The function of fear in institutional maintenance: Feeling frightened as an essential ingredient in haute cuisine

Abstract

Fear is a common and powerful emotion that can regulate behaviour. Yet institutional scholars have paid limited attention to the function of fear in processes of institutional reproduction and stability. Drawing on an empirical study of elite chefs within the institution of haute cuisine, this article finds that the multifaceted emotion of fear characterised their experiences and served to sustain their institution. Chefs' individual feelings of fear prompted conformity and a cognitive constriction, which narrowed their focus on to the precise reproduction of traditional practices whilst also limiting challenges to the norms underpinning the institution. Through *fear work*, chefs used threats and violence to connect individual experiences of fear to the violation of institutionalized rules, sustaining the conditions in which fear-driven maintenance work thrived. The study also suggests that fear is a normative element of haute cuisine in its own right, where the very experience and eliciting of fear preserved an essential institutional ingredient. In this way, emotions such as fear do not just accompany processes of institutionalization but can be intimately involved in the performance and maintenance of institutions.

Key words

Emotion; Fear; Fear work; Haute cuisine; Institutional work; Phenomenology

Introduction

Fear is a common and powerful emotion. Thomas Hobbes (1668/1994) suggested that fear shapes and suffuses human life, is the sole origin of a civilised society and the only reliable means of its preservation. Anthropologists (Parkin, 1986), historians (Robin, 2004), and sociologists (Elias & Jephcott, 1982) have also pointed to the vital role of fear in regulating and sustaining institutions and societies. Yet institutional and organizational scholars have paid limited attention to the function of fear in processes of institutional reproduction and stability. As a result, little is known about how fear in the workplace may serve to preserve organizations and institutions.

Although institutional studies have only briefly considered fear (see DeJordy & Barrett, 2014; Scott, 2014), recent scholarship has begun to explore how the broader concept of emotion and institutions are intertwined. In particular, the increasingly prominent body of research known as institutional work (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006) has produced several insights into this connection. For instance, associated studies have theorized how emotion and cognition interact to enable different forms of institutional work to occur (Voronov & Vince, 2012). They have also explored how emotion can inspire individuals to create, disrupt or maintain institutions (Creed, DeJordy, & Lok, 2010; Creed, Hudson, Okhuysen, & Smith-Crowe, 2014; Toubiana & Zietsma, Forthcoming). Nonetheless, despite calls for the study of discrete emotions (Creed et al., 2014) there is little investigation into the specific role of fear in processes of institutionalization.

The objective of this article is therefore to understand how fear is implicated in institutional work to reproduce or sustain institutions. This study develops such an understanding through an empirical examination of haute cuisine chefs. Haute cuisine denotes high quality cooking associated with gourmet restaurants and luxury hotels in France (Trubek, 2000). Prior research emphasises that “haute cuisine is a highly institutionalized

field" (Bouty, Gomez, & Drucker-Godard, 2013, p. 7; Rao, Monin, & Durand, 2003). Yet all of these institutional studies pay scant attention to emotional experiences, despite research noting that haute cuisine restaurants are sites of fear inducing activities (e.g., Burrow, Smith, & Yakinthou, 2015; Fine, 1990). This article therefore employs a phenomenological approach to elicit the emotional experiences of chefs and to explore how their fear connects to their institutional context.

This study provides three contributions to our understanding of the relationship between emotions and institutional maintenance. First, it reveals how the experience of felt fear can sustain institutions by promoting conformity and a form of cognitive constriction, or a narrowed focus on the reproduction of established practices. This focus also limits reflections on or challenges to the norms underpinning the institution. Identifying these processes illuminates the distinctive function of fear and offers a contribution to the understudied mechanisms of institutional maintenance (Dacin, Munir, & Tracey, 2010; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006, p.234). Second, it builds on other studies that reveal the conditions necessary for maintenance work to emerge (Lok & de Rond, 2013; Micelotta & Washington, 2013). Threats and violence targeted at individuals within the institution serve to connect experiences of felt fear to the violation of institutionalized rules. This *fear work* sustains the conditions necessary for fear-driven maintenance work. Third, it extends the limited theorizations of fear within institutional scholarship by demonstrating how fear is not only implicated in regulative processes (Scott, 2014) but also in normative processes, where feelings of fear are a traditional element of haute cuisine in their own right. Rather than viewing emotions as purely motivational forces or tools, the very experience or eliciting of particular emotions can therefore sustain elements of an institution.

Four sections structure this article. First, the article situates this study in terms of the research on emotion and institutions and then highlights the limited examinations of the

discrete emotion of fear in processes of institutionalization. Second, it discusses interpretative phenomenology as an appropriate approach to examine the fear and institutional work of haute cuisine chefs. Third, it details the institutional context of haute cuisine and presents the findings from an analysis of chefs' experiences. Fourth, it discusses these findings in light of the extant literature to highlight the powerful role that fear can play in the processes that sustain institutions.

Institutions, institutional work and emotion

The early pioneers of institutional theory emphasised the relationship between emotions and institutions. Talcott Parsons' theoretical work, for instance, suggested that different institutions rest on different values and affective states (Parsons, 1960). Philip Selznick's empirical investigations also emphasised the importance of emotional energy (Selznick, 1951) and noted that sometimes "an experience is so deep and moving that its emotional qualities spread out and pervade all that surrounds it and is related to it" (Jaeger & Selznick, 1964, p. 663). To these early institutional theorists, emotions were an important element of understanding the processes of institutionalization.

Subsequent institutional scholars, however, re-focused their research away from emotions and values. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, several seminal articles led to the development of a new approach to institutional studies of organizations (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Meyer & Rowan, 1977). Unlike the 'old' approaches of Selznick and colleagues, this 'new' institutionalism emphasised cognition, culture and persistence (Hirsch & Lounsbury, 1997). Although new or neo-institutionalism continued to develop, and broadened to incorporate notions of agency and entrepreneurship (DiMaggio, 1988; Hardy & Maguire, 2008), it continued to emphasise cognition and to overlook the role of emotions.

In recent years, institutional research has begun to re-focus away from considerations of actors as boundedly rational 'cognitive misers' (Fiske & Taylor, 1991) to incorporate more emotional and nuanced considerations (Toubiana & Zietsma, Forthcoming). For instance, it has been argued that institutional life is sustained through "moments of located passion" (Friedland, 2013, p. 44). Several scholars also contend that emotions may operate across the three fundamental pillars that support institutions: regulative, normative, and cognitive processes (DiMaggio, 1997; Scott, 2014).

As Scott (2014, p. 63) notes in terms of the three pillars, attention to emotion in institutional scholarship has largely been associated with institutional work (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Maguire & Hardy, 2009). Lawrence and Suddaby describe the concept of institutional work as "the broad category of purposive action aimed at creating, maintaining, and disrupting institutions" (2006, p. 217). In contrast to preceding institutional approaches, Lawrence et al. (2011, p. 52-53, emphasis added) state that institutional work is interested in the day-to-day equivocal instances of agency, "successful and not, simultaneously radical and conservative, strategic *and emotional*" and rife with unintended consequences.

Indeed, a growing number of scholars have drawn upon institutional work to support their examinations into the relationship between emotions and institutions. Creed et al.'s (2010) investigation of a small number of gay and lesbian ministers in two US Protestant denominations highlighted their sense of shame as their churches prescribed a heterosexual orientation. Although focused largely on the ministers' identity work, the authors' research points to the importance of shame in understanding why individuals may act back on institutional norms to affect institutional structures. Advancing such ideas, Voronov and Vince (2012) theorized that creative forms of institutional work may only be possible when individuals possess lower levels of both cognitive and emotional investment in institutional arrangements. In contrast, higher levels of cognitive and emotional investment serve to

maintain existing institutional arrangements. Thus, these studies highlight how emotion and cognition both serve important roles in the institutionalization process.

Emotionally focused institutional research necessitates bringing 'people' back into institutional studies (Hallett & Ventresca, 2006) and the inclusion of affective aspects of people that depart from 'cognitive miser' conceptualizations (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). As Voronov (2014) points out, if institutional scholars are seeking to understand how people experience various institutional arrangements (Suddaby, 2010), then acknowledging the role of emotions in these processes becomes increasingly important. Although institutional studies reveal an abundance of emotions (see Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005; Voronov, 2014) and touch on the emotional experiences bound up in institutional work (Zilber, 2009), explicit empirical investigation of institutional workers' emotional experiences remains rare (but see Moisander, Hirsto, & Fahy, Forthcoming). For example, whilst shame has been deeply explored (Creed et al., 2010; Creed et al., 2014) and recent research has examined anger, betrayal and hope (Toubiana & Zietsma, Forthcoming), a range of other institutional studies mention or touch on emotions but do not explore these theoretically. These include contempt (Wright, Zammuto, & Liesch, 2015), fear (DeJordy & Barrett, 2014) and joy (Zilber, 2007). Creed et al.'s (2014) point that a focus on a single emotion offers specificity, and avoids the problem of discussing emotions as rarified abstractions, clarifies the value in examinations of discrete emotions. Investigating these emotional experiences would add nuance to and support the development of new theories by illuminating the function of specific emotions within institutions. Such investigations would also reveal why each emotion matters from the perspective of institutional workers themselves.

Fear and Institutions

Fear is "the perception of a threat to some aspect of well-being, concurrent with the feeling of inability to meet the challenge" (Wurff, Stringer, & Timmer, 1988, p. 137). Fear can "mobilize or freeze resources to avoid threat" (Grandey, 2008, p. 238). Whilst fear is often viewed as an individual experience or feeling, sociological research has stressed that to understand this emotion requires an appreciation of social and cultural context (Tudor, 2003). As Elias and Jephcott (1982) explain, individuals' fears are not solely dependent on their nature but are also shaped by their social relations and culture, which guide their understanding of when and how much fear to feel.

Whilst existing historical and sociological research on fear has continually highlighted the important role of fear in supporting and sustaining institutions (e.g., Parkin, 1986; Scruton, 1986; Tudor, 2003), this emotion has received very limited attention from institutional scholars themselves. Perhaps this is because this emotion is hidden, disguised or suppressed consistently, particularly in men (Scheff, 2003). Indeed, DeJordy and Barrett's (2014) study of female U.S. naval officers is one of the rare empirical studies that reports the presence of fear within an institutional context. In their study, DeJordy and Barrett (2014) explored the emotional responses of women entering the traditionally all-male institution of the U.S. Naval Academy. They revealed how these women suffered bullying in their workplace and how this prompted experiences of fear. Whilst also noting several other emotions, the authors did not explicitly examine this fear or explore its function theoretically.

One of the only other brief considerations of the relationship between fear and institutions is Scott's (2014, p. 60) contention that fear is bound up in the regulative pillar of institutions, explaining that coercion and the enforcement of a system of rules is likely to prompt feelings of fear. Scott (2014) does not delve any further. Recognising the lack of theoretical or empirical attention given to the emotion of fear, in particular, gives rise to the

research question that motivates this article: how is fear implicated in institutional work to reproduce or sustain institutions?

Methodology

This study employs a phenomenological approach to examine how fear is implicated in institutional work to maintain institutions. Recent scholarship has pointed to the power of phenomenological methodologies to examine institutional workers' experiences (Gill, 2014). Scholars have also noted that institutional theory has failed to understand people and their passions as it has "become disconnected from its phenomenological roots" (Creed et al., 2014, p. 275; Hallett & Ventresca, 2006) and call for more phenomenological studies (Voronov & Weber, 2015). Although phenomenological studies remain relatively infrequent in organization studies, the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) approach has begun to demonstrate its potential to provide new insights into emotions within organizations (e.g., Gill, 2015a; Tomkins & Eatough, 2014). As with all methodologies, IPA possess certain limitations. Evaluations of this approach (see Brocki & Wearden, 2006; Gill, 2015b) point out that IPA's focus on experience is more appropriate for small numbers of cases or individuals and does not lend itself to generalization like other approaches, such as grounded theory. In addition, IPA recognises that the researcher interprets people's emotional state from what they say and therefore that researchers are largely dependent on what participants disclose.

Participants and data collection

The sampling of participants is purposive in IPA. The intention is to recruit participants who can offer a meaningful perspective of the phenomenon of interest. The study therefore selected chefs currently working in a small group of elite restaurants and hotels in various

locations around the world. Previous research has shown such environments to be an emotionally charged (Fine, 1990) and highly institutionalized setting (Bouty et al., 2013). Therefore, despite the study drawing interviewees from spatially dispersed organizations, chefs' primary work experiences and training were derived from kitchens that subscribed to the same basic values of haute cuisine. These values are elaborated in the 'institutional context' section below.

Interviews with chefs occurred between 2012 and 2015. The 30, mainly male, participants were aged between 18 and 40 and represented 11 nations. These included America, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, China (Hong Kong), Singapore, Spain, Italy and the United Kingdom. Interviews were carried out with chefs in a range of different positions in the kitchen – from stagiaire (work experience) to executive chef and chef patron (see a glossary of positions in table 1, in the appendix). Prior to interviewing, assurances of anonymity and confidentiality were provided and permission was obtained to digitally record and then transcribe the interviews. As part of the assurances around anonymity the identities of the participants, named colleagues, current and previous employers have been disguised. This article employs the pseudonyms detailed in table 2 (see appendix).

Semi-structured interviews facilitated exploratory discussions and the collection of participants' reflections, to explore participants' lived experiences (Eatough & Smith, 2006). Digital recordings were transcribed verbatim, in accordance with the principles of IPA. Interviews generally took place in the restaurant where the chef worked, but also in neutral locations (e.g. coffee shops) or by telephone. Initial interviews ranged from 40-minutes to almost 3 hours and covered a range of questions centred on their experiences in different kitchens, such as the nature of the work undertaken and relationships with colleagues. For

example, chefs were initially asked to recount how they came to be a high-end chef and to reflect on their apprenticeship and the work they undertook.

As a phenomenological exploration of chef's experiences necessitates the use of interviews, it is possible that chefs' responses will be subject to certain biases. To minimize the effect of such biases, this study draws on the advice of several scholars. First, the study adheres to Golden's (1992) suggestion to utilize multiple respondents by conducting interviews with a range of individuals, who work in different restaurants around the world. In this study, only data that reflects the wider experiences of chefs across the sample population is presented. Usefully, in some instances, chefs separately and individually recounted the same events, which allowed for some degree of comparison and verification. Second, as per other institutional scholars (e.g., Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010), this study draws on multiple sources of data. For example, books and exposés relating to the kitchen work help to triangulate interview data and provide further context.

Data analysis

The researchers performed an inductive and thematic analysis on the chefs' accounts, in adherence to the principles of IPA. In the early stages of data analysis, several commonalities emerged, labelled as clusters of sub-themes or first order constructs that represent shared ideas across the participants that are grounded in their accounts. In reviewing our first-order constructs, fear emerged as a consistent theme in a variety of guises. In an iterative fashion, the researchers explored the concept of fear in the extant literature and then returned to the data to examine this emotion. This helped to clarify that the emotion under study was fear. For instance, the participants' descriptions related to the perception of a threat to some aspect of their well-being. This manifested not just in the frequent use of the word 'fear' or 'scared' but also in their descriptions of being agitated and nervous in relation to this threat.

The analytical process continued by refining and aggregating the various first level constructs into three superordinate or second-order constructs (following other inductive research e.g., Creed et al., 2010). This required searching again for connections and patterns, clustering and abstracting groups of first-order constructs with commonalities together to classify them into distinctive second-order constructs. In relating these second-order constructs to prior research, the researchers concluded that the three second-order constructs that emerged collectively explained the role of fear in institutional maintenance.

The institutional context

The institutional context for this article is haute cuisine, which translates to high-class (French) cooking. Denoting a grand approach to the preparation and presentation of food (Trubek, 2000), haute cuisine is rooted in post-revolutionary France when restaurants and sophisticated dining emerged as a specific cultural phenomenon (Bouty et al., 2013; Gomez & Bouty, 2011).

The French chefs Antonin Carême (1784-1833) and Auguste Escoffier (1846-1935) were instrumental in establishing haute cuisine as a powerful and coherent institution (Shaw, 1995; Trubek, 2000). For example, Carême instituted a shift in French high society, away from theatrical banquets designed to showcase wealth and privilege in favour of a more refined approach to dining (Trubek, 2000). Escoffier continued Carême's work in the kitchen but also introduced further reforms to ideology, structure and organization of kitchen work. In particular, drawing on his experiences in the army, Escoffier established the concept of the 'Brigade de Cuisine'. He organized chefs into specialised, functionally efficient operational units characterised by rigid hierarchies, clear divisions of labour and responsibility (Roth & Mesplede, 2011). As his military commanders did of him, Escoffier demanded total commitment from those that worked for him. Chefs had to obey his orders, exhibit

unquestioning obedience and dedication to high standards (James, 2006; Roth & Mesplede, 2011; Shaw, 1995; Trubek, 2000).

In modern commercial kitchens, many aspects of the organizational systems and culinary ideologies instituted by Carême and Escoffier endure. Kitchens continue to follow a strict hierarchy, use French military-derived terminology, and vigorously promote commitment, discipline, hard work, obedience and exacting high standards (see Bourdain, 2001; Edwards, 2013; Ramsay, 2006). It is against this institutional backdrop that this article presents it findings.

Findings

This section reveals how fear underscored chefs' experiences and explains how this emotion served to reproduce the institution of haute cuisine. Additional data exemplars are provided in table 3, in the appendix. The section is organized into three main parts that examines chefs' experiences. The first part considers chefs' felt fears, which drive conformity and focus attention on to the precise reproduction of kitchen tasks, diminishing their capacity and willingness to contest institutional prescriptions. The second part explores the practice of 'fear working', where chefs sustained the conditions in which felt fear thrives by connecting threats or violence to mistakes, or violations of kitchen norms, to promote fear-driven maintenance work. The third part explicates 'institutional fear'. Institutional fear refers to the way in which fear constituted a normative component of haute cuisine, representing a necessary and valued emotion in its own right.

Collectively, these three parts explain the process of fear-driven institutional maintenance work: what felt fear 'does' to maintain the institution (felt fear as driver of conformity and focus), how the conditions that generate such fear are sustained (through fear work) and why fear is used in this way (as a normative expectation of the institution).

Felt fear: Driving conformity and narrowing focus

The category of 'felt fear' captures the most salient fears that played out in the minds of chefs, which stemmed from being professionally "good enough" ('professional fear') or the consequences of poor performance or practice ('practice fear').

Professional fear. The fear of not being proficient or 'good enough' across a range of complex culinary skills to ensure continued employment generated fear that prompted conformity in the form of learning and reproducing institutionalized practices. These fears featured particularly prominently, though not exclusively, during chefs' accounts of their early careers. For example, many chefs described how they began their careers feeling extremely afraid that they would be unable to live up to the high expectations of haute cuisine cooking. The experiences of Robert and Miles – young chefs employed in Michelin starred kitchens in the UK and France respectively – are instructive in this regard. For Robert, fear defined his initial experiences of working in a Michelin Starred restaurant: "… at the beginning I was really afraid my cooking was not good enough". Similarly, Miles described the fear he experienced when joining an haute cuisine restaurant with 3 Michelin stars. He experienced significant pressure to "get everything exact" as "I had never been so scared in my life, walking into that kitchen … I was so out of my depth, these guys are incredible".

For both Robert and Miles, fear was a strong emotional incentive to observe, learn and adopt the institutionalised modes of practice that defined the elite kitchens in which they worked. Both described how they set about replicating the standards, practices and ideologies espoused by the institutional elites that surrounded and impressed them. For example, to reduce his fear and to establish himself as a competent chef Robert described how he would be "pushing all day long" to replicate the practices of the chefs he revered. Similarly, Miles described how he worked hard to attain high standards by constantly "checking, checking,

checking and checking" everything he did to ensure it met the exacting standards of the kitchen. He dedicated himself to making sure "nothing goes wrong".

Professional fears were not, however, isolated to the start of a chef's career. Such fears occurred at different and later stages, as illuminated by the experiences of Nicholas – an experienced Head Chef of a restaurant in northern France. Nicholas described the fear he felt when he left his position as a Sous Chef in an elite 3 Michelin Star restaurant to embark on his first solo venture. The restaurant he took over already had a Michelin Star but had recently lost its Head Chef. Therefore, an important part of his job was to ensure that standards did not slip and the restaurant maintained this important industry accolade. Acute feelings of fear characterised this point in his career: "I arrive here - half of the team left. I had to hold the star on the first year. I was 28 and fucking… and… everybody was looking. They said this kid is going to fucking… he's going to die". Nicholas's fear of "not being good" enough motivated him to reinforce the wide range of institutional norms valued by the Michelin Guide and upon which his kitchen would be judged. In addition to his own very long working hours and intense effort, he enforced strict standards of practice on those who worked for him, recruited old colleagues to help institute these standards, and marginalised those who impeded him. Ultimately, he was successful. Irrespective of this outcome, Nicholas demonstrates how experienced chefs engage in work to conform to industry standards to allay the fears derived from threats to their professional status.

Practice fear. In contrast to chefs' professional fears, this subcategory captures the chefs' strongest fears, which were derived from the anticipated or imagined consequences of making mistakes in the kitchen. Mistakes were a significant source of fear for many chefs because haute cuisine is an institution defined by the individual and collective adherence to an ideology of culinary excellence. Mistakes impede the pursuit of this ideology. As Davide –

a Sous Chef employed by a prestigious Hotel in Paris – described: "You [are] going to fuck up everything in the kitchen, if you make a mistake".

Explosive, highly emotional outbursts occurring as a result of a mistake were common and significant source of fear for many chefs. Nicholas described how "you had to get your shit right straight away otherwise they would get very pissed off". Keith – a newly appointed Sous Chef with extensive experience of elite kitchens in the UK – described how this fear affected him: "… if I fucking know I'm gonna lose my job or get punched or get the shit kicked out of me, I'm always gonna make sure that everything I'm doing is right. I, I'm gonna make sure I, that there can never be a mistake". The fear of violence focused chefs on their immediate work and narrowed the possibilities open to them to reflect on anything other than meeting the exacting standards of their kitchens. As Susanna – a young French Pastry Chef working in the UK – described,

> *"when you work in the kitchen […] you don't, you don't see really what's happen outside. You are, your focus [is] just on your job and I think it's not really good. You [pause] maybe you lost your humanity, a little bit I think. It's … you became a machine I think."*

The very real threat of violent consequences directed chefs' behaviour, causing them to narrow their focus on to their immediate tasks of reproducing culinary excellence rather than challenging this process. Such a narrow focus on avoiding mistakes was widespread amongst the participants in this study. "The main thing is not to lose your focus, not to lose your concentration, and not looking too much at what's happening around you" (Daniel). Almost all of the chefs described the "focus" that was required to avoid a punishment. For example, Anton described how as a novice chef he used to "live part of the day in fear that I'm doing

something wrong". This encouraged him to learn quickly and follow closely the prescriptions of peers and mentors. Similarly, Max, who regularly endured "getting yelled at" and getting "screamed at" whenever he made a mistake, described how fear motivated him to adjust and refine his practice in order to align with dominant institutional prescriptions of culinary excellence. He described how he was now "more organized, more disciplined" as a result of his mentor's frequent scolding. This was echoed by Steven, who described "the desperate dread, thinking that you're not going to be ready in time for service" he experienced whilst working in a notoriously violent kitchen in London. Like Max, Steven also described how fear drove him to focus on the practices that now define him as a high performing chef. Fearful of what Kate described as the "generic" and "unspoken" personal consequences of their mistakes, chefs were unwilling to contest institutionalized practices. Instead, they sought to manage their fear by focusing on their work in the kitchen, pouring their attention and energies into producing the high quality food required, relentlessly reproducing rather than reflecting on or resisting established practices.

Fear work: Tying threats and violence to institutional violations

The category of 'fear work' describes the deliberate efforts of chefs to instil fear into other chefs, connecting institutionalized rules of fear to individual experiences. When successful, such fear work sustains the conditions in which felt fear can emerge and, in the case of haute cuisine, thrive. Beyond simply generating fear, fear work also harnesses this emotion, directing feelings toward the institutional objectives such as culinary excellence. Typically this was by binding acts of verbal or physical violence to mistakes, to ensure the focus necessary to produce high quality dishes. Edgardo – the Executive Chef of a leading restaurant in China – described fear work succinctly: "We're like a coach. You need to know when to encourage them and when to break them down and put them back together".

Similarly, as Marcello – another the Executive Chef – described "You motivate them, and you need to push the adrenaline through so they're ready, they're focused. I keep them focused". Three different types of fear work were described by chefs: verbal violence; non-harmful physical violence; harmful physical violence.

Verbal violence: This subcategory involved stimulating fear through verbal violence. Steven – the Head Chef at an elite restaurant in China – described this in terms of being "shouty". This form of fear work was widely experienced by the chefs that were interviewed. For example, Kate described how one chef she worked for in the USA "just yelled, just laid into this one woman" because she was a "bad cook". Max described how a chef he worked for in Denmark "would just get so enraged that he'll just go off at you" if he was doing his job badly. Gideon described how a chef he worked for in the UK would "verbally give shit to everyone" if they were working too slowly. He described how they would provoke chefs' fears by [verbally] working on their anxieties: "If there was one guy that was always really slow. You know, she's come over to us and like, you know [be like] 'what the fucks wrong with this guy, why's he so slow … he comes here and he can't even turn an artichoke'".

Non-harmful physical violence: The second subcategory of fear work involved stimulating fear through non-harmful physical violence. This subcategory incorporated demonstrative or symbolic violence that falls short of actual bodily harm (e.g., contact between the fear worker and their target). The following examples are illustrative: "I was [turning] a potato, it wasn't right. He put his fist to my face, he shouted at me" (Nicholas). "You give him a pot with something, the chef [say] "it's no good", bam, throw it back to you on the stove" (Anton). "He just walked over to my section grabbed the pan off the stove. Looked at it. Smashed it in half. Threw it in the bin and walked off" (Eric).

Harmful physical violence: The third subcategory of fear work involved stimulating fear through violence that was physically harmful. In comparison to the other two forms of

fear working, this form of fear working was less frequent. Many of the chefs that were interviewed, however, had some experience of this form of extreme fear work – either as providers or recipients. For example, Murray – the Executive Chef of an elite restaurant in Asia – described the violent behaviour of one chef he worked for at the start of his career: "… you never wanted to get in his way. Everything was shit. He used to like punch waiters, he used to punch chefs, he used to fling things. Everything was 'shit'". Numerous chefs also described having food or utensils used as weapons. Mario – a Chef de Partie in a leading UK-based restaurant – described how a colleague left "the plate in the oven and they thought it was me. So the chef just came there, just [left] the plate in my hand […] burnt it […] to show me how hot it was". Graham described his own experiences through a comparison with the violence and aggression shown on the TV series *Hell's Kitchen*. He described how the realities of his own practice could be far more extreme than those ever shown on 'reality' television. He said: "it is different when you overcook a piece of fish and the guy opens your chef's jacket and pours the hot fat down your chef's jacket".

Amongst the chefs that were interviewed, fear work was widely acknowledged as both common practice and an effective way of institutionalising particular ways of working and values. For example, Keith was firm in his belief in the instrumental value of fear work. He described how he used this practice in relation to the scenario of overcooked fish in a kitchen he ran in Asia: "I sent it back and you know, to prove my point, I took it over to them stopped everything, made sure they focused on me, and then made a point of pointing at the fish and asking "what's this? This is shit". I then tossed the fish onto their bench, slammed it a bit with my fist". He wanted his chefs to know he thought their work was "shit" and that it "wasn't acceptable": "If they know that I've already sent two or three bits of fish that have been over-cooked, the next time they cook, over-cook a bit of fish they're not going to hesitate to give it to me. Whereas when I send it back, then they are, they know it's over-

cooked and they'll think again about giving it to me". Such fear working preserved the conditions in which fear thrived and provided a powerful tool to ensure the motivation for reproducing high quality dishes. Fear work enabled the exertion of high levels of control in the kitchen and provided means with which to push chefs to achieve the high standards synonymous with haute cuisine.

Institutional fear: Fear as a necessary and traditional feeling

The category of 'institutional fear' describes the idea that fear – and the rules that relate to the experience of fear – can be routinely distributed throughout social groups and communities, over time. For the geographically dispersed chefs in this study, fear was a normative component of the institution of haute cuisine, where the presence of fear was itself an essential and expected feeling of inhabiting the institution. Whilst the prior category of felt fear captured chefs' individual experiences of fear, and the category of fear work illustrated how elements of this felt fear were learnt and taught through violent social interaction, the category of institutional fear underpins both. It explains why such fear is commonplace and valued, as this emotion is infused into the historical and social construction of haute cuisine. In this way, chefs' actual experience and eliciting of fear represented a form of institutional reproduction and preserved what many chefs perceived to be an essential element of the institution. Two subcategories underpin the category of institutional fear.

Necessity of fear. The first subcategory pertains to chefs' underlying belief in the necessity of fear. A large number of the chefs that were interviewed believed that fear was not only a useful tool, but was necessary in haute cuisine kitchens. They believed that fear was required to produce high quality dishes. These chefs identified with and valued the feeling of fear. For them, fear was part of an emotional script which defined and signified institutional inhabitation. For example, Morten described his own need to be "scared about

service". Max described the necessity of "tough love". Similarly, Pierre – a French Executive Chef working at an elite restaurant in Asia – described the importance of "a little bit of severity in the way you manage your kitchen". Anton described the need to "treat people badly". Robert described how "you have to be vicious" when working with chefs in the kitchen.

When probed, the chefs explained that this necessity stemmed from their belief that fear was the optimum way to galvanise and focus effort. Miles described the underlying sentiment that was shared by many: "it is worth the abuse, to produce the food". For example, Gideon – the Head Chef of a restaurant in Hong Kong – described how "Fear is definitely a motivation. It is not for everyone, it's not for every Head Chef, but you know, it's probably the way to get the quickest results from someone. Scare the shit out of them so that they don't make that mistake again". This certainly appeared to be true of the chefs in this study, as Jessica – the Chef Patron of an elite Japanese restaurant in USA – described how anger was a "wonderful drive" for her. Robert explained how "it is the rules. The more you are vicious, the more you gonna be better". Indeed, the necessity of fear in the kitchen had taken on a rule-like status as a necessary experience to ensure the high standards of haute cuisine are being met.

Tradition of fear: The second subcategory relates to the historically-grounded normative conventions that defined and signified fear as a normal and 'proper' aspect of the institution. Chefs frequently described how they had been taught to use and experience fear in the kitchen and how this was a tradition within haute cuisine. Anton described how fear-based pedagogical practices played a positive role in his own professional development. He described how a Head Chef he worked for at the start of his career was "always shouting at me", but that this was intended in a "nice way". "He [the Head Chef] wanted me to learn how to work properly".

As Steven noted, many chefs use "the historical thing as their basis for justification" for the normality of violence. Susanna described how "it don't shock me because [pause] violence it's a part of kitchen". Pierre described how "it's normal. Everyone is happy with it … That's the way chef is. We have to accept it". In relation to his experiences in the UK, Eric described how he "just yelled and screamed … It's just what you do, because if you're not yelling, then someone is yelling at you. Kill or be killed". In relation to his own fear work ("I just hit him a few times"), Morten cited similar normative conventions "that was the way it was … everybody did it like that". These quotes illustrate how the experience of fear and the practice of fear work have become a custom and a normalised expectation of what means to work in many elite restaurants. Fear was a tool used to support the institution, but also as an essential ingredient of the institution itself, passed on through generations of teaching and training. Many chefs were willing to endure feeling afraid and to conduct fear work to be a part of the elite institution of haute cuisine.

Discussion

This article has examined how fear is implicated in the institutional work of chefs to reproduce or sustain the institution of haute cuisine. The findings contribute to a broader understanding of the relationship between emotions – specifically the discrete emotion of fear – and institutional maintenance in three ways. First, the identification of chefs' felt fears in prompting conformity and focusing attention on to a narrow range of tasks illuminates the distinctive function of fear as a mechanism of institutional maintenance. Second, the finding that fear was generated and harnessed by chefs through *fear work*, illuminates how institutional workers can sustain the conditions under which such emotionally-driven maintenance work can occur. Third, the notion that fear appeared to be an end in itself and a

valuable aspect of haute cuisine in its own right extends the limited theorizations of the role of fear in institutional processes.

The distinctive function of fear in institutional reproduction

This study reveals how the personal experience of felt fear serves to reproduce institutions by promoting conformity and narrowing workers' focus on immediate tasks. Identifying these processes offers a contribution to the overlooked mechanisms (Dacin et al., 2010) and "relatively understudied phenomenon" of institutional maintenance (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006, p.234). Given that emotional investment in the current institutional order is often viewed as being even more important for institutional maintenance than cognitive investment (Voronov & Vince, 2012), deeper and more nuanced insights into the role of emotion is a particularly valuable direction of research.

In this study, by conforming to the exacting norms of the kitchen, the chefs could keep their unpleasant feelings of fear of not being professionally "good enough" at bay. Leaning and performing very specific practices modelled on successful chefs allowed them to avoid criticism and attain legitimacy in their precarious profession. The idea that extreme anxiety or fear prompts a desire to conform is well known in the psychology literature, where higher levels of fear generate greater degrees of conformity (e.g., Asch, 1956; Darley, 1966). In terms of institutional maintenance, these empirical findings offer an alternative explanation of how conformity can emerge at the micro-level, stemming from emotions rather than cognitions (Zucker, 1977), practices (Smets, Jarzabkowski, Burke, & Spee, 2015) or rituals (Dacin et al., 2010). Similarly, rather than being 'seduced' into conformance (Dacin et al., 2010), the chefs in this study conformed to escape their fears. Looking beyond the confines of haute cuisine, such fear-driven conformity is likely to reproduce particular practices that underpin an institution over time.

The threat of violence that existed in kitchens around the world, unlike many other contemporary organizations, prompted high levels of fear that made the chefs alert to mistakes. Such extreme cases provide particularly visible dynamics to identify theoretical insights (Pratt, Rockmann, & Kaufmann, 2006). In this study, threats of violence illuminated how chefs would narrow their focus to perform tasks precisely and to a high standard. This focus is a form of 'cognitive constriction', which refers to intense fear leading to "a narrowing of attention to central cues in the stressful situation, with a corresponding decrease in responsiveness to peripheral cues, which could improve performance on some tasks" (Easterbrook, 1959; Janis, 1967, p. 188). Fear can centre attention on to urgent tasks and reduce reflection on less urgent issues. In this way, fear drives the perpetuation of institutionalized practices to ensure an escape from threats whilst also restricting challenges to or the questioning of these practices. Fear can therefore function to support institutional maintenance or the uncontested reproduction of institutional practices or scripts (Jepperson, 1991).

The implication of this finding is that whilst other emotions may also serve to reproduce institutions, they are likely to do so in different ways. For example, shame, like fear, can support institutional reproduction and maintenance by providing powerful inducements to compliance with prevailing norms (Creed et al., 2014). Felt shame, however, does not appear to focus or narrow cognitive capacity as the high levels of felt fear did in this study. Unlike fear, one function of shame was to trigger an individuals' conscious and critical sensemaking to assess or reassess community prescriptions and bonds (Creed et al., 2014).

The findings from this study also help to draw a further distinction between fear and shame, not just in terms of how these emotions maintain institutions but why they do so. Creed et al. (2014) suggest that shame is an emotion which controls behaviour due to concerns about valued social relations. Fear can also be used as a means to control behaviour

but not simply because of the threat of harm to one's person, but also because it is seen as necessary to the values of the institution – to the successful performance of the institutional endeavour. Recent studies have begun to highlight the potential connection between emotions and values, particularly in terms of established professions (e.g., Wright et al., 2015). In this study, chefs were emotionally invested in the idea of excellent and high quality cooking, which represented a core value of the institution of haute cuisine. This value appeared to support and justify the experience and use of fear as individuals accepted and expected violent behaviour to produce high quality dishes. Fear had therefore become an institutionalized belief and component of the emotional register (Toubiana & Zietsma, Forthcoming). An emotional investment in such values (Voronov & Vince, 2012) can validate the experience of fear and use of violence. Thus, institutional maintenance can occur through shame and fear, one appealing to social bonds, and the other appealing to the values associated with an institutional context.

Fear may be used in a variety of settings to ensure compliance, as is often the case with military regimes using violence against their citizens. Such fear is less likely to be institutionalized and is therefore likely to be episodic in nature (Lawrence, Winn, & Jennings, 2001), whilst the fear identified in this study is much more systemic and the associated compliance more sustained. Discerning the specific roles of and reasons for different emotions in further empirical research is likely to further illuminate the processes of institutional maintenance.

Sustaining emotionally driven maintenance work

This study contributes to our understanding of the conditions necessary for fear-driven institutional maintenance work to function. It responds to calls to appreciate how emotional responses are rooted in the relationship between the members of an institutional domain

(Toubiana & Zietsma, Forthcoming) by emphasising the social nature of fear rules within institutional contexts. It also builds on other studies that reveal how maintenance work emerges through breakdowns (Lok & de Rond, 2013) or the need for institutional repair (Micelotta & Washington, 2013) by offering an insight into how individuals create the impetus necessary for such work in the absence of institutional threats. Rather than through threats to the institution, it is through threats to the individuals within the institution – through fear work – that individuals can experience fear and learn to reduce this fear by preserving institutional practices.

This article's notion of *fear work* refers to individuals' (successful or unsuccessful) attempts to instil fear into other individuals, connecting institutionalized rules of fear to individual experiences. The concept of fear workers draws inspiration from Furedi's (2005) notion of 'fear entrepreneurs', who represent the social forces necessary to instil fear into other individuals. For instance, Furedi's work describes how politicians employ 'scare stories' to promote their cause and to create tangible fears to achieve particular ends. The concept of fear work that emerged from this study's findings is distinct from fear entrepreneurship as fear workers can perform maintenance work and do not necessarily have to focus on change. Fear workers such as the chefs in this study may, therefore, prompt or prevent feelings of fear in others, or themselves, to intentionally sustain an institution and its norms. Indeed, "any culture seeks both to promote and proscribe certain forms of emotional expression, options which are realised by social agents in institutionalised modes of social activity" (Tudor, 2003, p. 243). Fear work is the only one of the three categories identified in this study that can be described as a form of institutional work as it represents intentional efforts to affect institutions. In contrast, the earlier category of felt fear is a micro-level response to such fear work.

Fear work sustains the conditions in which felt fear emerges and therefore plays a crucial role in reproducing institutions by generating and harnessing individuals' felt fear. As Micelotta and Washington (2013) point out, effort directed toward institutional maintenance requires enabling conditions. Just as military officers discipline new recruits by communicating and enforcing rules that guide when and how much recruits should experience fear (Eisenhart, 1975), so too do the chefs in this study. As in other studies that explore bullying in institutional contexts (DeJordy & Barrett, 2014), fear served to regulate behaviour and as an affective mechanism of institutional control. Mathisen, Einarsen, and Mykletun (2011): 638 noted in their study how many chefs promoted aggressive or violent behaviour within "a culture of fear". The fear workers in this study also generated fear largely through the use of violence and threats of violence.

These threats were not indiscriminate but were tied to mistakes, whereby a specific mistake would lead to a particular retribution. As such, fear was harnessed so that the near-perfect reproduction of highly institutionalized practices reduced chefs' feelings of being threatened and sustained institutional goals. This corresponds with Collins' (1990) suggestion that emotions serve to establish what is 'right' and 'wrong', and inform the micro-behaviours that shape macro-level structures. As such, it seems reasonable to believe that the promotion of fear may serve as a mechanism of institutional reproduction in a variety of settings, albeit to varying degrees. The construction of conditions which drive particular emotional experiences has received limited attention within institutional theory scholarship. Explorations of how fear or other emotions that promote maintenance work are summoned in different settings would illuminate not just what emotions 'do' but the contextual factors that sustain these emotions.

Emotion as a normative component of institutions

The category of 'institutional fear' emerged from this study to describe the idea that fear – and the rules that relate to the experience of fear – can be distributed throughout social groups and communities, over time. Institutionalized fear is the institutionalization of fear work over time, so that it becomes an essential part of beliefs and norms. By experiencing the emotion of fear, the chefs in this study were sustaining a normative element of the institution of haute cuisine about how they should feel. This finding serves to corroborate and extend Scott's (2014) contention that emotions may operate across the institutional pillars. Scott (2014, p. 60) specifically notes that fear is likely to be bound up in the regulative pillar of institutions, explaining that coercion and the enforcement of a system of rules is likely to prompt such fear. This is borne out in this study.

The finding that fear can be an essential element of some institutions suggests that fear can also function within the normative pillar. The normative pillar relates to values, designating both aims and the appropriate methods to achieve them (Wicks, 2001). Expectations of how to behave may also include prescriptions of how to feel. Indeed, in this study, many chefs spoke of how fear was a "normal" part of their working days. The normative pillar often gives rise to responsibilities and roles, where individuals hold others to particular standards (Stinchcombe, 1997). Many senior chefs spoke about their explicit attempts to instil fear into others as eliciting such feelings was a pedagogical tool to teach individuals how to become chefs. Fear was not just an instrument of coercion or regulation but a normative expectation (Moisander et al., Forthcoming) of what it means to be an haute cuisine chef.

By viewing fear as at least partially social in nature, rather than just as individualized experiences, fear is likely to stem from normative beliefs and to thrive in institutions where it is tied to core institutional values (Kraatz & Flores, 2015; Roulet, 2014). Emotion theorists have revealed how emotions are tied to ideological and cultural standards that transcend

purely felt experiences (Hochschild, 1975, 1979). This is important because, as Tudor (2003), p. 244 points out, studies of fear:

> *"cannot simply be concerned with the operation of the individual 'emotion' of fear […] Nor is it enough to develop a social psychology […] Fear must also be examined at the societal level where it may even become the very foundation of forms of social organization."*

For the participants in this study, fear appeared foundational to being a chef and inhabiting the institution of haute cuisine. When fear is institutionalized, particular notions of fear become an accepted and socially patterned processes through reinforcement and routinisation. Just as Zilber (2009) suggests that institutions are sustained through stories being passed on and understood by new inhabitants, the findings in this article suggest that institutions are sustained through values being passed on (i.e., high quality cooking) and that such values can perpetuate and justify certain emotional experiences for new inhabitants. Both the aspiration for high quality food as well the belief in the associated need for fear and violence were justified by chefs in the findings as an 'historical' component or tradition of working in haute cuisine. As discussed earlier, there appears to be a strong connection between values and the experience and eliciting of certain emotions (Toubiana & Zietsma, Forthcoming; Wright et al., 2015). Just as the value of high quality cooking is institutionalized over time and becomes central to haute cuisine, so too is the use of fear work, such that it also becomes an essential part of the beliefs and norms of kitchen life.

In viewing fear as a normative component of the institution of haute cuisine, it becomes easier to understand why fear plays such a prominent role in this profession but not others. For instance, many other forms of employment rely on rules enforced through rewards

or punishments that can prompt some anxiety or fear. However, few of these industries would share the normative makeup of haute cuisine, where fear is often perceived as a prized or appropriate emotional state that should be actively encouraged. Furthermore, few of these industries possess haute cuisine's cultural heritage, which is rooted in militaristic working practices. Indeed, the military offers several parallels to haute cuisine in terms of a strict hierarchy, routinized violence and a 'climate of fear' (Eisenhart, 1975; King, 2013). This is not to suggest that fear is the only emotional state experienced by chefs but, rather, that it is common and central to the institution of haute cuisine. Fear can be more than a motivating force or regulatory tool but, also, perceived as an essential and traditional aspect of some institutions. In this study, by experiencing fear, chefs were inhabiting the institution and, by eliciting fear, they were preserving an essential institutional ingredient.

Conclusion

This article contributes to the growing literature on emotions and institutions by showing how a specific emotion – fear – can sustain and reproduce institutions. The article reveals that the emotion of fear expressed in chefs' accounts has been central to the institution of haute cuisine for decades. The centrality of this emotion reflects its utility in promoting conformity and focusing attention on to a narrow range of tasks, limiting challenges to or the questioning of the established practices underpinning the institution. These findings extend our understanding of the micro-level processes of institutional reproduction whilst also drawing attention to the different ways in which distinct emotions sustain institutions.

The article also contributes to our understanding of the conditions necessary for fear-driven institutional maintenance work to occur. It offers an insight into how individuals create the impetus necessary for such maintenance work through the process of fear work, connecting institutionalized rules of fear to individual experiences and enforcing these

through violence. This article also suggests that the very experience and eliciting of fear preserved an institutional element, as fear was ingrained within the cultural heritage of haute cuisine and highly valued as a normative component of the institution in its own right. In this way, emotions do not necessarily just motivate institutional work aimed at the reproduction of an institution but can also represent an essential ingredient of the institution being reproduced.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank David Gill and the participants of the 2014 EGOS Emotions and (the Limits of) Institutional Control subtheme for their suggestions in shaping this article. They would also like to thank Charlene Zietsma, Madeline Toubiana and the three reviewers for their constructive and thoughtful comments in developing the final article.

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Appendix

Table 1: Glossary of positions

Position	Meaning
Stagiaire	Trainee or apprentice chef (typically someone on work experience)
Commis Chef	Junior kitchen chef
Sous Chef	'Under' (deputy) kitchen chef
Chef de Partie	Senior chef, station chief or line cook. A chef who is in charge of a section
Head Chef	Person in charge of a kitchen, generally reporting to an executive chef
Executive Chef	Chef with executive responsibilities, typically overseeing the running of several kitchens
Chef Patron	Chef/owner

Table 2: Outline of participants

Code	Gender	Age	Position
Graham	Male	26-29	Senior Sous Chef
Morten	Male	22-25	Head Chef
Robert	Male	22-25	Junior Sous Chef
Mario	Male	22-25	Chef de Partie
Nicholas	Male	30-33	Head Chef
Marcello	Male	34-37	Executive Head Chef
Susanna	Female	24-25	Chef de Partie, Pastry
Daniel	Male	26-29	Executive Chef
Anton	Male	22-25	Commis Chef
Keith	Male	26-29	Sous Chef
Max	Male	30-33	Executive Chef
Miles	Male	22-25	Chef de Partie
Davide	Male	22-25	Sous Chef
Vito	Male	22-25	Chef de Partie
Lucile	Female	22-25	Waitress
Rocco	Male	Withheld	Chef de Partie
Yoko	Female	22-25	Stagiaire
Dimitri	Male	18-21	Sous Chef
Murray	Male	38-43	Executive Chef
Pierce	Male	30-33	Executive Chef
Kate	Female	30-33	Head Chef
Pierre	Male	34-37	Executive Chef
Edgardo	Male	34-37	Executive Chef
Mayra	Female	Withheld	Chef Patron
Jessica	Female	34-37	Executive Chef/Chef Patron
Sarah	Female	34-37	Sous Chef
Ruth	Male	38-43	Restaurant Manager

Gideon	Male	30-33	Head Chef
Steven	Male	38-43	Executive Chef
Eric	Male	22-25	Senior Sous Chef

Table 3: Data Exemplars for First-Order Constructs

First-order construct	Quote
Felt fear	
Professional fear Fear derived from professional concerns	At first I was very nervous, because I don't have that background, like most other people working somewhere like this (Sarah) You come to one point and you think 'I am not good enough'. That is the low point, coming in that day and thinking about not being good enough for that place. (Mario)
Practice fear Fear derived from the practices of working in kitchens i.e. threats and violence	If you make mistakes you get food thrown in your face, hot food thrown in the face, hot pans thrown at you. (Graham) But when you're starting off you don't have that relationship because you're not confident enough to say 'I've made a mistake'. You're afraid- you're too afraid to say 'I've made a mistake', of the backlash, than you are to say 'I need more time' (Eric)
Fear work	
Verbal violence Using words to incite fear	… you ask this simple thing to people and they can't perform on the most easy task. It just makes you lose the plot, completely, then you shout at people. (Daniel) She shouts and screams at people, and she manipulates them. She's very- she relies a lot on psychologically putting people down. Like, putting them down and keeping them down. She'll humiliate people in the middle of the service- things like that. (Miles)
Physical violence (non-harmful) Using physical actions to incite fear	She was shouting, she was throwing things, so it's like TV. Because this is his mentality, she- think that like, if you push the chefs to the limit you get the best out of them (Anton) My chef looked at me and said you knew better and you shouldn't have made a mistake like this, somebody with your education this is shit and he pushed it over and it splattered on the floor. I was shocked and I cleaned it up really quick and then I went in the freezer and I cried (Kate)
Physical violence (harmful) Using physical harm to incite fear	There have been some really horrible kitchens to work in. I've been punched and had things thrown at me or- on multiple occasions. Recently, too. (Steven) … they are really physical and I mean if you mess up they'll push you against the wall they'll tear your apron in half- they'll be like, on you all the time. (Daniel)

Institutional fear	
The necessity of fear Essential nature of fear	… there needs to be something inside you which thinks 'I'm scared about service' (Morten) The sous chef needs to shout on the chef de partie. And, the chef de partie needs to shout on the commis. If something going on during service and he see the commis do it, he should give shit to the chef de partie because he is in charge of him. (Robert)
Tradition of fear Culture and history of fear	Well, for me, I don't mind when you see the people in the kitchens, and they are nervous or they are anxious, angry, you're yelling- that's totally fine, for me, because I feel you have all that action because you care. (Edgardo) You just see it in people, and you don't see it in other people, so you just get rid of the ones that don't have it. But in London, you didn't sack anybody, you just made their life horrible until they left. (Steven)