook the effects of power relations within and of food and food spaces, where it is more than evident that White patriarchal forces further control and define authenticity in food of people of color. This work traces the roots of control and power, right down to the meal we eat in our homes and in restaurants. Through participants’ expressions and discussions of authenticity, I begin to unpack the meanings and complex relationship between

authenticity, food, and identity. It is my hope that *Te De Boba* adds to this discussion and further argues that food spaces and the acknowledgement of food in the production and consumption of race can help us untangle complex relationships between race, ethnicity, identity, through an angle that is often ignored.

Chapter 5, Methods

East SGV draws from experiences including small business owners and customers. This project focuses on Boba Time. To protect the privacy and confidentiality of participants and the business, pseudonyms have been given for participants and the business. Participants range from age 18 to 24. I conducted six interviews with millennials who grew up in Baldwin Park, or moved to the city, but lived in BP for at least four years. I then completed three interviews with community members including one of the Boba Time owners, a founding member of the Baldwin Park Historic Society, and a Food Manager for a local elementary school. The data in this thesis comes from a total of ten interviews, in addition to cognitive mapping and field observations. I first sought to understand the experience of the owners. How did the owners decide to open a boba shop in a predominantly Latinx community? Did they know the demographics of Baldwin Park? Did financials affect the choice? How has the business grown? Would they consider their business successful? What do they think about Baldwin Park? Do they live in Baldwin Park? Do they interact with residents outside of the boba shop? Through these questions I seek to understand the experiences and relationships of the owners to the space and location of their business. Responses to these questions develop notions of space and place, and the importance of community interaction with space.

In critically thinking about this project and the role of food and food pathways in the development of race, ethnicity, and identity, I decided to seek a community member that may give me a different insight into the role of food within Baldwin Park, putting in dialogue space, place, and conceptions of race. A great way to further understand the role of food would be to interview someone who not only is a community member but who

works within the food industry and in an institution: a food manager was perfect. A food manager, or head lunch lady, as my mother refers to, is someone who is in charge of the kitchen. They coordinate ordering enough supplies for the kitchen, schedules, and with the district's food superintendent. Although this was a brief interview, I got insights on the connection between race, ethnicity, and identity, and how food itself has a role in creating power and notions of authenticity.

I also interviewed customers and residents of Baldwin Park. Although I designed an interview guide, I let the conversations flow naturally. Some of the questions on my guideline include: What prompted you to stop into this business today? Had you heard about boba tea before? Do you know where it originates? Tell me about your experience growing up in Baldwin Park. What are some values or ideals you label as important? Building on these brief questions, I gained an insight into why people from Baldwin Park come into the boba shop, and how millennials growing up in Baldwin Park have developed identity. As the conversations developed and included their experiences living in Baldwin Park, interactions with friends and classmates of a different race, I discover a unique self-identity formation that challenges racial and ethnic classification. I found myself asking less about the boba shop, and more about their childhood and growth in the city. Although I hoped to focus more on the boba shop, the interviews positively shaped my results into reflections on growing up, interracial friendships, and how the city has impacted their perceptions of race, ethnicity, and identity. It appears that the experiences they had growing up in Baldwin Park truly impact the way they see the city, city landscape, and how they think about race, ethnicity, and identity. Several participants describe disliking the classification of the self by the racial or ethnic category they are

given. The cross-cultural experiences of my participants show that a multiethnic environment develops a space and sense of community that challenges traditional classifications and definitions of race and ethnicity. This consequently impacts the way participants see themselves, and what communities they identify with. I will further discuss the emerging themes and comments in my analysis.

Finally, field observations allowed me to understand interactions between customers, shop owners, and workers. I was able to gain an insight on the value of this boba shop, whether it is simply a place to get a cheap drink, or whether people form relationships and/or friendships. Alternatively, the boba shop can serve as a meeting place, a place where cultural exchanges take place.

Drawing from Wendy Cheng's use of cognitive maps, and Dolores Hayden's discussion of the importance of cognitive maps in urban landscapes (Hayden, 1997), I used this method with participants to understand their conception of race, ethnicity, and identity in their environment. In this case, cognitive mapping helps participants draw out mental representations of their residential city, allowing me to understand what places/areas they believe are important. This method also helps participants who do not like to speak as much, but like to communicate through other mediums. How does food influence resident's cognitive processing of city landscape? How do race, ethnicity, class, and gender impact these cognitive processes? What places in the city do they map out, and how does that demonstrate importance and understanding? For privacy and confidentiality reasons, I will not be including the cognitive maps in the appendix, however I will be discussing some of the cognitive maps I analyzed.

Overall, the combination of interviews with customers, owners, a food manager, and a historic society member, provide diverse and rich experiences within the city that connect to food, race, ethnicity, and identity. Combining interviews with cognitive mapping and field observations, I am able to demonstrate the importance of acknowledging multiracial spaces, and Asian-Latinx relations within a suburban area. The following interviews will give a better understanding on how identity is formed within Baldwin Park, and how conceptions of race and ethnicity impact millennial development of identity.

Chapter 7, Analysis

Systematic Analysis

Interviews conducted in person were audio taped using an Iphone, when consent was given. Skype interviews were recorded using a software that allows for conversations to be recorded. Interviews were conducted at the research site, Boba Time, as well as in the privacy of a home via Skype. One phone interview was conducted that was not recorded, due to time and software limitations. However, notes were furiously typed in order to obtain the most precise and accurate statements from the conversation. Interviews were transcribed as soon as interviews were conducted. A series of codes I created help guide my analysis: identity, cross cultural interactions, friendships, food, and concepts of Baldwin Park. These codes allowed me to identify statements that fit a certain aspect of my project. These codes also helped me build a point of analysis to better understand the experiences of participants growing up in Baldwin Park but also with their relationship to Boba Time. From these codes, I build larger themes: forming identity, role of food, and community formation.

Field Observations and Survey Questionnaire

A total of 10 field observations took place. Field observations include a minimum of thirty minute sessions at Boba Time, where detailed notes about conversations, occurrences, and exchanges took place. Most observations were about an hour, a few being an hour and a half, and the minimum being thirty minutes. Field observations provided me the ability to better understand the space, and notice the environment and

atmosphere of Boba Time. I took note of interactions between workers, owners, and customers. A few customers seemed to be regulars, asking Kim how she was doing and how her family was doing. Kim would ask the same. A few customers inquired about the part time workers, and if they were off, or had some vacation time. Other customers simply came in to order their drinks and took off after receiving their order. Interestingly, I noticed pairs of interracial friends come in, discussing school, math, pop culture, or their weekend plans. From my ten field observations, I noted fifteen duos who were a pairing of Asian American and Latinx friends. During field observations, I had a Survey Monkey populated on my phone and Ipad, for customers to fill out. As customers would come in, I would quickly type my field notes and ask them to fill out a short survey after they ordered their drink. I would then run to my laptop at a nearby table and match up the survey result to the field notes. This would allow me to identify the age, race and/or ethnicity, education level of customers, gender, and employment status. Customers were also given the option of opting out, or not filling out the survey. Conducting the field notes by myself, it sometimes became difficult to ask for a survey, run back to my laptop, and match field notes to customers. Therefore, I did not always ask for a survey while I conducted my research. For future purposes, I will apply for grants and have a research assistant help me with this process.

I received a total of fifty responses from the survey monkey. Of those fifty, responses, thirty-five respondents, or 70%, identified as Latinx. Of these numbers, nineteen (54%) of Latinxs identified as Mexican American, eight (23%) identified as Guatemalan, three (9%) identified as Honduran, and five (14%) identified as Salvadoran. Of the total fifty responses, fifteen identified as Asian American. Of those fifteen

responses, eight (53%) identifies as Filipinx, five (33%) identified as Chinese, and two (13%) identified as Vietnamese. It is interesting to find that only Asian American and Latinxs were identified under the survey. I did not receive any survey responses including other races or ethnicities (Appendix C). The survey results on race and ethnicity point to the importance of analyzing Asian-Latinx relations, especially in an environment where the population encompasses mostly these two groups. It is also important to note the debate of Asian American and Pacific Islanders in regards to Filipinxs. Although I am aware that there is controversy in labeling Filipinxs as Asian American, I chose to include people of Filipinx background in the Asian American group for the purposes of this study. In the future, I plan to discuss this controversy and include the definition of Pacific Islander into my research.

As far as the ages, I created the following ranges: 18-24, 25-29, 30-34, 35-39, 40-44, 45-49, 50-54, 55-59, 60-64, 65-69, and 70 years and older. Of the fifty responses, thirty-six (72%) identified between the age of 18 to 24. Seven (14%) respondents identified between the ages of 25 to 29. Two (4%) respondents identified between the ages of 55 to 59, and five (10%) respondents identifies between the ages of 35 to 39. Most of the respondents are in fact millennials between the ages of 18 to 24, with only a small concentration ranging between ages 55 to 59, and no one older than 59 (Appendix C).

As far as gender, thirty-six respondents identified as female (72%) and twenty-one respondents identifies as male (28%). What could explain these gender differences? Although this paper does not heavily focus on gender, it is important to acknowledge how gender can also impact identity development and conceptions of race and ethnicity.

Finally, I asked about highest level of education completed and employment status. Of the fifty respondents, 20 (40%) have completed some college but no degree, 4 (8%) completed a bachelor's degree, 1 (2%) completed a graduate degree, 13 (26%) completed less than a high school degree, and 12 (24%) completed a high school degree or equivalent (Appendix C). The education levels completed appear to be diverse, where respondents range from having less than high school education to having graduate education, although only one person completed a graduate degree. It appears that most participants completed some college but no degree, which could be due to a correlation between age and education level, with most respondents being 18 to 24 and most respondents falling into the "some college" category. Typically, this age range is when students first enter colleges and universities, but have not yet received their degree.

This rich data from surveys helps me understand the space of Baldwin Park, more specifically the population that visits and interacts with Boba Time. It appears that a younger, Latinx population tends to have more interaction with Boba Time. However this is not to dismiss the large number of Asian Americans who also visit the shop. Given that I was not able to retrieve surveys from all customers, there may be a significant difference in results. In the future, I plan to conduct more survey questionnaires. What factors influence young Latinxs' and Asian Americans' interactions with Boba Time?

Qualitative Analysis

This project utilizes six interviews conducted with customers and residents of Baldwin Park as the principal data for my argument. There are an additional three interviews, one with a historic society member and founder, a food services manager, and Boba Time owner. Participants were recruited at the boba shop, but also through a

snowball approach, contacting friends who were available to interview and getting participant referrals from current participants. Ideally, more interviews would have been conducted, but given the time and distance constraints, these interviews still provide a rich story about Baldwin Park, race, and identity formation.

The analysis is broken down into large themes drawn from the interviews and the coding that took place during transcription. Codes used include: Identity, concept of race and ethnicity, Baldwin Park, food, and interethnic relationships. These codes helped develop the larger themes of this project: Forming identity and conceptions of race and ethnicity, community formation, and role of food. Because the relationship between each theme is so dynamic and intricate, rather than divide the themes into sections, I discuss them throughout the analysis. I will first discuss the interview with Kim, one of the owners of Boba Time. Then I will specifically discuss the emerging theme in the following sections.

When I first approached Kim, she seemed a bit nervous. However, after explaining to her the purpose of my project, understanding race and ethnicity in Baldwin Park, and people's experiences in the city, she decided to share some of her experiences as a shop owner. Kim was a manager at a boba shop in Monterey Park for a couple of years. Three years later, she decided she wanted to open up her own boba shop. Kim and her husband moved to Baldwin Park and also established Boba Time there. I asked her about why she chose Baldwin Park, to which she responded. "We felt it great area. It is next to a park, lots of school children in area, and yeah. Seem like a great area for a boba shop to succeed" (Santizo & Kim, February 2016). I still found it intriguing that she would choose a predominantly Latinx community to start her first boba shop, so I asked:

What else motivated you to start Boba Time in Baldwin Park? She replied, “Well uh it is very affordable. Rent is good. We also decided to move our family here” (Santizo & Kim, February 2016). As the conversation continued, she shared that they both moved from China to California a couple of years ago, the boba shops being their first jobs. Family members from China helped them invest in the boba shop, providing them with a small loan to begin the business. However, I was still intrigued as to why they chose a neighborhood marked as a Mexican neighborhood to begin their boba shop. Did they consider race and ethnicity when building their business? As Kim simply put it: No. She states, “You know we love the people of Baldwin Park, they are very nice. Many Mexicans come buy here, we speak, we know about family, friends. I love Baldwin Park and the community. People here are just so nice” (Santizo & Kim, December 2015). Similar to participants who grew up in Baldwin Park, Kim did not base a lot of her perceptions on racial differences. American society often trains children and people to create racial divides, perpetuated by stereotypes and discrimination. It is refreshing to uncover Kim’s motives behind choosing Baldwin Park as her business home by economic decision rather than basing it on race. She shared with me that while though business slows down in the winter since they only serve cold drinks, they still make enough money to be a successful business. Because Baldwin Park is a working class community, restaurants and local businesses moving into the city often time close down after opening. However Boba Time continues to thrive as a business. When asked about her success and why she thinks her business succeeded, Kim stated, “Well you know people love our special. Buy one get one free. We very happy here and uh, people love our drink!” (Santizo & Kim, December 2015). Conducting a short interview with Kim,

and respecting her busy schedule, it was difficult to continue interviewing Kim, but we always had short conversations as I came to the shop for field observations. Sometimes I was able to speak to her informally for about five to ten minutes, getting some brief details about how the business has been doing and what she has been up to. On one of my last visits, I saw a help wanted sign up in the ordering station. The sign stated “Looking for young female worker. Part time. Must speak English and Spanish.” Briefly asking Kim about the sign, she shared that they were seeking someone to help them out. The shop was getting busy (March 2016) and they preferred a worker who could cater to most customers. Because they have a large clientele of Latinx customers, they wanted someone who could speak English and Spanish, making communication easier for customers. I wanted to ask more about the sign, but due to Kim’s busy schedule, I was not able to further inquire about it. In regard to ethnicity and gender, the sign was very pertinent and a fruitful lead to pursue. I wanted to ask, why a female worker? What type of gender roles informed Kim’s sign for help wanted? Although I was not able to answer these questions, I hope in future directions, I can further inquire about this. In engaging the topic of Boba Time and the largely Latinx clientele, I asked several participants: What brought you into Boba Time? I will now discuss the experiences of participants.

Of the six participants I interviewed, all of them mentioned pricing and “trying something new.” Alvin, Sally, Tam, Amy Edna, and Diana all mention being lured by its affordability and excitement of trying something new to Baldwin Park. Although four participants had tried boba before, or grew up with it, they all mentioned not having an established boba shop in Baldwin Park. Diana states, “You know I love boba! It always sucked having to drive to Monterey Park for good boba. And its like, well now with

[Boba Time] we don't have to drive far, and its way cheaper too" (Santizo & Diana, March 2016). I wondered, what type of racial or ethnic concepts are tied to customer's perceptions of boba? I asked participants what they thought of boba, if they knew where it originates, and what boba may symbolize. I got diverse responses. Alvin stated, "I actually grew up having boba. All the time. So its something I equate to kinda like Mexicans and horchata. Its just something that you are used to having" (Santizo & Alvin, March 2016). Alvin's comment on boba connected this food to a culture and race, something he grew up with. Interestingly, he put this drink item in relation to horchata, connecting that particular drink to a culture and race as well. What is the meaning behind Alvin's conception of food stuffs and race and culture? It seems that food stuffs become related to people and cultures he is familiar with. When asking Alvin to share more about his discussion of boba and horchata, he explained that it was a way he related to his community members. They may not share the same food, but the cultural representation is still there, where boba for him was something he grew up enjoying, while his Mexican friends grew up enjoying a different drink, but having the same feelings and experiences. While my research ended up emphasizing less on the actual boba shop interactions and experiences within the shop, I found several comments discussed the emergence of identity and new conceptions of race and ethnicity.

Identity formation is complex, requiring several layers of analysis to fully understand. Sociologists tend to conduct research by studying macro and micro level interactions. Macro level analysis has been the forefront method in sociological work, focusing on large scale social processes such as industrialization, while micro level analysis (perhaps studying daily interactions between people) is a more recently used

approach. Following a microlevel analysis approach, one can say that by analyzing patterns of behavior, interaction, and action, one can better understand or answer questions about a specific phenomenon. One can also apply sociological methods of the micro-level of analysis to understand identity. How do daily interactions, actions, and behaviors shape identities? What actions, behaviors, or things are involved in the construction of the self? I pull from a sociological understanding of analysis to understand how identity formation is created in Baldwin Park, and what factors, forces, and interactions influence identity.

Similarly, the psychology field has developed several theories to explain identity formation. One particular theory of identity development is Chickering's seven vectors of student development in the college setting. This theory seeks to explain how students' development in college affects them emotionally, socially, physically, and intellectually, specifically in the formation of identity. Chickering revised his theory in 1993 with Linda Reisser and developed seven vectors that he believes create identity: developing competence, managing emotions, moving through autonomy toward interdependence, developing mature interpersonal relationships, establishing identity, developing purpose, and developing integrity (Chickering and Reisser, 1993). These vectors at time overlap, and are not sequential in nature. Chickering & Reisser (1993) believed that these seven vectors help explain identity formation among higher education students. To understand millennial identity formation in Baldwin Park, I pull from these vectors to ask participants questions about their self identity, and to better understand what can shape a young person's creation of the self. This theory was chosen because several participants are college students, and while this project does not focus solely on the experiences in

college, I find the vectors useful for understanding how college educated participants have developed and reflected on their identity throughout their life and in the space of Baldwin Park.

Pulling from both sociology and psychology theories, I seek to better understand how space and place, particularly food pathways and experiences within Baldwin Park, contribute to identity formation among millennials. Comments from participants point to a heavy role of local experiences shaping their identities. Alvin states, “The particular experiences here in BP have really helped me grow as a person, to understand others, and uh to really feel good about myself.” Alvin’s comment about Baldwin Park impacting how he feels and how he has grown is a sign of two vectors, developing competence and establishing identity. He uses his mind to build skill, forming a point of view on his growth and of Baldwin Park, and understanding the role of his childhood in shaping how he thinks and feels about himself. Alvin reflected a lot during this interview and he felt a sense of community and importance in himself.

Alvin himself recognized the importance of Baldwin Park as an influence of who he is and how he feels. His relationships with friends also shape his identity, which falls in line with micro level analysis, including daily interactions with friends and peers of Baldwin Park. Alvin states, “In thinking about uh, about my childhood, the move to BP, and uh, and growing up with Mexican friends, I feel like it has shaped who I am.” He reflects on his childhood, acknowledging interpersonal relationships, friendships, and support system as influencers on his life. This comment shows the interaction between the themes of identity and community formation, where he not only acknowledges the

city as shaping who he is, but how his friends have developed a sense of acceptance, building community across racial lines.

Several participants had similar experiences, where Baldwin Park life and friends in this specific city, came to shape their identity. One may argue that the experiences in Baldwin Park are no more important than those of any other millennial who grew up in a certain area. More so, everyone is shaped by their experiences growing up in a certain area or city. While experiences growing up play a major role in people's conception of race, ethnicity, and identity, I argue that the multiraciality of Baldwin Park and the unique interracial relationships of residents provide a space where millennials challenge American societal conceptions of race, ethnicity, and identity. In a country where identity is often equated to racial categorization, subsequently one's racial ties, it is important to acknowledge and understand spaces that challenge these norms.

The way participants critically think about social issues as well as their feelings show us how identity is created in this specific place. When Alvin commented about his feelings of self, Baldwin Park, and his friendships, he stated, "But, I also think that by being in Baldwin Park, by making connections, I have grown to understand that being Asian American isn't solely what I am. I feel it's almost unreal to classify people by race." The experiences of millennials in Baldwin Park point to a way in which identity is reevaluated outside of race and ethnic classifications. Alvin says that while he describes himself as Asian American, he is not defined by his race. More so, by saying Asian American, that should not stigmatize him into a certain classification. He went on to describe his Mexican friends calling him "hermano" and feeling a sense of pride and belonging. Alvin's comment about classifying people by race being "unreal" points to a

new conceptualization of identity that does not solely rely on race. There were similar comments that question categorization of people, and how that relates to identity.

Sally, a Baldwin Park native, describes her concept of identity, “You know um I think identity means how we define ourselves... How we choose to be and who we are surrounded by.” She goes on to state, “I think for me, growing up in BP really has influenced the way I am, my personality, what I value, and how I am as a person. It’s not so much about being Mexican or Chinese, or Black, its more about being there for one another, valuing your goals, and understanding each other” (Santizo& Sally, March 2016). She shows developing competence by understanding, communicating, and acknowledging her point of view. Sally also expresses her conceptualization of community, which does not have to rely on racial barriers. As she states, “it’s more about being there for one another” and “understanding one another” (Santizo & Sally, March 2016). Sally, a Mexican American twenty-three year old, had a different experience than Alvin. While Alvin moved to Baldwin Park in the sixth grade, Sally was born and raised in Baldwin Park, and still resides there. Sally primarily had Latinx friends growing up, and some acquaintances of other ethnic/racial backgrounds. However, Alvin, a Vietnamese American, hardly had any Vietnamese and mostly Latinx friends. As I continued the conversation with Sally, she made some comments that show how her conception of race has been influenced by her interactions in Baldwin Park,

“I was always in the advanced math courses. In BP that means mostly Asians. You know you would probably think somethin’ like oh yeah typical. Kind of put them in a box. But honestly, growing up being in these advanced math courses showed me that it wasn’t ever really about race or about making people feel like

others. We were all the same. That's why I get so agitated when I turn on the TV and just media tries to pin people of color against each other, like, why? See me, and us, we don't see race. We see community, people, humans. It really is just a way to further divy up people." (Santizo & Sally, March 2016).

Sally's comment about her experiences in advanced math courses point to a way in which she challenges racial classification, and builds a sense of community. She mentions "others" and "we are all the same." The creation of "othering" and the subaltern, as discussed by critical race theorists, attests to the issues of making people of color invisible. Sally similarly reflects on this by mentioning that society wants her to think of different racial groups as "others." As we continued the conversation I asked her if her interactions with Asian American peers went beyond the classroom. She shared that everyone constantly participated in study groups, and her experiences going to classmate's homes were important to her. As mentioned by other participants, the food shared within homes was a crucial part of forming identity and understanding among classmates and friends.

Friendships are a crucial part of personality and identity formation. What do these friendship patterns say about the space and place of Baldwin Park and its impact on forming self identity? Forming identity involves several components, if we refer to Chickering's theory of identity development. A key component that literature often misses is friendships. Friendships are important parts of everyday life and impact the way people perceive, act, create, react, and identify. All of the interviews I conducted with participants had similar reflections on friendships and the importance of shaping participants' identity and outlooks on life. Diana stated, "My high school friends I would

say, really shaped who I am today. From studying until midnight, to wanting to go to college, to loving the same shows and movies, we all bounced off of each other. And now, I can honestly say that without them, I wouldn't be who I am today" (Santizo & Diana, March 31, 2016). Diana shows an established identity. She seemed comfortable with herself, and from her comments has a sense of self in social and cultural realms. She knows herself and her attitudes towards herself, which make up the identity vector. Her comments point to an emphasis on friendships.

Friendships are an important part of forming identity everywhere, so how are friendships different within the space of Baldwin Park? What makes friendships unique in this space? Although not all of my participants had cross-cultural stories and friendships to share, six out of eight participants did share stories that point to a unique community formation in Baldwin Park.

The development of community is interconnected with identity, race and ethnicity, and food. Community builds upon these key components, creating a safe space for residents to feel accepted and comfortable. To better understand community formation and the conceptions of race and ethnicity in Baldwin Park, I use Cheng's (2013) concept of regional racial formation. Cheng (2013) develops regional racial formation to emphasize the importance of analyzing everyday interactions and institutions such as high schools and how they influence conception and creation of racial hierarchies of race, ethnicity, and class. The way participants think about race and ethnicity, as seen with Alvin's comment of being "unreal" shows a unique formation of identity and community. The concept of regional racial formation helps one understand how daily interactions impact one's sense of self, and how those thoughts and

experiences lead to community building. By analyzing institutions such as schools , specifically relying on food spaces, I connect identity, community, race and ethnicity, and food to emphasize the intricate relationship between such notions. One can see these notions interacting through the participation of Tam.

Tam, a Filipina American, had similar experiences as Alvin growing up in Baldwin Park. Tam attended Baldwin Park High School and was part of the basketball team. For her, sports were a big part of her personal growth. Sports helped her transition from living in the Inland Empire all her life, to becoming a Baldwin Park resident. Growing up in a strong Filipinx community, Tam did not have many Latinx friends. Moving to Baldwin Park, she felt a sense of difference and isolation because she was Filipinx. But after joining the basketball team of Baldwin Park High School, she made connections that continue to positively impact her life today, “I honestly did not have one Hispanic friend before I moved here. I didn’t know anything about Mexican culture, or Salvadoran culture, or that there was a difference between the two!” (Santizo & Tam, March 2016). In reflecting on her newly made friendships in Baldwin Park, Tam described her interethnic relationships as making the most impact on her life,

“I lived in a Filipino bubble my whole life. To come to a new place, let me tell you, I was not happy. But as I opened up and as I learned from my best friends I still have today, culture has really impacted my outlook on life, relationships, and world peace. I’ve honestly been reflecting a lot, especially with all the hate I’ve seen from politicians as of late. The friendships I built here in BP have taught me about what I value, and encourage me to keep pushing for justice, for education, and for what is right in the world. I have a community I identity with that goes

beyond our like race, our like appearances. I didn't have that in the IE. It really is something different here in BP..." (Santizo & Tam, March 2016).

As Tam reflects on how her friendships in Baldwin Park have impacted her identity, her response also points to how her friendships and interactions have shaped her world views and moral thoughts. She connects her identity to issues of world justice and education. It seems that Baldwin Park is a space where interethnic relationships not only impact identity, but also outlook on societal issues. In this commentary, Tam demonstrates the vectors of developing purpose and developing integrity. Her experiences and interactions with friends and Baldwin Park have not only helped her establish identity, but also balance career goals with personal aspirations and commitments that reflect her beliefs, values, and purpose. Here, we also see the themes of forming identity and race & ethnicity interact. Her daily interactions with friends, school, and sports not only influence her perception of self, but also how she sees the world. Through given commentary and responses, I believe that Baldwin Park fosters a unique sense of community that goes beyond race and ethnic classification. In order to better discuss this unique community formation, I will discuss other participants' experiences.

Edna, a twenty two year old Mexican American native of Baldwin Park, shared her experiences in Baldwin Park and how it shaped her conception of her identity.

Edna states, "You know as a current college student I really reflect on BP and how my diverse friendships have helped me not only develop a career goal, but also how I see society... So I really feel that being exposed to different cultures and races, I was able to set my mind up for success, to see political issues for

what they are and to understand and have compassion for world injustice”

(Santizo & Edna, March 11, 2016).

Edna goes on to discuss her outlook on global issues such as water access and poverty, and really connects it to her learning experiences and friendships in Baldwin Park. Rather than simply discuss how these issues have become important to her through college, she specifically connects her comments to the ways in which she grew up in the city, from seeing her peers struggle with learning and with issues of money, to making friends of different ethnic background than her,

“You know I didn’t grow up poor, but not rich either. But like seeing some friends struggle like to figure out if they would have money for dinner, that’s unjust. Having friends here in BP that go through that, seeing it as a bigger issue in the community, really has made me think” (Santizo & Edna, March 11, 2016).

Edna critically reflects on her interactions and acknowledges how they have had an impact on her thoughts about social issues. It is important to note that Edna is a college student studying sociology, which also influences her critical thinking on Baldwin Park, community, and identity.

In Alvin’s cognitive map, he drew out specific places in Baldwin Park, all of which were Mexican food establishments with the exception of Boba Time. Alvin drew out King Taco, Taco Nazo, Morgan Park, Sierra Vista High School, and Baldwin Park High School. Similarly, both Tam and Amy drew out King Taco, Red Top Kitchen, and Boba Time. Sally and Edna focused more on their houses and the surrounding area, while still pointing out In-N-Out, Taco Nazo, and Boba Time. Participants were asked to draw out Baldwin Park, and things in the city they find relevant. Participants were not told to

draw out food establishments, which is why I find it interesting that all participants ended up drawing out restaurants. This is telling of the importance food is to identity and community identity. The importance of food in creating identity, and utilizing food as a space to understand race, ethnicity, and identity is crucial to the argument of this paper. As I have argued food is an important lens through which we can understand millennial identity formation in a multiracial suburb.

Participants all mentioned experiences with Mexican food establishments in Baldwin Park. Most participants mention King Taco and Taco Nazo. Comments were not just about enjoying these foods, but about how they connected to these foods that formed a sense of cultural and community pride. For example, Amy talks about her experience being Chinese American in a predominantly Mexican neighborhood,

“Although I have now moved away from Baldwin Park, much of it is still dear in my heart. My best friends consist of Mexican American and Central American women, same age, who showed me a different world growing up. From empanadas, rellenitos, tortas, tacos, I uh, I really felt like part of the family... In elementary school we used to play chef, and whoever's house we were at, would shape the menu. I remember going to Marta's house and learning from her mom to make *rellenitos*. And the language barrier wasn't an issue, she taught me some Spanish. She would help us all make them, setting each of us up at a station. We swore we would all become chefs. Haha. And now that I see fusion restaurants everywhere, it kind of reminds me of these moments, where we were all one. I wasn't the Chinese friend, I was just Amy, la flaca” (Santizo & Amy, March 2016).

Amy's story about growing up with her Latina friends and constantly cooking with one another, shows us the value of her experiences with friends and food. This in turn shaped her identity formation, which looks past racial barriers as she mentions, "I wasn't the Chinese friend, I was just Amy, la flaca" (Amy, the skinny girl). Interviewing Netty, a food services manager, helped me further uncover the role of food in relationship to notions of race and ethnicity. As mentioned earlier, Netty describes certain school lunch items that are considered "ethnic foods." When asked about the food, Netty mentioned that most entrees consist of American fast food, such as hamburgers, hot dogs, sandwiches, and salads. Only a select amount of items are available that differ from this agenda, which they refer to as "ethnic foods" (Santizo & Netty, March 2016). These items, which I mentioned earlier, are *pupusas*, *tamales*, and orange blossom chicken with steamed rice. I asked Netty, what ethnicities do these items represent? She replied, "Well Salvadoran, Mexican, and Chinese" (Santizo & Netty, March 2016). I continued asking her about this and I wondered, what informs her perception of ethnic foods? Being Mexican, she relates to making *tamales* for holidays and special occasions. Having Salvadoran friends, she knows the wonders of *pupusas*. But how did she arrive to the conclusion that orange blossom chicken was in fact a Chinese dish? She states, "Well... well everyone knows that orange chicken is Chinese food. I think they eat this all the time" (Santizo & Netty, March 2016). Netty's misconception of orange blossom chicken as a Chinese meal that they "eat all the time" is very common in American imaginaries of ethnicities. As food studies writers have mentioned before. "Words like 'chop suey' 'sushi' 'curry' and 'kimchi' have become part of the American popular imagination to the extent that contentious notions of ethnic authenticity and authority are marked by

culinary and alimentary practices, images, and ideas” (Ji-Song Ku, Manalansan, Mannur, 2013, p. 4). The stereotypical images of foods essentialize bodies of color, portraying certain races and ethnicities to be defined by what they eat. Often time, the images of foods which categorize people by race, tend to be items that are assigned to their identities by White, patriarchal forces. Orange blossom chicken is not something that people of Chinese ethnic ties identity with. The comment provide by Netty is crucial in understanding the complexities of race and ethnicities that we would otherwise ignore if we do not acknowledge the role of food in creating these tropes. But as seen with the comments and cognitive maps of participants, for millennials of Baldwin Park, food sometimes gave way for them to connect with friends and classmates of different cultures and backgrounds. Concepts of race and ethnicity continue to affect participants outside of Baldwin Park.

Asking Amy about her identity, and how she defines herself, she went on to discuss how her race was not as crucial to her identity until she went to college,

“Moving to the East Coast for school really showed me how different things are outside of BP. As a kid, and even into high school, although I wasn’t Mexican, or other ethnicity, I was still part of BP, I was still part of SVHS. We didn’t have to discuss race. Of course in high school we address social issues, racism, that stuff. All important. But not until I got to the East Coast was I questioned and well put into this lumped group just because I was Chinese. It’s just so crazy to see how much people care about putting you into a category or box outside of BP... I feel really that like BP was a great place to grow up. I wasn’t defined by being Asian, I defined myself, and really the fact that everyone got along, race aside, was big

for me. Its just kinda weird to move away and realize how different things can be...” (Santizo & Amy, March 29, 2016).

Amy attests to how Baldwin Park is unique in that it does challenge popular notions of race and ethnicity. As mentioned by Alvin, Tam, and Sally, race is not used to divide people, in fact, participants rely less on race and ethnicity and focus on community to describe their experiences in Baldwin Park. While it is true that the environment in which one is raised in heavily influences one’s perceptions, ideologies, and traditions, I argue that Baldwin Park’s multiracial makeup not only influences residents’ ideology, but also creates a unique identity formation that also challenges racialization processes.

Chapter 7, Limitations

Having my research site be five and a half hours away proves some difficulty with obtaining a substantial amount of interviews and field notes in order to have an in depth analysis of emerging themes. Ideally, I would have conducted ten more interviews, however, with the current data (interviews, field observations, and cognitive maps) I am able to clearly open the dialogue for discussing race, ethnicity, and identity formation among millennials of Baldwin Park, an overlooked area of the San Gabriel Valley. Although I have a small number of interviews, I believe this thesis provides a channel through which scholars can further draw out identity formation and interracial relationships occurring in the Central SGV. Furthermore, food studies is a growing field and the theoretical framework in this area has not been fully developed. Pulling theories from sociology, psychology, and critical race, I am able to discuss my project and explain my findings. However, much work is needed in the theoretical framing of food studies. Given more time, I would include follow up interviews with shop owners and workers to develop an analysis on the relationship between race, ethnicity, class, and gender.

Chapter 8, Conclusions and Recommendations

The rich and unique experiences of millennials in Baldwin Park point to a creation of hub cities, involving new conception of race and ethnicity, which challenge conventional notions of race in the United States. The multiraciality of Baldwin Park has shaped millennials' creation of self, their worldviews, and how they see themselves in relation to the greater American landscape of identity. Rather than conforming to White patriarchal standards of what identity is, these participants demonstrate a new type of identity formation. Participants combine identity, community, and their experiences with food and food pathways to form an understanding of race and ethnicity that challenges the normative view of these concepts. Rather than rely solely on race and ethnicity as a way to classify people, participants show a way in which they combat these notions, often mentioning how community comes first. I believe this experience is unique to Baldwin Park because it is a multiracial suburb. However, I believe there are other suburban cities whose experiences and stories warrant further research. *Te de Boba: Millennial Identity Formation in a Multiracial Suburb* opens up the discussion of race, ethnicity, and identity, and how food space and food pathways can help us understand this complex relationship. While this relationship is hard to untangle, as one can see with this analysis, it is important to acknowledge the shared experiences of Latinxs and Asian Americans. I believe there are other cities that share a similar pattern of challenging traditional notion of race and ethnicity, which is why I create the term hub cities. This term, influenced by the original “nickname” of Baldwin Park (the hub of the San Gabriel Valley, see *Figure 3*) seeks to provide a framework through which we can understand the experiences in multiracial suburbs. Hub cities foster a sense of community within suburban areas that

challenges popular discourse of race and ethnicity. Hub cities give way for young people of color to reclaim their identities and form a concept of self that does not rely on stereotypes of race and ethnicity, further challenging the racialization of bodies.

I believe this work opens up the possibilities for further research that is comparative in nature, moving away from the black-White dichotomy, and acknowledging the experiences of Asian Americans and Latinxs as crucial centers of ethnic and racial history. I encourage us to continue to move away from discussing experiences in a divisive manner, and push towards acknowledging shared experiences, and the importance of discussing experiences in *relation* to one another. This work requires further investigation and further development. I hope to continue to expand this project, conducting more interviews, shaping the themes, and continuing to develop the theoretical framework that supports my argument.

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APPENDIX A
INTERVIEW GUIDE

Hello. Thank you for taking your time to talk to me. I am working on a project, which I eventually hope to publish on the topic of small businesses, in particular successful businesses in Baldwin Park. I am hoping to understand the economic, cultural, and business dynamics taking place in small businesses, but also how millennials have formed concepts of identity, race, and ethnicity. My goal is to publish this work in a book in a couple of years.

- What is your Age?
- What is your Race?
- What is your Ethnicity?
- What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?
- What is your employment status?
- Did you grow up in Baldwin Park?
- What high school did you attend?
- What was your experience growing up in Baldwin Park?
- In reflecting about growing up in Baldwin Park, how did you form friendships? How did you make your friends?
 - Did you spend a lot of time in Baldwin Park growing up?
 - Did you participate in any extra-curriculars in Baldwin Park?
 - What are some of your favorite things about Baldwin Park?
 - What don't you like about Baldwin Park?
 - What are some iconic places you see in Baldwin Park? In other words, what are some places either businesses or parks that stand out to you in this city?
 - Do you have a favorite location in Baldwin Park?
 - What is your favorite restaurant in Baldwin Park?
 - What is your favorite fast food in Baldwin Park?
 - What do you think race is? In other words, how would you define "race" ?
 - What do you think about ethnicity? In other words, how would you define "ethnicity"?
- What is "identity" to you? In other words, how would you define "identity"?
- What has influenced your self-identity?

APPENDIX B
CONSENT FORM

Te De Boba: Millennial Identity Formation in a Multiracial Suburb

I am a graduate student under the direction of Professor Rudy Guevarra, Jr. in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, under the School of Social Transformation at Arizona State University. I am conducting a research study to understand identity formation in Baldwin Park, specifically how millennials growing up in Baldwin Park form concepts of self, identity, and race and ethnicity.

I am inviting your participation, which will involve an interview about your experiences in Baldwin Park. It will also involve cognitive mapping. Cognitive mapping is an activity where I ask you to draw out the city of Baldwin Park on a white sheet of paper. This drawing is designed by you, showing me how you see the city. For example, you may draw out your house, or popular food places you enjoy going to, and/or schools or places you enjoy visiting. You have the right not to answer any question, and to stop participation at any time, or to not participate in cognitive mapping.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. Participation in this study does require you to be minimum age of 18.

Possible benefits for this participation include getting to reflect on your experiences in Baldwin Park, that may allow you to feel pride and happiness. There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to your participation. For the cognitive mapping activity, should you wish to participate, will involve not writing any address information or specific details about your home, in order to ensure privacy and anonymity. This study also involves survey questions such as race, ethnicity, and level of education completed. The purpose for this information is to understand the demographics and backgrounds of each person's experience in Baldwin Park.

Furthermore, to ensure privacy we will give you a pseudo name under your interview materials. Any recorded interviews will be encrypted on the phone through which recordings are taken. Your responses will be confidential. The results of this study may be used in reports, presentations, or publications but your name will not be used. Cognitive maps may be published, but only if you agree to allow this to occur. Your cognitive map does not have to be published if you do not want to. You can choose to not participate in the cognitive mapping at all, or participate but not have your cognitive map published.

I would like to audio record this interview. The interview will not be audio recorded without your permission. Please let me know if you do not want the interview to be recorded; you also can change your mind after the interview starts, just let me know.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact the research team at: (Natalie Santizo 626.324.4498 or Rudy Guevarra, Jr at rpguevarra@gmail.com). If you have any questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects

Institutional Review Board, through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance, at (480) 965-6788.

Please let me know if you wish to be part of the study.

APPENDIX C
SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Which race/ethnicity best describes you?
 - a. American Indian or Alaskan Native
 - b. Asian or Pacific Islander
 - c. Black or African American
 - d. Latina/o
 - e. White/Caucasian
 - f. Multiple Ethnicity/ Other (please specify)
 - g. Prefer not to answer
2. Please select all the ethnicities you identify with
 - a. Mexican
 - b. Puerto Rican
 - c. Cuban
 - d. Dominican (Dominican Republic)
 - e. Costa Rican
 - f. Guatemalan
 - g. Salvadoran
 - h. Honduran
 - i. Nicaraguan
 - j. Panaminian
 - k. South American
 - l. Other Hispanic/Latina/o Identity
 - m. Asian Indian
 - n. Burmese
 - o. Cambodian
 - p. Chinese (Except Taiwanese)
 - q. Filipina/o
 - r. Hmong
 - s. Indonesian
 - t. Japanese
 - u. Korean
 - v. Laotian
 - w. Pakistani
 - x. Sri Lankan
 - y. Taiwanese
 - z. Thai
 - aa. Vietnamese
 - bb. Other Asian Identity

- cc. Native Hawaiian
- dd. Samoan
- ee. Tongan
- ff. Guamanian or Chamorro
- gg. Apache
- hh. Cherokee
- ii. Choctaw
- jj. Comanche
- kk. Mexican American Indian
- ll. Navajo
- mm. Yuman
- nn. Other Native American Identity
- oo. Other Identity not listed
- pp. Prefer not to answer

3. What is your age?
 - a. 18-24 years old
 - b. 25-29 years old
 - c. 30-34 years old
 - d. 35-39 years old
 - e. 40-44 years old
 - f. 45-49 years old
 - g. 50-54 years old
 - h. 55-59 years old
 - i. 60-64 years old
 - j. 65-69 years old
 - k. 70 years or older
 - l. Prefer not to answer
4. Are you male or female?
 - a. Female
 - b. Male
 - c. Transgender
 - d. Other (please specify)
 - e. Prefer not to answer
5. What is the highest level of education you have completed or the highest degree you have received?
 - a. Less than high school degree
 - b. High school degree or equivalent (e.g. GED)
 - c. Some college but no degree
 - d. Associates degree
 - e. Bachelors degree

- f. Graduate Degree
 - g. Other
 - h. Prefer not to answer
6. Which of the following categories best describes your employment status?
- a. Employed, working full-time
 - b. Employed, working part-time
 - c. Self-employed
 - d. Homemaker
 - e. Not employed, looking for work
 - f. Not employed, NOT looking for work
 - g. Student
 - h. Military
 - i. Retired
 - j. Disabled, not able to work
 - k. Other
 - l. Prefer not to answer