

**Lake Effect Pizza: The Commodification and Culture of Pizza in Toronto, Ontario  
and Buffalo, New York 1950-1990**

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## **Abstract**

This dissertation examines the history of pizza in Toronto, Ontario and Buffalo, New York, spanning a period from 1950 through to the early 1990s. Pizza, far more than its constituent parts of dough, sauce, and cheese, is used as a lens to explore the history of immigration, business, labour, urbanization, gender, culture, economics, consumption, and food in Toronto and Buffalo. Through an analysis of a variety of sources, including oral interviews, GIS-produced maps, and newspapers, this dissertation explores how pizza was commoditized as an item of popular urban consumption and culture, in a variety of sites and spaces within the cities.

The commodification of pizza, the development of pizza industries, and the culture of consumption in Canada and the United States paralleled currents in postwar life in Toronto and Buffalo. The central question emanating from these histories and which is explored here is the ways in which culture, ethnicity, immigration, and urban economies shaped the commodification of an ethnic food. Pizza was once confined to the foodways of Italian immigrants in Canada and the United States, but was eventually commoditized for sale to non-Italians. The commodification of the food item spread from small family owned businesses attributed to Italian ethnic economies to franchises and conglomerates owned by non-Italians. Moreover, the food item itself was modified based on availability of ingredients and to appease the taste preferences of non-Italians.

The Great Lakes cities, Toronto and Buffalo had similar sized populations, patterns of Italian immigration, industry and growth in 1950. However, by 1990, Toronto was the largest city in Canada, a multicultural metropolis with strong economic output, and Buffalo was a regional American city, which suffered greatly from

deindustrialization and protracted population loss. Despite similar postwar currents, the staggering divergences between the economic capacities of two urban centres shaped different patterns of commodification and consumption of pizza.

*This project is dedicated to the memory of my grandfather,*

*William Alexander Hughes,*

*The man who started my love for history.*

## Acknowledgments

Research started for the dissertation in April 2018; since then I have consumed 712 slices of pizza. Pizza has always been at the peripheries of my life, consumed at birthday parties, as a late night snack, a dinner, a breakfast and a lunch. When Marlene Shore agreed that a dissertation on Great Lakes pizza sounded like a good idea back in 2017, I knew that I was set off on a tasty adventure. Little did I know where a food made of dough, sauce and cheese would take my pursuit for knowledge.

The community at York University has been essential to inspiring and forming this project. My supervisor, Marlene Shore, saw potential in me back in 2015 when I first considered a PhD, and was instrumental as a mentor who shaped and challenged my ideas, and improved my writing. Thank you as well to Jennifer Bonnell and William Jenkins, for the countless edits, comments, and curiosity along the path of this dissertation. I would also like to thank my external examiners, Sarah Elvins and Abril Liberatori for their thoughtful comments. To the larger graduate history community at York, I have been privileged to learn alongside you, both formally and informally. Thank you to the Graduate Program in History, especially Karen Dancy for all your assistance over the past several years. Additional thanks to Anne Rubenstein for a new music selection, and lessons in undergraduate teaching. I must also thank Susan Warwick of the Department of Humanities at York for introducing me to Marlene Shore, and suggesting I consider York for doctoral work.

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Writing a dissertation during a global pandemic has been quite the task. In some ways the pandemic made me focus on my writing, and get work done. In other ways it was also a looming dark cloud. At times, I have made reference to the impact of the pandemic in footnotes. Some historic pizzerias did not survive the financial implications of the pandemic and I've tried to make note of this.

I would like to thank my family, Craig, Sandra and James Hughes for supporting this dissertation. Thank you for reading chapters, James' cartography skills, rides to archives, and all the other support only a family can provide. To Terra, my foster puppy from Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides, thanks for asking me to leave my computer to go for walks, and sitting at my feet while I wrote.

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Yours in Pizza,

Alexander Hughes  
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## **Introduction: Lake Effect Pizza**

American-style dishes, including sandwiches, hamburgers, coffee, and fried chicken dominate the fast food markets in contemporary Canada and the United States. Pizza, once a staple of Italian immigrant cuisine, is also one of the most consumed fast-food items. The top ten highest-grossing fast food franchise operations in both countries include pizza franchises.<sup>1</sup> An ever-evolving product, pizza is a quick snack, served at the family dining table, a diet staple of university students, a featured food at celebrations, or a quick lunch. Pizza has also been a slice of mainstream news and a topic of political debate. The Canadian-created Hawaiian Pizza stirred an international incident in 2017 when the President of Iceland, Guðni Th. Jóhannesson, expressed his disdain for the Hawaiian Pizza, saying that if he had the power to pass the law, he would ban pineapple on pizza in Iceland. Following the Iceland incident, Prime Minister of Canada, Justin Trudeau, took to Twitter and said, “I have a pineapple. I have a pizza. And I stand behind this delicious Southwestern Ontario creation.”<sup>2</sup> The Prime Minister defended the Canadian style of pizza, despite the fact pizza was once not a customary Canadian food item. Pizza was embraced as part of mainstream foodways in Canada and the United States between 1950 and 1990, and was subsequently commoditized for the mass-market. The dish was originally cooked and sold on a small scale by Italians to their co-ethnic community, by non-Italians in their own kitchens, and by Italians in their own

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics from 2017 and 2018 business magazines including Statista, “Pizza restaurant chains in Canada ranked by gross sales in 2018”, Bloomberg “2017 Q2 Fast Food Sales”, QSR Magazine “2018: Ranking The Top 50 Fast-Food Chains in America” all demonstrate the popularity of fast food pizza franchises amongst the competition of American-style fast food options including sandwiches, burgers and fried chicken.

<sup>2</sup> CBC Radio, “Iceland's president admits he went 'too far' with threat to ban pineapple pizza”. November 14, 2018.

restaurants. It was not always a commodity sold by conglomerate fast food chains. At a time when pizza is one of the most popular fast food franchises, this study of the history of pizza in Canada and the United States provides a way of understanding the evolution of a popular food item from an immigrant food to a mainstream food commodity sold by franchise and conglomerate businesses.<sup>3</sup>

At its main focal point, this study of the commodification and consumption of pizza in Toronto, Ontario and Buffalo, New York between 1950 and 1990 highlights the connections between ethnicity and immigration, postwar culture, and urban economics in the development of urban food industries and consumption patterns. Postwar Canadian and American urban centres, including Toronto and Buffalo, were shaped by a series of cultural, economic and social currents, which facilitated the commodification of a food with ethnic origins – pizza. This study deals with the intricacies of postwar Toronto and Buffalo, including immigration, ethnic economies, community building, consumer culture, suburbanization, industrialization, and deindustrialization. Central to this study are Italian immigrants, who brought their traditional foodways to Canada and the United States and subsequently commoditized pizza for their community's economic and cultural survival. Equally important are the capitalistic interests of food conglomerates and fast food industries that attempted to commoditize pizza without the assistance or inclusion of Italian immigrants in their businesses. In Toronto, the incursion of American economic interests played an essential role in the commodification of pizza. The

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<sup>3</sup> Studies in the field of Food History including Jeffery Pilcher's *Planet Taco: A Global History of Mexican Food* [2012], Panikos Panayi's *Spicing Up Britain: The Multicultural History Of British Food* [2008], Ted Merwin's *Pastrami on Rye: An Overstuffed History of the Jewish Deli* [2015], and Gustavo Arellano's *Taco USA: How Mexican Food Conquered America* [2012] have examined the commodification of other immigrant foods including Tacos, Indian Food, and Jewish Deli. However, an academic historical study of the commodification of pizza in Canada and the United States at the urban trans-national level has not been undertaken. This study deals with aspects of the historiography that have not been told.

emergence of separate urban postwar consumer cultures in Canada and the United States shaped how Torontonians and Buffalonians purchased food, where they ate food, how they ate food, their accompanying social practices associated with consumption, and where the consumption of food fit in their work-leisure cycles. In a wider sense, this dissertation is a study of business and food history, revealing the intertwined connections among the histories of urban centres, urban economies, ethnicity, immigration, and currents of postwar Canadian and American life and the commodification and consumption of an ethnic food item. The central question emanating from these histories and which is explored here is the ways in which postwar culture, ethnicity, immigration, and urban economies shaped the commodification of an ethnic food.

From its earliest origins in Italy with Middle Eastern, Mediterranean and Asian influences, pizza has been transformed over many centuries by migration and food experimentation. Pizza is historically rooted in Italian social and cultural traditions, prepared with a variety of regional ingredients and considered a regionally diverse dish. Locally produced flour, olive oil, tomato and cheese aided in the development of modern pizza tastes.<sup>4</sup> In Italy, pizza was consumed in restaurants with a knife and fork, or by hand on the street, in a bar or at home.<sup>5</sup> The way in which pizza was consumed differed across social classes, places and time. Through waves of Italian migration to Canada and the United States, pizza was imported to North America, where it underwent further changes. Pizzas are based upon three basic elements. The so-called trinity of a pizza includes a dough base, a tomato sauce and cheese. Pizza should be baked over fire or in

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<sup>4</sup> Capatti, Alberto, Massimo Montanari, and Áine Healy. *Italian Cuisine: A Cultural History*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 153-154.

<sup>5</sup> Capatti, Montanari, and Healy, *Italian Cuisine: A Cultural History*, 153.

an oven and heated until the cheese bubbles and the crust crisps. Some regions of the world have organizations that require members to use select ingredients, processes and limited toppings to produce a pizza. For example, members of Napoli's Associazione Verace Pizza Napoletana are only allowed to produce Pizza Marinara (tomato, oil, oregano, and garlic) and Pizza Margherita (tomato, oil, mozzarella or fior di latte, grated cheese, and basil). Ingredients, preparation, and characteristics of the final product must, "conform strictly to the Disciplinary rules in order to meet the required characteristics."<sup>6</sup> In this dissertation, no pizza organization's regulations are used to define a pizza. Instead, it considers a pizza simply as a baked dough product featuring sauce, cheese and any other ingredients.<sup>7</sup>

Between 1950 and 1990, residential homes, restaurants, streets and franchises were the urban spaces where pizza was commoditized in Toronto and Buffalo. In these spaces, or the theatres of commodification, pizza was introduced to non-Italians, commoditized by the Italian ethnic economies, consumed by urban citizens, and co-opted by non-Italians seeking to profit from the popularity of the food item. The economic disparity between the cities of Toronto and Buffalo in the period between 1950 and 1990 shaped the process of commodification by Italian-Canadians, Italian-Americans, and non-Italians alike. As Toronto became an important cultural and economic centre in Canada, the role of Buffalo as an American economic centre waned. Toronto facilitated the

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<sup>6</sup> Associazione Verace Pizza Napoletana, "Regulations for obtaining the use of the collective trademark, Verace Pizza Napoletana: Production Rules" (accessed May 8, 2019)

<sup>7</sup> Non-dough bases for pizza have become popular in the past decade as restaurants accommodated different diets and allergies. Non-traditional pizza bases, including polenta, cauliflower, puff pastry, naan, and pita have been used in Toronto and Buffalo. Low-gluten and gluten-free dough bases, including rice flour, corn flour, quinoa, buckwheat and millet have also become popular pizza dough. Other pizza-style products like the Stromboli, Calzone, and pizza roll may be fried instead of baked, but are still comprised of the main three components.

growth of pizza businesses, homegrown franchise chains, conglomerates, and attracted the interests of American branch plant franchises. As Buffalo's economic role declined, so did its population, which resulted in the city fostering small independent pizza businesses and not attracting the business of franchises or conglomerates. The divergent economies of these two cities influenced how capitalist enterprises operated, and shaped the cultural significance of this commodity -- pizza.

In a capitalist economy (or economic system), commodification is understood as the transformation of a good, service, or idea into an object of trade (a commodity). The commodity is introduced to a market where value is assigned based on the supply and demand for it. Pizza was a commodity created from raw ingredients and made into a product for consumption and sale. This dissertation examines how pizza was produced and consumed in private urban homes, restaurants, on the streets, and conglomerate franchises; in each of these urban spaces, there were different economic and cultural significance assigned to the commodity of pizza.

By drawing cross-border comparisons affecting the commodification of a food item, the narrative of postwar economic conditions reveals how Canadian and American urban centres capitalized and consumed pizza in different fashions. The rituals, activities, and decisions made by individuals (as consumers), business owners, and state actors, shaped how food was produced and consumed in urban centres. The actions taken within urban spaces determined who had access to the commodity, how the commodity was accessed, how the commodity was modified, and how profits were made through the sale of the commodity. Postwar cultural trends also shaped the commodification of pizza by

influencing the tastes of consumers, their leisure activities, and the ways in which they experienced pizza.

Toronto and Buffalo had similar patterns of economic development and urban growth in the early 1900s, bound to their positions as transportation hubs connecting the Great Lakes to the interior by rail, as well as being centres of manufacturing. Economic growth also drew population to the cities, including many immigrants. Most notably, in the 1950s, both cities had Italian populations of comparable size and regional backgrounds, as well as expanding non-Italian populations.<sup>8</sup> The Italian immigrant populations in Toronto and Buffalo largely came from Southern Italy, having left Italy prior to World War I, escaping drought, crop failure and heavy taxation.

**Table 1: Total Population and Italian Population in Toronto and Buffalo (1950 and 1951)**

<b>City</b>	<b>Total Population 1950/1951</b>	<b>Italian Born Population 1950/1951</b>	<b>Percentage of Population Italian Born</b>
<b>Toronto</b>	673,754	18,441	2.7%
<b>Buffalo</b>	580,132	16,696	2.8%

Reflecting data collected in 1949 in Buffalo, and 1950 in Toronto. *1950 United States Census of Population- Census Tract Buffalo* and *1951 Ninth Census of Canada: Volume II Cross-Classifications of Characteristics*

The post-war Italian immigrants came from diverse regions of Italy; however, restrictive immigration policies in Canada and the United States favoured family members of persons already residing in the country. Each of the cities had approximately 2.7-3.4% of the population identifying as Italian born, according to statistics from 1950 and 1951. The cities of Toronto and Buffalo had similar sized urban populations of 673,000 and 580,000

<sup>8</sup> United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1950 United States Census of Population- Census Tract Buffalo, N.Y.* Table 1, 24.

Canada Department of Trade and Commerce, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *1951 Ninth Census of Canada: Volume II Cross-Classifications of Characteristics.* Tables 5, 6-28, 6-33.

respectively in 1950 and 1951.<sup>9</sup> The geographic proximity between Toronto and Buffalo, their location within the Great Lakes region, as well as comparable urban populations with many Italian-born persons (and second, third generational Italian-Canadians and Italian-Americans) are determining factors for their inclusion in this study.

Despite their similarities, it is the contrast between these two cities that makes them most intriguing for comparative analysis. Between 1950-1990, Toronto was a city on the rise of economic and cultural prominence, while Buffalo was a city on the economic and population decline. By 1990, the City of Toronto's population was 2,290,753 and the population of Buffalo's municipal area was 328,117.<sup>10</sup> Toronto grew by nearly 1.6 million residents, while Buffalo's population decreased by nearly two hundred thousand residents in the same forty-year period. Similarly, Toronto's median household income in 1990 was \$89,408 (CAD) and Buffalo's was \$75,000 (CAD).<sup>11</sup> By 1990, Toronto had a larger population, with a bigger and wealthier middle class, in contrast to Buffalo's declining population with primarily working class incomes. This dissertation follows other labour histories of the Great Lakes region and uses the term working class to encompass all types of wage earners in Buffalo without dividing them

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Statistics Canada, *Canada Year Book 1990*. "Population of Census Metropolitan Areas." U.S. Census Bureau, *1990 United States Census*. "General Population Characteristics- New York State."

<sup>11</sup> Statistics Canada, *The Daily Report*, Tuesday, May 12, 1998. and U.S. Census Bureau, *State Urban and Rural Incomes, Erie County, 1990 Census of Population Social and Economic Characteristics New York*. Toronto rate adjusted to \$89,408 consistent with 2020 inflation. Buffalo rate adjusted from \$28,508USD in 1989 to 2020 inflation of \$60,121 (USD) or roughly \$75,000 (CAD) to 2020 exchange rates.

by the type of labour they performed.<sup>12</sup> The term, “blue collar,” is sometimes used to describe the character of labour in industrial cities like Buffalo. The term signifies the labour of manual skilled and unskilled workers including those in Buffalo’s steel, automotive, factory, construction, and cereal industries. However, this term leaves out the labour of service sector employees (including pizzeria workers), the financial sector (Buffalo was the headquarters of M&T Bank since 1856 and employed 5000 employees), and other “white collar” employees in Buffalo.

Buffalo was a city once characterized by its industry and working class population but as industry left Buffalo and many other rust-belt cities in the United States, the population and economic output of the city also decreased. Toronto, on the other hand, grew exponentially during the time period in question and served as both an economic and cultural hub for Canada.<sup>13</sup> Their respective economic and cultural characteristics, with one as a city on the rise, and the other as a city on decline shaped different processes of pizza commoditization.

The decades 1950 to 1990 serve as the time frame of investigation for this study because Toronto and Buffalo underwent population and economic changes during this period. By selecting 1950 as a starting point for this dissertation, the contributions of

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<sup>12</sup> In *Lunch Bucket Lives: Remaking the Workers’ City* (2015), Craig Heron uses the terms wage earners, working people, and working-class to describe the workers of Hamilton, Ontario (a city with similar industries and demographics to Buffalo). In *Industrial Sunset: The Making of North America’s Rust Belt 1969-1984* (2003), Steven High uses the terms working people and working class to describe the particular types of workers in Youngstown, Ohio, Detroit, Michigan, Hamilton and Windsor, Ontario. Heron, Craig. *Lunch Bucket Lives: Remaking the Workers’ City*. (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2015). High, Steven. *Industrial Sunset: The Making of North America’s Rust Belt 1969-1984*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003).

<sup>13</sup> Toronto’s growth was affected in part by the exodus of businesses and population from Quebec following the success of René Lévesque’s separatist Parti Québécois in the 1976 Quebec Provincial election. Many Montreal-based firms, including the Royal Bank of Canada, Bank of Montreal, and Sun Life Assurance moved their head offices to Toronto to avoid potential political turmoil. Some growth is also attributed to the arrival of American Vietnam War draft resisters in Toronto and other Canadian cities.

early businesses and ethnocultural entrepreneurs associated with the Italian ethnic economies are recognized. Pizza obtained popularity outside of Italian communities in the 1950s, with some food scholars attributing the return of Second World War veterans who fought in Italy with popularizing the tastes for pizza in North America.<sup>14</sup> 1990 has been set as the end point for this study as it allows for a forty-year study of urban economies and their effects on the creation and expansion of many pizza franchises and conglomerates, the many innovations of the pizza industry, as well as trends in the manner in which pizza was prepared and consumed. This forty-year period also allows for and demonstrates the rise and demise of independent pizzerias that were part of the Italian ethnic economies, largely owing to the rise of pizza franchising conglomerates and the role of non-Italians in the pizza industry.

The formation of Toronto and Buffalo facilitated their paths towards becoming major urban centres. Toronto once served as both traditional lands of Indigenous persons and trading posts prior to the establishment of the Town of York in 1793.<sup>15</sup> In its first decades, York was established as a garrison town and the seat of government and commerce for Upper Canada.<sup>16</sup> The town of York was incorporated as the City of Toronto on March 6, 1834 with industrialization and a demand for factory workers gradually following.<sup>17</sup> Coinciding with industrialization, the city expanded geographically by annexing neighboring towns and villages of High Park, Humber,

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<sup>14</sup> Authors of books on pizza Tony Gemignani, Carol Helstosky, Liz Barrett all claim that American soldiers who served in Italy during WWII found a taste for pizza, and sought it out when they returned to the United States. However, searches of official war photos do not reveal American soldiers eating pizza, nor does the word appear in catalogued war correspondence. This claim has been hard to substantiate outside of secondary literature not grounded in primary sources. This represents one dominant myth in the history of pizza in North America.

<sup>15</sup> Levine, Allan. *Toronto: Biography of a City*. (Toronto. Douglas and MacIntyre: 2014), 19.

<sup>16</sup> Levine, *Toronto*, 34.

<sup>17</sup> Levine, *Toronto*, 87.

Yorkville Village, the Annex, Seaton Village, and Parkdale in the late 1800s.<sup>18</sup>

Capitalists, including Hart Massey whose business was the manufacture of agricultural tools, Timothy Eaton and Robert Simpson whose businesses were department stores, utilized Toronto as a centre for their enterprises. Following Confederation in 1867, the railways connected Toronto to the interior of Ontario and the rest of Canada. These connections ultimately made Toronto a hub for manufacturing and commerce.<sup>19</sup>

By the turn of the 1900s, Toronto's prominence as a centre of commerce and industry attracted many immigrants to the city. Immigrants, including Eastern European Jews, Germans, Chinese, Poles, Ukrainians, Macedonians and Italians, all made Toronto a home beginning in the early 1900s. During the period, 1897 to 1905, when Wilfrid Laurier was Prime Minister, the federal government opened the doors of Canada for "stalwart peasants in sheepskin coats" to farm the prairies and populate major cities.<sup>20</sup> Many of these new immigrants would establish ethnic economies and communities in Toronto.

The Second World War solidified Toronto's position as a centre of commerce and industry. War benefited the manufacturing and transportation economies of Toronto with its factories producing items such as artillery, machinery, and other war goods to be sent abroad. Major Canadian banks were also based in Toronto, helping to finance the war. Following the war, retooled war factories and centres of commerce drew population to Toronto. On September 8, 1949, the ground was broken for the establishment of the Toronto subway, marking a new wave of urbanization. After periods of great debate,

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Levine, *Toronto*, 122.

politicians, social reformers, entrepreneurs, real estate tycoons and planners attempted to reshape Toronto with social housing projects, highways, suburbs and shopping plazas leading into the 1950s.<sup>21</sup> This growth, coupled with the introduction of the immigration point-based system in 1967, facilitated further waves of immigration to the city, including Eastern Europeans, South Asians, Chinese, Caribbean Islanders, Filipinos, and Middle Eastern immigrant groups.<sup>22</sup> In the postwar era, Toronto rose as a multicultural metropolis.<sup>23</sup> The growth of Toronto as a centre of commerce and industry, an attractive home for immigrant populations, as well as its geographic expansion by the 1950s, helped to facilitate the commodification of pizza in the city.

The City of Buffalo began as a Dutch trading post named New Amsterdam in 1789. The town at the foot of the Buffalo and Niagara rivers was renamed Buffalo Creek, shortened to Buffalo by Yankee and Yorker settlers over the next decade.<sup>24</sup> This small trading post grew as a place of trade between Americans and local Indigenous populations.<sup>25</sup> At this time, Buffalo Creek was not an important town in New York State, yet it served as a point of contact for groups of the Great Lakes Region. The town was incorporated on April 5, 1816 and included the surrounding villages of Clarence, Grand Island, Cheektowaga, and West Seneca.<sup>26</sup> The first major expansion of industry and population to the city came after Buffalo defeated Black Rock to become the Western

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<sup>21</sup> Levine, *Toronto*, 199.

<sup>22</sup> The point system favored education, youth, and fluency in English or French as opposed to race or country of origin in order to level the field of immigration.

<sup>23</sup> By 1991, 59% of people living in Toronto were non-British and non-French, and represented over one hundred ethnic groups. In contrast, in 1961 Toronto had a population that was 60% British origins. Levine, *Toronto*, 304.

<sup>24</sup> Gerber, David A. *The Making of an American Pluralism: Buffalo, New York 1825-1860*. (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 3-4.

<sup>25</sup> Rizzo, Michael F. *Through The Mayor's Eyes: Buffalo New York 1832-2005*. (Morrsville NC: Lulu Enterprises, 2005), 15.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

terminus point of the Erie Canal. Associated industries, including grain elevators, were attracted to the city upon the completion of the canal in 1825.<sup>27</sup> Buffalo incorporated as a city in 1832 following the success of the canal and the grain elevators in expanding the population and introducing new industries.<sup>28</sup> By 1845, Buffalo attracted many German and Irish immigrants who established neighbourhoods and formed the culture and economic character of the city.<sup>29</sup>

Buffalo was selected as the location for the March 1901 Pan-American Exhibition with organizers celebrating Buffalo as an advantageous American city with an industrial core. The city was connected to the Great Lakes and Erie Canal shipping routes, had the ability to harness the power of Niagara Falls, and had an immense labor force of German, Irish, and Polish immigrants.<sup>30</sup> Industrialization brought new industry to Buffalo, including iron and steel companies like the Lackawanna Steel Company, as well as railcar manufacturers, which opened plants along the shores of Lake Erie.<sup>31</sup> Industry on the shores of Lake Erie used hydroelectric power and had access to the transportation routes of the Great Lakes and Erie Canal. The brewing and livestock industries also thrived in Buffalo because of their connections to the city's grain industry. At the turn of the century, Buffalo was the second largest livestock transfer hub, next to Chicago, with rail connections to Kansas City, Omaha, St Louis and Pittsburgh.<sup>32</sup> The industrialization

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<sup>27</sup> Rizzo, *Through The Mayor's Eyes: Buffalo New York 1832-2005*, 24.

<sup>28</sup> Rizzo, *Through The Mayor's Eyes: Buffalo New York 1832-2005*, 16.

<sup>29</sup> Jenkins, William. *Between Raid and Rebellion: The Irish in Buffalo and Toronto 1867-1916*. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2013), 28.

<sup>30</sup> Goldman, Mark. *City on the Edge: Buffalo, New York, 1900 – Present*. (Prometheus Books, 2007), 14.

<sup>31</sup> Goldman, *City on the Edge: Buffalo, New York, 1900 – Present*, 37.

<sup>32</sup> Goldman, *City on the Edge: Buffalo, New York, 1900 – Present*, 40-41.

of the city, as well as its role as an American transportation hub drew many immigrants including Italians, Polish, Lebanese and Eastern European Jews to the city by the 1920s.<sup>33</sup>

The First World War was advantageous for the manufacturing and transportation economies of Buffalo, allowing new industries such as petrochemicals, and aircraft and automobile manufacturing to expand in the city.<sup>34</sup> The war had a direct impact on Buffalo's migrant communities, especially the national quota system implemented in the Immigration Act of 1924, which limited incoming immigrants and served to ostracize many groups, including German and Italian Buffalonians.<sup>35</sup> In 1927 the opening of the Peace Bridge connected Buffalo with the Golden Horseshoe and facilitated international trade by land.<sup>36</sup> Buffalo dubbed itself the "International City" with the completion of the bridge.<sup>37</sup> However, like many other cities in the United States, Buffalo was devastated by the Great Depression of the 1930s. Many citizens were out of work, and reliant on relief rolls and New Deal public projects such as the airport, concert hall, stadium, police headquarters and recreation facilities.<sup>38</sup> The Second World War resurrected Buffalo's economy as the demand for industry increased, and the city became essential for aircraft production, shipbuilding, and steel production.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Goldman, *City on the Edge: Buffalo, New York, 1900 – Present*, 44.

<sup>34</sup> Goldman, *City on the Edge: Buffalo, New York, 1900 – Present*, 75.

<sup>35</sup> Goldman, *City on the Edge: Buffalo, New York, 1900 – Present*, 77.

<sup>36</sup> The Golden Horseshoe is the popular name used to describe the tract of land from Niagara Falls, around the western end of Lake Ontario at Hamilton, crossing Toronto and terminating at Oshawa. The horseshoe part of the name is derived from the fact that the tract of land roughly resembles a horseshoe, with Hamilton roughly being the centre. The phrase golden horseshoe referred to the band of industrial sites from Niagara Falls to Oshawa following the Second World War. The construction of the Queen Elizabeth Way (QEW) and the accompanying urban corridor in the 1930s popularized the name. High, Steven. *Industrial Sunset: The Making of North America's Rust Belt 1969-1984*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 34.

<sup>37</sup> Goldman, *City on the Edge: Buffalo, New York, 1900 – Present*, 92.

<sup>38</sup> Goldman, *City on the Edge: Buffalo, New York, 1900 – Present*, 99.

<sup>39</sup> Goldman, *City on the Edge: Buffalo, New York, 1900 – Present*, 134.

Following the Second World War, Buffalo entered a period of prosperity. All sectors of Buffalo's economy soared. The chemical production, hydroelectricity, aircraft manufacturing, transportation, and brewing sectors led the urban economy. Services including the public bus transportation system facilitated the expansion and growth of the suburbs around downtown Buffalo and the industrial areas along the lake.<sup>40</sup> Italians, Puerto Ricans, and African Americans from southern states immigrated to Buffalo following the war and contributed to the growth of the city. These immigrants remade downtown neighbourhoods, and encouraged many white-Buffalonians (which included second and third generation Italian-Americans) to migrate to the suburbs.<sup>41</sup> The growth of Buffalo as a centre of both commerce and industry, as well as its geographic expansion by the 1950s, would help to facilitate the commodification of a food item in the city. However, Buffalo's deindustrialization in the 1960s adversely affected independent pizzeria commodification in Buffalo, while in Toronto the growth of branch plants and mass franchises would spur further commodification of pizza.

Toronto and Buffalo entered the post-war era riding the successes of their roles as wartime manufacturing hubs. It was at this same time that pizza was introduced outside Italian communities. Pizza was first commoditized in the homes, spreading to restaurants, the streets, and franchises. However, as pizza was commoditized in the restaurants of Toronto and Buffalo in the 1960s, the urban economies of the cities also started to change. As Toronto's population grew and expanded towards the suburbs, industry in Buffalo started to leave for the American Sunbelt region or to develop

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<sup>40</sup> Goldman, *City on the Edge: Buffalo, New York, 1900 – Present*, 146.

<sup>41</sup> Goldman, *City on the Edge: Buffalo, New York, 1900 – Present*, 191.

Canadian branch plants, and the population left for opportunities in the Sunbelt.<sup>42</sup> The economic disparity between the two cities was a result of post-war change, and this change ultimately shaped how Torontonians and Buffalonians commoditized and consumed pizza. While both cities initially had pizza industries based on Italian ethnic economies, Toronto attracted a franchise-based mass conglomerate industry, which produced standardized and gourmet pizzas, while Buffalo's pizza industry remained independent and expanded towards the production of other foods like subs (i.e., submarine sandwiches) and chicken wings. This dissertation explores these economic changes in the homes, restaurants, streets and franchises of Toronto and Buffalo and their impact on the commoditization and consumption of pizza.

Toronto's role as a centre of the American branch plant economy facilitated the development of pizza franchises in the city. While branch plants were established across the country, the economy of many of the cities of the Golden Horseshoe region, including Toronto, was reliant on employment in plants, factories and offices owned by American firms.<sup>43</sup> Business historian Michael Bliss suggested that branch plants emerged from the economic dominance of the United States, the failure of Canadian economic nationalism, strong tariffs and reciprocity policies.<sup>44</sup> American companies were attracted to Southern

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<sup>42</sup> The Sunbelt stretches across the southern and southwestern United States from California to Florida and includes Georgia, South Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and Nevada.

<sup>43</sup> Watts, H.D. *The Branch Plant Economy: A Study of External Control*. (London: Longman Publishing, 1981), xii.

<sup>44</sup> The high tariffs of the Canadian National Policy (1879-1930) encouraged American businesses to set up branch plants in Canada to avoid the tariffs. Others argue that the foreign investments overwhelmed Canadian industrialists, who chose to work alongside American investors. Bliss, Michael. "Canadianizing American Business: The Roots of the Branch Plant Economy." In *Close the 49<sup>th</sup> Parallel Etc. The Americanization of Canada*. Ed. Ian Lumsden. (University of Toronto Press, 1970), 29-30; Laxer, Gordon. "Class, Nationality, and the Roots of the Branch Plant Economy." *Studies in Political Economy*, January 1986.

Ontario because of cheaper operating costs and the belief that short-term investments in regional economies would be prosperous.<sup>45</sup> Branch plants, ranging from manufacturing, to automotive production, to steelmaking opened in Ontario. Between the 1960s and 1990s, a series of American branch plant fast food franchises opened in Canadian urban centres, including McDonald's, Kentucky Fried Chicken, A&W, Arby's, and Subway.<sup>46</sup> These franchises paved the way for American pizzerias to establish branch plant franchises in Toronto.

Despite changing urban economies, immigrants were attracted to settle in both Toronto and Buffalo by the 1950s. The settlement of Italians in this region occurred in two waves, one in the 1880s to 1920s and a second in the 1950s to the late 1960s. As waves of Italians immigrated to Toronto and Buffalo, they were marginalized from established communities and the general labour market. The concept of ethnic economies, which is at the heart of this study, is inherently bound to the Italian communities of Toronto and Buffalo and their commodification of pizza. Ethnic economy is a concept that encompasses business, culture, social relations and spatial analysis. Ethnic economies exist when an ethnic group has significant influence over one industry of the economy.<sup>47</sup> The concept can be applied to the commodification of pizza

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<sup>45</sup>As Steven High demonstrates in *Industrial Sunset*, American multinational companies looked to Canada because they could pay workers, especially female workers, lower wages than they would be paid in the United States.

High, Steven. *Industrial Sunset: The Making of North America's Rust Belt, 1969-1984*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 101.

<sup>46</sup> The Richmond, British Columbia McDonald's location highlights how McDonald's opened the first branch plant franchises in large Canadian cities close to the United States border. Richmond is a 42km (26mile) drive from the border crossing at Blaine, Washington. Nearby American cities, including Seattle and Everett had McDonald's prior to the opening in Canada. Canadians may have first tried McDonald's on driving vacations in the United States, and wanted the same food at home.

<sup>47</sup> Gold, Steven J. "Ethnic Economies." in *The Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Race, Ethnicity and Nationalism*. (Wiley Blackwell, 2015).

through the themes of Italian immigration, Italian community building, suburbanization, the acceptance of ethnic foods, business development, franchise modeling, and the battle between independent and franchise pizzerias. The focus on ethnicity, with regard to economic contributions and economic participation, enables a scholarly examination of the community that introduced pizza, modified pizza products, created industry around pizza and challenged business models. The centrality of the Italian ethnic economies in Toronto and Buffalo facilitated the commodification of pizza in a variety of urban spaces.

The ethnic economy concept can be broken down into a series of business, labour, social, cultural and consumer categories of analysis. With regard to business and labour, the concept of the ethnic economy encompasses business ownership, employment, business specialization and the spatial concentration of ethnic communities and their businesses.<sup>48</sup> Employment categories are one of the easiest ways to conceptualize ethnic economy. The concept of business proprietorship, or the establishment of ethnic-owned businesses and self-employment, is central to ethnic economy. Closely related to this category is co-ethnic employment, whereby an ethnic business proprietor hires community members to work at their business. This often resulted in the hiring of family members, because ethnic businesses were likely to be smaller than non-ethnic businesses.<sup>49</sup>

The concept of ethnic economy also explains patterns of consumption. For a small-scale ethnic business, the ethnic market is their target consumer base. The appeal of

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<sup>48</sup> Kaplan, David and Li, Wei. *Landscapes of the Ethnic Economy*. (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 5.

<sup>49</sup> However, this concept extends beyond the ethnic owned economy, when ethnic networks play a role in finding employment in non-ethnic owned firms and in the public sector. Kaplan and Li, *Landscapes of the Ethnic Economy*, 2. Gold, "Ethnic Economies."

this business is to the ethnic community.<sup>50</sup> This was the role of early Italian grocers, butchers, fruit markets and bakeries in Toronto and Buffalo who served familiar foods to their fellow ethnic community members. The ethnic market demonstrates the connection between the ethnic business and the ethnic neighbourhood it serves. This connection extends beyond customers but is a linkage between ethnic businesses, whereby ethnic businesses are integrated with one another as suppliers and clients.<sup>51</sup> The linkage between ethnic business and ethnic community expands, as the residential concentration of ethnic homes were often in close proximity to ethnic businesses. The residential concentration helped support businesses as a part of the ethnic market. The concept of ethnic economy extends beyond links between members of the ethnic community. The stereotyping of ethnic communities, or the belief that certain immigrants were better at certain lines of work, aided the creation of ethnic enterprises outside of the ethnic market.<sup>52</sup> This is referred to as the ethnic controlled economy and it led to the specialization and ethnic ownership of businesses in certain industries.<sup>53</sup> For example, Italian newcomers to Toronto worked in and owned businesses in a variety of skilled and unskilled labour roles, ranging from dock workers, coat makers, tobacco retailers, boot makers, confectioners, tailors, butchers, grocers, hairdressers, barbers, and construction workers.<sup>54</sup> In the case of ethnic enterprises for the outside (non-members of the ethnic community) market, this would result in ethnic settlement patterns outside of the ethnic community. For example, fruit vendors often resided in non-immigrant neighbourhoods

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<sup>50</sup> Kaplan and Li, *Landscapes of the Ethnic Economy*, 3.

<sup>51</sup> Kaplan and Li, *Landscapes of the Ethnic Economy*, 3.

<sup>52</sup> Harney, Robert. "Toronto's Little Italy 1885-1945" in *Little Italies in North America*. Ed. Harney and Scarpaci. (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1981), 48.

<sup>53</sup> Kaplan, David and Li, Wei. *Landscapes of the Ethnic Economy*. (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 5.

<sup>54</sup> Harney, "Toronto's Little Italy 1885-1945," 47.

as their businesses changed from fruit brokering (for *paesans*) to grocers and provisioning for non-Italians.<sup>55</sup>

The concept of the ethnic economy can also be applied to a spatial understanding of a geographic location. Space can serve as both a resource for the ethnic economy, and a landscape on which the ethnic economy operates.<sup>56</sup> As a landscape, the ethnic economy operates in a location, which serves a role of ethnic exchange with the co-ethnic community, such as in a Little Italy or Chinatown.<sup>57</sup> Space can also be a resource for the ethnic economy, such as when an entrepreneur establishes an ethnic controlled industry in a location where the industry does not exist yet.<sup>58</sup> This explains the concentration of ethnic communities in certain areas, and the establishment of ethnic owned businesses outside of ethnically concentrated areas of an urban centre.

The concept of ethnic economies can be used to explain the processes and negotiations that took place and facilitated the commodification of an ethnic food item in Toronto and Buffalo. Ethnic entrepreneurs had access to resources, knowledge, a labour force, consumer base, and potential earnings to create and maintain a business. This concept is integral to understanding the commodification of pizza in Toronto and Buffalo as it explains the development of Italian communities and businesses (including restaurants), the interconnected nature of Italian businesses, and the reaction of Italian businesses to non-Italian businesses in the same industry. Moreover, the concept highlights patterns of ethnic movement in a city and the popularity of certain kinds of

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<sup>55</sup> Harney, "Toronto's Little Italy 1885-1945," 48. The term *paesan* or *paaisan* is an alternative Italian spelling for *paesano*, from the Neapolitan language meaning a fellow countryman or Italian. Italians in Toronto and Buffalo used the term to describe fellow Italians.

<sup>56</sup> Kaplan and Li, *Landscapes of the Ethnic Economy*, 6-8.

<sup>57</sup> Kaplan and Li, *Landscapes of the Ethnic Economy*, 8-9.

<sup>58</sup> Kaplan and Li, *Landscapes of the Ethnic Economy*, 7.

food. In Toronto and Buffalo, the Italian community's participation in labour, manufacturing and the food industry shaped the commodification of pizza.

Closely related to ethnic economies was the household economy, a central economic function of the homes of Toronto and Buffalo. The household economy encompassed all economic activities of a household, ranging from wage labour outside the home, non-wage labour, consumerism, and household production. This concept applied to the homes of many ethnic communities where the household economy blended with the ethnic economy. In this blended model, the divisions between paid labour and unpaid domestic work were not clearly delineated. Immigrant families operated outside of the open labour market and worked as family labour in co-ethnic businesses.<sup>59</sup> This ranged from the production of goods in the home, to employment in a family owned business, such as a grocery store or restaurant (often located beneath the over-store family apartments). For female household members, the line between domestic and ethnic economy work could be blended by the household ethnic economy. Women's labour, paid and unpaid, was shaped by a domestic ideology, which constructed their labour as female.<sup>60</sup> This limited women's wage-earning potential, the type of roles performed, and their ability to act as entrepreneurs.<sup>61</sup> More often than not, the domestic ethnic economy meant unpaid or low paying wages for women.<sup>62</sup>

The concept of the household economy also encompasses purchasing power and consumerism. Postwar households in Canada and the United States were in a relatively

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<sup>59</sup> Bhachu, Parminder and Westwood, Sallie. *Enterprising Women: Ethnicity, Economy and Gender Relations*. (Routledge, 2004), 15.

<sup>60</sup> Bhacu and Westwood, *Enterprising Women: Ethnicity, Economy and Gender Relations*, 15.

<sup>61</sup> Bhacu and Westwood, *Enterprising Women: Ethnicity, Economy and Gender Relations*, 17.

<sup>62</sup> Bhacu and Westwood, *Enterprising Women: Ethnicity, Economy and Gender Relations*, 38.

prosperous state, with average household incomes of \$34,800 annually in Toronto and \$34,179 in Buffalo.<sup>63</sup> Personal disposable income in Canada doubled between 1947 and 1960.<sup>64</sup> These growing household incomes, coupled with an expanding market economy, resulted in a wider range of available consumer goods, and higher consumer spending. Historian Lizabeth Cohen indicates that Americans of the 1950s saw, “their nation [and democracy] as the model for the world of a society committed to mass consumption and what were assumed to be its far-reaching benefits.”<sup>65</sup> In comparison to the United States, post-war Canada was, according to Joy Parr, a far, “less lush and a less practiced commodity culture.”<sup>66</sup> Shortages in Canada following the war forced consumers to make choices over which material comforts and pleasures would be purchased.<sup>67</sup> Postwar kitchen consumerism was influenced by the Cold War to support North American ideals of capitalism, modernity and abundance.<sup>68</sup> Consumerism and domesticity were central features of the postwar household economy, and were encouraged by the state, manufacturers, education systems, marketers and professional home economists. This model of consumerism included the purchase of kitchen

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<sup>63</sup> Average Household Income for Toronto derived from Statistics Canada, “*Average Incomes of Families and Unattached Individuals, Canada 1951-1955*”. Figure of \$22,401 for 1951 was provided in 1995 dollars, and adjusted using CPI Inflation Calculator to reflect 2020 figures. Buffalo Household Income was derived using United States Bureau of Labor Statistics report, “*Occupational Wage Survey: Buffalo New York, January 1950 No. 991*.” From this survey, the role of Stock Handler and Trucker had the highest number of respondents, with an hourly earning of \$1.27, this wage equaled \$2438.40 annually based on a forty-hour workweek, the average suggested by the survey across all professions. Adjusted to inflation using the CPI Inflation Calculator, this reflects \$26,211USD or \$34,179CAD in 2020.

<sup>64</sup> Parr, Joy. *Domestic Goods: The Material, the Moral, and the Economic in the Postwar Years*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 22.

<sup>65</sup> Cohen, Lizabeth. *A Consumers' Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America*. (New York: Vintage Books, 2003), 7.

<sup>66</sup> Parr, Joy. *Domestic Goods: The Material, the Moral and the Economic in the Postwar Years*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999). 64.

<sup>67</sup> Parr, *Domestic Goods*, 65.

<sup>68</sup> Iacovetta, Franca. *Gatekeepers: Reshaping Immigrant Lives in Cold War Canada*. (Toronto: Between the Lines Publishing, 2006), 139.

appliances, kitchen technologies, convenience foods, cookbooks, food ingredients, and eventually take-out food. However, this version of the household economy idealized the Anglo-white mother who did not work for wage labour.<sup>69</sup> Immigrant mothers who participated in the ethnic family economy, did not have the same purchasing power (because of low or no wages), or the time to spend on the pursuit of domestic consumerism as their Anglo-white counterparts. A stark divide stood between the participation of non-ethnic and ethnic mothers in the household economy. This changed by the 1960s as the state and other actors, recognized that the role of immigrants - - as small business people and consumers - - was central to the economy.<sup>70</sup>

Toronto and Buffalo entered the immediate postwar period as prosperous and expanding cities. At this same time, pizza spread through the cities by means of home recipes and home pizza production. In fact, Buffalo was quicker than Toronto to commoditize pizza for sale in the home, with the opening of the first home take-out pizza window, Santora's, in 1927. By the late 1950s, both cities experienced urban expansion and suburbanization. However, as the cities entered the late 1960s, Toronto's status as an economic and cultural centre grew, while Buffalo's faltered. The economic growth or economic decline of an urban centre is directly correlated to the expansion and character of commodity-based food industry. Toronto's economic growth led Torontonians to be more apt to order pizza in specialty restaurants, support the expansion of the franchised pizza industry, and modify pizza for premium tastes, including adopting the California style pizza. Meanwhile, Buffalo's economic decline resulted in franchised conglomerates not being attracted to expansion in the city, and the growth of independent single store

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<sup>69</sup> Bhacu and Westwood, *Enterprising Women: Ethnicity, Economy and Gender Relations*, 21.

<sup>70</sup> Iacovetta, *Gatekeepers: Reshaping Immigrant Lives in Cold War Canada*, 139.

pizzerias. Many of the independent Buffalo pizzerias needed to expand into other food sales, including submarine sandwiches and chicken wings, to ensure their marketability. The economic differences between the two urban centres contributed to the development of different consumption habits, marketing techniques and business strategy for a commoditized food item.

For the purposes of this dissertation, the boundaries of each city have been defined in specific ways. The geographic area of Toronto is defined by its modern boundaries, which were established by the amalgamation of the municipalities of East York, Etobicoke, North York, Scarborough, York and Metropolitan Toronto in 1998. These are the boundaries used in this study because it concludes in the 1990s. The analysis of pizza within these boundaries allows for a study of urban growth and suburbanization, as some of the former municipalities once served as suburbs within Metropolitan Toronto. Buffalo is defined as the modern Buffalo-Niagara Falls metropolitan area encompassing some of the surrounding cities and towns that form present-day Erie and Niagara counties in Western New York. The cities of Buffalo, Lackawanna, Tonawanda, and Niagara Falls, as well as the outlying towns of Amherst, Cheektowaga, Sloan, West Seneca, and Kenmore have been included as the “Buffalo” area for purposes of this study. Many city directories and telephone books since 1950 have included segments of Erie and Niagara Counties outside of the City of Buffalo in their listings. Because these areas served as suburbs for Buffalo, in this study, Buffalo has been designated as this larger metropolitan area.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Most figures used in this dissertation for Buffalo, refer to the City of Buffalo proper, unless otherwise stated.

In 1950, the urban metropolises of Toronto and Buffalo served as dominant centres of economics and culture within their respective regions -- Southern Ontario and Western New York. The concept of the urban metropolis is at the centre of this analysis.<sup>72</sup> William Cronon, in, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (1991), examined Chicago's place as an urban centre and its relationship to the region and natural world around it.<sup>73</sup> In his study, the city sits on an imagined boundary drawn between urban and nature, where the inhabitants of a city relied on the non-human world (the frontier or hinterland) as much as they rely upon one another.<sup>74</sup> According to Cronon, Chicago was built in a position with natural advantages that were improved upon by settlers who made the improvements to harbours, railroads and roads.<sup>75</sup> Cronon's emphasis on the role of transport technologies in improving an urban environment connects to his thesis that the manufacturing, processing, and transportation of commodities turned Chicago into the gateway metropolis to the West.<sup>76</sup>

In the 1930s, several Canadian social scientists argued that the frontier relationship had shifted from primarily serving the metropolitan interests of Britain and

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<sup>72</sup> The role of the urban centre, or metropolis has been central to Canadian economic history. Harold Innis' *Problems of Staple Production in Canada* (1933) was inspired by economist W.A. Mackintosh's call to understand Canadian history in terms of the relationship between communities and their commercial relation with the rest of the world. The influence of the metropolis extended to the hinterland and to the sale of the hinterland's staples to the rest of the world. The idea of the metropolis extending its reach over contiguous regions is also central to William Cronon's *Natures Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (1991). Cronon acknowledges that the metropolitan perspective, "has traditionally come more easily to historians in Canada," and cites the work of D.C. Masters, *The Rise of Toronto 1850-1890* (1947), J.M.S. Careless *Frontier and Metropolis: Regions, Cities and Identities in Canada before 1914* (1989), and Ramsay Cook, "Frontier and Metropolis: The Canadian Experience" in *The Maple Leaf Forever: Essays on Nationalism and Politics in Canada* (1971); Berger, Carl. *The Writing of Canadian History: Aspects of English-Canadian Historical Writing 1900- 1970*. (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1976), 91-97; Cronon, William. *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West*. (New York: WW Norton and Company, 1991), 404.

<sup>73</sup> Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis*, 17.

<sup>74</sup> Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis*, 18.

<sup>75</sup> Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis*, 55.

<sup>76</sup> Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis*, 377.

the United States towards a relationship centred upon local metropolitan organization.<sup>77</sup> In this new organization, some metropolitan groups (including industrialists and manufacturers) exerted a nationalist ideology, which held that the metropolis' purpose was to develop the hinterland market to secure greater profits.<sup>78</sup> While Toronto had a lead in industrial production, Montreal's advances in hydroelectric power realigned the two cities regional relationships.<sup>79</sup> Toronto and Montreal's metropolitan dominance led the cities to attempt to consolidate control over the development of the rest of Canada.<sup>80</sup> Meanwhile, Buffalo's regional power was far more consolidated in contrast to Toronto's. In the 1800s, Buffalo was a crucial transfer point for midwestern grain shipments, and was an important urban centre of the Midwestern United States. However, following the Second World War, Buffalo had far smaller regional power, with some prominence over Western New York and Northwestern Pennsylvania.<sup>81</sup> Much of Buffalo's regional prominence was concentrated on employment in the grain processing, steel and automotive industries, and service industry for the Western New York and Northwestern Pennsylvania region.<sup>82</sup> Toronto and Buffalo shared similar manufacturing industries and roles as transportation hubs, which drove their urban growth and connection to their regions through the late 1950s. However, as industry declined in Buffalo in the late 1960s, the city was no longer a dominating regional metropolis, and the Western New

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<sup>77</sup> Shore, Marlene. *The Science of Social Redemption: McGill, the Chicago School and the Origins of Social Research in Canada*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 153.

<sup>78</sup> Shore, *The Science of Social Redemption*, 154.

<sup>79</sup> Shore, *The Science of Social Redemption*, 153-154.

<sup>80</sup> Shore, *The Science of Social Redemption*, 155.

<sup>81</sup> Tumber, Catherine. "Buffalo Exchange: Retrofitting a Rust Belt Capital." *The Baffler*, 2015, No 27, 128-143, 138.

<sup>82</sup> The regional function of Buffalo was central to development plans for the city between the 1960s and 2000s, including the building of a convention centre, transportation networks, bank office towers, and the casino. Tumber, 138-142.

York region sought new economic function. Toronto's economic prosperity through the 1960s and beyond ensured regional and national dominance of the city, shaping the development of businesses, the attraction of American branch plants, and the commoditization of goods. This study is not intended to be a head-to-head comparison of the economic prosperity (or lack thereof) of these cities; rather this study is interested in two cities within close proximity to one another, which exist in a regional and trans-national structure.

Buffalo and Toronto also served as metropolitan centres of the Great Lakes region. The Great Lakes serve as a demarcation point, a physical barrier between separate national and urban identities, which enabled the commodification of pizza. The region has served as a "principal theatre of operation" since pre-Columbian times where European empire builders skirmished with Indigenous persons and were replaced by American and Canadian nation builders.<sup>83</sup> Within the region, a series of interconnected industries including hydro-electricity, manufacturing, and transportation connected the cities economically. Despite these economic connections, concepts of Canadian and American identities developed on the different sides of the border. These identities

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<sup>83</sup> Bukowczyk, John J. "The Permeable Border, the Great Lakes Region, and the Canadian-American Relationship." *Michigan Historical Review* 34, no. 2 (2008): 1-16, 7.

shaped the business practices, consumption habits, economic practices, and foodways of Canadians and Americans.<sup>84</sup>

Trans-national historical studies of the Great Lakes region include studies in the fields of immigration, cultural, environmental and urban histories. Such works as William Jenkins' *Between Raid and Rebellion: The Irish in Buffalo and Toronto, 1867-1916* [2013], Holly M. Karibo's *Sin City North: Sex, Drugs, And Citizenship In The Detroit-Windsor Borderland* [2015], and Philip P. Mason's *Rumrunning And The Roaring Twenties: Prohibition On The Michigan-Ontario Waterway* [1995], used historical comparative analysis of the trans-national urban centres within the Great Lakes region. This dissertation builds upon the framework of these comparative analyses of these Great Lakes cities, and demonstrates how economic and cultural differences across the border shaped the commodification of a cultural food item and the subsequent development of food-based industries.

Scholarship on the Great Lakes Region highlights how the region is a compelling frame of analysis for historians. In *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region 1650-1815* [1991], historian Richard White identified the Great Lakes Region as a space of mutual accommodation, exchange, and blending

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<sup>84</sup> The works by Seymour Martin Lipset *North American Cultures: The Borderlands Project* [1990] and *Continental Divide: The Values and Institutions of the United States and Canada* [1990], and the collection of essays in Ian Lumsden's *Close the 49<sup>th</sup> Parallel etc. The Americanization of Canada* [1970] were foundational in building my understanding of Canadian and American identities and how this influenced political, economical, cultural, and social thought in each nation. Canada and the United States exist similar to parallel train tracks, where the gap between the two sets of train tracks remains the same, even though the movement in behavior and values across those tracks is enormously different over time. The events of the American Revolution, where the United States was born of revolution and Canada remained anti-revolutionary and a product of British colonial evolution forged the gap between these nations. This gap explains the separate processes of thought despite being in close geographic proximity.

between the various Indigenous groups who called the region home.<sup>85</sup> Environmental history works, including John Riley's *The Once and Future Great Lakes Country* [2013] and Margaret Beattie Bogue's *Fishing the Great Lakes: An Environmental History 1783-1933* [2000] identify the Great Lakes Region as a space with similar climate, agricultural and aquaculture landscapes, and human use of the landscape. Jennifer Bonnell's work on beekeeping highlights how the Great Lakes Region supported trans-national networks of knowledge and communication around the practice of beekeeping in similar climate and agricultural landscapes.<sup>86</sup> Sarah Elvins' *Sales and Celebrations: Retailing and Regional Identity in Western New York State, 1920-1940* [2004] examines local consumerism in Buffalo and Rochester, New York and identifies how a Western New York regional consumer identity emerged within the Great Lakes Region. The region supports a population of forty-five million, is separated by a national border between Canada and the United States, and is a significant space of Canadian and American manufacturing and consumerism.<sup>87</sup> The cities of Duluth, Thunder Bay, Chicago, Milwaukee, Sault Saint Marie, Sudbury, Detroit, Cleveland, Hamilton, Buffalo, Toronto, Rochester and Kingston straddle the region as spaces between the rural interior, manufacturing, and trans-national transportation networks.

Another important work which shapes the framework of this dissertation is Rosella Ceccarini's *Pizza and Pizza Chefs in Japan: A Case Study of Culinary Globalization* [2011]. Ceccarini's case study of pizza's importation to Japan outlines

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<sup>85</sup>. White, Richard. *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region 1650-1815*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), xxx.

<sup>86</sup>. Bonnell, Jennifer. "Early Insecticide Controversies and Beekeeper Advocacy in the Great Lakes Region." *Environmental History*, Volume 26, Issue 1, January 2021, 79-101.

<sup>87</sup>. Riley, John L. *The Once and Future Great Lakes Country: An Ecological History*. (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2013], xxi.

basic models that explain the process of food migration and transformation. The process of ethnic food diffusion is explained through steps of naturalization, preservation, improvisation and authentication.<sup>88</sup> While the steps of naturalization and preservation are processes of the original food creators, the steps of improvisation and authentication are the most important ones for a study of a globalized food item. When the food item is relocated by means of immigration, chefs undertake steps of improvisation, utilizing new ingredients and cooking methods that fit the region, rather than replicating the region from which the food item originated. Over time, the improvised food item evolves into the authentic food style of a new region. This dissertation argues that the modification of pizza is a direct result of urban economic and cultural conditions that shaped the Italian ethnic economies in Toronto and Buffalo. While Ceccarini's outline is not unique to the study of food history, it is unique to the study of pizza. Ceccarini demonstrates how the importation and improvisation of pizza specifically takes place outside of Italy. Other scholars of Italian cuisine including Alberto Capatti, Massimo Montanari, and Aine Healy have proposed that the only modification to pizza outside of Italy is the addition of new toppings.<sup>89</sup> Ceccarini's framework suggests that the modification of pizza outside of Italy extends beyond just the toppings to include the method by which the food is prepared, who prepares it, the atmosphere in which the food is served, and who consumes it.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>88</sup>. Ceccarini, Rossella. *Pizza and Pizza Chefs in Japan: A Case of Culinary Globalization*. (Boston: Brill Publishers, 2011), 17.

<sup>89</sup>. Capatti, Montanari, and Healy in their 2004 work, *Italian Cuisine: A Cultural History* focus on the creation of Italian cuisine within Italy, often denouncing the advancements made to the cuisine abroad. Very little of their work even examines pizza, nor celebrates the accomplishment of Italians and their successes abroad with Italian cuisine.

<sup>90</sup>. Ceccarini, *Pizza and Pizza Chefs in Japan*, 2-17.

Ceccarini introduced the concept of ethnic food diffusion as a process food undergoes in a new country by means of steps of naturalization, preservation, improvisation and authentication.<sup>91</sup> This concept is similar to the model of commodification proposed in this dissertation; however, this dissertation provides a more nuanced concept of ethnic food diffusion by incorporating the concepts of ethnic economies and trans-national border regionalism within it. As John Bukowczyk illustrates in *Permeable Border*, the Great Lakes basin is centred on a region of dependency, permeability, and exchange transposed by national borders and differing economic policies.<sup>92</sup> Canada lies in a paradoxical position of “rich dependency” whereby it relies upon the dominant capitalist economy of the United States. With regard to the commodification of pizza in Toronto, it explains the appearance of American produced home pizza kits in the 1950s and American branch plant franchises in the 1970s through 1990s. The Canada-United States border in the Great Lakes region is permeable to goods, capital and ideas.<sup>93</sup> The imbalanced economic relationship enabled the flow of American made products, and American businesses, which contributed to the commodification of pizza in Toronto. As the economy of Buffalo faltered, the permeable border relationship was not reciprocated by Canada. Canadian franchises did not move to Buffalo, and Canadian food innovations (with the exception of Hawaiian pizza) did not move south. The border relationship between Toronto and Buffalo illuminates the American incursion into the Toronto pizza industry.

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<sup>91</sup>. Ceccarini, *Pizza and Pizza Chefs in Japan*, 17.

<sup>92</sup>. Bukowczyk, "The Permeable Border," 3-5.

<sup>93</sup>. Bukowczyk, "The Permeable Border," 5-8.

Central to the economic relationship between Canada and the United States is the transformation of pizza. Pizza was transformed from a product based upon Italian national origins, to a regionally diverse North American dish. Pizzas, including the Hawaiian style, Californian gourmet style, PizzaRolla, and Minitreet were created and modified in Toronto and Buffalo. This illustrates the idea of the “Pizza Effect”. The Pizza Effect is a term applied by sociologists, building upon the work of some scholars of religion, to describe a process whereby cultural products like pizza are exported, transformed and re-imported to their cultural origins. Anthropologist Agehananda Bharati originally coined the term to describe the exportation of Hinduism to the west.<sup>94</sup> Bharati explained that Hinduism, much like pizza, was exported to the west where, “the object has acquired a new meaning and a new status, as well as many new tastes.”<sup>95</sup> While this dissertation will not trace the re-introduction of a North American style of pizza back to its origins in Italy, by focusing on the identity, production and cultural transformation of pizza, this dissertation will demonstrate other significant components of the Pizza Effect. Thus, this term has been modified for the title of the dissertation. “Lake Effect Pizza” also serves as a humorous play on words, evoking the concept of lake effect snow -- an atmospheric condition when a cold air mass moves across long expanses of warm lake water. Both cities of Toronto and Buffalo, as well as many others in the Great Lakes, have been targets of this atmospheric condition. Buffalo receives lake effect snow as weather systems travel across Lake Erie, and Toronto receives the same

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<sup>94</sup>. Bharati, Aagehananda. "The Hindu Renaissance and Its Apologetic Patterns." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 29, no. 2 (1970): 267-87, 273.

<sup>95</sup>. *Ibid*, 273.

lake effect snow when the storms cross over Buffalo and Lake Ontario. The “Lake Effect” inherently binds the cities together.

This dissertation encompasses food history, business history, urban history, immigration history and cultural history, as the lenses for exploring the commodification of pizza in Toronto and Buffalo. Specific studies within each of these fields help to construct the methodological and foundational basis of this dissertation.

Within the realm of food history, various branches of study are integral to the foundation and methodology of this dissertation, especially histories of fast food, Italian cuisine, restaurant culture and ethnic food. Works dedicated to fast food, including Jakle and Sculle’s *Fast Food: Roadside Restaurants in the Automobile Age* [1999], Josh Ozersky’s *The Hamburger* [2008], and Steve Penfold’s *The Donut: A Canadian History* [2008], all offer models for the study of franchising, fast food cooking styles, and consumer responses to fast food. Italian cuisine studies, including Simone Cinotto’s *The Italian American Table: Food, Family, and Community in New York City* [2013] and Alberto Capatti, Massimo Montanari and Aine Healy’s *Italian Cuisine: A Cultural History* [2004], are fundamental food histories of ethnic cuisine. Cinotto’s work explores urban restaurants, eating habits and home cooking amongst Italian migrants in New York City. Cinotto divides Italian immigrants into different generations and explains the food habits of each generation.<sup>96</sup> Capatti, Montanari, and Healy focus on ingredients, recipes, and cooking methods. Taken together, these works help to provide an understanding of the state of Italian cuisine in North America and its traditional origins.

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<sup>96</sup> Cinotto, Simone. *The Italian American Table: Food, Family, and Community in New York City*. (University of Illinois Press, 2013), 123-139.

By studying North American cities with a history of Italian immigration, evidence supports the concept that Italians traditionally established their own communities and businesses as part of the ethnic economies. Literature on Italian communities in urban centres, as well as immigration histories of other ethnic groups, is central to the development of this study. Histories of Italian communities in the United States and Canada, including Jordan Stanger-Ross' *Staying Italian: Urban Change and Ethnic Life in Postwar Toronto and Philadelphia* [2010], John Zucchi's *Italians in Toronto: Development of National Identity 1875-1935* [1990], Nicholas Harney's *Eh, Paesan! Being Italian in Toronto* [1998] and Virginia Yans-McLaughlin's *Family and Community: Italian Immigrants in Buffalo 1890-1930* [1977], represent studies of Italian immigration and the establishment of Italian communities within the urban centres on which this study focuses. Each of these works on Italian immigration demonstrates the establishment of urban Italian communities, their attempts to maintain their cultural ways and their development of social, economic and cultural community institutions. The works also examine the expansion of the urban Italian community into distinct generations of Italian-Canadians and Italian-Americans. Stanger-Ross' study is an important reference work for the development of this study as it demonstrates the feasibility of a comparative analysis of Italian communities within Canada and the United States through an assessment of Toronto and Philadelphia. Similarly, William Jenkins' *Between Raid and Rebellion: The Irish in Buffalo and Toronto 1867-1916* [2013] further demonstrates the feasibility of a comparative study of an immigrant group in Canada and the United States. Jenkins demonstrates how the Irish navigated through maintaining their "home" culture, while navigating through Canadian and American cultures.

Within the field of immigration histories, there are two sub-topics integral to this study -- immigrant food histories and urban histories. Histories of immigrant foods, including the edited collection by Franca Iacovetta, Valerie Korinek and Marlene Epp, *Edible Histories, Cultural Politics: Towards a Canadian Food History* [2012], Jeffery Pilcher's *Planet Taco: A Global History of Mexican Food* [2012], Panikos Panayi's *Spicing Up Britain: The Multicultural History Of British Food* [2008], Ted Merwin's *Pastrami on Rye: An Overstuffed History of the Jewish Deli* [2015], and Gustavo Arellano's *Taco USA: How Mexican Food Conquered America* [2012], are instrumental works in understanding how food was grouped into categories of "immigrant other" diets, underwent processes of adaptation, and eventually became accepted as hybrid diet or popular food items. As Iacovetta, Korinek and Epp demonstrate, attempts were made to teach immigrants a "Canadian" style of cooking in order to limit their preference for ethnic foods. Originally, pizza, like the Ukrainian pierogi and Chinese bao, were restricted to immigrant communities and considered outside the realm of the "traditional" Canadian diet.<sup>97</sup> Yet, historians demonstrate how foods originally deemed to be immigrant foods eventually found their way into mainstream diets through hybrid "fusion" cooking, adaptation to local tastes and expansion of popularity outside of immigrant communities.

The urban centre is the main area of analysis for this dissertation. While this dissertation takes a comparative approach in studying two urban centres, these two centres can be subdivided into further spaces. Within an urban centre are a multitude of physical spaces essential to the commodification of pizza. The family home, the

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<sup>97</sup> Iacovetta, Franca, Valerie J. Korinek, and Marlene Epp. *Edible Histories, Cultural Politics: Towards a Canadian Food History*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), "Introduction", 11-13.

restaurant, the streetscape, the streets, and the franchise restaurant each contributed to the development and commodification of pizza within Toronto and Buffalo. These spaces were essential to the function of Italian ethnic economies, and shaped by urban economic conditions. The family home is the rudimentary foundation for the commodification of pizza in the two urban centres. It was the home where Italians and non-Italians alike first made their own pizza, and experimented with tastes based on the local availability of ingredients. The Italian restaurant is the secondary space in the commodification of pizza. Italians capitalized on the increasing popularity of specialized restaurants and the increasing popularity of pizza amongst non-Italian Torontonians and Buffalonians and used the resources of the ethnic economies to open restaurants. The streets were another fundamental location for the commodification of pizza. As Italian restaurants specializing in pizza, pizzerias, opened shops in the urban cities, the streets became an essential part of their take-out and delivery businesses. Pizza produced in pizzerias was brought into urban homes by means of the streets. The final space of pizza commodification was the franchise. The franchise represents the ultimate capitalist commodification of pizza as non-Italian businesses claimed stakes on the ownership and operation of pizzerias. Franchised pizzerias were treated much like other fast food franchises owned by conglomerate businesses. The franchise directly challenged the business of independent pizzerias and forced the erosion of Italian ethnic economies from the pizza industry. Each of these physical spaces within the urban environment occupied specific periods of time. The family home represents the earliest period of commodification in the 1950s with the restaurant representing the late 1950s and early 1960s, the streets representing the 1960s and early 1970s, and the franchise representing the 1970s through the 1990s.

The larger pizza business would not have existed without a population of non-Italian consumers who gained a taste for the Italian product. In order to support urban industry and consumption, neighbourhoods fulfill the need for housing the inhabitants of a city. Neighbourhoods may contain either high or low occupancy dwellings, or a combination of the two. Factors such as proximity to industry, commerce and transportation networks all shaped the development of new neighbourhoods. While neighbourhoods serve one of the main functions of a city, offering people a place to live, industry and commerce are other essential functions. Industry and commerce in a capitalist system offer the potential for individuals to develop a business or to make a salary. In an urban system, the service industry, including food service, plays an important function in maintaining a population. Food service outlets such as restaurants fulfill a basic human need by feeding the local population. The development of commercial and residential infrastructure ultimately decentralized cities.<sup>98</sup> The restaurant served an important role in decentralizing cities and feeding the local population following the Second World War. As cities expanded, restaurants opened outside of downtown cores, catering to a wider range of customers. The primary function of many restaurants was to serve food to travelers, or for special occasions, or emergencies (such as homemade dinners that went awry).<sup>99</sup> Restaurants opened to serve decentralized urban neighbourhoods, thus their business hours and function relied on the life-cycles of those who lived in their immediate area.<sup>100</sup> Therefore, the character of a neighbourhood, and its function within the industry of a city is immediately connected to the commodification

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<sup>98</sup>. Jakle, John A., and Keith A. Sculle. *Fast Food: Roadside Restaurants In The Automobile Age*. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999),11.

<sup>99</sup>. Jakle and Sculle, *Fast Food*, 2.

<sup>100</sup>. Jakle and Sculle, *Fast Food*, 14.

of a food item, and the opening of local restaurants. The study of the neighbourhood also includes those who live there. Italian immigrants are key to understanding the commodification of pizza. Studies of immigrant businesses (i.e. the ethnic economies) demonstrate the importance of immigrant communities opening businesses to serve members of their co-ethnic community, and creating market niches to serve the larger urban community. Examinations of the ethnic economies and businesses within the Italian communities have been components of the studies of Zucchi, Harney, and Stanger-Ross. As Zucchi demonstrates, Italian communities had demands for foodstuff from their home country, and importation businesses, grocers, pasta factories, restaurants and bakeries filled these voids.<sup>101</sup> One of the staple products of the Italian restaurants and bakeries in Italy, Canada and the United States was pizza.<sup>102</sup>

Despite the close geographic proximity between the urban centres selected for this dissertation, pizza underwent very different processes of improvisation and authentication within these cities, owing to diverging urban economies and the role of the Italian ethnic economies. Toronto tended to produce large, round symmetrical thin crust pies with a spicier tomato sauce, while Buffalo produced medium-thick round pies sold as wholes or halves along with the locally popular white pie. Each city developed unique processes of improvising local ingredients, importing Italian products, or creating faux-Italian products for pizza. Unique local pizza pie styles like the Hawaiian and white pizza emerged, as the result of local tastes demanding certain ingredients and toppings. Chapter 1: Just Like Mama's Pizza examines the growth of Italian communities in Toronto and

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<sup>101</sup>. Zucchi, John E. *Italians in Toronto: Development of a National Identity 1875-1935*. (Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 1988), 70-71.

<sup>102</sup>. Cinotto, Simone. *The Italian American Table: Food, Family, and Community in New York City*. (University of Illinois Press, 2013), 107-108.

Buffalo and the introduction of pizza to Toronto and Buffalo, through an examination of the home. Chapter 2: Pizza In Stile Ristorante examines the expansion of pizza outside the home through the development of Italian restaurants. Each of these chapters demonstrates the role of urban sites as essential spaces to the commodification of a cultural food item.

Another facet of pizza commodification examined in this dissertation is the innovation of pizza and supporting industries. Accompaniments to pizza included consumable side dishes, beverages and the innovation of the pizza box. One particular side dish central to the study of pizza in Buffalo is the chicken wing, known elsewhere as the Buffalo wing.<sup>103</sup> Chapter 3: The Streets- Where the Restaurant Meets the Home examines the creation of the pizza box, the pizza delivery industry, Buffalo-style wings, Brio soda and new styles of pizza.

Another component of this study is an examination of the locations where the pizzas were prepared and consumed. The popularity of pizza grew from the homes of Italians within the urban centres of North America where first and second generation Italians lived.<sup>104</sup> While Italian restaurants preceded pizzerias, it is believed that the first restaurant specifically devoted to serving pizza in the United States opened some time between 1888 and 1905.<sup>105</sup> Pizzerias adopted the traditional model of dining from Italian restaurants with dine-in eating, but they also adopted the fast food model of take-out and eventually added the process of home delivery. To demonstrate the influence of

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<sup>103</sup>. In Buffalo, they are just known as wings. Buffalo Wing is a name used elsewhere to identify the hot, fried wings from Buffalo that have become famous. This dissertation uses the terms Buffalo-style wing, Buffalo wing, wing, and chicken wing interchangeably to refer to the same food item.

<sup>104</sup>. Jakle and Sculle, *Fast Food*, 241.

<sup>105</sup>. Jakle and Sculle, *Fast Food*, 242. The origins of the first American pizzeria is debated and popular answers point towards different pizzerias opening in 1888, 1895 or 1905 in New York City.

capitalism on the commodification of a cultural food item, this study will examine the business practices that developed around the sale of pizza. The producers of pizza were initially Italians in restaurants, bakeries and pizzerias but evolved as non-Italians opened mass-franchise operations and conglomerates. This evolution to mass franchise operations is similar to the pattern that developed for other North American fast food items like chicken, tacos, and hamburgers, which is described by John Jakle and Keith Sculle in their 1999 work, *Fast Food: Roadside Restaurants in the Automobile Age*. Some of the first American pizza franchise chains included Pizza Hut (1958), Little Caesars (1959) and Dominos (1960). Canadian pizza franchises founded in Toronto, including Pizza Nova and Pizzaville (both established in 1963), and Pizza Pizza (1967), pioneered the expansion of the pizza business, and took territorial hold of the pizza business in Toronto. While Toronto created some of the largest Canadian pizza franchises, Buffalo's declining population and urban economy did not attract the business of mass American franchises (with the exception of Pizza Hut). Chapter 4: Big Business of Pizza- The Rise of the Franchise and Chapter 5: Franchise Pizza Wars- Mama Fights Back explore the commodification of pizza in franchise chains and the divergent practices of the pizza industry in Toronto and Buffalo, including Italian ownership, American branch plants, and the standardized pizza.

The chapters of this study are organized both chronologically and spatially. The spaces of an urban centre -- the home, the restaurant, the streets, and the franchise each served as theatres of pizza commodification. Each theatre of commodification is chronological in progression, as immigration, introduction and home made pizza cover the 1950s, the opening of pizza restaurants in the 1960s, the expansion of pizza on the

streets in the 1960s and 1970s, and franchising conglomerates and standardization reflect the 1970s through 1990s.<sup>106</sup> These sites serve as the organizational foundation of this dissertation. As this study takes a comparative approach, each city is examined within each chapter. Chapters include an examination of each city individually, and conclude with a blended analysis. This is similar to the method utilized by Stanger-Ross in *Staying Italian* where the Toronto situation was examined, followed by Philadelphia, followed by analysis of the two situations.

The research for this study incorporated a variety of sources, including GIS Mapping software in conjunction with city directories, business records, restaurant guides, and telephone books that were instrumental in the plotting of locations of pizzerias on city maps. By overlaying decades of pizzeria maps, trends such as location and urban expansion of pizzerias, proximity to Italian neighbourhoods, the demise of independent pizzeria, and the rise of the franchise pizzeria are traceable through the usage of multi-layered mapping.

Newspapers were another essential source. *The Toronto Star, Globe and Mail, Buffalo News, The Spectrum, Lackawanna Leader, The Island Dispatch, and The New York Times* carried a variety of stories, advertisements, reviews and news local to Toronto, Buffalo and the Great Lakes Region. While major urban newspapers cover the news of an entire urban area and feature the advertisements of pizzerias with larger advertising budgets, local newspapers like the *Lackawanna Leader and Island Dispatch*

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<sup>106</sup>. It is important to note that these spaces overlap between time periods. For example, home pizza production started in the 1950s and continued through the course of this study to the present day. Chapters have been organized by space and time period to show advancements in the commodification of pizza. But it is important to note that older forms of commodification in different spaces carried on concurrently with advancements of pizza commodification in new spaces.

provided suburban news and advertisements for pizzerias with smaller budgets. The combination of these two styles of newspapers enabled examination of primary sources from the entire urban area. These newspapers did not cater directly to the Italian community, and therefore advertisement for pizza in these publications suggests the popularity of pizza with non-Italian urban communities. The sampling and content analysis of newspapers was conducted by searching newspaper databases using the keywords pizza and pizzeria on all issues published between 1950 and 1990. This yielded over 50,000 results, which were not limited by editorial sections. Each entry was viewed, populated into a database, and assigned keywords, including home pizza making, independent pizzerias, the pizza industry, pizza innovation, crime, and food critic reports. The reports of food critics, including investigations of new pizzerias and reviews of local staple Italian restaurants are contained in newspapers. Despite the fact that food critics do not represent the average food consumer, their reports often offered detailed insight regarding taste, food presentation and restaurant ambiance for this time period that otherwise could not be uncovered.

Industry publications such as *Canadian Food Industries*, *Pizza Today*, *Canadian Pizza Magazine* and *Canadian Hotel & Restaurant* provided insight into the business of food in Canada and the United States. Food industry publications offered explorations of machinery, processes, and business opportunities. Publications for the industry also allowed for a study of independent restaurants and their needs, as well as sales and advertisements for the purchase of conglomerate franchises.

Italian immigration is fundamental for understanding the creation and production of pizza in the Great Lakes region. Sources demonstrating Italian migration and the

development of Italian communities in the region including censuses and personal memoirs have been analyzed for this dissertation. Most importantly, several oral history interviews were conducted with business owners and pizza workers alike to gain insight regarding the day-to-day operations of a restaurant and the motivations and business behind mass franchise operations. Oral history participants were located through personal connections, attendees of World Pizza Expo Las Vegas, Nevada in March 2019, emails requesting the participation of pizzeria and franchise founders, and archival records of oral history interview transcripts.

### **Towards Lake Effect Pizza**

Pizza is now ubiquitous within modern life and foodways in Toronto and Buffalo but this was not always the case. It was once a food confined to the homes of Italian immigrants, yet emerged in the 1990s as a commodity sold by conglomerate and franchising chains owned by non-Italians. Alongside the changes in tastes, and the acceptance of a food item, a series of events owing to changing urban economies helped shape the commodification of pizza. Processes of suburbanization, urban renewal, population growth and decline, the expansion and decline of industry, cultural trends, and immigration coincided with the commodification of pizza. The chapters of this dissertation examine how pizza was commoditized in the cities of Toronto and Buffalo between 1950 and 1990. By studying specific spaces within these urban centres including homes, restaurants, the streets, and franchises, the diversified consumption and business experiences of an immigrant food item in two urban centres is revealed. Although pizza was introduced to Toronto and Buffalo around the same time period (i.e., in the 1950s), the food underwent different processes of commodification owing to the

diverging urban economies and the role of ethnic economies in commoditizing pizza. Questions including how pizza was popularized outside the ethnic community, how businesses formed, how pizza was modified as a consumer product, how and why innovations took place, how capitalist processes and businesses claimed the local markets, and how each city created different pizza products can all be explained by diverging urban economic paths and the role of Italian ethnic economies. It was the economic conditions in each city, which shaped processes of immigrant community building, business creation, suburbanization, and urban renewal. These processes illuminate the divergent paths of pizza commodification.

Between 1950 and 1990, the process of commodification of pizza was underway. Pizza arrived in both Toronto and Buffalo as a product of Italy and emerged by 1990 as standardized capitalist commodity in Toronto and Buffalo. While the pizza itself was modified during this time period, the habits of consumers were developed, and an industry based around pizza was built. The study of pizza in specific urban spaces is necessary to understanding its commodification.

## Chapter 1: Just Like Mama's Pizza - Pizza in the Homes of Toronto and Buffalo



**Figure 2.1: Mrs. Brady demonstrating a pizza recipe on "Homemaker's Club," CBC Television, Vancouver, British Columbia, 1957.**

In 1957 on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation [CBC] television program, “Vancouver Homemakers Club”, a contestant, Mrs. Brady, proudly exclaimed, “Today, I’m going to make that popular Italian [Brady pronounces Eye-talian] dish, pizza [Brady places emphasis on the double z’s] pie. The pizza dish, which is becoming popular in the United States, has three parts: a biscuit layer, the tomato sauce and toppings.”<sup>1</sup> Other contestants on the show all made casseroles, but Mrs. Brady instead served pizza as an entree. As Brady proceeded to the addition of toppings she said, “traditional pie has only sauce, oregano and cheese, but I suggest adding toppings, especially if you're entertaining. Men love the meat toppings, such as pepperoni, canned spiced meat and blood sausage.”<sup>2</sup> Brady demonstrated some knowledge of a traditional Italian pizza but offered the addition of some uniquely North American toppings. Brady’s recipe suggests that the Anglo-Canadian homemaker had some knowledge of pizza, and interest in

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<sup>1</sup>. “Mrs. Brady: Homemakers Club Auditions”. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. May 22, 1957. CBC Archives. <https://www.cbc.ca/archives/entry/whos-the-happiest-homemaker> (Accessed February 11, 2019)

<sup>2</sup>. Ibid.

baking it in the 1950s. She was one of many Canadians who first cooked pizza in their homes using pizza kits, recipes, and other convenience foods in the 1950s.

The consumption of pizza is now ubiquitous in modern Canadian and American life, but this was not always the case. Prior to the end of the Second World War, non-Italian Canadians and Americans seldom consumed pizza. Pizza was a dish confined to homes of Italian immigrants, reliant on imported foodstuffs, and an essential part of traditional Italian foodways. However, by 1957 a transformation allowing the acceptance of Italian immigrants and the expansion of their foodways had taken place in Toronto and Buffalo. This transformation was attributed to the participation of Italians in the urban ethnic economies and the emphasis of the nuclear family and the home economy in the post-war era. These transformations ultimately led to the commodification of pizza in the homes of Toronto and Buffalo.

As waves of Italians immigrated to Toronto and Buffalo, they were marginalized from established communities and the general labour market. They were external to the institutions, culture and ways of the dominant cultural groups and faced the pressures of assimilation and acculturation. As a response to their marginalization from Canadian and American society, Italian immigrants formed enclave communities. In Toronto, the Italian community resided in two centres of Italian life, Little Italy and by the late 1940s, Corso Italia. In Buffalo, the Italian community initially lived on the southern side of the city and was regionally subdivided by street.<sup>3</sup> For Italians, their homes were spaces

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<sup>3</sup> Immigrants from Campobasso lived between Seneca and Swan Streets on the East Side; Calabrese people lived in South Buffalo, Abruzzese lived on Roma Avenue, and Sicilians lived on the old Buffalo waterfront near Canal Street.

Goldman, Mark. *City on the Edge: Buffalo, New York, 1900 – Present*. (Prometheus Books, 2007), 43-44.

shielded from the outside urban assimilatory pressures; they were able to speak their native language, and participate in their traditional culture.

As was the case with other immigrants, Italians brought a balance of political experiences, economic ambitions and expectations of how they could achieve these in Canada and the United States.<sup>4</sup> Italians responded to marginalization from Canadian and American society by evoking ethnic economies, many of which were centred on the home.<sup>5</sup> Ethnic economies involved a process whereby entrepreneurs in an ethnic group specialized in an industry, and hired fellow community members to work in that industry. Co-ethnic personnel are key to the definition of the ethnic economy.<sup>6</sup> Employment in ethnic economies included both formal employment and occasional informal employment, such as day labour or temporary assistance at the business of a friend or family member.<sup>7</sup> In Toronto and Buffalo, Italians worked and owned businesses important to the commodification of pizza in food-based industries ranging from butcher shops, to bakeries, to fruit markets, to taverns, and dry good importers.<sup>8</sup> Many of these businesses initially catered to their neighbours (the co-ethnic market), but shifts took place by the late 1940s that saw Italian businesses serve non-Italian neighbours as well. These businesses relied on the interconnected supports of other ethnic Italian businesses to supply labour, raw materials, and financial services. As historian Robert Harney

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<sup>4</sup> Olson, Sherry and Kobayashi, Audrey. "The Emerging Ethnocultural Mosaic" in *The Changing Social Geography of Canadian Cities*, ed. David Ley and Larry Bourne. (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1993), 138-152, 139.

<sup>5</sup> Harney, Robert. "Toronto's Little Italy 1885-1945" in *Little Italies in North America*. Ed. Harney and Scarpaci. (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1981), 47.

<sup>6</sup> Light, Ivan et al. "Beyond the Ethnic Enclave Economy." *Social Problems*, Volume 41, No 1, February 1994, 65-8-, 66.

<sup>7</sup> Light, Ivan. Immigration and Ethnic Economies in Giant Cities." *International Social Science Journal*, Volume 56, Issue 181, September 2004, 385-298.

<sup>8</sup> Zucchi, John. *Italians In Toronto: Development Of A National Identity, 1875-1935*. (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988), 101.

suggested, by 1905, Toronto's Little Italy "achieved the critical mass necessary to support and encourage a kaleidoscope of enterprises and occupations."<sup>9</sup>

Equally important to the economic and household activity of Italians in Toronto and Buffalo were labour agents and the *padrone* system.<sup>10</sup> The *padrone* system facilitated immigration, found employment for newly arrived Italians, and established the pattern of living arrangements of Italian immigrants. This is an example of the ethnic enclave economy, a system characterized by the spatial clustering of ethnic enterprises and homes, and the operation of businesses that employed co-ethnic workers.<sup>11</sup> The system formed boarding houses for sojourning men (an example of an ethnic enclave economy business) and the system whereby Italian immigrant families lived on the same streets as fellow townspeople.<sup>12</sup> It was within these households that pizza was first prepared and consumed in Toronto and Buffalo.

The home marks the demarcation point between the public and private spheres, where a familial unit can create a sense of belonging or alienation tied to their sense of self in relation to their community.<sup>13</sup> The home is an essential space in understanding the

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<sup>9</sup> Harney, "Toronto's Little Italy 1885-1945," 47.

<sup>10</sup> The Italian phrase for boss or manager. The *padrone* system was a contract labour system, where a labour agent (the *padroni*) brought fellow countrymen to Canada to fulfill labour needs. In Toronto, this often represented the immigration of fellow townspeople. More often than not, this was sojourning single men who came to Canada to work, make money and improve their family's condition in the old country. Some *padroni* exploited the system and owned the boardinghouses, saloons, banks and provision shops used by the workers. The *padroni* played as intermediaries between agents in Italy, and businesses in Canada, earning a bounty for each worker they found. *Padroni* including Montreal's Antonio Cordasco, became notorious for their role in the immigration and labour of Italian immigrants, resulting in a federal royal commission in 1904, which limited their power and the *padrone* system.

Zucchi, John. *Italians in Toronto: Development of a National Identity 1875-1935*. (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1988), 48.

Harney, Robert. "Montreal's King of Italian Labour: A Case Study of Pardonism." *Labour/Le Travail*, Volume 4, 57-84, 1979.

<sup>11</sup> Light, Ivan et al. "Beyond the Ethnic Enclave Economy," 68.

<sup>12</sup> Zucchi, 48.

<sup>13</sup> Blunt, Allison and Ann Varley. "Geographies of Home." *Cultural Geographies* 11:2004. 3-6, 3.

interplay of external culture with domesticity, economics, familial relations, gender, ethnicity, race and religion. Within a home, spaces reflect different roles for members of a family unit who occupy them. For example, the kitchen marks the centre of domesticity and is a central site for the negotiation of gender, class and national identity.<sup>14</sup> In Toronto and Buffalo, the ethnic economy or ethnic enclave economy was not necessarily present in each individual Italian home. However, the ethnic family economy and home consumerism shaped the lives of Italians and non-Italians alike, and contributed to the home becoming the first site of pizza production and consumption.

Within some ethnic communities, the home was an extension of the workspace. For Jewish immigrants in Toronto working in the garment industry, for instance, the home was often a site of production for piecework.<sup>15</sup> The home also served as the site of childcare, small-scale production, and secondary wage income.<sup>16</sup> For entrepreneurial Italian immigrants, the home also served as the site of both business and private lives, where the division between paid labour and unpaid domestic work was not clearly defined. Self-employed immigrants, although a small minority, often worked from home and represented the ethnic family economy.<sup>17</sup> For example, while immigrant women might have prepared ethnic food at home as a domestic task, if the food was sold, it contributed to the family economy. Some of the earliest pizza businesses including

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>15</sup> Hiebert, Daniel. "Integrating Production and Consumption: Industry, Class, Ethnicity and the Jews of Toronto." in *The Changing Social Geography of Canadian Cities*, ed. David Ley and Larry Bourne. (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1993), 199-213, 205.

<sup>16</sup> Hiebert, "Integrating Production and Consumption," 202.

<sup>17</sup> Light, Ivan et al. "Beyond the Ethnic Enclave Economy," 67-69.

Buffalo's Santora's pizzeria and Totino's frozen pizza (both discussed in this chapter) started with the household production of pizza sold to others.<sup>18</sup>

Consumerism in non-Italian households was also essential to the commodification of pizza in Toronto and Buffalo. The acceptance of Italian culture by non-Italians can be partially attributed to the inroads made by popular Italian figures including Joe DiMaggio and Frank Sinatra in Canadian and American popular culture, and the availability and affordability of Italian food during the Great Depression and Prohibition. Consumers were drawn to Italian foods because they were affordable, convenient, and quickly prepared. Moreover, Italian food was different and seemed more interesting than the familiar food Americans and Canadians ate every day.<sup>19</sup> Marketers, home economists, and the advent of convenience food technologies made Italian foods widely available to non-Italians for home consumption. Owing to trends in postwar domesticity, the rise of home economics and the advent of wartime convenience food technologies, the home kitchen was an important space in postwar Canadian and American homes. Facilitated by the participation of Italians in the urban economies, and the dissemination of their ethnic foodways, pizza products were first sampled in the homes of Toronto and Buffalo in the 1950s. The early pizza products for non-Italians came in the form of pizza kits, frozen pizza, and scientifically developed recipes.

The home is often a key location of study in food history. The home kitchen is one of the few sites of urban food production, aside from restaurants and food carts.

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<sup>18</sup> Part of this process included the passing of traditional cooking ways and recipes to second and third generational children born in Toronto and Buffalo. Many of these children would open some of the first pizzerias in the urban centres.

<sup>19</sup> A discussion of Canadian and American cuisine is featured in Chapter 2. These cuisines featured meals of meat or fish, vegetables, and bread. Italian cuisine featured grains like pasta as a central feature of the meal, covered in sauce (sometimes made with meat) and multiple side dishes of vegetables, fruits, meat and seafood.

Scholarly works on food history including Jeffery Pilcher's *Planet Taco* [2012], Aaron Bobrow-Strain's *White Bread* [2013], and Michael W. Twitty's *The Cooking Gene* [2017] all use the home as a location of analysis for exploring the production and consumption of food. However, histories of pizza rarely examine the home as a site of production or consumption but focus instead on the pizzeria and restaurants.<sup>20</sup> This chapter contributes to the scholarly study of the history of pizza by exploring the role of the home in the commodification of pizza.

From the period following the Second World War until the late 1950s, Toronto and Buffalo experienced similar patterns of economic and urban growth owing to postwar prosperity. In 1950, Toronto and Buffalo had similar sized urban populations of 673,000 and 580,000 and household incomes of \$34,800 (CAD) annually in Toronto and \$34,179 (CAD) in Buffalo.<sup>21</sup> This is contrary to the developments of the 1960s-1990s, which saw divergent economic and cultural paths for Toronto and Buffalo. During the period in question, pizza was first introduced and commoditized in the two cities in similar ways. This chapter demonstrates how the economic superiority of the United States, and its incursion into Canada, influenced the commodification of pizza in Toronto. Concurrent to the introduction of pizza, the development of Italian ethnic economies, the

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<sup>20</sup> This includes works by Carol Helstosky, Liz Barrett, and Rosella Ceccarini who all focus on restaurants and pizzerias as the site of pizza production, overlooking the role of the home in pizza production and consumption.

<sup>21</sup> See Appendix Table 1: Urban Populations. Average Household Income for Toronto derived from Statistics Canada, "*Average Incomes of Families and Unattached Individuals, Canada 1951-1955*". Figure of \$22,401 for 1951 was provided in 1995 dollars, and adjusted using CPI Inflation Calculator to reflect 2020 figures. Buffalo Household Income was derived using United States Bureau of Labor Statistics report, "*Occupational Wage Survey: Buffalo New York, January 1950 No. 991*." From this survey, the role of Stock Handler and Trucker had the highest number of respondents, with an hourly earning of \$1.27, this wage equaled \$2438.40 annually based on a forty-hour workweek, the average suggested by the survey across all professions. Adjusted to inflation using the CPI Inflation Calculator, this reflects \$26,211USD or \$34,179CAD in 2020.

redevelopment of Italian foodways in Canada and the United States, as well as the changing postwar urban metropolis shaped how pizza was commoditized in the homes of Toronto and Buffalo. As the colloquial saying goes, “Home is where the heart is,” this chapter suggests that between 1945 and the late 1950s in Toronto and Buffalo, home is where the pizza was, and “Mama” was the producer.

## I

Pizza is the product of Italian culinary traditions imported to North America by Italian immigrants. However, Italian-American and Italian-Canadian communities existed within North America prior to the popularization of pizza in Italy in the late 1800s. The establishment of these communities, their ethnic economies and ethnic household economies help to illuminate the processes of importation and commodification of pizza in North America.

The first Italians emigrated to North America in the early 1800s. They largely settled in New York City and Chicago where they worked as merchants, retailers and artisans, establishing markets for the Italian ethnic economies. Italian immigrants looked to Canadian and American urban centres for economic opportunities, including home and business ownership that were not possible to obtain in Italy.<sup>22</sup> Toronto and Buffalo’s industrial and transportation industries and growing cities offered economic opportunity for new immigrants, and the foundation for the creation of ethnic economies. In the 1880s, larger waves of Italians migrated to Toronto and Buffalo. In the early 1880s,

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<sup>22</sup> Zucchi, *Italians In Toronto*, 70.

migrants from Southern Italy immigrated to Buffalo and persons belonging to the Italian peasant classes immigrated to Toronto.<sup>23</sup>

Toronto's Italian community was tightly knit, built upon associations from the home country, owing to the *padrone* labour system, kinship and religious connections. Italians who settled in Toronto lived amongst people from their former Italian towns [*paese*, Italian for locale and *paesano* referring to people hailing from the same paese] and established their homes and businesses near them. For example, Italians from Campania did not have formal institutions that bound them together, yet networks of transnational kinship organized their community for remittances, reunions and religious festivals.<sup>24</sup> Toronto's Italian community of the late 1890s was centred around St. John's Ward, an area bounded by College Street, Queen Street, Yonge Street, and University Avenue.<sup>25</sup> St. John's Ward historically housed many different immigrant groups, including early European refugees and the Irish. The Ward was referred to as Toronto's "slum district" because of the concentration of immigrants and their propensity to live in multi-family homes.<sup>26</sup> The Italian community in the Ward was centred upon a single parish, St Agnes Church, at Dundas and Grace Streets.<sup>27</sup> This close knit community fostered the establishment of Italian ethnic economies.

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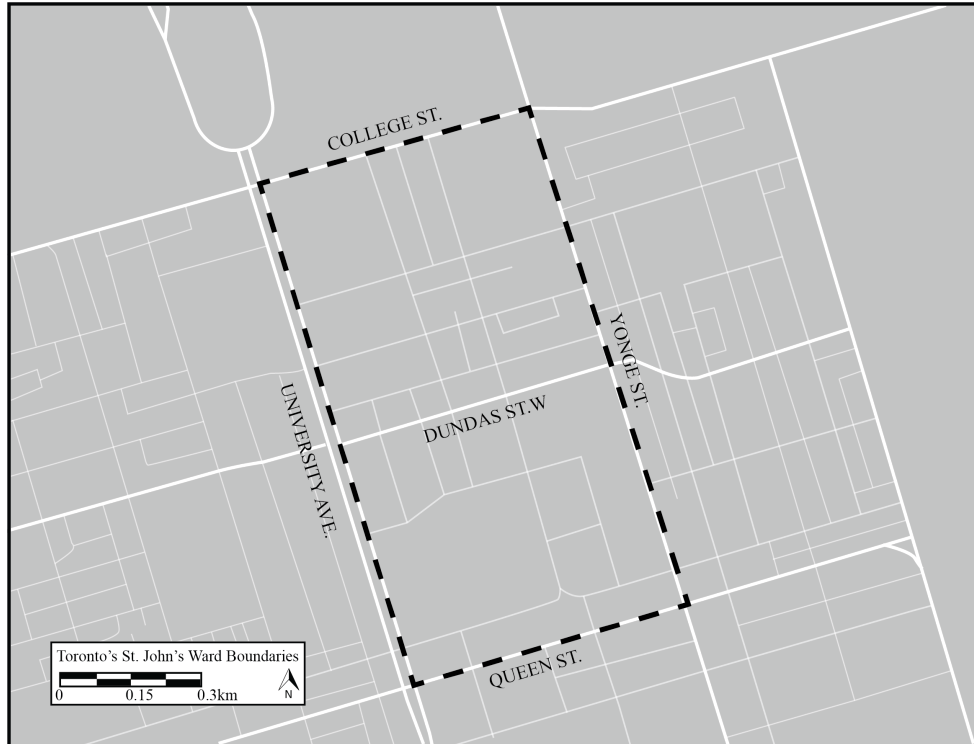
<sup>23</sup> Yans-McLaughlin, Virginia. *Family and Community: Italian Immigrants in Buffalo 1880-1930*. (Cornell University Press, 1977), 25 and Zucchi, *Italians In Toronto*, 16.

<sup>24</sup> Liberatori, Abril. "Tera Straniera: Migration and Transnationalism in Italy, Canada and Argentina." *European Review of History*. 25, no. 3-4 (July 2018): 636-653, 639.

<sup>25</sup> Stanger-Ross, Jordan. *Staying Italian: Urban Change And Ethnic Life In Postwar Toronto And Philadelphia*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 26.

<sup>26</sup> Zucchi, *Italians in Toronto*, 31-34.

<sup>27</sup> Stanger-Ross, *Staying Italian*, 27.



**Figure 2.2: Toronto's St John's Ward Boundaries (Created in ArcGIS, Esri Light Gray Canvas Map, 2020)**

Central to the Italian community in Toronto were boarding and rooming houses. While lodging was not unique to the Italian community, with 23.2% of Toronto households containing one or more lodgers, many young Italian men were sojourners living in the Ward neighbourhood.<sup>28</sup> In some cases, these young men formed cooperative boarding houses, while labour agents paired others. These homes had poor conditions, with local reformers fearing overcrowding and disease.<sup>29</sup> In a survey of Toronto boarding houses in 1919, fifteen of the sixty-four houses surveyed reported the “housekeeping privilege” of a communal kitchen.<sup>30</sup> In the description of one rooming house in the 1950s in the Regent Park neighbourhood of Toronto, the kitchen was fitted with a two-burner

<sup>28</sup> Harris, Richard. “The End Justified the Means: Boarding and Rooming in a City of Homes, 1890-1950.” *Journal of Social History*. Vol. 26 No. 2 (Winter 1992), 331-358, 340.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> Leach, Edith. “Board and Lodging Conditions in Toronto,” *Town Planning and Conservation of Life*, 6,2 (1920): 41-44.

electric plate, and no refrigerator or food storage space.<sup>31</sup> The conditions of the home, coupled with the gendered experience of food production in Italian households suggests that pizza was not made by sojourning single men in Toronto.

As the sojourning men made money and established their lives in Toronto, they brought their families to Canada.<sup>32</sup> This transformed the home space from a slum dwelling for single men to a cooperative space for families. The Italian homes of Toronto were focused on the centrality of family, both nuclear and extended, for economic support. The family was a cooperative enterprise: its economic well-being was dependent on the specific roles of family members as part of the domestic and ethnic economies. Many of the early Italians in Toronto worked in the businesses of construction business, needle trades, laundry, brickmaking, metal trade and other domestic services.<sup>33</sup> While male family members engaged in wage labour outside the home, women assumed domestic roles as well as home wage labour alongside kin and female friends.<sup>34</sup>

Between 1895 and 1905, Italians in Toronto established the retail fruit market and bakery business as part of the ethnic economy.<sup>35</sup> Italians sold fruit and bakery products to non-Italian Torontonians, and prepared Italian dishes for sale to co-ethnic community members. Italian-Canadians established networks in Italy to import Italian food goods, including olive oil, olives, tomatoes and other preserved and canned goods to Canada.<sup>36</sup> This wholesale trade became fundamental to early pizza production, providing Italian-

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<sup>31</sup> Harris, "The End Justified the Means," 348.

<sup>32</sup> Harris, "The End Justified the Means," 340-341.

<sup>33</sup> Zucchi, *Italians in Toronto*, 77.

<sup>34</sup> Ramirez, Bruno. *The Italians in Canada: Canada's Ethnic Groups*. (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1989), 12.

<sup>35</sup> Zucchi, *Italians in Toronto*, 88.

<sup>36</sup> Zucchi, *Italians in Toronto*, 116.

made ingredients, before they were reproduced in Canada and the United States. Toronto based companies, Aurora Imports and Bona Foods, built warehouses in Toronto in the 1950s to sell imported Italian foods to home chefs and restaurants alike.<sup>37</sup> These businesses prospered in Toronto, as the Canadian federal government did not limit the national business activities of the Italian communities. These businesses relied on the ethnic economy for the hiring of other Italians as workers, product producers, and for connections to the home country to obtain materials.

The centrality of the ethnic economy and the production of pizza in Italian-Canadian homes are illuminated by a series of oral histories from residents of Toronto's Harbord Village, (an area bound by Bloor Street, Spadina Avenue, College Street and Bathurst Street). Mario Porretta, arrived in Toronto in 1957 from Sicily and lived with his parents in an apartment at 93 Harbord Street, in the Harbord Village Neighborhood.<sup>38</sup> His father, Giuseppe worked in a grocery store, under their apartment, owned by his brother Giorgio.<sup>39</sup> An interview with Silia Giannone and Vittoria Giannone, who were intermarried with the Porretta family, explained that Giorgio Porretta (brother-in-law to Vittoria) welcomed all newly immigrated extended family members to live at 93 Harbord.<sup>40</sup> These newcomers would rely on familial and *paesan* connections to find work in the city.<sup>41</sup> In the Harbord apartment, Mario recalled that both his parents were

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<sup>37</sup> Corporate histories of both companies reveal the expanding importance of the wholesale trade. Both companies started in family garages, using cars to deliver their products. As the business became more formal, the companies expanded to warehouses with delivery trucks. While they were family businesses at their root, by the 1960s they were important businesses for the Italian community. In the case of Aurora, their wholesale expanded from Toronto to Mississauga and Montreal.

"Our Story." AuroraImporting.com (Accessed, October 1, 2020)

"History." BonaFoods.com (Accessed, October 1, 2020)

<sup>38</sup> Mario Porretta, interviewed by Harbord Village History Oral History Project, April 18, 2013.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Silia Giannone and Vittoria Giannone, interviewed by Harbord Village Oral History Project, 2013.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

good cooks and used produce available in the grocery store, and reminisced about, “caramelized onions, because they would always be in the fridge.”<sup>42</sup> He also recalled his parents being proud of a backyard garden where they grew parsley, basil and tomatoes.<sup>43</sup> The Giannone sisters also recalled the centrality of food to their experiences of living amongst family on Harbord Street, “the house was all the time full, I make the pizza.”<sup>44</sup> The centrality of food experiences to the Porretta family and their businesses resulted in the opening of Porretta’s Pizza at 97 Harbord Street in 1969.



**Figure 2.3: Porretta's Pizza at 97 Harbord Street. Also visible is Louie Laundry at 95 Harbord, which would later become part of the pizzeria. To the far left is 93 Harbord, which in 1969 was a psychiatrist's office (previously the Porretta family store). Photo: Courtesy of Mario Porretta's donation to the Harbord Village History Project.**

Buffalo also had a vibrant and growing Italian community. The Italians who flocked to Buffalo came from Southern Italy, specifically the region of Sicily. These primarily agricultural migrants also worked in Italy as miners, fishers and, occasionally craftsmen.<sup>45</sup> In Buffalo, single male Italian migrants became industrialized workers,

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<sup>42</sup> Mario Porretta, interviewed by Harbord Village History Oral History Project, April 18, 2013.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Silia Giannone and Vittoria Giannone, interviewed by Harbord Village Oral History Project, 2013.

<sup>45</sup> Yans-McLaughlin, *Family and Community*, 25-26.

earned wages to import their families from Italy, and adopted the American nuclear family pattern when their families arrived.<sup>46</sup> The Italian population of Buffalo increased naturally and through migration from 13,000 in 1890, to 20,000 by 1900 and nearly 50,000 by 1920.<sup>47</sup> This expanding population resulted in the development of Italian neighbourhoods and the growth of Italian businesses.

Similar to regionally based settlement patterns in Toronto, Italians in Buffalo settled amongst neighbours from Italy. Italians in Buffalo were not a monolithic group and were divided along both regional and dialect lines. These divisions dated back to migrants' status in Italy. For example, nearly the entire population of the town of Valle D'Olmo migrated to Buffalo after years of poor agriculture results in Italy. These families lived near one another in multi-family homes on the waterfront streets of the Lower West Side in Buffalo.<sup>48</sup> On Buffalo's East Side, people from the Campobasso region of Italy lived between Seneca and Swan Streets on the East Side, Calabrese people lived in South Buffalo, Abruzzese lived on Roma Avenue, and Sicilians lived on the old Buffalo waterfront near Canal Street.<sup>49</sup> These settlement patterns followed economic opportunities along the Erie Canal and manufacturing industries.

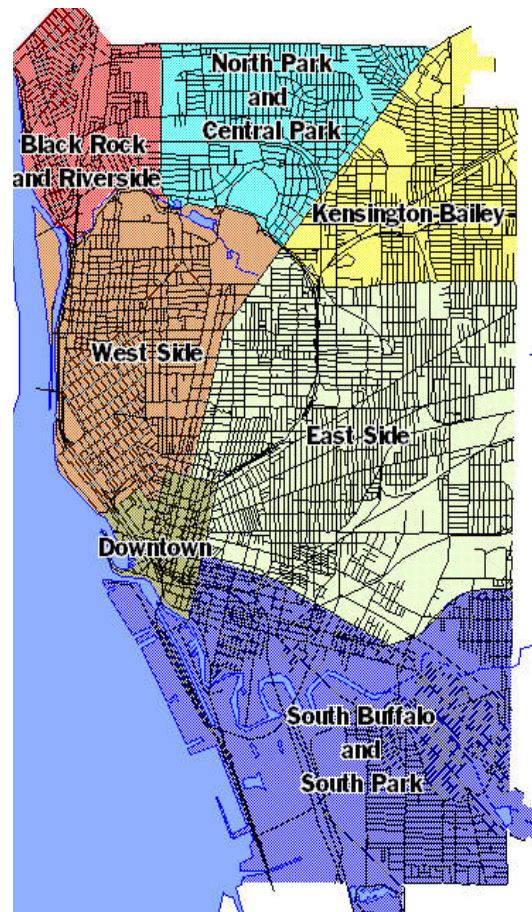
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<sup>46</sup>. Yans-McLaughlin, *Family and Community*, 18.

<sup>47</sup>. Goldman, *City on the Edge*, 43.

<sup>48</sup>. Goldman, *City on the Edge*, 44.

<sup>49</sup>. Goldman, *City on the Edge*, 43-44.



**Figure 2.4: Districts of Buffalo, New York.**  
 (Created by Seth Triggs for Chuck LaChiusa’s “Buffalo as an Architectural Museum” 2002)

The church brought Italian-Americans together in Buffalo, leading them out of their various enclaves of regional and dialect groups and consolidating them. In 1902, the St. Anthony of Padua Church opened on Court Street. By 1905, more Italian-Americans moved towards Canal Street, a downtown neighbourhood known as “The Hooks” for economic opportunities alongside the canal.<sup>50</sup> In 1905 a church, Madonna del Carmine, or Mt Carmel opened on Le Cousteleux Street further supporting the growing

<sup>50</sup>. “The Hooks” also known as “Canal Street”, “The Flats”, “Five Points” all refer to an area alongside the Buffalo River bound by the historic Erie Canal, Ship Canal and Commercial Canals. Employment in the area supported the canal industry as longshoremen, and in processing plants. It was redeveloped in the 1990s as the historic canals were filled in, and is now known as the Canalside neighbourhood.

Italian community.<sup>51</sup> The strength of the Italian immigrant communities and their survival was tightly tied to the parish, as many immigrants were impoverished and relied on community meals served at the parish. Aside from parish meals, they survived on bread and oil, and some pasta; fresh fruit and vegetables were rare in their diets.<sup>52</sup> The diet of many of the Italian-Americans was weak in variety and nutrition compared to their Toronto counterparts who owned importing wholesale businesses, fruit markets and bakeries.<sup>53</sup>

Aside from meals provided by the church, Italians in Buffalo purchased food from co-ethnic entrepreneurs at public markets and Italian owned grocery stores. The act of visiting these markets to select ingredients to make traditional dishes was a gendered role for Italian women in North America.<sup>54</sup> As wives, mothers and members of the Italian community, they were expected to gather ingredients and cook dishes that would be served to their families and neighbours. For example, a Sunday night dinner was a family-centred ritual where family members gathered to relax and socialize around a meal. By maintaining the ritual of the Sunday night dinner, Italians held on to familial roots and traditional upbringings.<sup>55</sup>

Pizza and other traditional foods were essential to the homes of Italian-Americans in Western New York. In Jerre Mangione's memoir, *Mount Allegro: A Memoir of Italian American Life*, he described growing up in a Sicilian community in Rochester, New York

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<sup>51</sup>. Goldman, *City on the Edge*, 43.

<sup>52</sup>. Yans-McLaughlin, *Family and Community*, 31.

<sup>53</sup>. While the Canadian government didn't limit the economic activities of Italians, the American government did. The Hawley-Smoot Tariff Act of 1930 was a protectionist trade bill passed by the United States Senate, which placed heavy duties upon imported goods. This limited Buffalo's Italians from participating in importation and fruit market businesses like their Toronto counterparts.

<sup>54</sup>. Cinotto, Simone *The Italian American Table: Food, Family and Community in New York City*. (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2013), 91.

<sup>55</sup>. Cinotto, *The Italian American Table*, 58.

(73 miles or 117 kilometers East of Buffalo) between 1909 and 1930. Mangione recalled Sunday afternoons where the extended family got together, the men would go to the “saloon for a bucket of beer,” and the wives stayed home to socialize.<sup>56</sup> When the men returned home Mangione explained that, “the women would spread out a tablecloth over the table and pile it high with fried Italian sausages, pizza made with cheese and tomatoes, and fried artichokes if they were in season.”<sup>57</sup>

Outside of the home, members of Italian clubs and associations in Buffalo consumed pizza. Clubs and associations included those centred on the Italian churches, St. Anthony’s, St. Gerard’s, Assumption, Holy Cross, Mt Carmel, and Holy Angels Churches as well as benevolent and fraternal societies.<sup>58</sup> These clubs and organizations were essential to the acculturation processes and ethnic economy as they provided newcomers with information in their native language, material aid, and encouraged feelings of belonging and security.<sup>59</sup> Food played a key role in these clubs as members strove to create a unified Italian identity. Part of this acculturated identity was serving a singular Italian cuisine. One historian described these as “pizza and sausage clubs,” where food drew together Italians regardless of their place of origin.<sup>60</sup> One of the most important clubs to the commodification of pizza in Buffalo was the Bocce Club and Bar

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<sup>56</sup> Jerre Mangione was the uncle of popular jazz musicians, Chuck and Gap Mangione, who have recorded as, “The Boys from Rochester.” Mangione, Jerre. *Mount Allegro: A Memoir of Italian American Life*. (New York: Hill and Wang, 1942), 17.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Italian Clubs were also essential to Toronto’s Italian life, with important clubs including the mutual aid societies Umberto Primo, Vittorio Emanuele, and Operaia Italiana who merged into Societa di Mutuo Soccorso Italo-Canadese in 1919. However, no records exist suggesting the consumption of pizza or food at their meetings. But it can be assumed they did, like their New York counterparts.

<sup>59</sup> Iacovetta, *Gatekeepers*, 73.

<sup>60</sup> Diner, Hasia R. *Hungering for America: Italian, Irish and Jewish Foodways in the Age of Migration*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 70.

on Hickory Street, just North of the East Side Italian neighbourhoods. The Bocce Club was a home that served as the gathering spot for Buffalo's Italian-American Second World War veterans who came together to play bocce ball on courts in the backyard. One of the members, Dino Pacciotti, born in Buffalo in 1922 to Italian immigrant parents, served as a United States Army Court Reporter at the Nuremberg trials between June 1942 and June 1945.<sup>61</sup> Following the war, Pacciotti worked as an accountant for General Mills and as a bartender at the Bocce Club. In 1946, Dino Pacciotti and his sister, Melvina Sacco, purchased the Bocce Club and began serving sandwiches and other Italian foods. As legend has it, Dino wandered around the basement of the newly acquired bar and found an old pizza oven, which inspired him to expand the menu beyond sandwiches and cocktails.<sup>62</sup> Dino experimented with many recipes, and eventually settled on a sauce, dough and cheese combination that reminded him of pizza he grew up with. The Bocce Club would become one of the first retail pizzerias in Buffalo in the 1950s.

## II

Italian communities in Toronto and Buffalo played an essential role in the commodification of pizza in the home. These communities brought their traditional foodways to the urban centres and opened businesses that supplied the products needed to produce them. However, different economic opportunities for Italians in Toronto and Buffalo and the extent of their ethnic economies shaped how Italians introduced pizza to the non-Italians in their cities.

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<sup>61</sup>. "Bocce Club Pizza History" Bocce Club Pizza. [www.bocceclubpizza.com/our-story](http://www.bocceclubpizza.com/our-story) (Accessed February 19, 2019)

<sup>62</sup>. "How Bocce Began" Bocce Club Pizza. [www.bocceclubpizza.com/our-story](http://www.bocceclubpizza.com/our-story) (Accessed February 19, 2019)

A correspondent for the *Buffalo Saturday Night* magazine described the Hooks Italian neighborhood of Buffalo in 1920 as, “a miniature Naples, a little city so strange and unfamiliar that you can scarcely believe you are in twentieth century America.”<sup>63</sup> The correspondent explains, “the name of the streets have an ethnic flavor – Dante, LeCouteleux, Maiden Lane and Peacock, near the Commercial Street Bridge.”<sup>64</sup> Perhaps the most interesting part of the correspondent’s report on Buffalo’s Little Italy was the descriptions of food, “Outside the store you will see long strings of chestnuts, and inside Italian cheeses of all kinds. You will also see a profusion of red and green peppers, varieties of pastries, cakes and hot loaves of bread. And, of course, the never absent macaroni...and garlic is everywhere.”<sup>65</sup> While the magazine correspondent describes the neighbourhood as unfamiliar and “scarcely twentieth century America”, the description of Italian foods suggests some familiarity with the Italian diet outside of the Italian American community. In fact, the description of the foods suggests interest in Italian cuisine based on the positive descriptions of the baked goods, and recognition of the aroma and abundance of garlic.

The recognition of Italian cuisine in Buffalo was part of the larger popularization of Italian food amongst non-Italians in the United States. New York City was the Mecca of Italian food in the United States, with the consumption of Italian food dating as far back as the 1870s. Italian food in New York City that was created outside of Italian homes was a small part of the consumption economy as it was made primarily for co-ethnic consumption. Early Italian food outlets included bakeries, pasta shops, ice cream

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<sup>63</sup>. B.J. Ruby, “A Visit to Buffalo Little Naples,” *Buffalo Saturday Night* 1:1920, 4. Grosvenor Collection, Buffalo and Erie County Public Library.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup>. Ibid.

and candy shops.<sup>66</sup> Many of these food outlets were not “brick and mortar” outlets but were attributed to mobile pushcart vendors.<sup>67</sup> Pushcarts in New York City moved daily between locations from the 1870s until 1938. In 1938, Mayor LaGuardia waged war against pushcart vendors. In an opinion piece, for the *New York Times*, LaGuardia said, “The open market pushcart is not only antiquated...These peddlers are a danger to themselves and to others by creating traffic congestion...In addition to the lack of food inspection and the difficulty of checking weights and measures, there is manifest unfair competition with legitimate stores.”<sup>68</sup> LaGuardia effectively banned street vendors, forcing many Italian food carts off the streets, and collapsing one role of the ethnic economy. As the consumption of Italian food was forced off the streets, some cart vendors opened storefronts. Accordingly, the home remained the principal theatre for the production and consumption of Italian food.

The importation of foreign ingredients was essential to the production of Italian cuisine in Toronto and Buffalo homes in the early 1900s. Italians remained loyal to imported pasta, pre-canned tomatoes, oil, cheeses and meats over domestic varieties.<sup>69</sup> Similar to the import market that developed in Toronto, a strong importation market operated in Buffalo. In 1930, the Hawley-Smoot Tariff Act, a protectionist trade bill passed by the United States Senate, placed heavy duties upon imported goods, including Italian foods and ingredients. Various Italian-American groups attempted to fight the Act in an effort to continue to import goods.<sup>70</sup> Ultimately, the Act served as an economic

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<sup>66</sup> Cinotto, *The Italian American Table*, 107.

<sup>67</sup> Pushcart food also had a history in Toronto, but was not necessarily Italian food like New York City. This is explored in Chapter 3.

<sup>68</sup> Fiorello LaGuardia, “Cart Market Antiquated”, *New York Times*, May 22, 1938.

<sup>69</sup> Cinotto, *The Italian American Table* 156.

<sup>70</sup> Cinotto, *The Italian American Table*, 167.

barrier for Buffalo's Italians to own import businesses. As a result, Italian-American companies produced Italian-style foods, which replicated Italian products and imitated a sense of Italianità. This included Sargento Cheese and Saputo Cheese companies, as will be discussed in Chapter 4.

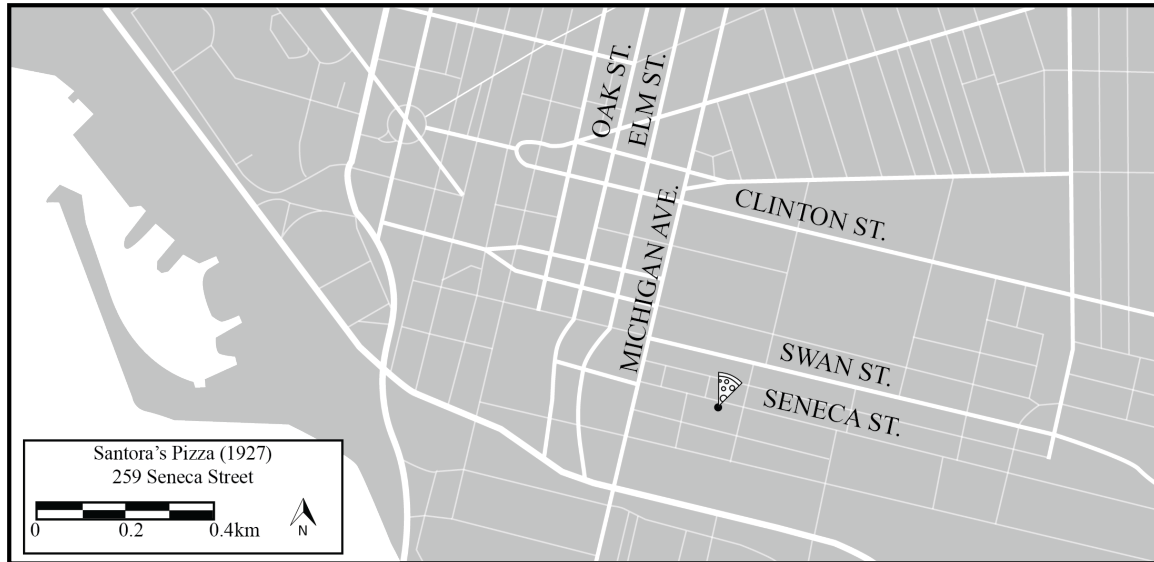
Long before pizza was sold in Toronto, it had spread through the cities of New York State, including Buffalo. Buffalo is home to the sixth oldest pizzeria in the United States -- Santora's Pizzeria.<sup>71</sup> The Santora family opened a small storefront window out of their home at 259 Seneca Street in 1927. Fioravante Santora and his family arrived in Buffalo from Naples, Italy in 1915. In Buffalo, Santora worked as a labourer, installing streetcar tracks and faced a lot of ridicule from his work crew because of his Italian heritage. Santora family legend claims that Fioravante said he would never work for a boss again and opened the store.<sup>72</sup> The original store sold Italian cookies and candies but when the family moved to the house on Seneca Street, the menu expanded to include pizza.

The Santora home storefront is an example of the ethnic family economy, whereby food produced in the home was sold to the co-ethnic community. The location on Seneca Street was in the middle of the Italian neighbourhoods, which had become far more homogeneously Italian than divisions that had once existed and which had been based on regional origins and dialects. Despite the regional variation in Italian food, the Santora family from Naples sold pizza to their neighbours from various Italian regions. The Santora family eventually opened one of the first pizza restaurants in the city.

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<sup>71</sup> Breslouer, Lee. "The 21 Oldest Pizzerias in America." *Thrillist*. June 24, 2015.

<sup>72</sup> Santora's "Our History" <https://www.santoraspizza.com/history/> Accessed: January 23, 2019.



**Figure 2.5: Santora Home/Original Pizzeria Location  
(Created in ArcGIS, Esri Light Gray Canvas Map, 2020)**

Although Italian cuisine had become popular in North America prior to the Second World War, the war should be viewed as a major turning-point in the history of Italians in North America. Prior to the war, millions of Italians fled to Canada and the United States seeking a better life. In North America, Italians were met with racism, prejudice, and economic exclusion that forced them to create insular communities centred on their local parishes. In some cases, this insular community resulted in sympathy for Italian fascism, which was attributed to struggles against discrimination and World War I patriotism.<sup>73</sup> Legislation such as the National Origins Act of 1924, in the United States, deemed Italians to be a less desirable immigrant group and established a quota system to slow immigration.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>73</sup> Harney, Nicholas. "Building Italian Regional Identity in Toronto: Using Space to Make Culture Material." *Anthropologica* 44, no. 1 (2002): 43-54, 51.

<sup>74</sup> Massaro, Dominic R. "The Background, Founding, Evolution and Social Relevance of the Order Sons of Italy in America." *Italian Americana* 24, no. 1 (2006): 20-34, 20.

Following the Second World War, Italy was in a state of disorder following the collapse of the fascist Mussolini government. Many Italians left their homeland for Canada and the United States because of economic destabilization and political infighting between the former fascist regime and the Christian Democratic and Communist Parties. Shortages of food, fuel, and other necessities encourage migration to booming post-war nations like Canada and the United States and cities like Toronto and Buffalo.<sup>75</sup> Toronto's Italian population in 1941 was 14,171, expanding to 18,441 in 1951, and 58,266 by 1961.<sup>76</sup> Meanwhile Buffalo's Italian population was 16,696 in 1950 and grew to 77,434 by 1960.<sup>77</sup> Aside from immigration, the recorded population of Italians included some second-generation Canadian and American persons of Italian ancestry.

This migratory flow from Italy after the Second World War changed the nature of the Italian communities of Toronto and Buffalo. The bulk of migration from Italy to Canada took place in the 1950s, although there were considerable increases in immigration numbers between 1964-1966.<sup>78</sup> Similarly, the United States also saw a rise in Italian migration in the 1950s, with the bulk occurring between 1952-1957 and another surge between 1964-1969.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Liberatori, Abril. "Tera Strabuera: Migration and Transnationalism in Italy, Canada and Argentina." *European Review of History*. 25, no. 3-4 (July 2018): 636-653, 638.

<sup>76</sup> Canada Department of Trade and Commerce, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *1941 Eighth Census of Canada: Volume 3- Ages of the Population*. Table 15. Canada Department of Trade and Commerce, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *1951 Ninth Census of Canada: Volume II Cross-Classifications of Characteristics*. Table 5. Dominion Bureau of Statistics, Minister of Trade and Commerce, *1961 Census of Canada: Population- Characteristics of Immigrants*.

<sup>77</sup> United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1950 United States Census of Population- Census Tract Buffalo, N.Y.* and United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1960 United States Census of Population- Census Tract Buffalo, N.Y.*

<sup>78</sup> Tomasi, Lydio F. "The Italian Community in Toronto: A Demographic Profile." *The International Migration Review* 11, no. 4 (1977): 486-513, 487.

<sup>79</sup> Tomasi, "The Italian Community in Toronto," 488.

New Italian immigrants, predominantly from southern Italy and Sicily, migrated to Toronto following the Second World War. While many of the new Italians settled in the original Little Italy (centred around College Street West), a satellite Little Italy, centred on St. Clair Avenue West near Dufferin Street, was also established.<sup>80</sup> The area was initially built between 1911 and 1913, and included 235 buildings, primarily storefronts with apartment residences above.<sup>81</sup> St. Clair was described as “pretty rough” and “like an old city” when the first Italian immigrants moved there.<sup>82</sup> Italians saw the area as an opportunity for the ethnic economy and redeveloped the area by renovating homes and establishing businesses.<sup>83</sup> The area was designated the Corso Italia (Italian Way or Promenade) business district by the City of Toronto in 1984 to acknowledge Italian contributions.<sup>84</sup>

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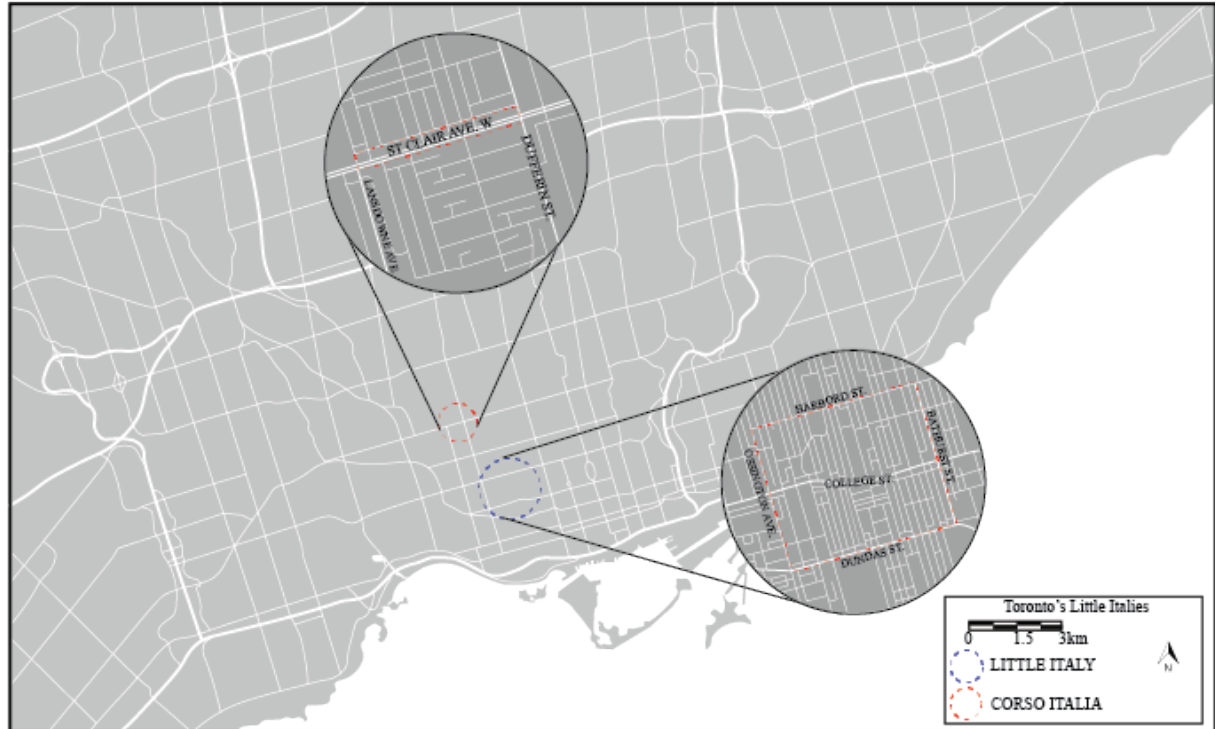
<sup>80</sup> Levine, Allan. *Toronto: Biography of a City*. (Douglas and MacIntyre: 2014), 195.

<sup>81</sup> Buzzelli, Michael. “Canadian Urban Landscape Examples: Toronto’s Postwar Little Italy.” *The Canadian Geographer*. 2000-09, Vol. 44(3), 298-305.

<sup>82</sup> Buzzelli, “Canadian Urban Landscape Examples.”

<sup>83</sup> Buzzelli, “Canadian Urban Landscape Examples.”

<sup>84</sup> Despite the area being predominantly Portuguese by 1984, the Italians were recognized in the naming of this area for their contributions of community building between 1945 and the 1980s. Much of the Italian population had moved to the suburbs of Toronto including Vaughan, King and Caledon by the 1980s.



**Figure 2.6: Toronto's Little Italies (Created in ArcGIS, Esri Light Gray Canvas Map, 2020)**

Coinciding with the growth of the Italian population, the entire population of Toronto increased from 1.1 million in 1951 to 1.6 million in 1961.<sup>85</sup> Postwar economic prosperity and the population growth coupled with automobile ownership, affordable suburban home developments and the opening of the Bloor-Danforth subway line (1966 and 1968), facilitated the population sprawl from the downtown towards the suburbs of Etobicoke, York and Scarborough.<sup>86</sup> By the 1960s, Italians moved beyond Little Italy and Corso Italia to North Etobicoke (bounded by Steeles Avenue, Islington Avenue and the Humber river), North York (the area between Wilson and Finch, Dufferin and Jane), the

<sup>85</sup> Levine, *Toronto*, 202.

<sup>86</sup> Levine, *Toronto*, 202.

neighboring city of Mississauga to the west, and north to the town of Woodbridge (a township incorporated into the city of Vaughan).<sup>87</sup>

Postwar economic prosperity resulted in the retooling of wartime factories, urban redevelopment, and the shift of Buffalo's population from the downtown core to outlying suburbs. In the 1950s the municipal government initiated renewal projects to transform the downtown into Buffalo's central business district. Buffalo's downtown was described as, "In transition...Businesses and cultural activities, traditionally located in downtown, have been shifting to the periphery."<sup>88</sup> The goal of the renewal projects was to remove "blighted areas" of downtown including the Italian Lower West Side, and the African American East Side and replace them with higher income waterfront housing.<sup>89</sup> The renewal of the downtown included the construction of high-rise office buildings for banks and parking lots.<sup>90</sup> The people who lived in the downtown neighbourhoods, along with those who lived in the surrounding neighbourhoods (Ellicott District, Lower West Side, Elm and Oak Streets) lost access to the downtown. These neighbourhoods were slowly replaced with slabs and towers to build rectangular superblocs.<sup>91</sup> Businesses on Buffalo's former Main Street closed, and residents moved to outlying suburbs.<sup>92</sup>

Industrial redevelopment modernization projects on Buffalo's waterfront pushed Buffalo's Italians out of the Hooks neighbourhood. Old "Hooks" Italians joined other Italians in the area bound by City Hall, Niagara River to the West, Porter Avenue to the

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<sup>87</sup> Harney, Nicholas. *Eh Paesan! Being Italian in Toronto*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 28.

<sup>88</sup> "Little Report Asks Major Rebuilding in Downtown Buffalo," *Buffalo Evening News*. December 8, 1960. 1.

<sup>89</sup> Goldman, *City on the Edge*, 191.

<sup>90</sup> Goldman, *City on the Edge*, 196-198.

<sup>91</sup> Goldman, *City on the Edge*, 187-196.

<sup>92</sup> Goldman, *City on the Edge* 199.

North and Niagara Street to the East.<sup>93</sup> Many of the children of early Italian migrants had reached adulthood by the 1950s and had married outside the ethnic group, and lived in suburbs.<sup>94</sup> Unlike Toronto, where Little Italy communities multiplied, Buffalo was reduced to one centralized Little Italy with expanding boundaries. By the 1960s as businesses started to decline in Buffalo, many families migrated out of Buffalo for economic opportunities in the Sunbelt states and suburbs around Buffalo. Italians moved to the former Polish and Eastern European neighbourhoods of Fillmore-Leroy, and Broadway-Fillmore.<sup>95</sup>

As Italian communities grew in both Toronto and Buffalo and grew out of the confines of their ethnic neighbourhoods, a process of cultural exchange took place with their new neighbours. Sociologist Milton Gordon indicated that when different ethnic groups meet one another, a process of assimilation or acculturation takes place.<sup>96</sup> The processes of assimilation and acculturation are starkly different. Assimilation is a process where a minority culture is fully absorbed into a majority culture, and acculturation is a process where the culture of a minority group changes, but they also maintain unique cultural markers including language, food and customs.<sup>97</sup> Gordon explains that the process of assimilation has taken place when the immigrant is able to, “function in the host community without encountering prejudiced attitudes or discriminatory behavior.”<sup>98</sup> He explains that these processes take place through behavioural assimilation, whereby immigrants adopt language, dress and daily customs of the dominant society, and

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<sup>93</sup> Goldman, *City on the Edge*, 202.

<sup>94</sup> Candeloro, Dominic. “Suburban Italians” in *Ethnic Chicago* ed. Holli and Jones (1984). 266-268.

<sup>95</sup> Goldman, *City on the Edge*, 255.

<sup>96</sup> Gordon, Milton. *Assimilation in American Life: The Role of Race, Religion, and National Origins*. (Oxford University Press, 1964), 61.

<sup>97</sup> Gordon, *Assimilation in American Life*, 8-20.

<sup>98</sup> Gordon, *Assimilation in American Life*, 63.

structural assimilation where minorities are welcomed into clubs and institutions of the host society.<sup>99</sup> However, acculturation is the best process to explain the commodification of Italian food in Toronto and Buffalo.

The process of behavioural acculturation for second generation Italian-Americans was, “a pathway to autonomy and integration at the same time the urban culture scorned unrefined immigrants struggling with English and performing unskilled labour with no hope of social advance”<sup>100</sup>. The rejection of Italian food on the tables of second generation Italians resulted in the dining room table becoming a contested battleground space for the tensions between the first and second generation Italians. Many first generation immigrants rejected the advice of American and Canadian food experts, and maintained traditional foodways.<sup>101</sup> The second generation believed that the conservative attitudes held by their parents towards preserving their traditional foodways were un-American or un-Canadian and risked their acceptance into mainstream Canadian or American society.<sup>102</sup> However, some deliberately experimented with Canadian and American recipes and convenience foods.<sup>103</sup> Structural assimilation educational programs were established in immigrant-populated public schools to teach the American diet. These educational programs focused on the consumption of products like oatmeal for breakfast, and the consumption of milk with every meal for children.<sup>104</sup>

Despite the changing attitudes and tastes of second generation Italians, food remained central to the formation of Italian-American and Italian-Canadian families and

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<sup>99</sup> Gordon, *Assimilation in American Life*, 67-70.

<sup>100</sup> Cinotto, *The Italian American Table*, 21.

<sup>101</sup> Iacovetta, *Gatekeepers*, 152.

<sup>102</sup> Cinotto, *The Italian American Table*, 36.

<sup>103</sup> Iacovetta, *Gatekeepers*, 151.

<sup>104</sup> Cinotto, *The Italian American Table*, 40-41.

their social networks. Second generation members continued to attend family-Italian rituals despite the second generation's quests for Americanization. They embraced their Italian identities in the privacy of the home or traditional Italian spaces (the Church, socializing with other Italians etc.). Within their homes, they learned to cook traditional dishes and observed traditional Italian familial practices from their immigrant parents and grandparents. The division between public and private lives served as a demarcation line between the Italian immigrant experience, and that of assimilating into an American culture.<sup>105</sup> The traditional knowledge and new urban opportunities gained by the second-generation created new ethnic economies, including the pizza industry.

An oral interview with Mario Porretta illuminates how the private lives of second-generation Italians at home allowed them to maintain traditional Italian foods and food cultures. Mario described how he moved back to his family home at 95 Harbord Street following his divorce. Despite having his own space in the building he said,

I'd cook, they'd cook, we'd cook. I had my autonomy, my independence, my privacy, but I didn't have to run away from my parents. It's this whole thing in North American thinking, you get to a certain age in life and it's important that you disconnect yourself from your family, well that's not part of Italian Culture.<sup>106</sup>

Mario describes the process of acculturation, whereby he hangs on to the centrality of his Italian family and culinary traditions, yet maintains his own autonomy, independence and privacy outside of his family unit. Most importantly to the commodification of pizza, Mario alludes to the centrality of cooking, as the Porretta family owned a pizzeria, it can be assumed that Mario and his parents cooked many pizzas.

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<sup>105</sup> Cinotto, *The Italian American Table*, 51.

<sup>106</sup> Mario Porretta, interviewed by Harbord Village History Oral History Project, April 18, 2013.

Italians lived in Toronto and Buffalo alongside other immigrant communities, as well as native-born Canadians and Americans. Attitudes towards Italians in Toronto and Buffalo's newspapers are telling with regard to cross-cultural contact and explain why the commodification of pizza amongst non-Italians did not take place until the 1950s. Prior to the Second World War, newspapers in Toronto referred to Italians in Toronto as Italian-Canadians. As early as 1906, a reference was made in *The Globe* to Italian-Canadians holding a ball in Toronto.<sup>107</sup> Other references to Italian-Canadians in Toronto were made in January of 1927 as they gathered to listen to a recording of Benito Mussolini in Italy. While gathered to listen to the affairs of their home country, the organizer of the event was quoted as saying, "further efforts be made in order that the strength of the [Italian] community of Toronto might be apparent in the public affairs of their adopted country."<sup>108</sup> This suggests that Italian-Canadians maintained ties to the home country, but wanted to be recognized as a strong group in Canadian affairs as well. An examination of *The Globe* gave the impression that prior to the Second World War in Toronto, newspaper commentary was rather positive towards Italians in the city. In Buffalo, similar trends were noted in the popular press. The press reported on the happenings and events of the Italian-American Citizens' Club such as one for Columbus Day in 1931 or the election of Italian American Lodge officers in 1937.<sup>109</sup> The press of Buffalo prior to the Second World War also viewed Italians as community members and reported on their community and cultural events in positive ways.

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<sup>107</sup> "Italian-Canadian Club Ball." *The Globe*. December 13, 1906. 14.

<sup>108</sup> "Voice of Mussolini Heard by Italians." *The Globe*. January 7, 1927. 12.

<sup>109</sup> "First Annual Ball." *The Lackawanna News*. August 13, 1931. 4. and "Roland Lodge Elects Officers." *Lackawanna Herald*. January 7, 1937.

Attitudes towards Italians in Toronto shifted with the advent of the Second World War. As Canada and Italy were on opposing sides of the war, the loyalties of Italian-Canadians were questioned and some were interned. A letter to the editor of the *Globe and Mail* in 1939 illuminates the attacks on Italians in Toronto. In a response written by Dick Turano, the President of the Retail Fruit Merchants' Association of Toronto, he explained how many Italians in Toronto had applied for citizenship or were already citizens of Canada.<sup>110</sup> Turano commented that they interested themselves in the affairs of Canada, sent their children to Canadian schools, and had no intention in returning to Italy to fight for the Italian war effort.<sup>111</sup> Despite negative attitudes towards them, Italians in Toronto attempted to promote their contributions to the city.

In Buffalo, the popular press continued to publish news of Italian-American clubs in Buffalo during the Second World War. Other commentary about the Italian community referred to their support of the war effort, as, for instance, in an article from 1942, Italian churches in Buffalo offered prayers for American soldiers, sailors and marines in combat.<sup>112</sup> The support of Buffalo's Italian population was also reflected in an article from the *Lackawanna Leader*, which describes Buffalo's Italian community celebrating the Italian surrender of September 1942. In a quote from the President of the Italian-American council in Buffalo, the community was described as "true Americans"

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<sup>110</sup> One scholar of Italian-Canadians, Nicholas Harney, uses the term ethnocultural entrepreneur to describe community and business leaders who mobilized ethnicity for the collective social, economic and political advantage of the ethnic community. Groups like the Retail Fruit Merchants' Association of Toronto served as ethnocultural entrepreneurs who provided an essential service that helped Italian community members navigate processes of assimilation and community building. The fruit market retail business in Toronto was primarily Italian, and the advocacy of a group like the one led by Dick Turano demonstrates the extent of the ethnic economy in community mobilization efforts.

Harney, Nicholas. *Eh Paesan! Being Italian in Toronto*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 104-105.

<sup>111</sup> Turano, Dick. "Toronto Italian Replies." *The Globe and Mail*. February 15, 1939. 6.

<sup>112</sup> "How Are You Winning the War." *Lackawanna Leader*. December 3, 1942. 2.

for their “intense hate for Hitler” and for never sympathizing with the Mussolini government.<sup>113</sup> The attitude of Italians in Bethlehem Park and the Ingham Avenue neighbourhood was described as, “positive and upbeat.”<sup>114</sup> Italians in Buffalo were represented far more positively in newspaper coverage than their Toronto counterparts during the Second World War

Following the Second World War, Italian-Americans and Italian-Canadians attempted to suppress their “Italianism” to counter negative attitudes in the press, yet Italian culture and cultural icons made their way into American and Canadian homes through popular culture. The 1945 Three Stooges Film, *Micro-Phonies*, featured the Stooges badgering an overweight Italian musician, who turned violent when they interrupted his musical routine.<sup>115</sup> In the film, Italians were portrayed as both artistic and violent. The depiction of Italians in wartime popular culture followed the attitudes depicted in the popular press. Yet not all portrayals of Italians in popular culture were negative. Joe DiMaggio, a baseball player for the New York Yankees, was a prominent Italian-American sports figure, Major League Baseball’s Most Valuable Player in 1939, 1941, and 1947 and was well known for his marriage to American actress Marilyn Monroe.<sup>116</sup> DiMaggio was celebrated as both a positive sports star and a social figure. Similarly, the musician Frank Sinatra was a notable Italian-American entertainer following the Second World War. Sinatra’s music was popular, and as an icon, Sinatra was surrounded by legions of fans. Sinatra was portrayed as not only a showman, and

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<sup>113</sup> “Surrender by Italy Causes Joy in City.” *Lackawanna Leader*. September 9, 1943. 1.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> Iorizzo, Luciano J., and Salvatore Mondello. *The Italian Americans*. (Youngstown, NY: Cambria Press, 2006), 263.

<sup>116</sup> Lorizzo and Mondello, *The Italian Americans*, 275.

artist but also as a family man. Popular culture representations of figures like DiMaggio and Sinatra helped to counter the pre-war caricatures of Italians, attitudes in the popular press, as well as changing the popular press perception of Italian-Americans as Italian mobsters such as Al Capone and other gangsters of the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>117</sup> These positive cultural representations permeated the home space through radio, magazines, newspapers and eventually televisions, and made Italians and Italian culture more common in the homes of Canadians and Americans.

While attitudes towards Italians in the popular press and popular culture were mixed, references to pizza emerged in the popular culture of the post-war era. One of the earliest, and perhaps the most influential popular culture reference related to pizza was entertainer Dean Martin's 1953 song, "That's Amore". The song, which would become one of Martin's staple songs, contains the lyrics, "When the moon hits your eye like a big pizza pie, that's amore."<sup>118</sup> The song was featured in the Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis' 1953 film, *The Caddy*, and eventually reached the second spot for highest-selling song on the Billboard Top 100 Song Chart, and finished 1953 as the fifteenth-highest selling song of the year.<sup>119</sup>

The 1950s ushered a period of growth and changes for Italian communities in Toronto and Buffalo as new waves of immigrants came to the cities, and the cities prospered in postwar economic growth. Italian communities in Toronto and Buffalo

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<sup>117</sup> Newspapers of Toronto and Buffalo including the *Toronto Star*, *Globe and Mail*, *Lackawanna Leader*, *Lackawanna Herald* and *The Buffalo News* often referred to Italian-Americans and Italian-Canadians involved in crime (robbery, assault, murder) as Italian immigrants in the 1920s and 1930s. Perhaps this was done as connection to the well-publicized mafia crime rings in New York, Chicago and eventually Toronto, Montreal, Hamilton and Buffalo.

<sup>118</sup> Dean Martin, "That's Amore" Written by Jack Brooks, Composed by Harry Warren. Released as single by Capital Records, November 7 1953.

<sup>119</sup> Billboard 1953 Top Sellers List, Jimmy's Charts Catalogue Archive.

rapidly grew and reshaped urban neighbourhoods. Within Italian-Canadian and Italian-American households, a clash between traditional values and second generational aspirations took place, with food becoming a central battleground.<sup>120</sup> As the second generation became more Americanized, portrayals of Italians in popular culture also became more positive. Canadians and Americans had become more open to the culture of their Italian neighbours, including cuisine, by the 1950s.

### III

Commoditized pizza first arrived in the United States before 1905, but it took far longer to reach Canada. Pizza is reported to have arrived in Canada in 1953, at Calgary's La Villa Supper Club (which claims to be the site of the first Italian restaurant in Western Canada) when an American customer who had previously tried pizza in San Francisco made a request.<sup>121</sup> This is the only documented case of early pizza creation within Canada, mentioned in a memoir published in 2007. It is evident from this memoir that it was the influence of Americans who brought the demand for pizza consumption to Canada. Keyword searches from Toronto's major newspapers reveal further connections between the United States and Canada's first exposures to pizza. The word, pizza, first appeared in a *Toronto Star* article in 1944 when an instance of crime in New York City was reported, "a fistfight over one [pizza], a hot pie of cheese, olive oil, tomatoes, and spices. It certainly sounds like something to fight over, or with."<sup>122</sup> A similar early mention of pizza comes from an editorial in the *Globe & Mail* in 1949. The article

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<sup>120</sup> Tomasi, Lydio. *The Italian American Family: The Southern Italian Family's Process of Adjustment to an Urban America*. (Center for Migration Studies, 1972), 20.

<sup>121</sup> Maria Cioni. *Spaghetti Western: How My Father Brought Italian Food to the West*. (Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2007), 118.

<sup>122</sup> T.W. Jones, "The Jay-Walker". *Toronto Star*. September 19, 1944. 6.

sarcastically described New York City as, “Little Italy despite its shortage of pizza and pasta.”<sup>123</sup> In both articles, New York City is a common geographic point of discussion and because of its close geographic proximity to Toronto, Toronto’s newspapers reported on New York’s culture and tourism offerings.

On May 4<sup>th</sup> 1953, four years prior to the opening of the first pizzeria in Toronto, a recipe in Margaret Carr’s *Toronto Star* recipe column, “Cooking Chat,” details how to make pizza at home. Carr writes, “Have you tried pizza yet? Pronounced peet-sa. It’s not a new dish, not to Italians anyway, but it’s new to many of us Canadians, and it’s achieving popularity wherever it goes.”<sup>124</sup> Carr suggests that it is suitable for making in the home for multiple occasions and it is served in slices as a snack with afternoon or evening coffee, or as an hors d’oeuvres. Carr’s recipe suggests using a package of pre-made “Hot Roll Mix”, canned tomato sauce, oregano, white cheese, parsley, Parmesan cheese, mushrooms, anchovies, Italian sausage, salami, and pork sausage.<sup>125</sup> A similar recipe appeared in a 1953 cookbook, *Nellie Lyle Pattinson’s Canadian Cook Book*. Originally published in 1917, and updated in 1953, the 1953 edition is the oldest Canadian cookbook to feature pizza as a recipe.<sup>126</sup> The recipe differs from Carr’s in three major ways: the dough is made from scratch, use of Mozzarella cheese is specified, and

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<sup>123</sup> Billy Rose, “Pitching Horseshoes”. *Globe & Mail*. May 13, 1949. 38.

<sup>124</sup> Margaret Carr. “Cooking Chat”. *Toronto Star*. May 4, 1953. 31.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Pattinson’s cookbook was first published in 1917 as a collection compiled while teaching at Central Technical School. The cookbook was published nearly twenty times before it was updated in the early 1950s. Pattinson was in her 70s at the time of revision and hoped a relative would update her book. This was not the case, and Helen Wattie, a professor of Home Economics at Ryerson Institute of Technology in Toronto was tasked with the revision. It was during Wattie’s revisions when pizza was added. The cookbook was sold under Pattinson’s name until 1991. Cookbook historians Elizabeth Driver, *Culinary Landmarks: A Bibliography of Canadian Cook Books 1825-1949* [2008] and Carol Ferguson and Margaret Fraser, *A Century of Canadian Home Cooking: 1900 Through The ‘90s* [1992] celebrate Pattinson’s cookbook and its early contributions to the Canadian culinary landscape and household economics.

the only topping is anchovies.<sup>127</sup> Pattinson's cookbook contained a multitude of Italian recipes, including spaghetti sauce, short ribs, meatballs, cacciatore and tetrazzini which suggests the interests of homemakers in producing Italian dishes at home.<sup>128</sup>

Recipes such as Carr's and Pattinson's were a part of the larger professionalization of home economics, and attempts to shape women's domestic roles in the post-Second World War Canada and the United States. Following the war, American educators, psychologists, sociologists and government officials examined women's roles in the formal labour force and encouraged domesticity as an alternative.<sup>129</sup> Funded by the 1917 Smith-Hughes Act, American schoolgirls received formal education in domestic skills. This government-sponsored home economics education ended in 1963 with the Vocational Education Act, which only funded vocational education and certain home economics skills, with the goal of gaining employment.<sup>130</sup> In Canada, informal home economics education dates to the late 1800s, with organizations including the Young Women's' Christian Association (YWCA) offering classes in major urban centres. In 1902, formal home economic education was included in Ontario high school curriculum, teaching subjects including cookery, hygiene, household emergencies, sewing and

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<sup>127</sup> Nellie Lyle Pattinson. *Nellie Lyle Pattinson's Canadian Cook Book*. (Ryerson Press, 1953), 471.

<sup>128</sup> Canned ready-to-eat Italian food products like spaghetti and meatballs date to the 1920s. Companies including Franco-American and Chef Boyardee produced ready-made Italian products for home consumption. The Home Economics movement and advancement of nutritional guidelines made homemakers look towards recipes to produce their own meals in lieu of canned pre-made meals. Pattinson's book is one example of where non-Italians could find Italian recipes inspired by their favorite pre-made meals. Canned spaghetti was another product, which introduced non-Italians to Italian food in Canada and the United States. Cathey, David. *A Culinary History of Pittsburg County*. (Arcadia Publishing, 2013).

<sup>129</sup> Shapiro, Laura. *Perfection Salad: Women and Cooking at the Turn of the Century*. (University of California Press: 2008), 137.

<sup>130</sup> Stage, Sarah, and Virginia Bramble Vincenti. *Rethinking Home Economics: Women and the History of a Profession*. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 79.

handicrafts.<sup>131</sup> The study was professionalized at universities including the McDonald Institute in Guelph (1903) and the Household Science Program at the University of Toronto (1906).<sup>132</sup>

In the post war era, the ideal homemaker was emphasized as a way to facilitate the domestic containment of women who had worked in the labour force during the war, and to educate and assimilate newly arrived European immigrants.<sup>133</sup> As Franca Iacovetta has shown, Canadian gatekeepers, including home economists, public health nurses, food writers, and dieticians, sought to promote a Canadian middle class affluence and modernity through the promotion of a woman's role as a homemaker.<sup>134</sup> However, this version of the household economy idealized the Anglo-white mother who did not work for wage labour.<sup>135</sup> Immigrant mothers who participated in the ethnic family economy did not have the same purchasing power (because of low or no wages), or the time to spend on the pursuit of domestic consumerism as their Anglo-white counterparts. Canadian home economics education shifted towards consumer education, including such topics as food purchasing, nutrition, meal planning and shelf life to ensure the continued prosperity of Canadian homes.<sup>136</sup> However, informal education written by professional home economists for corporate-sponsored newspaper columns, radio shows and eventually television programs continued to exhibit home economics techniques, including recipes. Companies, including Pillsbury, sponsored bake-offs and recipe

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<sup>131</sup> Mlynaryk, Jenna. "Home Economics in Ontario Secondary Schools." Ontario Institute for Studies in Education Library. October 15, 2018.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> Iacovetta, Franca. *Gatekeepers: Reshaping Immigrant Lives in Cold War Canada*. (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2006), 139-140.

<sup>134</sup> Iacovetta, *Gatekeepers*, 142.

<sup>135</sup> Bhachu, Parminder and Westwood, Sallie. *Enterprising Women: Ethnicity, Economy and Gender Relations*. (Routledge, 2004), 21.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

columns that featured the use of their product.<sup>137</sup> The professional home economist, Margaret Carr, and her column in the *Toronto Star* is one example of this practice. This movement illuminates why many non-Italians first encountered pizza recipes, production, and commoditized consumer goods in their homes.

In the 1950s, women were the primary producers of pizza in the homes of Toronto and Buffalo. In Italian homes, women produced pizza for home consumption and the ethnic economies. As demonstrated by Jerre Mangione's memoir and the Porretta family oral histories, the production of pizza in Italian-American and Italian-Canadian homes was primarily a female enterprise. Italian women made pizza for their families, extended kinship lines and sold pizza to the co-ethnic market via home-based ethnic economies. In non-Italian homes, the production of pizza was also attributable to the labour of female household members. Gatekeepers further encouraged female household domesticity as a path towards modernity and middle class affluence. Female homemakers used pizza recipes and made home pizza products from convenience foods. Despite the fact that men, women and children consumed pizza, the production of pizza rested firmly in the hands of "Mama".

The introduction of at home pizza recipes to Canada in 1953 eventually led to the opening of a commercial Canadian pizza market in 1957. Toronto's home economists and newspapers columnists seemed to become aware of pizza through American media sources rather than from the Italian community of Toronto. The idea of making pizza at home grew before Canadians were introduced to Italian-produced pizza in restaurants. The home chef, "Mama," was essential to the commodification of pizza in the city.

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<sup>137</sup> Shaprio, *Perfection Salad*, 82-83.

While Margaret Carr's first recipe for pizza appeared in the *Toronto Star* in 1953, she did not introduce another pizza recipe until 1955. The follow-up pizza recipe for "Quick Pizza" was earmarked for mothers with, "teen-age pizza fans in your family".<sup>138</sup> The recipe called for the production of individual pizza pies that were an "interesting change of pace, with a foreign touch that perks up supper menus."<sup>139</sup> The crust for the pizza was made of biscuit dough, which Carr suggested, is healthy as it adds extra amounts of "B vitamins and food iron". The dough itself was made of pastry flour, baking powder, salt, shortening, milk, and melted butter. These ingredients are very different from the standard pizza dough recipe of yeast, flour, salt and water. Furthermore, Carr calls for a sauce of two and one-quarter cups of cooked tomatoes. Italian-made tomato sauce for a pizza is never cooked and is prepared and canned seasonally in the home following tomato harvest season. Carr attempted to make pizza less overwhelming for non-Italian readers by modifying traditional Italian pizza design and home preparation of ingredients by instructing the use cooked tomatoes. Carr also suggests that a meat pizza can substitute the two cups of cheese for sliced sausage or ground meat.<sup>140</sup> From its traditional origins, pizza always consisted of dough, sauce and cheese and the elimination of the cheese negates the concept of a pizza. Carr deviated from traditional pizza, perhaps in an attempt to make pizza more palatable to her Canadian readers.

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<sup>138</sup>. Margaret Carr. "Cooking Chat". *Toronto Star*. August 31, 1955. 29

<sup>139</sup>. Ibid.

<sup>140</sup>. Carr notes that cheese can replace meat on the pizza. Perhaps this alteration has been mentioned, as she is being attentive to kosher dietary restrictions of many Toronto readers. Dairy products and meat cannot be eaten at the same time. Similarly, Carr suggests in the previous recipe to use anchovies, which can be eaten with cheese by those adhering to Jewish dietary laws. This also demonstrates Carr's professional approach to home economics by suggesting alternatives that adhere with dietary laws.

In 1955, *Maclean's Magazine* presented an example of Canadian home pizza cooking. In an article about Italian food, Rosina Samarillo, a waitress at Angelo's Italian Restaurant on Chestnut Street in Toronto, prepared a table of Italian dishes for *Maclean's* writers to sample and photograph.<sup>141</sup> The article, explaining Italian dishes to Canadians, described how to cook pasta, and included a labeled photograph of the food prepared by Samarillo.<sup>142</sup> The article illuminates the role of home economist writers as authorities in introducing Italian food to Canadians.



**Figure 2.7: Photograph from *Maclean's* article, "No Wonder Italians Like to Eat." January 1, 1955, featuring a pizza (left side, below the bottle of chianti) made in a Toronto home.**

Aside from the recipes in Canadian publications, home consumer goods introduced pizza to non-Italian home pizza makers. Grocery advertisements from 1955 demonstrate a variety of convenience food products which enabled home pizza production. One of the most popular products to appear was the Chef Boyardee Pizza

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<sup>141</sup> Sangster, Dorothy. "No Wonder Italians Like to Eat." *Maclean's Magazine*. January 1, 1955.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

Mix, Pizza Kit and Spaghetti Sauces. An advertisement for Chef Boyardee Kits ran ten times in the *Toronto Star* between January 1957 and December 1958. The Chef Boyardee Company was founded in 1928 in Cleveland, Ohio when Italian business connections, Carl Colombi, an Italian food importer, met restaurant owner and chef, Hector Boiardi. Colombi came up with the idea to package Boiardi's spaghetti sauce with pasta and parmesan cheese, to sell to home customers. The product was called Boyardee, a modification of Boiardi's name, and was advertised as, "a meal for three that could be made in twelve minutes and sold for twenty-eight cents."<sup>143</sup> During the Second World War, the Chef Boyardee Company mass produced pre-made meal kit rations for the United States Army. Following the war, the American Home Products Corporation (which would eventually become International Home Foods, and ConAgra Foods) purchased the company from Colombi and Boiardi.<sup>144</sup> Under the leadership of American Home Products, Chef Boyardee appeared on grocery shelves across Canada and the United States.<sup>145</sup> The Boyardee product line grew to include, Chef Boyardee Pizza Pie Mix, a home pizza kit that contained, "Zippy Italian Style Cheese", active dry yeast, pizza sauce, and pizza flour mix.<sup>146</sup> The mix was an easy, just add water recipe, to be followed by fifteen minutes of dough rising, then sauce and cheese were added to the baked product. According to a Chef Boyardee advertisement, the result was a "Real Italian style pizza, crispy brown crust, with rich sauce and savory cheese, great for a late evening guest snack, or lunch or supper."<sup>147</sup> Boyardee pizza kits were one of the first

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<sup>143</sup>. Bonnie Frey, "Carl Colombi Served Up Chef Boyardee Idea". *Sarasota Harold Tribune*. June 22, 1994. 30.

<sup>144</sup>. Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> Distribution and production channels developed while a wartime ration company granted the Chef Boyardee Company the ability to permeate the Canadian border to access a new consumer market.

<sup>146</sup>. "Chef Boyardee Pizza Pie Mix Advertisement". *Toronto Star*. November 14, 1957. 5.

<sup>147</sup>. Ibid.

pizza products available in Canadian grocery stores, and introduced pizza to many non-Italian consumers.<sup>148</sup>

In contrast to the explanatory discussions of pizza in Toronto newspapers, an examination of the *New York Times* gave the impression that New York audiences were far more familiar consumers of pizza.<sup>149</sup> In an article published in 1956, Herbert Mitgang described pizza as a “round dish of dough, sauce and cheese” and also suggested that since Lombardi’s opened nearly fifty years earlier, many pizzas had, “been digested by Americans.”<sup>150</sup> Despite an explanatory tone, Mitgang indicates that pizza-making machines outnumbered hotdog vendors at the Texas State Fair, and that “pizza bars” served hundreds of New Yorkers a day.<sup>151</sup> This suggests that pizza had already become a common American commodity. The article also mentions the existence of a “beltline factory in New Jersey, like General Motors” which mass produced refrigerated and frozen pizzas which were sold to restaurants and home consumers alike.<sup>152</sup>

Unlike Canadians who were introduced to pizza in the 1950s, first through recipes and later through restaurants, American audiences, as will be discussed in Chapter 2, were accustomed to eating pizza in restaurants in the 1950s. The pizza business shifted from in-restaurant dining to include made-at-home pizza in the 1950s. While pizzerias such as the Bocce Club in Buffalo offered restaurant quality pizza in takeout containers in the late 1950s, in the early 1950s Americans started to make pizza at home. In 1953, the *New York Times* offered a pizza recipe using white bread dough, topped with cut

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<sup>148</sup> Chapter 2 examines how influences outside of the home including cross border shopping and tourism to Niagara Falls, Ontario and New York also introduced pizza to Torontonians.

<sup>149</sup> While the *New York Times* is a New York City based newspaper, in the 1950’s it still paid attention to other major cities in New York State including Buffalo and Albany.

<sup>150</sup> Herbert Mitgang, “Pizza A La Mode” *New York Times*. Feb 12, 1956. SM133.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

tomatoes and sliced American cheese, cooked in a skillet pan in the oven.<sup>153</sup> While this abomination of a recipe only slightly resembles a pizza, it is an easy at-home alternative to seeking out a local pizzeria. Another article from 1953 also explored the development of a pizza-making kits like Chef Boyardee's. The Fiorello Kit, produced by two brothers from Plymouth, Massachusetts, contained a dough kit of dry yeast, flour, powdered milk, salt and sugar and a can of tomato sauce. The journalist described the product as producing a "creditable pie" that lacks, "the toughness of an authentic article."<sup>154</sup> The critique of the kit suggests the shortcomings of homemade products. Americans could identify pizza kit shortcomings because the majority of urban Americans could already purchase pizza from pizzerias.

While Canada was introduced to pizza by at-home pizza making, American cities like Buffalo only experienced pizza at-home after the success of pizza in restaurants. This could be attributable to the consumer habits of Canadians in the post World War II era. In comparison to the United States, post-war Canada was a far, "less lush and a less practiced commodity culture."<sup>155</sup> Shortages in Canada following the war forced consumers to make choices over which material comforts and pleasures would be purchased.<sup>156</sup> Fancy foods, ingredients and dining out could all be categorized as an extravagant pleasure. Canadians purchased fridges and stoves as scientifically tested appliances to improve their living conditions.<sup>157</sup> The purchase of an appliance, like a stove, offered the opportunity to make many meals for a family over many years; a meal

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<sup>153</sup> Nickerson, Jane. "Food News: Pizza Provides Good One-Dish Meal." *New York Times*, Apr 17, 1953.

<sup>154</sup> Nickerson, Jane. "News of Food." *New York Times*, July 29, 1953.

<sup>155</sup> Parr, Joy. *Domestic Goods: The Material, the Moral and the Economic in the Postwar Years*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999). 64.

<sup>156</sup> Parr, *Domestic Goods*, 65.

<sup>157</sup> Parr, *Domestic Goods*, 204-205.

in a restaurant could not offer the same longevity. An appliance saved the labour for the stay at home mother who did not work for wage, but was an acceptable expenditure for Canadians.<sup>158</sup> This explains why Torontonians were more likely to try a new food at home, making it themselves rather than spending money on dining at a restaurant. Between 1960-1962 a Freezer Queen brand frozen pizza could be purchased for eighty-nine cents, a Chef Boyardee Pizza Kit for fifty-five cents, yet a restaurant made pizza would cost a few dollars.<sup>159</sup> The aversion to spending money also explains why Buffalo had a larger number of restaurants (other than Italian) than Toronto, a topic explored in Chapter 2.

Convenience kits like Chef Boyardee constituted one way in which the process of making pizza at home was accelerated. However, frozen food technologies and new kitchen technologies including toaster ovens, and convection ovens accelerated cooking processes and made convenience foods even easier. As Laura Shapiro shows in *Perfection Salad: Women and Cooking at the Turn of the Century*, kitchen convenience was a central process in the creation of convenience food. Kitchen convenience entailed the introduction of new appliances and kitchen tools whose purpose was for the machine to produce the food.<sup>160</sup> The advent of convenience foods and new home technologies in the 1950s coincided with the commodification of pizza in Toronto and Buffalo.

Convenience foods were envisioned in the era following the Second World War as a process where, “all contact between the cook and the raw makings of dinner would

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<sup>158</sup> Parr, *Domestic Goods*, 206.

<sup>159</sup> Survey of La Pizza advertisements for restaurant price, Dominion and Loblaws advertisements for grocery prices. From *Toronto Star* and *Globe and Mail* 1960-1962.

<sup>160</sup> Shapiro, Laura. *Perfection Salad: Women and Cooking at the Turn of the Century*. (University of California Press: 2008), 161.

be obsolete.”<sup>161</sup> Early convenience food items like Aunt Jemima pancake mix in 1889 and Bisquick introduced by General Mills in 1931, allowed homemakers to simply add water or milk and make a variety of baked goods. Later products like the Betty Crocker cake mixes were more elaborate, requiring the addition of eggs and sugar.<sup>162</sup> Products like Citra-Frost, a failed frozen orange juice company founded by future American President, Richard Nixon, attempted to provide more Americans with fresh California orange juice year round.<sup>163</sup> These products created wider availability of fresh produce and ingredients, made the preparation of foods easier, and simplified the cooking process. While specialty convenience foods like egg rolls and canned macaroni and cheese were more expensive than food made from scratch, consumers weighed convenience and quality when purchasing convenience items over fresh food.<sup>164</sup>

Convenience foods illuminate the popularization of pizza amongst non-Italians in Canada. In 1959, *Canadian Hotel & Restaurant* (CH&R) claimed that, “buyers are more or less use to the idea of convenience type products among the much publicized, highly processed foods.”<sup>165</sup> Processes developed in factories during the Second World War for freezing and the freeze-drying of food entered the consumer market in the late 1940s. Frozen foods tended to limit most of the work for the chef and suggested an illusion of freshness that no manufactured foods could equal.<sup>166</sup> Some of the first frozen foods were plain fruits and vegetables, quickly followed by dinner plates with an entrée, potato and

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<sup>161</sup> Shapiro, Laura. *Something from the Oven: Reinventing Dinner in 1950s America*. (New York: Penguin Books, 2004), xvii.

<sup>162</sup> Shapiro, *Something from the Oven*, 69-70.

<sup>163</sup> Wills, Garry. *Nixon Agonistes: The Crisis of the Self-Made Man*. (Open Road Media, 2017). Chapter 9.

<sup>164</sup> Shapiro, *Something from the Oven*, 25.

<sup>165</sup> Wightman, R.J. “Food Market Forecast”. *Canadian Hotel & Restaurant*. June 15, 1959. 4.

<sup>166</sup> Shapiro, *Something from the Oven*, 10-11.

vegetables.<sup>167</sup> By 1952, there were 155 million people in the United States, and according to census data nearly 33 million refrigerators, but only 4 million freezers, most of which were in rural areas.<sup>168</sup> In the mid 1950s, with increased movement to urban suburbs, many Americans had the space in their home to purchase a freezer, and that made freezers in homes more popular.<sup>169</sup>

With the creation of the Swanson segmented frozen TV dinner in 1954, the market was introduced to the idea of pre-made frozen convenience dinners.<sup>170</sup> The development of the frozen pizza soon followed. Ovens facilitated the convenience cooking of frozen pizza at home. According to Laura Shapiro, at a time when the “highest praise for a recipe was ‘easy’”, the advent of new technologies could make cooking even easier.<sup>171</sup> The innovation of new electric appliances including the toaster oven allowed even those living in urban apartments with kitchenettes to use “electric servants” to prepare food quicker.<sup>172</sup> Directions on the packages of convenience foods suggested how these new appliances could be used to prepare the products from their frozen state. In fact, newspaper columns featuring home economists testing the package directions were common in American newspapers in the late 1940s through the 1960s.<sup>173</sup>

Boston baker, Leo Guiffre, introduced the precursor to frozen pizza, the refrigerated pizza, in April 1950. Guiffre sold forty-nine cents refrigerated pizzas from

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<sup>167</sup> Shapiro, *Something from the Oven*, 12.

<sup>168</sup> Shapiro, *Something from the Oven*, 16.

<sup>169</sup> Shapiro, *Something from the Oven*, 17.

<sup>170</sup> Shapiro, *Something from the Oven*, 19.

<sup>171</sup> Shapiro, *Something from the Oven*, 50.

<sup>172</sup> Barbas, Samantha. "Just Like Home: "Home Cooking" and the Domestication of the American Restaurant." *Gastronomica* 2, no. 4 (2002): 43-52, 44.

<sup>173</sup> Hamilton, Shane. "The Economies and Conveniences of Modern-Day Living: Frozen Foods and Mass Marketing, 1945-1965." *The Business History Review* 77, no. 1 (2003): 33-60, 47.

his bakery, which could be cooked in a home oven.<sup>174</sup> The pizzas came with cooking directions, which recommended cooking in an oven at 375 degrees Fahrenheit for twenty-five minutes. Giuffre opened the Roma Pizza Company in Long Island in June of 1950, selling over 3000 refrigerated pizzas to New York and Boston per day.<sup>175</sup>

Following the inroads made by Giuffre, food scientists and chefs experimented with frozen pizza. Joseph Bucci filed the first patent for frozen pizza in 1950. The patent was approved in 1954 for a process of quick-freezing dough, so pizza would have the right texture when cooked in a home oven. Products like Giuffre's refrigerated pizza meant that pizza dough could be penetrated by moisture, making the dough soggy when thawed and heated. Bucci's patent was a process for fixing the moisture penetration of raw pizza dough from tomato sauce during the freezing process. The process entailed an edible sealing agent spread across the shell of a pizza (the dough crust), which was then placed in an oven for nine minutes at 450 degrees Fahrenheit. This allowed the yeast in the dough to rise, and the sealing agent coagulated on the dough, preventing moisture from penetrating "air bubbles" within the shell.<sup>176</sup> This patent, along with patents for frozen food packaging, frozen food shipping containers and even insulated containers for transporting frozen food dinners from grocery stores to home, all advanced frozen pizza onto Canadian and American tables.<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> "News of Food: Pizzas Now Offered Here Ready to Cook; Salade Julienne Suggested for Hot Days." *New York Times*. June 28, 1950. 34.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

<sup>176</sup> Bucci, Joseph. 1950. Method of Making Frozen Pizza. US Patent 2668117A, filed August 10, 1950, and issued February 2, 1954.

<sup>177</sup> Patents referenced include US Patents: Method of Heating Frozen Food Packages 2600566A (1952), Precooked Frozen Food Package 2674536A (1954), Frozen Food Shipping containers 2808093A (1957), and Insulated Carrying Case for Heated Frozen Food Dinners and the Like 3016129A (1962). Each of these patents specifically mention frozen pizza amongst other frozen meal technologies.

In an advertisement in the *Toronto Star* in 1956, the Dominion chain of grocery stores urged housewives to switch to Dominion for “greater variety of frozen foods”. The advertisement includes the image of a woman standing beside an upright freezer that includes boxes of frozen goods. One of the boxes in the freezer is a generic white box labeled, pizza.<sup>178</sup> This advertisement suggests that Toronto consumers could purchase a frozen pizza in 1956. However, a branded frozen pizza did not appear in a grocery advertisement until May 1961. A Loblaws’ Grocery advertisement sold Freezer Queen branded pizzas offered in pepperoni or deluxe varieties on for eighty-one cents.<sup>179</sup> The Freezer Queen brand was a pioneer company in the TV dinner industry, having opened a manufacturing plant in Buffalo in 1958.<sup>180</sup> It can be inferred that frozen pizza was introduced in Toronto between 1956-1961 via the United States.

In 1955, one year after the issuing of Bucci’s frozen pizza patent, an advertisement appeared in the *Buffalo Criterion* for J&J Food Products (3240 Main Street in Downtown Buffalo) selling a variety of frozen foods, including pizza.<sup>181</sup> Frozen pizza appeared in Toronto in 1956. This demonstrates the interconnected nature of the cities of New York State and Ontario, whereby frozen pizza was created in New York and slowly moved north across New York State and into Ontario over the next two years. Some of this movement between New York and Ontario can be attributed to cross-border

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<sup>178</sup>. “Dominion Advertisement” *Toronto Star*. November 8, 1956. 17.

<sup>179</sup>. In 1925, Theodore P. Loblaw grew his Toronto grocery store chain to three stores in Buffalo. By 1940, a warehouse and logistics headquarters was established in Buffalo as Loblaw’s American headquarters. When George Weston purchased the chain in 1953, the Buffalo headquarters expanded as more stores opened in the Buffalo area. This Buffalo headquarters supplied American goods like Freezer Queen Pizzas to Canadian stores.

Rizzo, Michael. *The Glory Days of Buffalo Shopping*. (Charleston: The History Press, 2013), 73.

“Loblaws Advertisement” *Toronto Star*. May 24, 1961.

<sup>180</sup> “About Us.” Freezer Queen Website, archived via Wayback Machine, 2008.

<sup>181</sup> “J&J Food Products” Advertisement. *The Buffalo Criterion*, October 08, 1955, Page 3.

shopping. Since the end of the Second World War, Canadians in Southern Ontario were drawn to shopping in the United States for a larger selection of goods (including some not available in Canada), a greater variety of stores, and lower prices for some common items.<sup>182</sup> The Canadian propensity to shop in the United States was often curtailed by the higher value of the American dollar, but the experience of cross-border shopping was described by one scholar as, “a cultural experience and rite of passage [for Southern Ontarians].”<sup>183</sup>

Though frozen pizza arrived slowly to Toronto, its expansion can be explained by the opening of a branch plant of the New York firm, Origina Pizza Crust Co., in Canada. The company opened its first Canadian plant in 1956 and another in 1965 in Cooksville (present-day Mississauga, Ontario).<sup>184</sup> The Cooksville plant was 15,000 square feet in size with a capacity of 20,000 pizza pies and 50,000 pizza shells for restaurants per day and enough freezer storage space for an additional 100,000 pizzas and 500,00 shells.<sup>185</sup> By 1961, the company also produced pizza ingredients for the restaurant industry.<sup>186</sup> In 1965, the plant started to manufacture and install machinery in restaurants for pizza making.<sup>187</sup> The opening of the plant, coupled with its vast capacity, suggests that there

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<sup>182</sup> Elvins, Sarah. “A River of Money Flowing South: Cross-Border Shopping in North Dakota and the Insatiable Canadian Desire for American Goods, 1900-2001.” *History of Retailing and Consumption*. Vol. 1, No. 3, 2015, 230-245, 231.

<sup>183</sup> One cultural practice associated with this rite of passage was the smuggling of both legal and illegal goods. The popular figure of the, “lady smuggler,” hid goods in layered dresses while traveling across the border to avoid customs duty limits.

Elvins, Sarah. “Lady Smugglers and Lynx-Eyed Customs Agents.” *The Canadian Historical Review*. Vol. 101, No. 4, December 2020.

Longo, Julie. “Consuming Freedom: The International Freedom Festival as Transnational Tourism Strategy on the Windsor-Detroit Border, 1959-1976.” *Michigan Historical Review*. Vol. 34, No. 2, Fall 2008, 118-137, 126-127.

<sup>184</sup> “Cooksville Pizza Capital?” *Toronto Star*. March 20, 1965. 36.

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>186</sup> “Bricks and Mortar.” *Toronto Star*. June 9, 1961. 32.

<sup>187</sup> “Cooksville Pizza Capital?” *Toronto Star*. March 20, 1965. 36.

was demand for frozen pizza amongst consumers in Toronto and Buffalo. The commodification of pizza in Toronto can be attributed to the incursion of the United States and the creation of the branch plant economy. After a series of strange events at the factory, the *Toronto Star* listed a public liquidation of the assets of the Origena Pizza Crust Company in June 1971. The liquidation suggested that the branch plant had failed and machinery and frozen pizza products could be produced cheaper in the United States.<sup>188</sup>

Totino frozen pizzas also opened an American branch plant in Canada. Rose Totino was a second-generation Italian-American, who was taught how to make pizza in the 1940s, by her aunt in Pennsylvania. Totino returned to her home in Minneapolis, where she made pizza for family and friends. Her household production of pizza gained popularity and resulted in the opening of the restaurant, Totino's Italian Kitchen, in 1951. Totino produced a pizza with a very crisp crust and spicy sausage, which led to the success of the business.<sup>189</sup> One article from the *Toronto Star* claims that Totino's pizzeria in Minneapolis was the first pizzeria to open in the northern midwest of the United States.<sup>190</sup> In 1962, as Totino's pizza became popular in the Minneapolis area, a frozen pizza factory and distribution network was established by the Italian ethnic economy to

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<sup>188</sup> Despite its vast capacity and origins as one of the first frozen pizza plants in Canada serving the Great Lakes region, Origena Pizza Company of Canada was not without its challenges. In December of 1969, William Harper Bremner of London, Ontario shot and killed Gerald Vallo, a part owner in the company, in the parking lot in front of the Cooksville factory. Shortly after shooting Vallo, Bremner made his way to the Scarborough home of Joseph Harrison, a one-time owner of the pizza firm, where he attempted to take the son of Harrison hostage. Bremner was a former employee of the factory. "Suspect Gives Himself Up." *Toronto Star*. December 11, 1969. B43.

"Public liquidation" *Toronto Star*. June 10, 1971.

<sup>189</sup> Jamieson, Laura. "Rose never looked back since her first pizza" *Canadian Hotel & Restaurant*. October, 1979. 28.

<sup>190</sup> White, Jim. "A Spicy Dream Made Rose Pizza Queen." *Toronto Star*. November 16, 1979.

meet consumer demand for her pizza.<sup>191</sup> An illustration of the frozen pizza from 1983 shows that the very thin crust was filled with air pockets and smothered with cheese and toppings.<sup>192</sup> According to Totino, the sale of frozen pizza was, “a natural progression of her business as frozen pizza could be conveniently served in the home at a lower cost than a pizza from a pizzeria.”<sup>193</sup> Totino’s frozen pizza quickly became popular in the United States and she claimed, “I had only been in the frozen pizza business one year and some company came along and offered me one million [dollars] for my recipe and trademark.”<sup>194</sup> Totino turned down the first offer, but accepted a buy-out offer from Pillsbury in 1975.<sup>195</sup>

Under Pillsbury’s ownership, Totino’s captured 65% of the frozen pizza market in the United States. The brand entered the Canadian market in February 1979, opening a branch production plant in Alberta. In October 1979, Totino’s opened a production plant in Midland, Ontario, one hour north of Toronto.<sup>196</sup> With this expansion to Canada, Pillsbury recognized the need to modify the product for Canadians. Canadian Totino’s pizzas were made with pepperoni, while American pizzas toppings were sausage and hamburger. According to Totino, “Canadians prefer a blander product...so we’ve made the switch.”<sup>197</sup> The Canadian pizzas were introduced in ten-inch and five-inch mini pizza varieties sold in pepperoni and deluxe.<sup>198</sup> In Canada, Totino’s frozen pizzas accounted for

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<sup>191</sup> Jamieson, Laura. “Rose never looked back since her first pizza” *Canadian Hotel & Restaurant*. October, 1979. 28.

<sup>192</sup> “Totino’s New Cheese Pizza” Advertisement. *Toronto Star*. November 29, 1983. F7.

<sup>193</sup> Jamieson, “Rose never looked back since her first pizza,” 38.

<sup>194</sup> White, “A Spicy Dream Made Rose Pizza Queen.”

<sup>195</sup> Jamieson, Rose never looked back since her first pizza,” 28.

<sup>196</sup> Jamieson, Rose never looked back since her first pizza,” 38.

<sup>197</sup> White, “A Spicy Dream Made Rose Pizza Queen.”

<sup>198</sup> Jamieson, “Rose never looked back since her first pizza,” 38.

25% of all frozen pizza sales in Canada.<sup>199</sup> The creation of Totino's pizza occurred outside of the Great Lakes region, but the economic dominance of the United States brought the commodification of the product to the Canadian market.

Frozen pizza in Toronto can be attributed to the influence of the United States and the opening of branch plant factories. In Buffalo, frozen pizza was a convenience food that served as an alternative to restaurant pizza and was produced by factories in the city. Aside from the aforementioned frozen pizza brands, other brands including grocery store house brands, tried to attract different customers to frozen pizza, including the short-lived 1960s kosher branded pizza, "Noah Zark".<sup>200</sup> The home, and the "Mama" figure were central to the commodification of pizza in Toronto and Buffalo, aided by the advent of new home cooking technologies and methods.

## **Conclusion**

Pizza's origins may have originally dated from 5 B.C.E in Asia, the Middle East or the Mediterranean, but it was the waves of Italian immigration to Canada and the United States that brought pizza to North America. While Italian migrants did not leave Italy with the intention of introducing pizza to North America, their traditional foodways were introduced to North Americans as they sought out economic opportunities. Italians developed ethnic economies which granted them further financial freedom and aided in community building. Coinciding with waves of Italian immigration, the period following the Second World War until the late 1950s, Toronto and Buffalo experienced similar patterns of economic and urban growth. This is contrary to the developments of the

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<sup>199</sup> Ibid.

<sup>200</sup> Hamilton, Shane. "The Economies and Conveniences of Modern-Day Living: Frozen Foods and Mass Marketing, 1945-1965." *The Business History Review* 77, no. 1 (2003): 33-60, 56.

1960s-1990s, which saw divergent economic and cultural paths for Toronto and Buffalo. During the period in question, 1945 to the late 1950s, pizza was first introduced and commoditized in the non-Italian homes of the two cities.

The post-war era idealized a domestic role for women, the household economy, consumerism, emphasized home cooking, and facilitated the commodification of factory produced convenience foods. The home was the theatre where identities, nationality and the permeable relationship of the Great Lakes region met and first commoditized pizza in the cities of Toronto and Buffalo. Italians first produced pizza in their homes, purchased ingredients from other-Italians and sold pizza to other Italians. The concept was intertwined with home economy, as some of these home pizzas were commoditized for sale from the home. The arrival of more Italian immigrants in Toronto and Buffalo, the expansion of diaspora communities, changing attitudes towards Italians and their food, and the availability and ease of at-home products shaped the early stages of pizza commodification. Non-Italians in Toronto and Buffalo first experienced pizza by making it at home. The contributions of Italians to the ethnic economy facilitated the sale of pizza making kits and ingredients to non-Italians. Without “Mama” at home, non-Italians and Italians in Toronto and Buffalo, would not have consumed pizza.

The introduction of pizza in Toronto was attributable to the somewhat permeable border that allowed the flow of goods and ideas to Canada from the United States. The economic superiority of the United States, coupled with the incursion of the branch plant economy through Canadian frozen food plants, commoditized pizza in Canada. Similarly, the regional connection shared by Toronto and Buffalo, influenced by their

proximity to the New York City pizza scene, was instrumental in the introduction of pizza to their cities.

The home serves as a central location of analysis again in Chapter 3: The Streets, where the focus on the interaction between the home and the restaurant is a paramount stage in the commodification of pizza in Toronto and Buffalo. The home was the primary space of consumption of pizza in Toronto and Buffalo, and was the first space for which pizza was commoditized. In Buffalo, the first pizza restaurant was through a window in a house, and in Toronto the next step for the consumption of pizza would be the opening of pizzerias.

## **Chapter 2: *Pizza In Stile Ristorante* (Restaurant Style Pizza)**

In 1958, *Globe and Mail* published an article claiming that “Toronto, with any number of good eating establishments, has seen in the past few years an interesting trend towards a new type – the specialized dining room.”<sup>1</sup> The article explained that restaurants in Toronto in the late 1950s, rather than being primarily luncheonettes and diners, were becoming restaurants specializing in particular cuisines or dishes including Italian and pizza. Because restaurants served decentralized urban neighbourhoods, their business hours and function were often reliant on the lifecycles of those living in their immediate area.<sup>2</sup> Proximity to industry, commerce, transportation networks, and new neighbourhood developments shaped how and what restaurants served their communities. For example, establishments like luncheonettes or lunch counters served breakfast and lunch but not dinner. Other establishments, such as taverns and saloons, opened later in the day for a post-work clientele and served alcohol and quick-snack meals.<sup>3</sup> In the post Second World War era, individuals dined at restaurants for a multitude of reasons, such as celebrating a special occasion, traveling away from home, or a remedy to a burnt home-cooked dinner. The pizzeria and Italian restaurant serving pizza emerged in Toronto and Buffalo as specialized dining rooms and quick service lunch counters. The commodification of pizza had grown outside the homes in Toronto and Buffalo, into specialized restaurants, pizzerias that catered to the lives of those who lived nearby. The commodification of pizza in restaurants reveals how the diverging economies of Toronto and Buffalo dictated where restaurants opened, and how they commoditized pizza.

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<sup>1</sup> “Specialized Establishment Toronto Restaurant Trend.” *Globe and Mail*. October 1, 1958.

<sup>2</sup>. Jakle and Sculle, *Fast Food: Roadside Restaurants in the Automobile Age*, 14.

<sup>3</sup>. Jakle and Sculle, 20.

Coinciding with the commodification of pizza in restaurants, a series of economic and social changes shaped Toronto and Buffalo. Downtown neighbourhoods were targets of urban renewal projects, which forced some communities, including Italians, to move from their downtown neighbourhoods to suburbs. The opening of Italian restaurants was one response of the Italian ethnic economies to these changing urban conditions. Early Italian restaurants catered to the co-ethnic market, following patterns of urban employment, opening in centres of ethnic economic life where fellow countrymen worked. In Toronto and Buffalo this included areas with dense construction, factories, and transportation hubs, where Italian restaurants served the needs of Italian workers for quick lunches, and take-out dinners. As Italian food was popularized with non-Italians, Italian-Canadian and Italian-American restaurants capitalized upon their authenticity and cooking knowledge to produce dishes of a better quality and convenience than what could be produced in the homes of non-Italians. The consumption of superior Italian food in restaurants drew non-Italians into spaces of Italian life.

The opening of Italian restaurants followed the pattern of co-ethnic employment similar to early Italian ethnic enterprises including fruit markets, bakeries and grocery stores. Ethnic restaurants hired family members, friends and extended kinship lines to work as chefs, line cooks, dishwashers, waiters, hosts, and bartenders.<sup>4</sup> As was the case with household ethnic economy employment, the employment of family members in family-owned restaurants blurred the distinction between family participation in the home

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<sup>4</sup> Specific references to co-ethnic restaurant hiring are made in the chapters by Christopher Airriess and Heike Alberts in *Landscapes of the Ethnic Economy*. Ed. Kaplan and Li. (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006). Oral history interviews with Mario Porretta and Domenic Primucci also confirm that this practice extended to Italian restaurants in Toronto. Further assumptions can also be made from the hiring practices of other businesses from Toronto and Buffalo's ethnic economies.

economy and family businesses. The family-owned restaurant was an extension of home enterprise.

As the popularity of Italian food grew amongst non-Italians, pizzerias and Italian restaurants serving pizza opened outside of centres of Italian life. Concurrently, many Italians moved into new neighbourhoods to be closer to their businesses. Ethnic economies and the expansion of Italian restaurants and pizzerias across urban centres were another factor that contributed to the decentralization of the Italian communities of Toronto and Buffalo. Economic conditions, including suburbanization, urban renewal, automobiles, transportation networks, and centres of industry, led Italian families to live in new suburban neighbourhoods, away from former centres of Italian life. In Toronto this included movement to North Etobicoke (bounded by Steeles Avenue, Islington Avenue and the Humber River), North York (in the area between Wilson and Finch Avenues, Dufferin and Jane Streets), the neighbouring city of Mississauga to the west, and north to the town of Woodbridge (a township incorporated into the city of Vaughan).<sup>5</sup> Movement to the suburbs of Toronto was attributable to the expansion of the highway system, the expansion of the subway, and urban population growth and sprawl. In Buffalo, the movement of Italians was to North Park, Black Rock, Riverside, Kensington-Bailey neighbourhoods and the neighboring towns of Tonawanda to the north, Lackawanna and West Seneca to the south, and Cheektowaga to the east. Factors that facilitated these movements included the renewal of the downtown, and the opening of expressways towards outlying towns and suburbs. The movement of Italian immigrants to new neighbourhoods also demonstrated their mobility owing to their

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<sup>5</sup> Harney, Nicholas. *Eh Paesan! Being Italian in Toronto*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 28.

financial successes in ethnic economies. If home ownership serves as an indication of economic mobility and success, in 1971 in Toronto, Italians were the immigrant group with the highest percentage of home ownership, with 83% of Italians in Toronto owning a home.<sup>6</sup>

The concept of the ethnic economy illuminates the Italian business proprietorship and employment that enabled the commodification of pizza in restaurants in Toronto and Buffalo. However, the process of suburbanization coincided with the expansion of the ethnic economies and the development of Italian restaurants in Toronto and Buffalo. Suburbanization was both an economic and social process which shaped where people would live and the industries that would be needed to support this population and urban sprawl. Owing to postwar prosperity in Toronto and Buffalo's industrial, transportation, manufacturing and service sectors, middle class incomes grew, which facilitated the processes of suburbanization. Urban residents could afford single-family detached homes, which were increasingly built on the peripheries of the downtown core. As new subdivisions were built and other areas of the city were renewed, consumer businesses developed in these new areas to attract middle class consumers. Spaces, including the strip mall, shopping centres and local plazas, catered to middle class suburban incomes. Specialized restaurants opened in these spaces to attract suburban middle class incomes.

The pizza restaurant differed from take-out fast food pizza establishments, as restaurants sold pizza as both a sit-down (dine in) meal and takeout experience. Fast food franchised pizza restaurants (the late 1960s through 1970s), sold pizza for take-out and home delivery (this style of pizza restaurant is discussed in subsequent chapters). Early

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<sup>6</sup> Harney, Nicholas. *Eh Paesan! Being Italian in Toronto*, 28.

pizza restaurants offered more than just pizza, often including other kinds of Italian food, as well as traditional American fare such as hamburgers and hotdogs.

## I

The Italian pizza restaurant was a product of the Italian ethnic economies, and was one part of a long history of ethnic food restaurants in Toronto and Buffalo. Ethnic food restaurants, as well as the history of ethnic food in Canada and the United States, is central to understanding the gradual commodification of pizza and the expansion of pizza restaurants in Toronto and Buffalo. An examination of other ethnic cuisines in North America, and how certain dishes were accepted outside the confines of ethnic cuisines, establishes a framework for comprehending why pizza was perceived as separate from Italian cuisine.

Italians, like many other immigrant groups, were characterized as an immigrant-other and their cuisine and foodways were viewed as alien to those of the dominant Canadian and American ones. Cuisines, including Chinese, Polish, Ukrainian, Russian, Japanese, Mexican, Thai, Vietnamese, Caribbean, Indian, as well as Italian, have been othered by the dominant Canadian and American food cultures and categorized as ethnic food. In some cases, ethnic economies reinterpreted and modified their ethnic cuisines for wider acceptance and commodification.

The concept of cultural self-identity and food must be explored to understand how individuals may identify or be identified as Canadian, American or ethnic-other. While the processes of preparing food, cooking food and consuming food may be applicable to all human cultures, symbolic anthropologists propose that these aspects of a culture serve as a, “sign value, which is juxtaposed to other signs to construct complex communication

systems.”<sup>7</sup> This suggests that the processes of preparing, cooking and consuming food develops into part of a larger communication system between cultural groups, whereby the food itself and the process of cooking and consuming said food, becomes an actor of communication for a culture. For example, pizza served as a communication system suggesting “Italian-ness” because it was first produced for the consumption of other Italians. As food communicates culture, it may also influence how a consumer self-identifies or assumes a desired identity through the consumption of food.<sup>8</sup> The cooking and preparation processes can be completely altered in hopes of assimilating foodways. Beyond the life-altering process of assimilation, one may temporarily perform the act of passing for another culture through processes of acculturation. The act of passing for another culture in the context of this study could be as simple as the consumption of American or Canadian foods as a way of adapting an American or Canadian cultural persona.<sup>9</sup> This act of assimilation or cultural passing was embraced by some second and third generation Italian-Americans and Italian-Canadians who rebelled against their ethnic cultural roots, and consumed American food items like hamburgers and fries.<sup>10</sup>

Canadian food culture and cuisine were bound by the traditions of Canada’s primary cultural groups, the English, French and Indigenous people. Each of these groups tended to consider each other’s food traditions quaint, old-fashioned and eccentric and regarded the food of other early ethnic groups, including Pennsylvania Germans,

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<sup>7</sup> Brown, Linda and Kay Mussell. *Ethnic and Regional Foodways in the United States: The Performance of Group Identity*. (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1984), 12.

<sup>8</sup> Dalessio, William. *Are We What we Eat? Food and identity In Late Twentieth-Century American Ethnic Literature*. (Amherst: Cambria Press, 2012), 4.

<sup>9</sup> Dalessio, *Are We What we Eat?* 7.

<sup>10</sup> Cinotto, *The Italian American Table*, 21.

Chinese, Italian and Eastern Europeans, to be unique and external to their foodways.<sup>11</sup> Canadian diets relied on the bounty of the land, including fish, wheat based bakery products (bread), livestock raised on the land (cattle and pigs), and eventually crops of vegetables raised in fertile soil.<sup>12</sup> Both British and French newcomers were compelled to set aside the traditional recipes and ingredients of their homelands in favour of hunting, fishing and foraging for food from the Canadian landscape. Their new diet was focused on seasonal and regional availability.<sup>13</sup> Fruits, including apples, pears, cherries, and peaches, as well as vegetables, including beans, potatoes, squash, were central to the Canadian diet. Baked goods, soups, meats, preserves and cooked fruits and vegetables became staple dishes of Canadian cuisine in the nineteenth century.<sup>14</sup>

Through waves of migration and immigration to Canada, immigrant communities including Italian-Canadians, established ethnic economies and attempted to maintain their traditional culinary practices. Italian-Canadians did so by establishing their own restaurants and grocers, and relying on a steady import business from Italy. However, by the twentieth century, Canadians of diverse cultural groups were interested in finding quick meal solutions, as well as convenience foods, to defray some of the time involved in food preparation. While British and Americanized dishes reigned culturally dominant, Canadians found new opportunities to sample the cuisines of other cultures, as well as the ability to purchase food and drink owing to specialized restaurants and new grocery

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<sup>11</sup> Duncan, Dorothy. *Food, Fellowship and Folklore: Canadians at Table- A Culinary History of Canada*. (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2011), 215.

<sup>12</sup> Duncan, 14-15, 18-19.

<sup>13</sup> Duncan, Dorothy. *Nothing More Comforting: Canada's Food Heritage*. (Toronto, Dundurn Press, 2012), 10.

<sup>14</sup> Cooke, Nathalie and Fiona Lucas. *Catherine Parr Traill's The Female Emigrant's Guide: Cooking with a Canadian Classic*. (McGill-Queens University Press, 2017).

supply diversity.<sup>15</sup> As suggested by food historian Dorothy Duncan, at the turn of the twentieth century, Canadians' focus on food was related to the availability of ingredients, convenience of preparation, comfort associated with consumption, and health consciousness.<sup>16</sup> It is evident that the Canadian cuisine shifted from English, French and Indigenous ways to a multiplicity of diets. The process of accepting ethnic dishes into Canadian diets was slow, and ultimately hinged on the convenience factor. For example, home economists and marketers encouraged the introduction of pizza into Canadian diets as a part of postwar consumerism.

American cuisine was forged out of a variety of experiences, including the culinary habits of those who moved to or visited the United States, the experiences of transportation technologies, migration from farms to city, food related technological developments and the powers of big business and mass agriculture.<sup>17</sup> Early American diets under English, French, and Spanish colonization concentrated on meats, puddings and pottages, with fruits and vegetables. German and Dutch immigrant farmers brought herb and vegetable seeds, planted gardens, and popularized and sold fresh fruit and vegetable produce in America.<sup>18</sup> While meat products remained central to American diets, vegetables and fruits found their ways into the diet by the nineteenth century.

One of the markers of American cuisine was the regionalism that emerged in the mid-nineteenth century. Culinary regionalism was dependent on waves of settlement that brought contact with different kinds of soils, climates and population interactions, as well as a lack of railroad and refrigeration technologies that made national food distribution

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<sup>15</sup>. Duncan, *Food, Fellowship and Folklore*, 216.

<sup>16</sup>. Duncan, *Food, Fellowship and Folklore*, 218.

<sup>17</sup>. Hooker, Richard. *Food and Drink in America: A History*. (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1981),1.

<sup>18</sup>. Hooker, *Food and Drink in America*, 4.

difficult, if not impossible.<sup>19</sup> For example, New Englanders relied on their proximity to the ocean to supply seafood to their diet; Pennsylvanians, inspired by German traditions, and consumed dried and smoked meats; pork and rice were central to the diets of persons in the South Atlantic states; while those in the Southwest relied on dried and canned goods from the East until they established communities and supplemented their diets with local yields.<sup>20</sup> The emergence of diverse American cuisines, reliant on regional economic staples, mitigated against the possibility of a singular American cuisine.

Similar to Canada, the cuisine of the United States was drastically affected by new immigration groups from the 1880s onward. Newcomers to the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including Hungarians, Poles, Czechs, Russians, Greeks, Eastern European Jews, Chinese and Italians all brought new culinary traditions to the areas they settled in across America. Some of these immigrants had been small landowners or tenant farmers in their home countries, and they brought new uses of fruits and vegetables to the United States.<sup>21</sup> Although many came from farming traditions, a majority moved into large northern urban areas where some established communities and ethnic economies, including some restaurants and grocery stores.<sup>22</sup>

Coinciding with the development of Canadian and American cuisines, ethnic cuisines in Canada and the United States were organized into a hierarchical structure and deemed “ethnic” when culinary techniques and recipes were different from the

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<sup>19</sup>. Hooker, *Food and Drink in America*, 168.

<sup>20</sup>. Hooker, *Food and Drink in America*, 180-190.

<sup>21</sup>. Hooker, *Food and Drink in America*, 287.

<sup>22</sup> For example, Italians influenced American cuisine through their roles in the urban ethnic economies by selling and distributing food. Italian-Americans also embraced the emergence of quick-service food at the turn of the twentieth century, operating ice-cream parlors, food carts, quick lunch restaurants and eventually pizzerias.

Hooker, *Food and Drink in America*, 290-292.

established culinary traditions and ways.<sup>23</sup> Ethnic cuisines acted as a communicator of status rather than a personal preference for other communities who sampled the cuisine. For example, in the United States, at formal occasions hosted by diplomats, generals and university professors, French cuisine or “frenchified” domestic American food was often served.<sup>24</sup> French food was seen as synonymous with high culture, while American food was viewed as “every day”. Prior to the acceptance of Italian food in Toronto and Buffalo, the cuisines of Jewish, Chinese and Polish immigrants were received with varying successes and attempts to commoditize on the mass urban markets. These communities have been selected for analysis as they represented large portions of the populations in Toronto and Buffalo in 1950-1951.

In the 1951 Canadian Census, Jewish was a category of origin, with 40,000 persons or 6% of Toronto’s population identifying as such.<sup>25</sup> In Buffalo, Jewish people made up 2% of the city’s population in 1950.<sup>26</sup> Jewish cuisine in Canada and the United States emerged primarily from Ashkenazi Jewish traditions and the various European communities in which Ashkenazi Jews lived prior to North American migration. These foods accorded with their religious dietary laws, and so it was common for Jews moving to Canada or the United States to maintain these foodways. Unlike other ethnic cuisines, which emerged from singular national origins, Jewish cuisine is a blend from a multiplicity of national cuisines all following similar dietary laws and religious

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<sup>23</sup> Nandy, Ashis. "Ethnic Cuisine: The Significant 'other'." *India International Centre Quarterly* 29, no. 3/4 (2002): 246-51, 246-247.

<sup>24</sup> Nandy, "Ethnic Cuisine," 248.

<sup>25</sup> Canada Department of Trade and Commerce, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *1951 Ninth Census of Canada: Volume II Cross-Classifications of Characteristics*. Tables 5, 6-28, 6-33.

<sup>26</sup> Taylor, Steven. *Desegregation in Boston and Buffalo: The Influence of Local Leaders*. (Albany: SUNY Press, 1998), 36.

customs.<sup>27</sup> For example, Jews brought pickled cucumbers from Holland, and pickled red cabbage, borscht and kasha from Russia.<sup>28</sup> Other foods central to the cuisine were associated with festive meals, including latkes at Chanukah and hamantaschen at Purim.<sup>29</sup> Jewish cuisine was first sold to the co-ethnic market to enable adherence to religious observances, but was popularized outside the Jewish community owing to the role of bakeries and delicatessens from Jewish ethnic economies. Jews in the United States opened bakeries that offered a variety of breads including challah, pumpernickel and Russian rye to members of their community, as well as to outsiders. What became perhaps the most popular baked good from Jewish bakeries was the bagel. While the bagel ostensibly originated in Egypt, the variations of the bagel popularized in North America, including the poppy seed, is unique to North American Jewish cuisine.<sup>30</sup> The bagel was first produced in New York City in the late 1880s following an influx of nearly two million Yiddish-speaking Jewish immigrants to the United States.<sup>31</sup>

Some Jewish immigrants also opened some of the first kosher-delicatessens in New York City, offering corned beef, brisket and other smoked meats.<sup>32</sup> As with the Jewish bakeries, the delis were numerous and popularized outside the Jewish community until the 1950s when they were, “overwhelmed with competition from supermarkets, and the rise of other competing foods, most notably pizza.”<sup>33</sup> In 1945, the *New York Times*

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<sup>27</sup>. Hooker, *Food and Drink in America*, 293.

<sup>28</sup>. Apfelbaum, David. "Jewish Cuisine." *Ethnology* 40, no. 2 (2001): 165-69, 167.

<sup>29</sup>. Hooker, *Food and Drink in America*, 294.

<sup>30</sup>. Apfelbaum, "Jewish Cuisine," 168.

<sup>31</sup>. Levine, Harry G. "Pastrami Land: The Jewish Deli in New York City." *Contexts* 6, no. 3 (2007), 67.

<sup>32</sup> The first kosher delicatessens were part of the Jewish ethnic economy, catering to the co-ethnic market and their religious dietary restrictions. But as the food was popularized, kosher-style or broadly Jewish delicatessens were commoditized by Jewish ethnic economies to cater to both the religious community and other communities.

<sup>33</sup>. Levine, "Pastrami Land: The Jewish Deli in New York City," 68.

estimated that close to one thousand kosher and kosher-style delis existed in the city.<sup>34</sup>

The sheer volume of kosher deli restaurants in urban centres suggests that this type of cuisine was popular because of its mass commodification in restaurants.

Unlike New York City, which had a large Jewish population, Canada's Jewish population was smaller and predominantly centred within Toronto, Montreal and Winnipeg. As a result, Canadian urban centres could not support the number of kosher and kosher-style delis that New York City supported. By the 1950s in Toronto, kosher food was primarily sold in grocers near the centres of Jewish life in the Spadina Avenue, Dundas Street, and College Street area and subsequently, the Bathurst Street corridor.<sup>35</sup> In these stores, certain kosher goods were commoditized for sale including Barton's chocolates, and the Golan Heights wine brand from Israel.<sup>36</sup> Starting in the 1960s, Jewish restaurants and bakeries opened along Bathurst Street, but many of these were not kosher, catering to other communities and non-observant religious community members.<sup>37</sup> These restaurants were one part of the Jewish ethnic economy as they created jobs and businesses for their community members, while serving the co-ethnic and other communities. In April 1955, one early Canadian Jewish restaurant, Cindy's Restaurant on

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Prior to the Jewish community's movement uptown and towards the suburbs following the Second World War, Kosher stores and butchers were primarily located around the Kensington Market area (between College Street, Spadina Avenue, Dundas Street and Bathurst Street) in downtown Toronto. This area was located to the West of the St. John's Ward, which was the original neighbourhood of Italian immigrants and Eastern European Jews. As St. John's Ward became overcrowded, many Jews moved to Kensington Market in the 1920s and 1930s.

Diamond, Etan. *And I Will Dwell in Their Midst: Orthodox Jews in Suburbia*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 119-120.

<sup>36</sup> Diamond, *And I Will Dwell in Their Midst*, 121.

<sup>37</sup> Diamond, *And I Will Dwell in Their Midst*, 122. Owing to a lack of rabbinical supervision, many restaurants conducted their own supervision, and could not claim to be certified Kosher. This meant that many Orthodox Jews in Toronto lowered the level of their observance to eat in restaurants. Toronto's first kosher restaurant, Sova opened in 1961. Sova was followed by other kosher restaurants including Eppes Essen Delicatessen in 1966 and the Kosher Pizza House in 1970.

Queen Street in Ottawa, Ontario, was reported in *Canadian Hotel and Restaurant* [CH&R]. The article noted the design and floor plan of the restaurant, noting its six-stool counter, four person booths and bright décor.<sup>38</sup> CH&R never mentioned the food served in the restaurant beyond the fact that it was ethnic cuisine. Jewish restaurants in Canada were not as popular as they were across the United States owing to a smaller population, with fewer restaurants, and a lack of rabbinical supervision to ensure kosher culinary processes.

Chinese food was another notable ethnic cuisine in Toronto and Buffalo. The Chinese population of Toronto was 2879 in 1951, while a statistic for Buffalo's Chinese population was not available in 1950.<sup>39</sup> The Chinese population of these cities may have been small, but the history behind the gradual acceptance of their foodways in Canada and the United States is important as a way to understand the acceptance of other ethnic cuisines. Chinese immigrants first arrived in California as unskilled labourers in low-wage manual labour roles during the gold rush of the 1850s. Some Chinese immigrants opened restaurants catering to gold rush workers. Chinese restaurateurs were met with legal discrimination and white aggression. They were forced to modify recipes for an Anglo palate in order to draw white customers into their restaurants.<sup>40</sup> Chinese cuisine in the United States and Canada is merely an assimilated representation of the regional

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<sup>38</sup>. "Jewish Food Found Popular in Ottawa" *Canadian Hotel and Restaurant*. April, 1955.

<sup>39</sup> The 1950 *United States Census of Population- Census Tract Buffalo N.Y.* did not include China as a place of birth or ethnic origins, but used the classification, "Asia", to encompass non-white people from the geographic region. In 1950 this classification included Pacific Islanders, Japanese, Chinese, Filipino and Korean, which represented 505 people in Buffalo.

Canada Department of Trade and Commerce, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *1951 Ninth Census of Canada: Volume II Cross-Classifications of Characteristics*. Tables 5, 6-28, 6-33.

United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1950 United States Census of Population- Census Tract Buffalo, N.Y.*

<sup>40</sup>. Peters, Erica J. "A Path to Acceptance: Promoting Chinese Restaurants in San Francisco, 1849–1919." *Southern California Quarterly* 97, no. 1 (2015): 5-28, 6.

variety of cuisines in China. Unlike Jewish cuisine, which was produced for Jews and eventually popularized outside their community, Chinese cuisine in North America was produced for an external, rather than internal co-ethnic Chinese market. Some owners of Chinese restaurants tended to be cultural entrepreneurs who acculturated their ethnicity and sold a multitude of regional Chinese cuisines, to offer their clients an exotic encounter, while others were small family business owners who sold a variety of Chinese and other foods for financial survival.<sup>41</sup> The first Chinese restaurants established in San Francisco served American foods alongside modified Chinese dishes, using American cutlery and advertised in English language newspapers.<sup>42</sup> The style of Chinese cuisine served was initially Cantonese but Peking, Szechuan and Hunan as well as Chinese-fusion recipes, replaced Cantonese style food as the most popular by the 1960s.<sup>43</sup>

In Canada, Chinese restaurants arrived much later than in the United States. Chinese immigrants to Canada first arrived in the 1850s serving in low-wage unskilled labour roles in the construction and mining field and experienced very restrictive policies and employment opportunities. Chinese immigrants received low wages for hard and dangerous work.<sup>44</sup> By the 1940s, the Canadian government lifted restrictive immigration boundaries, which increased Chinese immigration to major urban centres including Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal. Coinciding with increased Chinese immigration was

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<sup>41</sup> Shun Lu, and Gary Alan Fine. "The Presentation of Ethnic Authenticity: Chinese Food as a Social Accomplishment." *The Sociological Quarterly* 36, no. 3 (1995): 535-53, 536.

<sup>42</sup> Peters, "A Path to Acceptance," 7-9.

<sup>43</sup> Hooker, *Food and Drink in America*, 353. Hooker importantly notes the role of fusion cuisine. He uses the example of Chinese chefs that lived in Cuba prior to moving to the United States. Chinese-Cuban chefs used saffron rice, avocados, fried bananas and espresso coffee alongside Chinese dishes. While pizza would undergo fusion styles in the 1980s, it is important to note the role of fusion in other ethnic cuisines.

<sup>44</sup> Cao, Huhua, and Olivier Dehoorne. "Changing Territorial Strategies: Chinese Immigrants in Canada." In *The China Challenge: Sino-Canadian Relations in the 21st Century*, edited by Cao Huhua and Poy Vivienne, 222-40. (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2011), 223-225.

suburbanization in the major urban centres of Chinese-Canadian life.<sup>45</sup> As was the case with the ethnic economies of other immigrant groups, some Chinese-Canadians opened restaurants. In the 1960s, Chinese restaurants opened outside the Chinese communities to serve non-Chinese populations.<sup>46</sup> Chinese food in Canada took a similar path to the United States where recipes were acculturated and modified, and non-Chinese dishes were also sold to appeal to non-Chinese Canadians.

Another cuisine worth noting is Polish food because both Toronto and Buffalo had significant Polish populations. Toronto's Polish population was 20,857 in 1951, and Buffalo had a population of 15,301 Poles in 1950.<sup>47</sup> An examination of Polish foodways and their lack of more general acceptance outside the Polish communities in Toronto and Buffalo is crucial to understanding why some foodways remained insular within their respective ethnic communities.

The first Poles to arrive in Buffalo were Polish Jews, who brought Jewish cultural foodways with them. However, Polish Jews were later excluded from the larger Polish community that developed in Buffalo, for religious and cultural differences. In 1865, non-Jewish Poles arrived in Buffalo and settled in their own community south of Broadway at Townsend Street and Fillmore Avenue.<sup>48</sup> Similar to the Italian community in Buffalo, the Polish community formed their own community organizations centred on

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid, 233.

<sup>46</sup> Smart, Josephine. "Ethnic Entrepreneurship, Transmigration, And Social Integration: An Ethnographic Study of Chinese Restaurant Owners In Rural Western Canada." *Urban Anthropology and Studies of Cultural Systems and World Economic Development* 32, no. 3/4 (2003): 311-42, 316.

<sup>47</sup> Canada Department of Trade and Commerce, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *1951 Ninth Census of Canada: Volume II Cross-Classifications of Characteristics*. Tables 5, 6-28, 6-33. and United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1950 United States Census of Population- Census Tract Buffalo, N.Y.*

<sup>48</sup> Obidinski, Eugene. "Polish Americans In Buffalo: The Transformation of An Ethnic Subcommunity." *The Polish Review* 14, No. 1 (1969): 28-39, 29.

their local church, like Polish-Catholic schools. Many of the Poles in Buffalo found work outside the community in un-skilled and semi-skilled labour tasks.<sup>49</sup> In 1894, the Polish-American community in Buffalo petitioned the municipal government to open a local market; the result was the Broadway Market. On weekends, Polish vendors sold kielbasa and chrusciki as well as eggs, poultry and produce to their fellow countrymen.<sup>50</sup> The Polish foodways in Buffalo were centred on providing goods to produce ethnic dishes at home. Emphasis was not placed on the sale of these goods to a larger mass market; instead, it was focused on supporting other Poles to prevent the assimilation of their culture.

In Toronto, Poles first arrived in the mid-1800s and continued arriving until the World Wars. Prior to World War II, Polish migrants to Canada were primarily single men seeking work in rural areas.<sup>51</sup> Following the Second World War, Polish immigrants to Canada were overwhelmingly educated and had professional trades, and were either displaced or had no desire to live in a Communist country. It was this second wave of immigrants who established the Polish foodways in Canada. Similar to Poles within Buffalo, Poles in Toronto mostly lived within ethnic community enclaves where food was sold in grocery stores catering to their community and recipes were circulated through Polish language newspapers including, *Jak Tam Idzie*.<sup>52</sup> As was the case in Buffalo, many of Toronto's Poles ensured that their food culture remained embedded within their community, as a means to preserve their culture.

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<sup>49</sup> Obidinski, "Polish Americans In Buffalo," 33-35.

<sup>50</sup> Obidinski, "Polish Americans In Buffalo," 37.

<sup>51</sup> Kasprzak, Gabriela Pawlus. "A History Reawakened: Contemporary Approaches to the Study of Poles in Canada." *Polish American Studies* 68, no. 2 (2011): 5-12, 5-6.

<sup>52</sup> Payseur, Eric L. "Gendering the Generations: Polish-Canadian Women in the 1950s and 1970s." *Polish American Studies* 68, no. 2 (2011): 85-105, 96-97.

Jewish and Chinese cuisines were deemed ethnic foods but have also been accepted into Canadian and American culinary traditions. Jewish cuisine was widely available in restaurants in urban centres and the modification of Chinese recipes and dining experiences popularized the cuisine. The restaurants of Chinese and Jewish communities in Toronto and Buffalo demonstrate the strengths of their ethnic economies as their cuisines, sold in restaurants, appealed to and were commoditized for outsiders.<sup>53</sup> Polish cuisine was deemed ethnic because of the insular turns taken by the community, which limited the popularization of Polish food outside Polish-Canadian and Polish-American communities. The trajectories and practices of these ethnic cuisines suggest that ethnic cuisines took many different paths towards capitalist commodification in the Canadian and American urban markets.

Aside from ethnic restaurants, Toronto and Buffalo had a variety of other restaurants prior to the introduction of pizza in the 1950s. The 1955 *Might's Toronto City Directory* lists 523 restaurants in the city, while the 1955 *Polk's Buffalo City Directory* lists over 600 restaurants.<sup>54</sup> Many of these establishments had names like grill, bar, diner, lunch, dining room, tavern, soda bar, coffee shop, or simply restaurant. These restaurants were often named after areas of the city like the Mount Pleasant Lunch (Toronto) or used their owner's name such as Bud's Quality Lunch (Buffalo). Diners, lunches, taverns and grills were interchangeable names for establishments with wide-

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<sup>53</sup> Restaurants were small businesses, which provided income. The income provided by these businesses for people of ethnic communities, for whom professions were not accessible, offered an alternative to wage work. The successes of some ethnic cuisines, outside ethnic communities, provided new sources of income for ethnic families.

<sup>54</sup> Polk's Buffalo City Directory 1955 was used for this statistic. However, the high number of restaurants could be inflated as some names were listed alongside restaurant listings. It is unclear if persons like Mrs. Mary S Adams (the first of the non-restaurant names listed alongside restaurants) were actually restaurant owners, or if an error were made by the Polk Company in compiling the city directory.

ranging menus, serving a variety of mass produced “greasy spoon” dishes from breakfast, meatloaf, sandwiches, soups, hamburgers and fish and chips.<sup>55</sup> Other options, including soda bars and coffee shops, offered quick snacks and lunch items including coffee, soda and novelty sandwiches, as a by-product of the office revolution.<sup>56</sup> Dining rooms and clubs offered higher scale cuisine but were far less numerous in the 1950s. The types of restaurants in Toronto and Buffalo in the 1950s suggest that citizens of both cities preferred inexpensive and quick service dining options. In comparison to most American consumers, Canadian consumers had an aversion to spending money on material comforts and pleasure items which the working class population of Buffalo may have shared. Non-pizza restaurants and their quick and cheap offerings facilitated the commodification of pizza in Toronto and Buffalo as a quick and inexpensive product that could be sold in restaurants.

## II

The history of Italian food for sale outside the confines of Italian households is rooted in New York City in the early 1890s. As was the case with ethnic economies in Toronto and Buffalo, some Italians in New York City created enterprises catering to the co-ethnic community and other communities. Italian-owned food businesses in New York City included pushcarts, saloons, confectionary shops, restaurants, bakeries, grocery

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<sup>55</sup> Jakle and Sculle, *Fast Food*, 37-40. The popularity of fish and chips serves as an interesting reminder of colonialism. The battered and fried fish, served with fries dates back to the 1860s in Britain. By the 1930s there were over 35,000 shops in the United Kingdom. British immigrants brought this tradition to Canada, and to a smaller scale, to the United States. Because of the dominance of Anglo traditions in both countries, fish and chips were never seen as an imported ethnic food. Irish Catholics who would not eat meat on Fridays popularized the consumption of the dish in the United States. In upstate New York the dish is also known as fish fry. *The Foods of England Project*.

<sup>56</sup> Jakle and Sculle, *Fast Food*, 27.

stores, and butcher shops.<sup>57</sup> Pushcart vendors offered limited samplings of Italian cuisine to fellow countrymen prior to the opening of Italian-American restaurants in the early 1900s. The oldest Italian restaurant in New York City, Barbetta, opened in 1906 and served food from the Northwestern Italian region of Piemonte.<sup>58</sup> Barbetta served elegant dishes familiar to Italians living in the United States including white-truffles imported from Italy, risotto, polenta, and wild porcini mushrooms handpicked by Maioglio in Connecticut.<sup>59</sup> The restaurant initially served the co-ethnic market, but appealed to some non-Italians seeking fancy Italian cuisine as Italian food was increasingly popularized in the 1950s. The restaurant has been owned by the same family since 1906 and continues to operate in New York City (as of January 2022).

The first pizzeria in the United States predated the opening of the first Italian restaurant. Unlike the Italian restaurant, which had a more expansive menu and seating options, the pizzeria's menu centred on pizza and had sparse, if any, seating. The first pizzeria to open in North America has been identified by many scholars as Lombardi's of New York City.<sup>60</sup> Lombardi's opened at 23½ Spring Street in Lower Manhattan in 1897

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<sup>57</sup> Pozzetta, George. "The Mulberry District of New York City: The Years Before World War I." in *Little Italies in North America*. ed. Harney and Scarpaci. (Toronto: The multicultural Society of Ontario, 1981), 9.

<sup>58</sup> Barbetta was registered by Locali Storici d'Italia (Association of Historical Places of Italy) as a landmark of important historical status. It was the first restaurant in the United States to be listed on the Italian register.

"History of Barbetta Restaurant," <http://barbettarestaurant.com/history.html> (Accessed: January 24, 2019).

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Scholars including Carol Helstosky, Liz Barrett, Mark Cinotto made this claim. However, according to 2019 research from independent historian, Peter Regas, Regas speculates that Lombardi's was not the first pizzeria. It is Regas' belief that an Italian baker named Filippo Milone opened up six pizzerias in New York City that were classified as delis, grocery stores or bakeries. It is Regas' belief that the location of 53 1/2 Spring Street had already been established as a pizzeria probably by Milone in 1898 but also a proprietor named Giovanni Santillo in 1901. Lombardi most likely worked as an employee in one of these earlier pizzerias before opening Lombardi's as the first classified pizzeria in 1905. "Filippo Milone and the Forgotten Pizza Makers of New York City" Presented by Peter Regas at the U.S. Pizza Museum, February 23 2019.

as a grocery store, catering to the Italian co-ethnic market. In 1905, the owner, Gennaro Lombardi, obtained a restaurant license to operate a pizzeria within the grocery store. The store sold thin crust pizza wrapped in paper to Italian factory workers at lunchtime. The pizzas produced at Lombardi's were coal fired, unlike traditional Italian wood fired pizzas, and used fior di latte cheese instead of mozzarella di bufala.<sup>61</sup> Lombardi's can be credited with creating the first American-style pizza by breaking from traditional cooking methods and by improvising ingredients. Some of the first *pizzaiolos* (Italian term for pizzamakers) in the United States received their training at Lombardi's and many of them would go on to open their own pizzerias.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>61</sup>. Helstosky, *Pizza*, 54.

<sup>62</sup>. *Ibid.*



**Figure 3.4: New York City, Island of Manhattan, Locations of Barbetta and Lombardi's (Created in ArcGIS, Esri Light Gray Canvas Map, 2020)**

Despite pizza being popularized in the homes of Toronto and Buffalo in the 1950s, two events of the 1930s were the catalysts for the popularity of Italian food in American and Canadian restaurants. The first event that shaped the popularity of Italian food outside of the Italian communities was national Prohibition in the United States [1920-1933]. Under Prohibition, the sale of alcohol within mainstream restaurants and taverns was prohibited and limited to underground or illegal taverns. Italian restaurants located within Little Italy districts, took advantage of the restrictive conditions and

became underground locations for non-Italians to socialize over alcoholic beverages. Although Prohibition attempted to block the production and sale of alcohol, Italian communities had a long-standing tradition of home winemaking and could meet the market demands for alcohol.<sup>63</sup> The importation of grapes from Italy to produce wine was one of the original products imported by Italian-American food wholesalers. Under Prohibition, the fermentation of grape juice was not considered illegal, so many Italian Americans continued home wine production, and sold the excess in local restaurants.<sup>64</sup>

The illegal importation of alcoholic beverages was also central to Prohibition. The organized crime syndicates, or Mafia, was central to the illegal importation of alcohol. Families such as the Magaddino Crime Family of Buffalo were central to this illegal importation of alcohol because of their proximity to the Canadian border by land and waterways. Canadian wartime prohibition was repealed in the 1920s, so legal alcohol from Canada was brought illegally into the United States. It has been alleged that the Magaddino family were alcohol distributors during Prohibition, as they became one of the first legitimate alcohol distributors to establish a business only weeks after Prohibition ended in 1933 in Niagara Falls, New York.<sup>65</sup> The Magaddino's established Power City Distributing Company in 1933 and were the official distributor of Utica Club, O'Keefe's, Pfeiffer's and Budweiser beers within Western New York.<sup>66</sup>

The Great Depression also led non-Italians into Italian-American and Italian-Canadian communities. While non-Italians were drawn into Italian communities during Prohibition for consumption of alcohol, food was not central to their interactions. Food

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<sup>63</sup>. Cinotto, *The Italian American Table*, 146.

<sup>64</sup>. Kyvig, David. *Repealing National Prohibition*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987) 20.

<sup>65</sup>. Michael Rizzo. *Gangsters and Organized Crime in Buffalo*. (Charleston: The History Press, 2012), 64.

<sup>66</sup>. Ibid.

scarcity forced non-Italians to explore new methods to stretch limited budgets to create and consume hearty meals. During the Depression, public opinion towards Italian food changed.<sup>67</sup> Simple foods like pasta were hearty meals with easily modifiable recipes based on readily available ingredients. Other innovations, such as mass marketed canned spaghetti sauces, and canned spaghetti and meatballs were developed during the Depression.<sup>68</sup>

The popularity of radio and its growing audience also had a direct impact on the expansion of Italian food and culture. As Italian food was popularized by Prohibition and the Depression, radio was a tool for companies to influence both the tastes and habits of Canadian and American consumers.<sup>69</sup> Food was advertised to consumers while Italian language shows and music spread Italian culture.<sup>70</sup> Advertisements for convenience food products and pizza kits were directed to consumers on the radio.

The popularity of the pizzerias was central in *New York Times* social, travel and commentary columns. In an article in 1958, journalist Walter Hackett brought a historian of ancient Italy to a Naples pizzeria to observe the cooking process, the atmosphere and the food itself. The historian, Dr. Augusto, mentions some facts about the Margherita Pizza, as well as some commentary on the wines to drink with pizza, and expressed his inability to understand how Americans drank coloured, sweet sodas with pizza.<sup>71</sup> The article gave the impression that there was interest in the history and origins of the food

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<sup>67</sup> Cinotto, *The Italian American Table*, 151.

<sup>68</sup> Cinotto, *The Italian American Table*, 152.

<sup>69</sup> Iacovetta, *Gatekeepers*, 88. The Citizen Branch of the Canadian government, whose main purpose was addressing the assimilation of newcomers, compiled educational materials to aid in English and French language skills, as well as consumption of Canadian culture for new immigrants. One of the notable mediums they used was radio broadcast. Radio was not only used by corporations to encourage consumer behaviour, but as a tool of government led assimilation and acculturation of immigrant groups.

<sup>70</sup> Cinotto, *The Italian American Table*, 139.

<sup>71</sup> Hackett, Walter. "The Habits and Habitat of the Pizza". *New York Times*. June 1, 1958. X29.

consumed in New York. A similar article from 1956 takes audiences on a food tour of Italy. In the article, “Italy’s other Dishes”, Jane Nickerson suggests that American audiences need to look beyond tomato sauce, pasta and pizza and explore other dishes of Italian Cuisine.<sup>72</sup> This article explains that American audiences were already consuming pizza and pasta by 1956, with the Depression, Prohibition and radio having facilitated non-Italian consumption by the 1950s.

Consumption of Italian food by non-Italians in Toronto and Buffalo can also be attributed to their proximity to the cities of Niagara Falls, on both sides of the border in New York and Ontario. The cities were built along the banks of the Horseshoe, American and Bridal Veil waterfalls at a central location in the Great Lakes Region known as the Golden Horseshoe, between the tracts of land of the Ontario Peninsula (extending from Toronto on Lake Ontario), to New York State at the Niagara River and Lake Erie.<sup>73</sup> The Niagara Cantilever railway bridge (1883), the Whirlpool Rapids railway bridge (1897), and the Peace Bridge (1927), connected the southern reaches of the Golden Horseshoe to the Buffalo-Niagara Falls region.

In the 1820s a tourist industry emerged in Niagara Falls around the natural wonder and quickly grew to include taverns, mills, hotels, shopping districts and souvenir shops.<sup>74</sup> Tourism to the Falls grew over the next decade, and soared in the 1920s.

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<sup>72</sup> Nickerson, Jane. “Italy’s Other Dishes”. *New York Times*. March 4, 1956. SM27.

<sup>73</sup> The Golden Horseshoe is the popular name used to describe the tract of land from Niagara Falls, around the western end of Lake Ontario at Hamilton, crossing Toronto and terminating at Oshawa. The horseshoe part of the name is derived from the fact that the tract of land roughly resembles a horseshoe, with Hamilton roughly being the centre. The phrase golden horseshoe referred to the band of industrial sites from Niagara Falls to Oshawa following the Second World War. The construction of the Queen Elizabeth Way (QEW) and the accompanying urban corridor in the 1930s popularized the name. High, Steven. *Industrial Sunset: The Making of North America’s Rust Belt 1969-1984*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 34.

<sup>74</sup> Berton, Pierre. *Niagara: A History of the Falls*. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1992), 47.

Ownership of automobiles and the development of highways made the destination more accessible, with Canadian tourism increasing from 250,000 tourists in 1920 to one million in 1930.<sup>75</sup> Employment in hotel laundries and kitchens was part of the Italian ethnic economy in Niagara Falls. Between 1930 and 1940, some Italian immigrants elevated their role in the Niagara Falls tourist industry from menial positions in large hotels to hotel owners and restaurant proprietors who hired their co-ethnic connections.<sup>76</sup> Restaurants such as The Como opened as a response to this development. Frank Antonacci established the Como in 1927 as a home storefront catering to other Italians, on Pine Avenue in Niagara Falls, New York. The Como expanded to a deli in 1958, a bar in 1959 and a banquet hall by 1978.<sup>77</sup> The expansion of the Como demonstrates the growing popularity of Italian food with non-Italian tourists. In an interview in 2012, Dominic Antonacci, son in law of the founder, Frank, stated that Canadians have always constituted forty-five percent of the Como's clientele.<sup>78</sup> By the 1940s, hotels in the region, including the Lone Star Inn, advertised that they specialized in Italian food.<sup>79</sup> With the availability of pizza restaurants in Niagara Falls, it is likely that some Torontonians first tried pizza in restaurants in Niagara Falls. Starting in 1938, Toronto's *Globe and Mail* reported on the annual tourist and shopping visitors to Niagara Falls by examining the number of users of the Falls View Bridge and the Whirlpool Rapids Bridge.<sup>80</sup> By 1977, the *Globe and Mail* reported that Canadian tourists shortened their

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<sup>75</sup> Dubinsky, Karen. *The Second Greatest Disappointment: Honeymooning and Tourism at Niagara Falls*. (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1999), 127.

<sup>76</sup> Dubinsky, *The Second Greatest Disappointment*, 126.

<sup>77</sup> Parlato, Frank. "The Remarkable History of the Como." *Niagara Falls Reporter*. November 13, 2012.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> "Lone Star Inn." Advertisement. *Lackawanna Leader*. November 16, 1944. 8.

<sup>80</sup> "Tourist Traffic at Niagara Falls." *Globe and Mail*. May 7, 1938. 80.

visits to Niagara Falls from multi-day trips to day trips in response to the high costs of the accommodations and food, and the strength of the American dollar.<sup>81</sup>

### III

Buffalo's first pizzeria, Santora's, opened in the front of the Santora family home in 1927, but Toronto's first pizzeria did not arrive until 1957.<sup>82</sup> In 1957, Brothers Domenic and Ettore Pugliese opened Vesuvio's Pizza, with support from their father Rocco, at 3028 Dundas Street West in the Junction Neighbourhood of West-End Toronto.<sup>83</sup> Domenic arrived in New York City in 1955 from Italy where he had learned the pizza business while working at a bakery named Vesuvio. Upon moving to Toronto to seek out new opportunity, Domenic and his brother opened a pizzeria, and named it Vesuvio's to honour that bakery.<sup>84</sup> Toronto's first pizzeria was influenced by New York City style pizza, a style defined by its wide slices, hand-tossed crust made with high gluten content bread flour, light sauce, heavy cheese and production in a gas-fired oven.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> "Tourists shortening visits to Niagara Falls." *Globe and Mail*. October 6, 1977. 8.

<sup>82</sup> A 1955 article in *Macleans Magazine* said that in the fall of 1954, "visitors at the Canadian National Exhibition, were surprised to find, wedged in between the traditional hot-dog and hamburger stands, small pizzerias." While a search of the Canadian National Exhibition Archives did not reveal any pizza stands in the Food Building in 1954, a primary source from the period suggests so. So it is questionable if another pizzeria did exist in Toronto prior to the opening of Vesuvio's in 1957.

Sangster, Dorothy. "No Wonder Italians Like to Eat." *Macleans Magazine*. January 1, 1955.

<sup>83</sup> "About", Vesuvios Pizza. <https://vesuviospizza.com/about> (Accessed February 8, 2019)

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Barrett, *Pizza, A Slice of American History*, 26.



**Figure 3.2: Vesuvio's Pizza Location (Created in ArcGIS, Esri Light Gray Canvas Map, 2020)**

Vesuvio's prided themselves as having the first pizzeria in Toronto and also claimed to have provided the training and standards that many other Toronto pizzerias would follow. This is similar to the way in which Lombardi's in New York City claims to have set the standard for all North American pizzerias.<sup>86</sup>

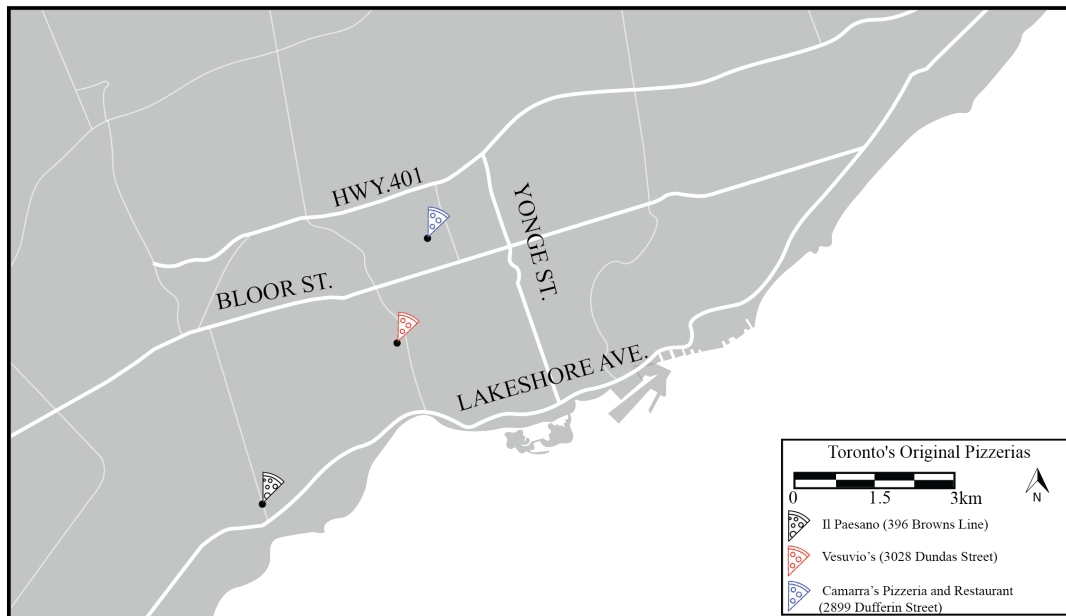
More members of the Pugliese family eventually came to Canada for the economic opportunities in the family business. In 1961, Rocco Pugliese returned to Italy to bring his son Atillio to Toronto to open a new Vesuvio location at 3010 Dundas Street West. The larger storefront, a few doors down from the original, allowed for more tables for dine-in customers. By 1963, the Vesuvio's business continued to expand, and the fourth Pugliese brother, Corrado, came to Canada to participate in the family business.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>86</sup>. About, Vesuvio's Pizza.

<sup>87</sup>. Ibid.

The 1950s saw two more pizzerias open in Toronto: Camarra’s Pizzeria & Restaurant opened in 1958 at 2899 Dufferin Street (Dufferin and Glencairn in North York); and Il Paesano Pizzeria opened in 1959 at 396 Browns Line (Browns Line and Horner Avenue in Etobicoke).<sup>88</sup>



**Figure 3.3: Toronto's Original Pizzerias (Created in ArcGIS, Esri Light Gray Canvas Map, 2020)**

Interestingly, not one pizzeria opened near the geographic centres of Italian life. Instead, they opened in the Junction, North York, and Etobicoke-Lakeshore respectively. Each of the pizzerias operated near centres of industrial production. Metropolitan Toronto had three primary uses of land, including a core area characterized by a mix of office, hotels and parking (the downtown core); an area of industry and warehousing adjoining the

<sup>88</sup> Camarra’s closed on July 28, 2019, after sixty two years of operation. It emerged from a grocery store and pastry shop to a full service dine-in restaurant and take-out/delivery. Four generations of the Camarra family ran the restaurant between 1958 and 2019. Il Paesano continues to operate at the same location as of 2021. In 1972 the original owners, the Mallozzi family sold the pizzeria to the Casale family, who have operated the business since.

“Arrivederci” posted by Camarra’s Pizza on Instagram, July 28, 2019.

Hughes, Alexander. “Il Paesano: 60 Years of Pizza, Family and Quality Service.” *Canadian Pizza Magazine*, January 2020.

major rail lines; and an area of vacant land on the urban periphery awaiting development.<sup>89</sup> The first pizzerias opened in the areas of industry and warehousing, parallel to Canadian National and Canadian Pacific Rail lines. In the 1950s, the Junction was home to businesses in the meatpacking and manufacturing industries, and contained the Canadian Pacific Parkdale Yard. The Glencairn neighbourhood in North York, near Camarra's Pizzeria & Restaurant, was commercial and residential zoned, and had a large industrial zone to the south-west centred on Tycos Drive. The Alderwood neighbourhood centred on Browns Line, near Il Paesano had industrial automotive and firearms manufacturing, and was within close proximity to the Long Branch junction of the CN Oakville Subdivision.<sup>90</sup> The proximity to centres of industrial and commercial operations suggests that the first pizzerias in Toronto served a quick meal or snack to local workers (some of whom may have been Italian-Canadians). However, the small number of pizzerias in Toronto suggests that pizza had a limited consumer base outside of homes between 1950 and 1959.

While Toronto had a small consumer base for restaurant pizza by 1959, Buffalo was quite the opposite. Buffalo's original pizzeria, Santora's (established 1927), had no competition until the late 1940s when Bocce Club Pizzeria and La Hacienda Pizza opened in 1946 and 1947, respectively.<sup>91</sup> While pizza restaurants were slow to expand in Toronto in the 1950s, Buffalo's pizza restaurants grew rapidly in the 1940s and 1950s.

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<sup>89</sup> L.S. Bourne. "Descriptive Patterns of Urban Land Use: A Summary." In *The Form of Cities in Central Canada: Selected Papers* ed. Bourne, MacKinnon and Simmons. (Toronto: University of Toronto Department of Geography Research Publications, 1973), 51.

<sup>90</sup> City of Toronto, Planning Board Atlas 1957-1960, B24. and City of Toronto Zoning Interactive By-Law Map with Links to Historic and Former Municipalities Zoning Laws.

<sup>91</sup> Iterations of both Bocce Club and La Hacienda opened over the years by family members of original owners, and other entrepreneurs. Buffalo lore suggests that La Hacienda was originally a Mexican Restaurant and the owner was unable to change the name, but this is unlikely as the restaurant opened in 1947 and Mexican food was not yet popularized in the Northern United States.

As was the case with Santora's, Buffalo's second pizzeria, Bocce Club, emerged from a home pizza operation to a pizzeria in the 1950s. Dino Pacciotti had owned the Bocce Club, since 1946. While originally a bar and bocce club in a residential neighbourhood, Pacciotti served pizza and other snacks to his customers.<sup>92</sup> In 1955, Pacciotti introduced the use of cardboard bakery boxes to sell take-out pizza to young families and college students who lived nearby and appreciated the convenience and affordability of takeout pizza.<sup>93</sup> Following the take-out success, in 1958 Bocce Club closed the original residential location and moved to a larger storefront location at 630 Clinton Street in the Emslie neighbourhood on Buffalo's East Side.<sup>94</sup> Shortly after, in 1959, Bocce Club opened another pizzeria at 4174 North Bailey Avenue in Amherst.<sup>95</sup> This second location was strategic because it was just north of the University of Buffalo, which had been a private institution but expanded in 1962 when it joined the State University of New York (SUNY) system.<sup>96</sup> The new locations were created specifically to cater to university students and families moving outside the downtown core.

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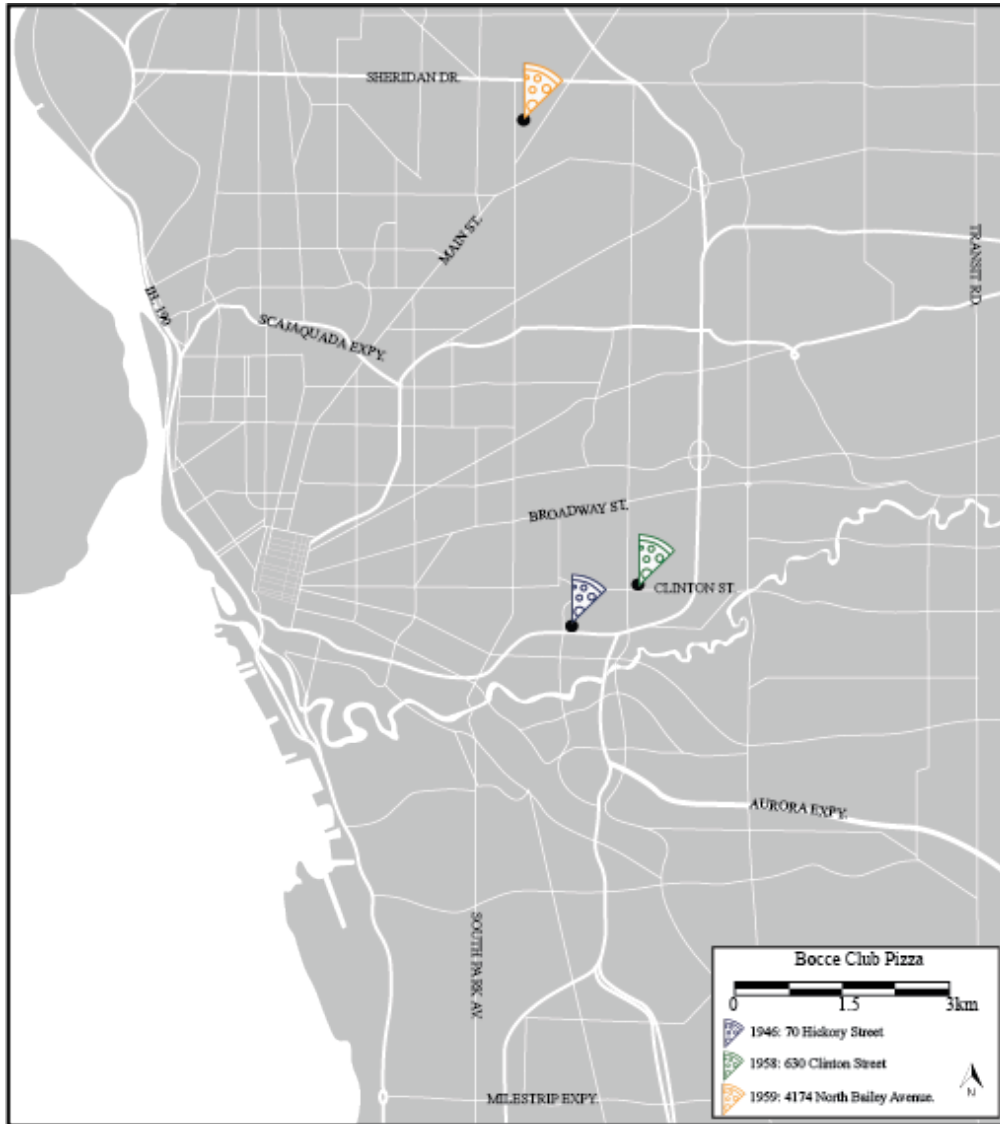
<sup>92</sup> "Bocce Club Pizza History" Bocce Club Pizza. [www.bocceclubpizza.com/our-story](http://www.bocceclubpizza.com/our-story) (Accessed February 19, 2019)

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Polk's Buffalo City Directory, 1959

<sup>95</sup> Polk's Buffalo City Directory, 1960.

<sup>96</sup> University at Buffalo History" School of Management. <https://mgt.buffalo.edu/about/history.html> (Accessed February 19, 2019).



**Figure 3.4: Bocce Club Pizza Locations (Created in ArcGIS, Esri Light Gray Canvas Map, 2020)**

Following the opening of the first pizzerias in Toronto and Buffalo in the 1950s, the 1960s saw a period of growth for pizza restaurants in the urban centres. Toronto entered the 1960s with just sixteen pizzerias; by 1969 there were one hundred and eight (a 675% increase). Buffalo began the 1960s with thirty-one pizzerias and grew to fifty-five by the end of the decade (a 177% increase).<sup>97</sup> This period of restaurant growth

<sup>97</sup>. This data reflects City Directory and Yellow Page listings for 1960 and 1970 comparatively.

suggests that pizza was an in-demand commodity in Toronto and Buffalo. Urban sprawl, the growth of the cities, and the popularization of pizza in non-Italian homes in the 1950s had facilitated the expansion of restaurant-based pizza commodification.

In the late 1950s through the 1960s, Toronto's boundaries expanded and the population grew exponentially, with much of the growth resulting from the influx of Italians and other immigrants to the city. Poverty, poor land, and little economic opportunity in post-war Italy led to 250,000 Italians immigrating to Canada between 1946 and 1961.<sup>98</sup> Predominantly from southern Italy and Sicily, these newcomers swelled Toronto's Italian population to 140,000 by the start of the 1960s, a number that would continue to grow.<sup>99</sup> While many of the new Italians settled in the original Little Italy (centred around College Street West), a satellite Little Italy centred on St. Clair Avenue West near Dufferin Street also formed in the late 1940s.<sup>100</sup> The population of Toronto increased from 1.1 million in 1951 to 1.6 million in 1961.<sup>101</sup> The increased population, coupled with automobile ownership, affordable suburban home developments, and the opening of the Bloor-Danforth subway line in 1966 and 1968, facilitated the population sprawl out of downtown Toronto towards the suburbs (Etobicoke, East York, North York, Scarborough and York).<sup>102</sup> By the 1960s, nearly 3.18% of the city's land use was occupied commercial operations, including restaurants.<sup>103</sup> As the city grew, some of the new Italian immigrants joined the Italian

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<sup>98</sup> Levine, Allan. *Toronto: Biography of a City*. (Douglas and MacIntyre: 2014), 194.

<sup>99</sup> Levine, *Toronto*, 194.

<sup>100</sup> Levine, *Toronto*, 195.

<sup>101</sup> Levine, *Toronto*, 202.

<sup>102</sup> Levine, *Toronto*, 202.

<sup>103</sup> "Basic Land Use Structure, Metropolitan Toronto, 1964) in *The Form of Cities in Central Canada: Selected Papers* ed. Bourne, MacKinnon and Simmons. (Toronto: University of Toronto Department of Geography Research Publications, 1973), 48.

ethnic economy as labour in pizzerias, as well as proprietors of their own pizza businesses.

While Toronto underwent a period of expansion and suburbanization in the late 1950s and early 1960s, Buffalo experienced a period of downtown urban renewal as businesses and cultural activities traditionally located in downtown shifted to the periphery.<sup>104</sup> The goal of the project was to remove “blighted areas of downtown including the Italian Lower West Side, and the African American East Side and replace them with higher income waterfront housing.”<sup>105</sup> The renewal of this area resulted in the building of high-rise office buildings, cheap parking, and the displacement of downtown residents.<sup>106</sup> The people who lived in the neighbourhoods undergoing renewal, along with those who lived in the surrounding neighbourhoods (Ellicott District, Lower West Side, Elm and Oak Streets), lost access to downtown as their neighbourhoods changed. Businesses on Buffalo’s former Main Street closed, and residents moved to outlying suburbs of the city.<sup>107</sup> This included the movement of many Italians and their businesses, most notably pizzerias and restaurants, to the suburbs.

Coinciding with these urban transformations and the development of Italian restaurants, gender roles within the Italian communities were undergoing changes. Unlike the production of pizza in home-based ethnic economy enterprises, which was the responsibility of women, the pizza restaurant was increasingly a male enterprise. For example, the corporate history of Vesuvio identified brothers and sons immigrating to Canada to work in the family business, but did not mention a single female family

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<sup>104</sup> “Little Report Asks Major Rebuilding in Downtown Buffalo” *Buffalo Evening News*. December 8, 1960.

<sup>105</sup> Goldman, *City on the Edge*, 191.

<sup>106</sup> Goldman, *City on the Edge*, 196-198.

<sup>107</sup> Goldman, *City on the Edge*, 199.

member.<sup>108</sup> Meanwhile, the corporate history of Bocce Club Pizza discusses Dino Pacciotti's role in establishing the pizzeria, and only briefly mentions his sister, Melvina Sacco's partial ownership.<sup>109</sup> In the case of New York City's Barbetta, Sebastiano Maioglio's daughter took over the operations of the restaurant in the 1960s.<sup>110</sup> While it can be assumed that female family members worked in the early pizza restaurants of Toronto and Buffalo as part of family based ethnic economies, the ownership of early pizza restaurants was primarily male. In pizza restaurants, female family members worked in the kitchens, and in "front of house" roles serving and hosting. The figure of "Mama", who had been central to the production of pizza in the homes of Toronto and Buffalo, was relegated to behind the scenes in restaurants, contributing to the household ethnic economy. As employment and ownership of pizzerias became male dominated, the space also became masculine in character. Pizzerias were social hubs for many Italian men in Toronto and Buffalo who met with co-ethnic friends to consume pizza, watch television, have drinks and socialize.

#### IV

In the early 1960s, pizza in restaurants emerged from the confines of ethnic cuisine to become a food consumed by non-Italians that was bound to its Italian origins. When pizza was mentioned in newspapers during the 1960s, it was specifically marketed by pizzerias as Italian in both Toronto and Buffalo. Pizzerias owned by Italians claimed ownership of pizza recipes and production, which influenced how non-Italians viewed,

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<sup>108</sup> "About", Vesuvios Pizza. <https://vesuviospizza.com/about> (Accessed February 8, 2019)

<sup>109</sup> "Bocce Club Pizza History" Bocce Club Pizza. [www.bocceclubpizza.com/our-story](http://www.bocceclubpizza.com/our-story) (Accessed February 19, 2019)

<sup>110</sup> "History of Barbetta Restaurant," <http://barbettarestaurant.com/history.html>, (Accessed: January 24, 2019).

understood, and consumed pizza. This can be seen as an example of banal nationalism, whereby an object is used by a group of people as a symbol to communicate a shared sense of belonging. While this symbolism can easily be placed on an object like a flag, as Michael Billig mentions in his work, *Banal Nationalism*, it can also be projected on to a food item.<sup>111</sup> For many Italians in Toronto and Buffalo, pizza served as a symbol for the collective remembering of their Italian origins and traditional foodways.<sup>112</sup> This symbolism was then passed to non-Italians who purchased and consumed pizza.

The Italian character projected on to pizza served as an attempt for Italian pizzamakers to navigate within non-Italian cultures and cultural practices. By identifying pizza as an Italian dish, pizza could continue to be made by Italians, and Italians could claim to be the true culinary experts behind pizza. This is an example of a commodity being exploited by the ethnic economy. As ethnic identity and symbolism were bound to the dish, the ethnic economies of Toronto and Buffalo held the technical cooking knowledge, equipment and supply chain to produce the dish. In Toronto, this approach helped limit the at-home pizza culture that developed in the 1950s and was used by Italians as an advertising claim to sell pizza during the 1960s. In Buffalo, the Italian character of pizza also facilitated the expansion of pizzerias in the city, and was used as an advertising claim to sell more authentic pizza than what non-Italians produced.

In Toronto newspapers, pizza was celebrated as an Italian dish. Editorials, entertainment, political and lifestyle pieces all made mention of the Italian-ness of the food item. “Italian-ness” refers to the connection between Italian persons and their culture to the non-Italian perceptions of pizza and Italian cuisine. Famed Canadian

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<sup>111</sup> Billig, Michael. *Banal Nationalism*. (London: Sage Publications, 1995), 40-41.

<sup>112</sup> Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, 41-42.

author, Pierre Berton, wrote a series of editorials for the *Toronto Star* in the late 1950s and early 1960s, many of which spoke of pizza.<sup>113</sup> In one such editorial from 1960, Berton produced an “eating out guide to the exotic and foreign world” in Toronto. His article celebrated the fact that Toronto’s dining out pattern had changed in the past decade to include many foreign restaurants, most notably, Chinese, Danish, Hungarian, Jewish and Italian restaurants.<sup>114</sup> With respect to Italian food, Berton states that Little Italy was the best location to obtain it, and he documented a series of restaurants and recommended dishes to order. For pizza, Berton suggested the Vesuvio Restaurant on College Street.<sup>115</sup> While he did not identify the “Italian-ness” of pizza in this article, he grouped pizza alongside various other ethnic cuisines available in Toronto. In an editorial from 1958, Berton focused on Toronto’s Little Italy on Dundas Street, just west of Spadina Avenue as the space to buy Italian food. Berton wrote, “An Italian friend tells me Little Italy makes the type of pizza served in Genoa- the crust quite thick, crisp on the outside but soft on the inside....at 90 cents a pizza.”<sup>116</sup> As an outsider to the Little Italy food community, Berton relied on the guidance of an “Italian friend” to guide him through the foodways. The Italian friend provided advice, suggesting that one should call in advance when ordering a pizza in Little Italy, especially during lunchtime on weekdays, as that is when the ovens are cold, and on Friday and Saturday evenings when

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113. Berton wrote about pizza in the *Toronto Star* five times between 1958-1963. All his articles were about his experiences eating pizza in Toronto restaurants. One article from 1958 and another from 1962 connect pizza kits and convenience food to laziness and American ways. Berton always suggested that readers should visit local restaurants. It is evident that Berton was a fan of pizza.

114. Berton, Pierre. “My Own Eating Out guide to the Exotic Foreign World”. *Toronto Star*. July 25, 1961. Second Section, 15.

115. The Vesuvio Restaurant located at 612 College Street is not the same as Toronto’s first pizzeria, Vesuvio’s Pizza and Spaghetti House located at 3028 Dundas Street in 1961. The Dundas Vesuvio is the original pizzeria, the College restaurant simply shares a similar name.

<sup>116</sup>. Ibid.

the restaurants are crowded.<sup>117</sup> This suggests that in 1958, pizza was considered a weekend dinner, not a lunchtime snack for non-Italians in Toronto. Berton also suggested the consumption of pizza for dinner when he reviewed an Italian-owned jazz club, Mario's Basement located at 1144 Eglinton West. He commented that patrons of Mario's wanted Italian food, décor, and waiters but not Italian singers.<sup>118</sup> At Mario's, symbols of Italian banal nationalism were connected to the commoditized sale of pizza.

As was the case with Toronto newspapers, which had focused on the "Italian" factor in articles discussing pizza, Buffalo newspapers also emphasized the Italian symbolism of pizza. In an article in the University of Buffalo's student newspaper, *The Spectrum* from 1968, an editorialist emphasized, "A ham hock, a piece of cornbread, and a forkful of greens are just as part of a black man's soul as pizza is to an Italian, Goomkie to a Polish person, and cabbage and potatoes to an Irishman."<sup>119</sup> Comments such as these made it seem that race and national origins were intertwined with ethnic cuisines in the 1960s. Articles in Buffalo newspapers were not alone in advancing this message; it was perpetuated by the pizza industry itself. Advertisements for pizzerias and Italian restaurants emphasized the Italian symbolism of their food. For example, an advertisement for "Italian Submarine Sandwich Shop" (Bailey Avenue near Main Street) in *The Spectrum* in 1960, emphasized the word Italian three times when describing the food they sold.<sup>120</sup> Rather than stating that they served submarine sandwiches, pizza, and sausage sandwiches, each of the food items was emphasized as Italian. In 1962, "AA

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Berton, Pierre. "With notebook and pencil through the land of the folkies". *Toronto Star*. November 23, 1960. Third Section, 33.

<sup>119</sup> Townes, Oliver. "Rap with Ollie" *The Spectrum*. September 20, 1968. 12.

<sup>120</sup> "Italian Submarine Sandwich Shop" Advertisement. *The Spectrum*. October 20, 1960.

Pizzeria” on Ingham Avenue in Lackawanna emphasized how their specialty was Italian food.<sup>121</sup> While most would associate the word “pizzeria” with Italian food, the advertisement uses the word Italian to emphasize Italian banal nationalism. The symbolism assigned to pizza by means of a banal nationalism allowed the Italian ethnic economies to claim authority over the production and commodification of pizza.

Coinciding with the Italian symbolism applied to pizza in the early 1960s, pizza was becoming a part of non-Italian culture in Toronto and Buffalo. In a *Toronto Star* opinion piece from 1963, Johnny Lombardi (an Italian supermarket owner- turned broadcaster and founder of the multilingual CHIN radio stations in 1966) replied to a previously published anti-immigration letter stating, “Italian-style pointed shoes are worn all over the world, as spaghetti is eaten everywhere and pizza served to the best.”<sup>122</sup> This suggests that although there was some anti-Italian sentiment in Toronto during the 1960s, it was impossible to deny the impact that Italian-Canadians and Italian-Americans alike had on the culture of Great Lakes urban societies. The acceptance of Italian culture by non-Italians, coupled with urban growth, economic prosperity, and expanding Italian communities facilitated the growth of pizza restaurants in Toronto and Buffalo.

Pizzerias in Toronto in the late 1950s were sporadically distributed across the former boroughs of Etobicoke, Old Toronto, Scarborough, York and North York. Of the fifteen pizzerias in Toronto by 1959, only five were located within the two Little Italies.<sup>123</sup> The majority of pizzerias in Toronto by 1959 operated on major crossroads

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<sup>121</sup>. “AA Pizzeria” Advertisement. *Lackawanna Leader*. May 17, 1962. 8.

<sup>122</sup>. Lombardi, Johnny. “Not Riffraff”. *Toronto Star*. March 2, 1963.

<sup>123</sup>. One Little Italy bounded by Ossington and Bathurst, with Dundas to the South and Harbord St to the North (this will be referred to as Little Italy in this dissertation). The second being centred on St. Clair between Lansdowne and Dufferin (this will be referred to as St. Clair and Corso Italia in this dissertation). The term Little Italies refers to both of these locations collectively.

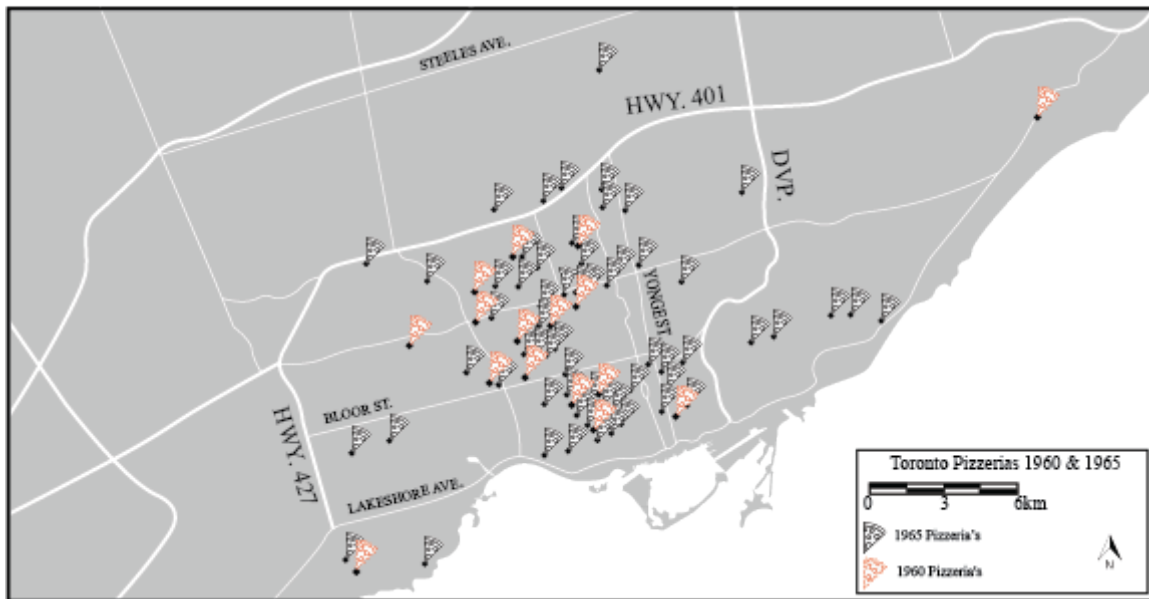
including Dupont Avenue, Eglinton Avenue, Bathurst Street, and Dundas Street. The notable exceptions to pizzerias on the major crossroads were the Italian bakeries that produced pizzas “to go” and served pizza at hot tables. Both the Commisso Bros & Racco Italian Bakery (8 Kincort Street in York) and Italian Home Bakery (118 Claremont Street in Etobicoke) opened outside of major crossroads and were located in industrial and residential areas respectively. These locations, like the original pizzerias in Toronto, catered to the lunch and snack needs of industrial workers. By the early 1960s, sections of Toronto, including East York, Scarborough, Central Etobicoke and the downtown core had no pizzerias.<sup>124</sup>

The pattern for establishing a pizzeria in Toronto during the 1960s traditionally followed two methods, filling an empty space or competing with pre-established pizzerias. The empty-space class of pizzerias emerged along the major crossroads of the city, filling geographic and spatial voids left by the previously opened pizzerias. The competing class of pizzerias opened within proximity to existing pizzerias that were established prior to 1959. Notable centres for the opening of competing pizzerias were within Little Italy as well as north on Dufferin Street. Little Italy contained six pizzerias by 1966, many of which were situated along College Street. Pizzerias including Pizzeria Toto (482 College Street) and Vesuvio Restaurant (612 College Street) opened within proximity of one of Toronto’s earliest pizzerias, Vulcan Pizza (697 College Street).

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<sup>124</sup> This data reflects City Directory and Yellow Page listings for 1960, 1965, and 1970, input into ArcGIS. The 1971 Canadian Census revealed the ethnic composition of East York, Etobicoke and Scarborough to be overwhelmingly of British Isles origins. The remainder of the population was primarily comprised of French, Jewish, Dutch, German, Ukrainian and Polish. East York and Etobicoke had Italian populations of 6,000 and 23,000 respectively. While Italians were present in these regions of the city, their minority status may have limited their abilities to open businesses. Furthermore, the Anglo majority in these areas were still developing their tastes for pizza in the early 1960s. Statistics Canada, *1971 Census of Canada Population- Ethnic Groups*. 1973, Table 5-25.

Similar competing patterns occurred on St. Clair when pizzerias opened next to the pre-existing Dolomiti PasticcERIA Fresh Pizza (1348 St Clair Avenue West) and Ragno D'Oro Restaurant (1231 St Clair Avenue West). Competing pizzerias included Calabria (1352 St Clair W), virtually next door to Dolomiti and Caffè Centrale located between Dolomiti and Ragno at 1265 St. Clair Avenue West. The pattern of competition with a pre-1960 pizzeria was best illustrated on Dufferin Street south of Lawrence Avenue West where pizzerias opened around Camarra's Pizzeria & Restaurant (2899 Dufferin in 1959 and 2879 Dufferin by 1965). Within walking distance to the Camarra's locations were Margellina Pizzeria (282 Dufferin) and Mona Lisa Tavern (2954 Dufferin). The method of creating competing pizzerias essentially capitalized on the clientele of established pizzerias, by setting up pizza businesses within proximity to them, sometimes only a few storefronts away from an existing location.



**Figure 3.5: Map of Toronto Pizzerias 1960 and 1965**  
(Created in ArcGIS, Esri Light Gray Canvas Map, 2020)

The opening of the competing pizzerias in the 1960s in Toronto facilitated geographic expansion of pizza businesses across the city. Central areas of the downtown core, including Yonge Street and Dundas Street, saw the opening of many pizzerias in the 1960s to cater to lunch for office workers. Other areas including the Danforth, Bloor Street West and North York also saw the opening of pizzerias. Eglinton Avenue West, for example, saw the opening of seven pizzerias between Keele and Yonge Streets. Areas east of the Don Valley and West of the Humber River still had limited pizzerias, owing to few new housing developments and the limited aggregate activity spaces of Italians in Toronto in the early 1960s.<sup>125</sup> The massive expansion of single location pizzerias across Toronto in the 1960s brought pizza into new neighbourhoods as the result of suburbanization and proximity to centres of commerce.

However, by the mid 1960s Toronto's pizza industry was primarily comprised of single location pizzerias. Apart from Mario's Spaghetti House and Pizzeria with locations on Eglinton, Dupont and Yonge Street, and La Pizza with locations on both Bathurst and Weston Road, Toronto pizza primarily consisted of single location operations until 1966. This drastically changed after 1966 when single pizzeria operators, including Pizza Nova and Pizzaville, grew their operations into franchising multi-store models. These expansions into mass franchising are covered in Chapter 4.

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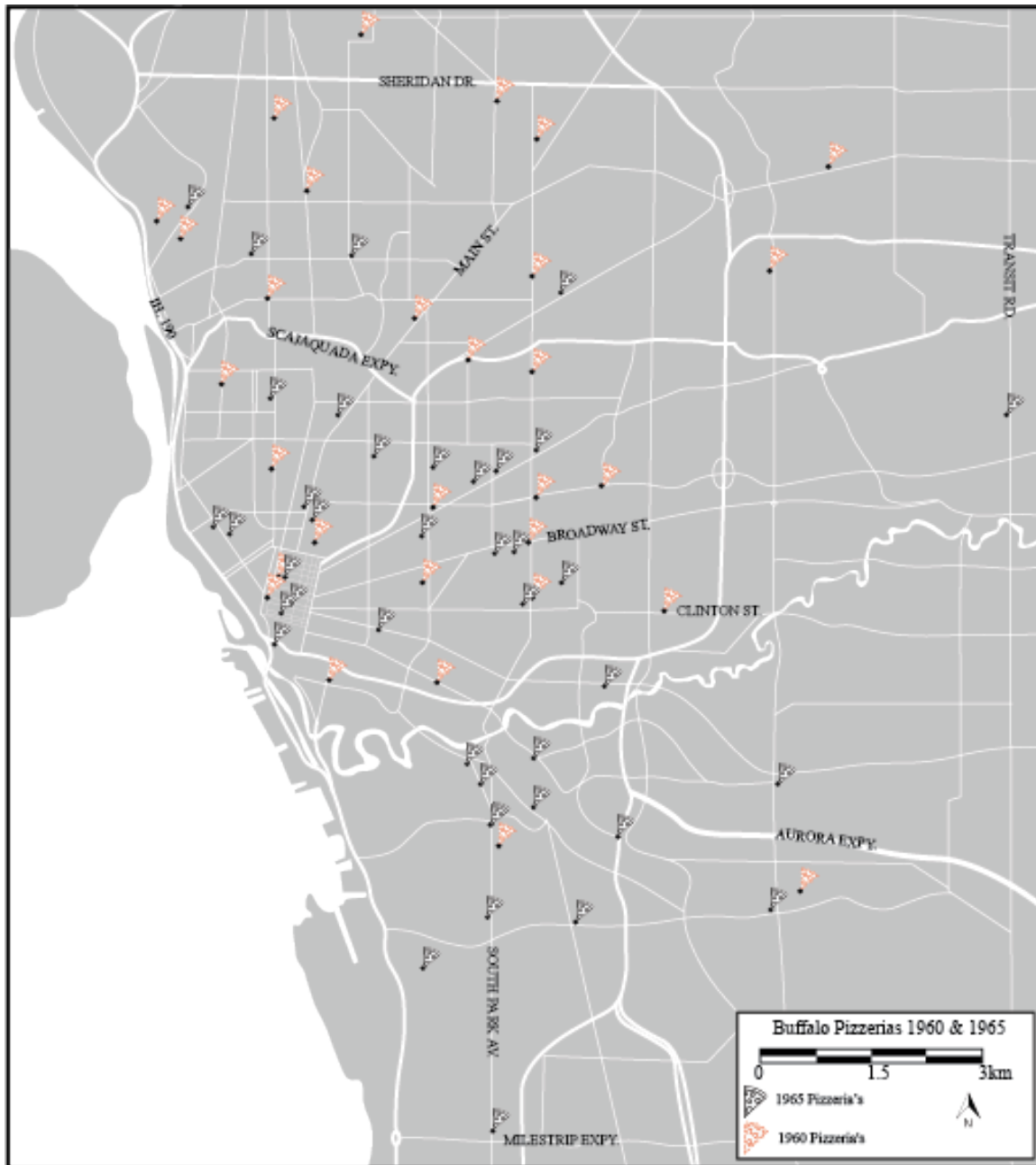
<sup>125</sup> Questionnaire results examined the activity space (work, school, friends, recreation and cultural facilities) and the frequency they were visited of different ethnic groups. Italian-Torontonians had less than one point of contact West of the Humber River, and zero East of the Don River in the 1960s. Subdivision activity and development maps from 1950-1968 suggest less than 1000 acres were developed into neighbourhood subdivisions on West of the Humber and East of the Don Valley. Gad, Peddie and Punter. "Ethnic Differences in the Residential Search Process." and Hodge, G. "Subdivision activity in the periphery of the Toronto urban field." in *The Form of Cities in Central Canada: Selected Papers* ed. Bourne, MacKinnon and Simmons. (Toronto: University of Toronto Department of Geography Research Publications, 1973), 173-175 and 222-223.

In the late 1950s, Buffalo's historic pizzerias (established before 1955) were concentrated to the East of Downtown, in Kenmore and West Seneca. In the 1960s, Buffalo's pizzerias took on similar patterns to those in Toronto, operating in geographic locations not previously served by pizzerias. While Toronto's pizzerias had a tendency to open near other established pizzerias, this was not the case in Buffalo as pizzerias opened in brand new locations or opened near locations where pizzerias had once been. For example, Radice Pizzeria, located at 74 West Chippewa Street in Downtown Buffalo, was listed in the 1960 City Directory, but was gone by 1965 when Dino's Pizzeria opened at 29 West Chippewa Street. As was the case in Toronto, pizzerias in Buffalo opened on cross-town main arterial streets. Genesee Street, Broadway, Elmwood Avenue, and Walden Avenue all attracted pizzerias in the 1960s. Cross-town arterial roads were used to exit from downtown Buffalo to reach suburban Buffalo and outlying areas including Cheektowaga, West Seneca and Tonawanda. Many of these pizzerias did not open in centres of Italian life, but residential neighbourhoods, including the predominantly African-American East Side. The renewal of the downtown core in the early 1960s pushed Buffalo's working class and Italian community out of the downtown, and towards the suburbs. Pizzerias grew, following the population movement. Unlike downtown Toronto, which was a centre for commerce, culture and socialization, downtown Buffalo was a space of commerce and industry. The suburbs of Buffalo served as the spaces of socialization and culture, including restaurants.<sup>126</sup> The location of pizzerias along the main routes out of the city suggest that as spaces of socialization and

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<sup>126</sup> Goldman, *City on the Edge*, 196-198.

culture, they were frequented primarily at the end of the workday and on weekends, and were not utilized for lunchtime or early morning snacks.



**Figure 3.6: Buffalo Pizzerias 1960 and 1965 (Created in ArcGIS, Esri Light Gray Canvas Map, 2020)**

The pizzerias which opened in Toronto and Buffalo in the 1960s followed patterns of suburbanization and urban growth along arterial roads. While Toronto's pizzerias clustered around existing pizzerias and consumer bases, Buffalo's pizzerias

were more geographically dispersed. Toronto's clustering of pizzerias around areas of Italian life, notably the two Little Italies, suggests that pizza in Toronto was still closely aligned with the Italian community and ethnic economy. In Buffalo, the wide geography of pizzeria locations suggests that the Italian community of Buffalo had become more embedded in the formerly non-Italian neighbourhoods, yet maintained proprietorship of pizza businesses via the ethnic economy.

Beyond the expanding geography of pizza businesses in Toronto and Buffalo, the Italian ethnic economies established new business practices. As advertising has demonstrated, the Italian banal nationalism assigned to pizza demonstrates how many of these businesses were of the Italian ethnic economies. Each pizza business fought for consumers to patronize their establishments. Advertising was central to developing an audience, and running a successful pizzeria. The bulk of advertising of the 1960s for pizzerias was in local newspapers, as well as in circulated advertisements. The 1960s saw the emergence of nearly daily advertisements from pizzerias, ranging in size from a two-line text classified advertisement, to business card sized ads with graphics. One of the earliest examples of a graphic pizzeria advertisement in a Toronto newspaper appeared in the *Toronto Star* in March, 1962. The advertisement for Italian City Restaurant located at 587 College Street, featured a sketch of a white well-dressed family, one man, woman, boy and girl sitting around a table smiling with lots of plates before them. The advertisement states that the restaurant had just opened, served Italian-American foods including pizza, and had a modern Italian design.<sup>127</sup> On the opposite end of the advertising spectrum, an advertisement for the opening of Pizza Romi at 49

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<sup>127</sup>. "Italian City Restaurant" Advertisement. *Toronto Star*. March 4, 1961. 26.

Dundas Street West on October 31, 1962, took up a quarter page. The advertisement was text heavy, detailing fifteen varieties of pizza, lunch specials, ample parking, party facilities, and after theatre snacks.<sup>128</sup> Unlike the Italian City Restaurant advertisement, Piazza Romi did not rely on graphics, but on a large sized advertisement. Restaurant advertisements relied on descriptions of the food, décor of the restaurant, and any other special services they offered (parking, banquet facilities). Restaurants ran advertisements infrequently, contained within small spaces, and were often used to announce the opening of new locations.



Figure 3.7: Advertisements from the *Toronto Star* for Italian City Restaurant (March, 1962) and Piazza Romi (October 31, 1962).

Trends in Toronto pizza advertising evolved in the late 1960s as advertisements no longer focused on the centrality of Italian identity with pizza, but used consumer targeted marketing tactics. Toronto pizzeria, La Pizza, relied on a series of weekly advertisements in the entertainment section of the *Toronto Star*. The business card-sized advertisements featured weekly and holiday specials, an expansion on Jane Street in

<sup>128</sup> "Piazza Romi" Advertisement. *Toronto Star*. Oct 31, 1962. 41.

1967, and a “pizza club card” in 1968. In February 1968, La Pizza created the “Pizza Club Card” which consumers could access with a one-time membership fee of \$7.50, to get one pizza at a regular price, and a second pizza for free. In the introductory pizza club advertisement, La Pizza had an image of the membership card, followed by details on how the card worked and how to apply for a card.<sup>129</sup> The concept of two for one pizza was not unusual, as La Pizza had run that promotion in 1967 but the concept of a membership card was unique.

In the late 1960s, promotional gimmicks, such as pizza club membership and two-for-one pizzas, became commonplace within the Toronto pizza industry. Pizza had become synonymous with everyday life in Toronto and advertisements for other industries used pizza to sell their goods. For example, in August 1967, Plaza Pontiac Buick had a pizza-themed sales event featuring a hundred pound pizza made by a local pizzeria.<sup>130</sup> This was a cross-themed promotion between the pizza and auto industry. Although the sale was vehicle-centric, the pizzeria obtained publicity and recognition for their production of a massive pizza.

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<sup>129</sup>. “La Pizza” Advertisement. *Toronto Star*. February 2, 1968. 28.

<sup>130</sup>. “Plaza Pontiac Buick” Advertisement. *Toronto Star*. August 18, 1967.



Figure 3.8: Advertisements from the *Toronto Star* for La Pizza's Club Card, (February, 1968) and Plaza Pontiac Buick's Pizza Sale (August, 1970).

In the early 1960s, advertisements for Buffalo pizzerias also shifted from emphasizing Italian symbolism towards marketing tactics. In 1965 a series of advertisements for Mr. Take Out, at 1361 Jefferson Avenue ran in the *Buffalo Criterion*, a newspaper for Buffalo's African-American community. The advertisements were simple in design, and reliant on text rather than graphics. The word "Pizza" was positioned at the top of advertisement, and described their pizzas as fresh to order with the options of lightly cooked, medium and well done.<sup>131</sup> No prices, offers or pictures of food were included in the advertisement. An advertisement in the *Island Dispatch* took a different approach in 1963 when announcing the opening of Drago's Restaurant on Grand Island Boulevard. The advertisement featured multiple photographs of the owners and the staff of the restaurant. In bold print below the photographs is the tagline, "Specializing in Italian Made to Order Pizza."<sup>132</sup>

<sup>131</sup>. "Mr. Take Out" Advertisement. *Buffalo Criterion*. February 7, 1965. 4.

<sup>132</sup>. "Drago's Restaurant" Advertisement. *Island Dispatch*. November 26, 1963.

Similar to Toronto, pizzeria advertising in Buffalo shifted in the late 1960s, to gimmicks, promotions and images. An advertisement for Lackawanna’s Mr. Submarine’s grand opening in 1967 featured a cartoon of a *pizzaiolo* removing a photographed pie on a pizza paddle from an oven, and offered a free Pepsi with any pizza purchase.<sup>133</sup> Bocce Club Pizza, one of the longest established pizzerias in Buffalo, ran a different gimmick advertisement. In a series of advertisements in *The Spectrum* in 1967, Bocce Club avoided heavy text, images or promotions, but featured a series of outlined black boxes, enclosing text that said Bocce in large font and pizza in small font, followed by their phone number.<sup>134</sup> These advertisements relied on the status of a long-standing popular name in the Buffalo area pizza business and served to communicate their phone number for take-out pizza, rather than location, menu, or gimmick promotions.



Figure 3.9: Advertisement for Mr. Submarine from the *Lackawanna Leader* (December, 1967) and one of the minimalist Bocce Club Pizza advertisements from *The Spectrum* (February, 1967).

<sup>133</sup>. “Mr. Submarine” Advertisement. *Lackawanna Leader*. December 28, 1967. 6.

<sup>134</sup>. “Bocce Pizza” Advertisement. *The Spectrum*. February 7, 1967. 12.

While the expansion of pizzerias and subsequent advertising illuminate the growing commodification of pizza in restaurants, there is much to be learned about the experience of consumption in these restaurants. Toronto's growing economic and cultural prominence was noted in a series of advertisements that promoted pizza restaurants with entertainment. Advertisements for La Pizza in the *Toronto Star* in April and May of 1960 touted that the restaurant featured live jazz bands every Friday night.<sup>135</sup> This suggests that during the early 1960s, pizza was consumed as a sit-down-meal with entertainment. As previously noted, author Pierre Berton wrote of a night out in Toronto in November of 1960, which included a late night stop at Mario's Basement on Eglinton West. Berton described the restaurant as one of the newest clubs in town, featuring Italian food, décor, waiters and Klass Van Graaft, a Dutch-Canadian folk singer on stage singing songs about Ontario.<sup>136</sup> Again, the consumption of pizza in an Italian restaurant was paired with entertainment. The combination of entertainment and pizza was not limited to Jazz and Folk music, as a *Toronto Star* article from 1961 mentions the "West Indian" Club, Calypso, which sold pizza alongside calypso music performances.<sup>137</sup> An entertainment review of the theatrical performance "Boy Friend" in April 1960, explained how theatre goers sat at tables with striped cloths, and could smoke and consume pizza and soft drinks while watching the performance.<sup>138</sup> A review of George's Spaghetti House described the restaurant as upscale with dimly lit lights, checkered tablecloths, and live modern jazz performances alongside a wide assortment of Italian food.<sup>139</sup> The

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<sup>135</sup> "La Pizza" Advertisement, *Toronto Star*, April 6, 14, 26 May 6, 20, 27 1960.

<sup>136</sup> Berton, Pierre. "With Notebook and Pencil through the land of the folkknicks." *Toronto Star*. November 23, 1960. 33.

<sup>137</sup> Duff, Morris. "Jazz Declines and Folk Music Soars." *Toronto Star*. December 30, 1961. 22.

<sup>138</sup> "Only Bathtub Gin Lacking at Boy Friend Opening." *Toronto Star*. April 6, 1960. 21.

<sup>139</sup> "George's Spaghetti House." Review. *Toronto Star*. August 23, 1961.

connection between pizza consumption and entertainment in the early 1960s suggests that pizza was served to non-Italians as an upscale meal, and was not for everyday consumption.<sup>140</sup>

A classified advertisement from 1963 in Toronto announced the sale of a restaurant located at Yonge Street and Dundas Street. The sale of the space announced that it was suitable for a dining hall lounge with over one-hundred tables and equipment to make pizza.<sup>141</sup> This advertisement suggests that pizza and entertainment restaurant operations were not small in scale, but could serve many diners in one sitting and had the space for musical performances. The menu at the music-pizza restaurants was not limited to just pizza: an advertisement from 1962 for George's Spaghetti House and Jazz bar located at Dundas Street East at Sherbourne Streets suggests that their menu included veal, lasagna, spaghetti and a variety of pizzas.<sup>142</sup> The restaurant spaces that provided live music served a wide ranging Italian menu opposed to the take-out only pizzeria (discussed in the next chapter), which featured only pizza as a main menu item.

While Torontonians regarded pizza in the 1960s as a formal accompaniment to a sit-down dinner or entertainment, Buffalonians consumed pizza far more casually. The working class character of Buffalo, combined with lower household incomes than Toronto, and minimal cultural prominence in New York State facilitated the casual consumption. Advertisements for pizza restaurants suggested that pizza was served as a

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<sup>140</sup> The upscale serving of Italian food in Canada may be connected to the commodification of the cuisine in Britain. Prior to the Second World War, Italian food in Britain was haute cuisine. Foods such as baked pasta and meats were sold in upscale establishments. Following the war, Italian coffee bars opened and started to sell cheap Italian food including minestrone soup, spaghetti and eventually pizza. As these foods were popularized by coffee bars, Spaghetti Houses, which maintained the class of the early haute cuisine Italian restaurants, also served the food. The early Italian restaurants in Canada seemed to follow the British tradition of serving Italian food in upscale restaurants. Panayi, 117-188.

<sup>141</sup> "Pizza Restaurant for Sale" Classified. *Toronto Star*. July 6, 1963.

<sup>142</sup> "Cool Jazz at George's Spaghetti." Advertisement. *Toronto Star*. November 21, 1962.

family meal. Many restaurants advertised in Buffalo newspapers claimed that they offered pizza as “complete meals” or dinners. An advertisement in the *Island Dispatch* in 1963 for Beachcombers Restaurant stated that they offered complete meals, snacks and pizza under the image of a cartoon family at a dining table.<sup>143</sup> A column in the *Lackawanna Leader* in 1962 explained that the pizza and spaghetti dinners at AA Pizzeria (Ingham and Holbrook) were popular for families and nationally famous wrestler and Buffalonian, Ilio Di Paolo.<sup>144</sup> In an article from 1964, Grand Island families, through the Camp Fire Girls guiding organization, donated pizzas to the Children’s Hospital Unit at the Buffalo State Hospital. The pizzas were donated as a family meal for patients and their parents as pizza, “is not usually found in hospital diets, it will be a treat for the children.”<sup>145</sup> This demonstrates how the consumption of pizza in Buffalo was a casual family experience.

## **Conclusion**

The late 1950s through the mid 1960s were a period when the specialized restaurant spread across Toronto and Buffalo. Changing tastes and attitudes towards Italian food popularized the cuisine outside of non-Italian homes. Italian restaurants were able to produce foods like pizza, at a greater quality than what could be produced in the homes of non-Italians. Factors contributing to the commodification of pizza in Toronto and Buffalo were a result of Italian ethnic economies, suburbanization, and urban renewal

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<sup>143</sup> “Beachcombers Restaurant.” Advertisement. *Island Disptach*. April 25, 1963.

<sup>144</sup> Ilio DiPaolo was born in Italy and became a professional wrestler when he immigrated to the United States. He wrestled all across North America and was very popular at shows in Buffalo, Toronto, Montreal and Hamilton amongst the Italian diaspora. When he retired from wrestling in 1965, he opened a pizzeria which evolved into Ilio DiPaolo’s Restaurant on South Park Ave.

“Ilio DiPaolo Great Food Recipes” Buffalo Erie County Library Special Collections.

“Holynski, Tony. “The Chit Chat Corner.” *Lackawanna Leader*. February 1, 1962.

<sup>145</sup> “Isle Families Donate Pizzas.” *Island Dispatch*. April 30, 1964.

efforts. As many Italians followed trends of suburbanization and urban renewal, they opened businesses in new areas of the cities. Italian communities became less centralized, and their businesses spread across urban centres to serve non-Italian populations. Using pizza as a symbol of nationalism enabled some Italians to commoditize their ethnicity and sell authentic pizza products to non-Italians. Entrepreneurial Italian-Canadians and Italian-Americans also utilized their system of ethnic economies to employ fellow countrymen and family members in their restaurants, and looked towards other ethnic businesses to support their business. In Toronto, the establishment of the first pizzerias near places of commerce suggests that the pizzerias were ethnic economy enterprises catering to the co-ethnic market. In Buffalo, the establishment of pizzerias in Italian neighbourhoods also suggests the influence of the co-ethnic market. As Italian communities became decentralized, the locations of pizzerias spread across the cities to cater to the other ethnic markets.

Pizza was introduced to non-Italians in Toronto and Buffalo in their homes in the 1950s. In the 1960s pizza restaurants opened across the cities, and employed new techniques to gain customers. Restaurants were spaces for formal dine-in experiences in Toronto and less-formal everyday consumption in Buffalo. Despite different methods of consumption in Toronto and Buffalo, the restaurant pizza industry developed in a similar fashion in both cities. The expansion and success of pizza in urban restaurants laid the groundwork for the commodification of pizza in another space, the streets. However, as pizza was commoditized on the streets, the economies of Toronto and Buffalo started to diverge, and street-based commodification took different paths in these cities.

### **Chapter 3: The Streets- Where the Restaurant Meets the Home**

In January 1970, the Toronto branch of the American corporation, General Foods, asked the Toronto market research firm, Elliott Research Corporation, to conduct a random telephone survey of Toronto housewives regarding their household pizza consumption and pizza purchasing habits. General Foods was a conglomerate of food businesses, which included cereal, coffee, frozen foods, meat and cold cuts, and drink powders.<sup>1</sup> While Elliott's report does not state the objective of the survey, General Foods' interest in pizza was multifold, from considering expansion of their frozen food lines to purchasing a chain of pizza restaurants. The survey sought out individuals who consumed pizza, and divided their consumption of it into five categories: frozen pizza, shelf pizza, refrigerated pizza, pizza made from scratch, pizza mix, and pizzerias. The results of the survey revealed that 13% ate pizza regularly, 47% ate it occasionally, and 40% seldom ate pizza.<sup>2</sup> Among those who ate pizza over the preceding year, 74% purchased it from a pizzeria, followed by 32% who bought frozen pizza.<sup>3</sup> The results of the survey suggested that by 1970, the bulk of Toronto's pizza consumers purchased their pizza from restaurants. Individuals who purchased pizza from pizzerias described the

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<sup>1</sup> General Foods dates to 1891 when C.W. Post developed a roasted cereal-based beverage, Postum, while he was a patient at Dr. John Harvey Kellogg's holistic sanitarium. Postum was developed as an alternative to coffee and was inspired by the health benefits of Kellogg's corn flake cereal. In 1897, Post introduced a dry cereal, Grape Nuts. Post established Canadian branch plant operations of both Postum and Grape Nuts in 1908, with the opening of the Canadian Postum Company in Windsor, Ontario and Grape Nuts Company in London, Ontario. Following Post's death in 1914, his daughter Marjorie Merriweather Post assumed control of the company. Under Marjorie's control, notable purchases included Jello-O, Minute Rice, Baker's Chocolate, Log Cabin Syrup, Hellmann's mayonnaise, Sanka Coffe, and Maxwell House coffee. In 1929, Post made the acquisition of the General Foods frozen food company and changed the company name from the Postum Cereal company to General Foods. As General Foods, purchases include Kool-Aid, Tang, Oscar Mayer, and the Burger Chef and Rax fast food restaurants. In 1990, General foods merged into Kraft Foods (now the Heinz Corporation). Kraft General Foods Archives Department, "Chronological History of Kraft General Foods Inc." Glenview, Illinois, 1994.

<sup>2</sup> Elliott Research Corporation. "January 1970 Pizza Survey for General Foods." February, 1970. Archives of Ontario, F245-23-0-3315.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

process as handy, convenient, offering better tasting pizza with a wider variety of optional toppings and different sizes than other convenience foods. Notably, these individuals also rated fast delivery and the receipt of a hot product as major factors in selecting restaurant-delivered pizza. The survey found that 83% of respondents bought between five and twelve pizzas per year. The survey also revealed that the bulk of these pizzas were produced in pizzerias, and 22% of respondents cited fast delivery as a factor for purchasing pizza from a pizzeria.<sup>4</sup> In addition to demonstrating the popularity of pizza outside the home in restaurants, this survey also gave the impression that by 1970 delivery was an important factor in the commodification of pizza in Toronto.

*How Torontonians purchased pizza*

<b>Method</b>	<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
Pizzeria	74%
Frozen	32%
From Mix	26%
From Scratch	12%

*For Pizzeria Users- What features do you like and not like about pizzeria pizza?*

<b>Likes/ Dislikes</b>	<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
Convenient	36%
Better Taste than Others	32%
Prompt Delivery/Received Hot	22%
Better than Homemade	13%
Good Crust	8%
No Dislikes	52%

**Table 2: Sample of Results from General Foods Pizza Survey, conducted by Elliott Research Corporation, 1970.**

The transformation of urban streets from condensed downtown networks to sprawling suburban thoroughfares coincided with the growing demand for pizza on the part of non-Italian Torontonians and Buffalonians. The expansion of pizzerias and pizza restaurants in Toronto and Buffalo was rooted in processes of urban expansion,

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

downtown urban renewal and the growing urban economies. The expansion of the cities and changing face of industry facilitated the expansion of the pizza business from restaurants to the streets. Italian ethnic economies were central to the expansion of the pizza business and its development as a street-based industry. Former pizza restaurant employees of Italian ethnicity opened their own pizzerias, using the training and knowledge gained from working in co-ethnic pizzerias, and hired co-ethnic employees. Ethnocultural entrepreneurs mobilized their ethnic community, teaching the co-ethnic community business and food skills, which eventually supported the ability of employees opening their own independent businesses. Nicholas Harney claimed that ethnocultural entrepreneurs provided an essential service that helped ethnic community members navigate processes of assimilation and community building.<sup>5</sup> The successes of the pizza restaurants connected to Italian ethnic economies in Toronto and Buffalo, combined with trends in urban expansion and changing urban economies, facilitated the commodification of pizza on the streets.

An expansion of the pizza industry in Toronto and Buffalo meant multiple pizzerias covered similar geographic areas for takeout, delivery and dine-in pizza. Because pizzerias relied on a stable base of consumers to support their pizzerias, increased competition made this endeavor difficult. As the General Foods survey from 1970 revealed, in Toronto, convenience was the paramount factor, with taste being a close secondary category in determining consumer selection.<sup>6</sup> Pizza entrepreneurs relied on the support of Italian ethnic economies to improve their pizzerias by creating new

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<sup>5</sup> Harney, Nicholas. *Eh Paesan! Being Italian in Toronto*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 104.

<sup>6</sup> Elliott Research Corporation. "January 1970 Pizza Survey for General Foods." February, 1970. Archives of Ontario, F245-23-0-3315.

products and services. Innovations stemming from the Great Lakes region, including new styles of pizza, sodas, pizza accompaniments, and pizza transportation technologies arrived in Toronto and Buffalo between the 1960s and late 1970s.

The concept of ethnic economies illuminates the processes of urban Italian settlement, business openings, the interconnected nature of Italian businesses, and the centrality of the ethnic family economy. While different processes of pizza commodification in Toronto and Buffalo can be attributed to the diverging urban economies, ethnic economies contributed to the processes of innovation and business expansion which facilitated the commodification of pizza on the streets. This chapter examines the activities of Italian ethnic economies and the role of inventors, food service support, and culinary innovators who facilitated the commodification of pizza on the urban streets.

Urban streets acted as the conduit by which pizza traveled from the primary producer, the pizzeria, to the consumers in their homes. While the streets facilitated a new method for consumers to purchase pizza, the streets illuminate the trends of suburbanization and urban renewal. Suburbanization was the movement of urban citizens from the downtown core into new developments and communities on the outskirts of the city. This included the movement of Italians to new urban areas for the purpose of opening businesses to support an expanding population and industries. While pizzerias may not have served each of these new communities as walk-in restaurants, they expanded their delivery range quickly to serve new areas and created a new job -- the delivery driver. Pizzerias also introduced new technologies and methods to facilitate home delivery, including the pizza box and the insulated pizza bag.

The history of the pizza industry has paid little attention to the interconnections between technological innovations, suburbanization, urban growth and Italian ethnic economies. As pizza became popular with non-Italians, currents of urban change including subdivision neighbourhoods, expanded streets, strip mall plazas, and a trained cadre of Italian *pizzaioli* (the Italian term for pizzamakers) facilitated changes within the pizza industry. This chapter demonstrates how changes in the urban economy, and the continued strength of the ethnic economies modified the business of pizza on the streets of Toronto and Buffalo. Between the 1960s and 1970s, the streets of these cities changed dramatically as their economies took divergent paths, with Toronto representing a city on the rise, and Buffalo a city on the decline. As the production of pizza moved from homes to restaurants during periods of prosperity in both cities, pizza moved from the restaurant to the streets.

## I

Pizza was not the first street food in Buffalo or Toronto; both cities had a long history of food commoditized for sale on the streets. The sale of food on the streets of Buffalo and Toronto was rooted in ethnic economies, as market vendors came from rural communities to sell fresh produce. In Toronto, farmers of British, Irish, German, Mennonite, Dutch and African-Canadian communities sold produce to non-ethnic and co-ethnic community members in the city.<sup>7</sup> The sale of food on the streets predated the building of the St. Lawrence Market in 1803, which was Toronto's main food distribution hub until the opening of the Ontario Food Terminal in 1954.<sup>8</sup> In Buffalo, the Broadway

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<sup>7</sup> Crowley, Terry. "Experience and Representation: Southern Ontario Farm Women and Agricultural Change 1870-1914." *Agricultural History*. Vol. 73, No. 2. Spring 1999, 241.

<sup>8</sup> Hood, Sarah B. "Pickerel, pork and President's Choice: A Historical Food Map of Toronto," in *Edible City: Toronto's Food from Farm to Fork*. Ed. Alana Wilcox. (Toronto: Coach House Books, 2009), 18.

Market, established by Polish Americans in 1894, fulfilled a similar function.<sup>9</sup> In the United States, street vendors date back to the 1840s in Boston, where they sold popcorn balls from wagons at public events.<sup>10</sup> Ethnic vendors sold snack foods on the streets to make economic opportunities for themselves because they were excluded from mainstream economic activity. At the turn of the twentieth century, street vendors had established steam-driven wagon snack carts at fairs, circuses, and exhibitions and made an excellent living, averaging \$150 per week in major cities.<sup>11</sup> At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Toronto, some of the earliest street food vendors were European Jews who sold kosher snacks from wagons to their co-ethnic community in Kensington Market.<sup>12</sup> In Buffalo, the earliest street food vendors were German and Polish immigrants who sold sausages and sauerkraut from carts to co-ethnic factory workers at lunchtime.<sup>13</sup> German, Polish and Jewish ethnic economies facilitated the commodification of food on urban streets, opening the way for Italians and pizza.<sup>14</sup>

The effort to attract customers led to many food innovations among ethnic street vendors. For example, in 1867 a German-American pushcart vendor, Charles Feltman,

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<sup>9</sup> Obidinski, Eugene. "Polish Americans in Buffalo: The Transformation of an Ethnic Subcommunity." *The Polish Review* 14, No. 1 (1969): 28-39, 37.

<sup>10</sup> Smith, Andrew. *Encyclopedia of Junk Food and Fast Food*. (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2006), 254.

<sup>11</sup> Smith, Andrew. *Encyclopedia of Junk Food and Fast Food*. (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2006), 254.

<sup>12</sup> Known as the Jewish Market, the Kensington Market was a series of Jewish vendors open on Thursday and Friday for shopping before the Sabbath. According to historian Jean Cochrane, this market was shunned by most of Toronto's citizens and primarily served the Jewish community. A prime example of the Jewish ethnic economy operating in Toronto to serve the co-ethnic market. Nonetheless, it was one of the first examples of street food vendors in the city.

Cochrane, Jean. *Kensington*. (Boston Mills Press, 2000), 35.

<sup>13</sup> Goldman, Mark. *High Hopes*, 165.

<sup>14</sup> Italians did not participate in the early sale of street foods in Toronto but pizza and other foods had been sold on the streets of Italy. The world's first pizzeria, Antica Pizzeria Port Alba opened in Naples, Italy in 1830. Antica Pizzeria produced a wood fired pizza, to be folded and served *porta foglio*, meaning eaten on the go. In the late 1800s, street vendors carried a kind of oven on their backs and would sell a rudimentary pizza. The tradition of food for sale on the streets was part of Italian culture, and would contribute to later modifications of the Canadian and American pizza industries.

Bransfield, Dan. *Pizzapedia: An Illustrated Guide To Everyone's Favorite Food*. (California: Ten Speed Press, 2018).

sold sausages on white rolls at Coney Island, New York. This product, the Coney Island red-hot, is credited as the first hot dog.<sup>15</sup> The hot dog cart quickly spread to other cities, including Chicago, Rochester, Buffalo and Toronto, where it served hot dogs as a quick snack or lunch. Hot dog carts were important businesses for ethnic economies as they had small upstart costs, were mobile, and did not pose any barriers for immigrants to enter the industry. Early carts, like Feltman's, had no branding and purchased meat directly from a co-ethnic wholesaler. By 1910, branded carts were established, wherein vendors entered into exclusive agreements with meat wholesalers who provided the vendor with marketing tools and hot dogs at a reduced cost. Branded carts adorned with signs and coloured umbrellas signified brand allegiance; in Buffalo, this was overwhelmingly the red and yellow associated with the locally produced Sahlen brand and in Toronto, the red and yellow (alternatively black/yellow and green/yellow over the years) became associated with the local Shopsy's brand.<sup>16</sup> From 1910 onwards, as carts became professionalized, local governments tried to regulate the businesses by implementing licenses and health inspections. In Toronto, this limited where vendors could sell, and legally prohibited the sale of anything other than hot dogs.<sup>17</sup>

The types of street foods available in Toronto and Buffalo and the consumption habits of citizens varied dramatically. Similar to Toronto, Buffalo regulated the hot dog

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<sup>15</sup> Goldman, Mark. *High Hopes*, 165.

<sup>16</sup> Kraig, Bruce and Patty Carroll. *Man Bites Hot Dog: Hot Dog Culture in America*. (AltaMira Press, 2012), 53.

<sup>17</sup> Kraig and Carroll, 77 and 209-214. The rationale behind this prohibition was often under the guise of protecting businesses and buildings. Hot dog stands and the smells associated with cooking were unattractive for business owners, and bylaws were created to prohibit which streets vendors could operate on. Other rationales included protecting the health of citizens from food spoilage at a mobile cart. By the 1980s many of the street food vendors were of Middle Eastern origins and hoped to supplement their hot dog incomes by selling street foods from the Middle East including kebab and shawarma. This was prevented by restrictive city licensing requirements, potentially rooted in xenophobia. However, this also demonstrates how the hot dog business was tied to a multiplicity of ethnic economies over the decades.

vendor industry starting in the 1970s, and didn't allow mobile food trucks until 2010.<sup>18</sup> Buffalo's street food vendors were primarily connected to festivals and events. Articles in Buffalo's *Courier Express* from 1978 and 1980 mention the presence of food vendors at a Winter Carnival and a Main Street Open House.<sup>19</sup> While neither article mentions what kind of food these vendors served, both events featured hot dog-eating contests, suggesting that these vendors sold hot dogs. An article about the Juneteenth celebration in Buffalo in 1978 mentioned that street food vendors sold African, Mexican, Spanish and Southern foods.<sup>20</sup> The ethnic character of the festival as predominantly African-American may have contributed to the wider range of street cuisines available and suggests that a variety of ethnic entrepreneurs operated street food businesses. Street food in Buffalo was primarily a celebratory commodity, associated with local events and not commerce or industry.

With the advent of automobiles, the food truck was a natural progression from food wagons and carts.<sup>21</sup> Toronto had a booming food truck-based industry in contrast to Buffalo's cart based street food industry. Food trucks in Toronto served such snacks as ice cream, nuts, french fries, hot dogs, fried rice, egg rolls, and Vietnamese buns. The food trucks were part of the Italian, Chinese, Greek, Portuguese, and eventually Middle Eastern ethnic economies, but also operated by Anglo-Canadians.<sup>22</sup> Despite these foods not being part of the ethnic cuisines of those who sold them, municipal laws limited the

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<sup>18</sup> "Food Trucks Get The Green Light." *NewYorkStreetFood.com* (accessed July 3, 2020).

<sup>19</sup> "A Wintery Weekend." *Courier Express*. January 21, 1978. and "N. Main St. Merchants To Hold Open House." *Courier Express*. September 3, 1980.

<sup>20</sup> "Juneteenth Fest Draws 140,000." *Courier Express*. June 19, 1978.

<sup>21</sup> Smith, Andrew F. *Encyclopedia of Junk Food and Fast Food*. (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2006), 255.

<sup>22</sup> Dale, Daniel. "Food trucks face new rules of the road." *Toronto Star*. April 3, 2014.

kinds of foods that could be sold on the streets.<sup>23</sup> These trucks spread throughout the downtown core with popular locations, including Front Street near the Convention Centre, City Hall and the Eaton Centre, on streets alongside the University of Toronto and Ryerson Polytechnic Institute (now Ryerson University), and along the University Avenue hospital row.<sup>24</sup> These locations suggest that the food trucks targeted students, office workers, and tourists for quick snacks and lunches. Bicycle carts selling ice cream and nuts had more mobility than the trucks, and sold food in parks and at festivals.

The presence of both trucks and carts in Toronto was a contentious debate among urban residents and local legislators. One letter to the editor of the *Globe & Mail* in 1964 referred to ice cream truck drivers on the streets of Etobicoke as “potential child killers,” and supported provincial legislation to assist the municipality with banning mobile ice cream vendors.<sup>25</sup> The following year, the Toronto Municipal Licensing Commission reviewed the licensing of ice cream trucks after several children were struck and killed by the trucks. The review resulted in drivers selling outside the cab and walking around the vehicle prior to leaving to ensure all children were away from the truck.<sup>26</sup> However, ice cream trucks were not the only food truck under scrutiny in Toronto, as Toronto bylaw enforcement in 1979 targeted food trucks that sold in the same location for more than thirty minutes in a day.<sup>27</sup> In 1985, the Toronto Licensing Commission launched further investigations concentrated upon food cart propane heaters, vehicle insurance, and

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<sup>23</sup> Many ethnic dishes were banned from sale on the streets of Toronto well into the mid 2000s. City council restricted street food to the sale of Anglo-Canadian and American snacks.

<sup>24</sup> Photographs of food trucks and vendors City of Toronto Photo Archive and the *Toronto Star* photography collection.

<sup>25</sup> Brown, Nola. “Ice Cream Truck: Letter to the Editor.” *Globe & Mail*. September 2, 1964.

<sup>26</sup> “Metro cracks down on ice-cream trucks.” *Globe & Mail*. November 11, 1965.

<sup>27</sup> “Metro moves on street vendors who stay too long in one place.” *Globe & Mail*. March 24, 1979.

garbage containers, all in the name of public safety.<sup>28</sup> Between 1981 and 1985, the number of street food vendors in Toronto tripled, and was described by Toronto Alderman Jack Layton as a problem of “enormous magnitude.”<sup>29</sup> The number of food vendors on the streets of Toronto points to the popularity of street food. The local government’s attempts at regulation indicates that they wanted to protect local business interest, spare neighbourhoods from noisy trucks, and were concerned about the health and safety of citizens.<sup>30</sup>

Outside of the home and workplace, street food presented an opportunity for consumption that coincided with the sports and cultural events of Toronto and Buffalo. Stadiums built in Toronto and Buffalo between 1948 and 1989 hosted major sports teams and performing acts.<sup>31</sup> While food within these stadiums was one site of consumption (explored in Chapter 5 in connection with the growth of conglomerate food franchises), food trucks outside the stadiums were a staple feature of these events. An article in the *Toronto Star* in 1990 chronicled one journalist’s purchase of hotdogs, peanuts, popcorn

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<sup>28</sup> York, Geoffrey. “Rules for street vendors to be studied.” *Globe & Mail*. April 3, 1985.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> The debate over street food in Toronto raged for decades beyond the scope of this study. During the “Subway, Subway, Subways!” mayorship of Rob Ford (2010-2014) which promoted a vision of an urban grandeur for Toronto streets, food trucks were banned from the streets and forced to set up in parking lots and on-street parking spaces. Under this bylaw, trucks were unable to operate within 50 meters from any restaurant, which effectively banned them from most downtown streets. This effectively killed the roaming food trucks of Toronto, and replaced them with food truck-parking lot-food courts in the suburbs.

Dale, Daniel. “Food trucks face new rules of the road.” *Toronto Star*. April 3, 2014.

<sup>31</sup> Exhibition Stadium (built 1948) was home to the Toronto Argonauts of the Canadian Football League (1959-1988), and the Toronto Blue Jays of Major League Baseball (1977-1989), Maple Leaf Gardens (built in 1931) was home to the Toronto Maple Leafs of the National Hockey League (1931-1999), SkyDome (built 1989) became the home of the Blue Jays, Argonauts, and the Toronto Raptors of the National Basketball Association (1995-1999), Memorial Auditorium (built 1940) was home to Buffalo Sabers of the National Hockey League (1970-1996) and the Buffalo Braves of the National Basketball Association (1970-1978), and Rich Stadium (built 1973) was home to the Buffalo Bills of the National Football League (1973- Present). Some performing acts include World Wrestling Entertainment at the Memorial Auditorium, Maple Leaf Gardens, Exhibition Stadium and SkyDome between 1970 and the 1990s, Elvis Presley at Memorial Auditorium and Maple Leaf Gardens in 1957, The Who at Memorial Auditorium and Exhibition Stadium in 1979, and Queen at Memorial Auditorium and Maple Leaf Gardens in 1978.

and pizza outside the SkyDome.<sup>32</sup> Meanwhile, in Buffalo, street food was an essential part of attending a Buffalo Bills game at Rich Stadium. An article in the *Courier Express* in 1980 explained how Bills fans gathered in Orchard Park parking lots prior to football games to grill their own food, to be shared with friends and sold to other tailgaters.<sup>33</sup> The sale of street food in Buffalo was arrayed around events and celebrations, while in Toronto, street food sales focused on both celebratory events and quick snacks and lunches for workers, students, and tourists in the downtown area. Street food was more of an everyday occurrence in Toronto than in Buffalo.<sup>34</sup>

## II

The sale of these foods on the streets, primarily by immigrants participating in their ethnic economies, paved the way for the commodification of pizza on the streets of Toronto and Buffalo. Much like street food vendors before them, pizzeria owners followed patterns of urban expansion to find new consumer markets, and created new products to attract consumers. The commodification of pizza on the streets of Buffalo and Toronto took different paths, following the diverging social and economic demands of each urban center. Pizza innovations stemming from the Italian ethnic economies were used by pizzerias to differentiate their business from other competitors and to connect restaurant-produced pizza to the homes of Toronto and Buffalo. On the streets, the pizza business transformed from primarily family-owned independent businesses to a mass-

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<sup>32</sup> The journalist was denied entry until the food was consumed because of McDonald's exclusive rights to the sale of food in the stadium. This is explored in depth in Chapter 5.

"SkyDome fare can't compare with food at U.S. ballparks." *Toronto Star*. August 23, 1990.

<sup>33</sup> "Tailgating: Parking Lot Sport." *Courier Express*. September 14, 1980.

<sup>34</sup> The economic and social composition of Toronto's downtown core including office professions, students and tourists may have contributed to the popularity of food trucks as they sought quick lunches. In Buffalo, the downtown's composition of blue-collar manufacturing industries, suggests that they may have been served by snack trucks/wagons or onsite canteens/commissaries. This would suggest why food trucks were more popular in Toronto for everyday consumption, and popular in Buffalo for events and festivals.

market capitalist industry by improving the pizza-making process and the customer experience. Pizza was no longer a business of the ethnic economies for the co-ethnic market, but a business controlled by ethnic economies with capitalistic goals. This process, driven by the increased pizza competition on the urban streets, and resulting from the interconnected nature of the Italian ethnic economies, changed how Canadians and Americans consumed pizza, the locations where they consumed it, and the items they ate as accompaniments.

As urban historian Jon Teaford has explained, metropolitan areas with a single central business district were replaced by an amorphous sprawl of population without a unifying hub or culture.<sup>35</sup> By the mid 1950s, the streets of Toronto grew beyond the existing limits of the City of Toronto into the Townships of North York, Etobicoke, East York, York and Scarborough. In 1953, the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto was established, encompassing the city and the surrounding townships into a regional structure for local government and development.<sup>36</sup> The downtown core, once the central urban hub, was dense with industry, business and homes. In contrast, the suburbs comprised farmland and small farm settlements, which attracted developers seeking to build new subdivisions of homes on large lots with low population densities.<sup>37</sup> Suburban home ownership had become an obtainable goal for many Canadians in the post-war era as household incomes grew.<sup>38</sup> By 1964, single-family housing comprised nearly 32.97%

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<sup>35</sup> Teaford, Jon. *The Metropolitan Revolution: The Rise of Post-Urban America*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 7-9.

<sup>36</sup> Sewell, John. *The Shape of the Suburbs: Understanding Toronto's Sprawl*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 6.

<sup>37</sup> Sewell, *The Shape of the Suburbs*, 8.

<sup>38</sup> Oberlander, Peter. *Canada: An Urban Agenda*. (Ottawa: Community Planning Press, 1976), 158-160.

of all land use in the city of Toronto.<sup>39</sup> Suburban growth, in turn, required the development of new infrastructure, including water service, sewers, expressways, streets, and public transportation to connect the downtown to the new developments.

Developments which included the building of arterial roadways, the expansion of the 400 Highway system (Highway 427 in 1972, Highway 401 to 410 to 400 in 1970s), the building of the Don Valley Parkway (1954-1966), and the Gardiner Expressway (1955-1964), all facilitated the flow of automobiles to and from the suburbs.<sup>40</sup> These highways encompassed 2.01% of the total land use in Toronto.<sup>41</sup> While the highways served to facilitate the flow of traffic directly from the suburbs, extended arterial roads were the centres of commercial activity. Because arterial roads operated as through routes rather than destinations, urban planners referred to commercial activity along these routes as highway-commercial.<sup>42</sup> Streets that developed commercial life prior to 1950 were either widened into arterial roads or were destroyed as places of commerce and social interaction in favor of arterial roads.<sup>43</sup> Shopping plazas and shopping malls emerged as a new form of commercial activity from the development of arterial roads.

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<sup>39</sup> L.S. Bourne. "Descriptive Patterns of Urban Land Use: A Summary." In *The Form of Cities in Central Canada: Selected Papers* ed. Bourne, MacKinnon and Simmons. (Toronto: University of Toronto Department of Geography Research Publications, 1973), 48.

<sup>40</sup> It is important to note that the building of these highways can also be attributed to the Italian ethnic economies in Toronto. Italian road-workers and construction workers built major commercial projects in Toronto including the Gardiner Expressway, Malton Airport, the subway, sewer system and hydro-electric plants. Italian workers were also responsible for the building of the homes in many of the subdivisions that emerged in Toronto's suburbs. In the 1960s, membership of Local 183 of the Labourers' International Union was 85% ethnically Italian in Toronto. Toronto's construction industry was a large part of the Italian ethnic economy and featured many of the processes attributable to the ethnic economy of the pizza industry. Italian workers quickly organized labour unions (as an extension of informal Italian social and cultural connections), relied on co-ethnic business connections for subcontracting, material supply, and development, and co-ethnic hiring practices resulted in the training of skilled workers.

Agnoletto, Stefano. *The Italians Who Built Toronto: Italian Workers and Contractors in the City's Housebuilding Industry, 1950-1980*. (Oxford: Peter Lang Publishers, 2014), 228-229.

<sup>41</sup> Bourne, "Descriptive Patterns of Urban Land Use: A Summary," 48.

<sup>42</sup> Sewell, *The Shape of the Suburbs*, 71.

<sup>43</sup> Sewell, *The Shape of the Suburbs*, 71.

The suburban plazas and malls catered to the consumption patterns of suburban social classes, which ensured that shoppers would mix with people like themselves. These spaces were insulated from the social, economic and other hardships of the downtown center, including panhandlers.<sup>44</sup> While numerous local plazas opened across Toronto in the 1950s and 1960s, major suburban shopping centres opened in the 1960s and 1970s including Yorkdale Shopping Centre in North York (1964), Fairview Mall in North York (1970), Sherway Gardens in Etobicoke (1971), and Scarborough Town Centre (1973). The major shopping centres attracted the rental income from established commercial brands, while local plazas attracted smaller businesses, including those of the ethnic economies.

Shopping plazas built in Toronto's suburban developments became sites of middle class consumption and chain restaurants and fast food franchises. Independent pizzerias, including Don Valley Pizza, located at 1090 Don Mills Road (the present-day Cadillac Fairview Shops at Don Mills), Milano's Pizza at 3886 Bloor Street West (a small strip mall plaza), and La Pizza West at 2572 Weston Road (present-day Crossroads Centre) opened in urban strip malls.<sup>45</sup> Many strip mall pizzerias can be connected to the Italian ethnic economy of the 1960s and early 1970s.<sup>46</sup> Former co-ethnic employees who

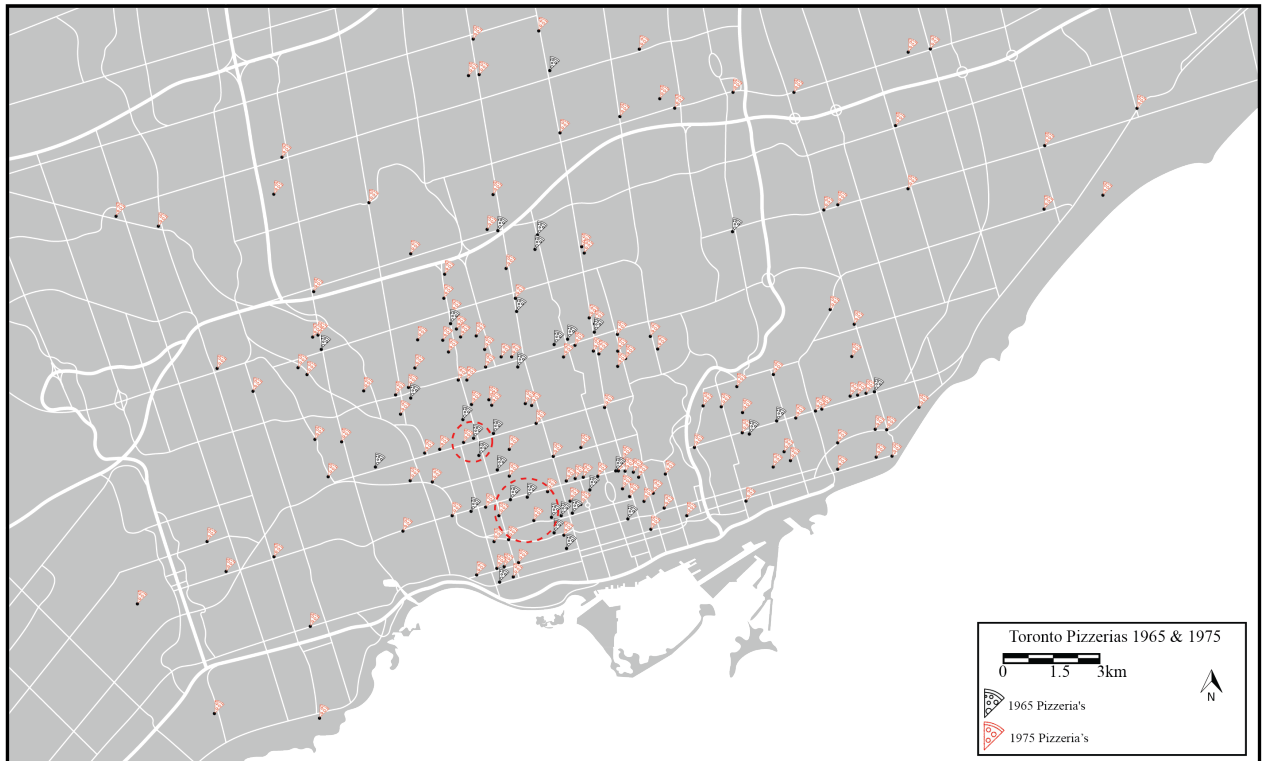
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<sup>44</sup> Teaford, *The Metropolitan Revolution*, 9.

<sup>45</sup> Toronto Pizzeria Map 1965-1966. The address listed for Milano's at 3886 Bloor Street West is actually across the street from their original 1963 location. On April 24, 2003 the strip mall at 3885-3887 Bloor Street West exploded when a natural gas utility company hit a utility line with a backhoe during roadwork construction. The explosion resulted in seven deaths, and the destruction of the building that housed Milano's, a salon, and a dry cleaner and several homes. The explosion was the second-highest loss of life for a single event in Etobicoke, following Hurricane Hazel in 1954. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, "Enbridge fined \$700k for fatal Etobicoke explosion." December 16, 2012.

<sup>46</sup> Many of the pizzerias opened during this period, and still operating between 2018 and 2020, including Milano's, Camerra's, Porretta's, Il Paesano, and chains Pizza Nova and Pizzaville were owned by Italian-Canadians. However, not all pizzerias in the city were. Other immigrant groups including Greek-Canadians and much later, Southeast Asians ethnic economies co-opted pizza restaurant work and pizza restaurant ownership from Italian-Canadians.

gained skills working in pizza restaurants opened these pizzerias to cater to sprawling home developments and middle class incomes. As Toronto changed, the commodification of pizza adapted alongside.



**Figure 4.1: Comparative Map of Toronto’s Pizzerias 1965 and 1975 (Created in ArcGIS, Esri Light Gray Canvas Map, 2020)**

Buffalo also grew in the post-Second World War era, owing to an economic and industrial boom influenced by the migration of African Americans from Southern states, and industries that emerged in the city during the Second World War. The cover of *Fortune* magazine in July 1951 celebrated the industrial diversity of the city, announcing everything was “Made in Buffalo.”<sup>47</sup> Buffalo was the third largest producer of steel, largest inland port, second largest railroad center, and leading city in flour milling in the

<sup>47</sup> “Made in Buffalo.” *Fortune*. July 1951.

United States.<sup>48</sup> The industrial boom in Buffalo led to two major changes in the composition of the city - - the expansion of middle class suburbs, and the ghettoization and urban decline of the downtown neighbourhoods.<sup>49</sup> Developers and bureaucrats at Buffalo City Hall undertook renewal projects throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Italians were forced from their traditional waterfront neighbourhoods in the early 1960s, as homes built in the 1850s and 1860s were cleared by the city, with the goal of redevelopment.<sup>50</sup> Other urban projects, including the building of the highway systems -- the New York State Thruway, the Skyway and the Scajaquada Creek Expressway, all built in the 1950s and 1960s, fractured downtown neighbourhoods.<sup>51</sup> This forced the working class to move to the suburbs, and left people with poverty-level incomes stuck in the ghettoized downtown areas. However, with regard to the pizza industry, the development of an arterial road system, highways, and expressways from the downtown to suburbs and smaller cities like Niagara Falls and Amherst allowed for the expansion of pizzerias outside of the downtown core in the 1960s and 1970s.

Despite the celebration of Buffalo's industry in *Fortune* in 1951 and the expansion of the city, the late 1950s and the 1960s ushered in a series of urban changes with dire economic, social, and cultural consequences. The opening of the St Lawrence Seaway in 1959 minimized Buffalo's role as a transportation and manufacturing hub, as the Erie Canal was a longer and more costly maritime route. The first industry to leave Buffalo in search of cheaper labour and lower transportation costs was the grain industry,

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<sup>48</sup> Goldman, Mark. *City on the Lake: The Challenge of Change in Buffalo, New York*. (Amherst: Prometheus Books, 1990), 167.

<sup>49</sup> Kraus, Neil. *Race, Neighborhoods, and Community Power- Buffalo Politics 1934-1997*. (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000), 7.

<sup>50</sup> Goldman, *City on the Lake*, 28.

<sup>51</sup> Goldman, *City on the Lake*, 31.

which relocated to Kansas City in 1966.<sup>52</sup> The steel and auto industries prospered in Buffalo in the early 1960s because of federal spending related to the Vietnam War, and industry investment tax credits, but by the late 1960s, the automobile industry started to leave Buffalo. Major American companies, including Ford Automotive and Stanley Aviation, moved their plants from Buffalo to Lorraine, Ohio and Denver, Colorado respectively.<sup>53</sup>

As industry left Buffalo, residents left the city in search of employment. Buffalo's population was 462,768 in 1970 and 357,000 in 1980, a decline of twenty-three percent.<sup>54</sup> During this decade, the suburbs of Buffalo drained much of the middle and working class urban populations.<sup>55</sup> The downtown core was predominantly comprised of impoverished recent immigrants and African Americans, contained inadequate housing, vacant lots, crime, and very few businesses.<sup>56</sup>

As white working- and middle-class citizens (including Italians) left downtown Buffalo and moved towards the suburbs, businesses moved as well. President Reagan's economic revival policies, including the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981, reduced federal income tax, governmental regulation of industry, and government spending. These economic policies resulted in business expansions, some urban development, and expanded median family incomes, which meant that consumers had more income to

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<sup>52</sup> Goldman, *City on the Lake*, 170.

<sup>53</sup> Goldman, *City on the Lake*, 173.

<sup>54</sup> US Census, Buffalo, New York 1970 and 1980.

<sup>55</sup> Goldman, *City on the Lake*, 39.

<sup>56</sup> It is of significance that this area, the East Side was revitalized and redeveloped in the late 1980s after decades of controversy and political turmoil. In 1989, the city of Buffalo won an award from the Urban Land Institute for the housing efforts in this neighbourhood. Kraus, *Race, Neighborhoods, and Community Power* 32.

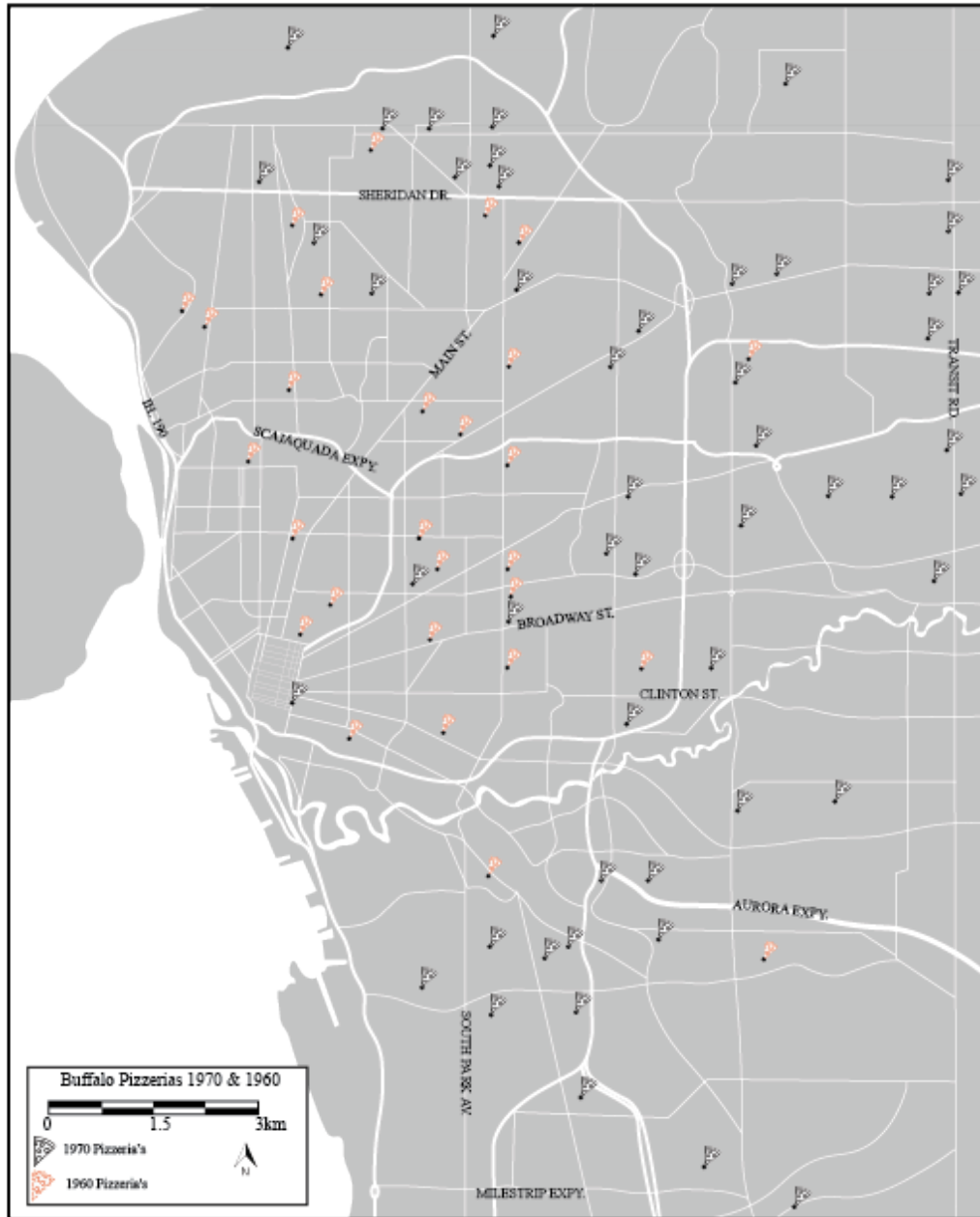
spend on leisure activities.<sup>57</sup> As was the case in Toronto, businesses in the suburbs catered to the consumption patterns of the suburban middle class. Suburban shopping plazas and malls opened in Buffalo, including the Seneca Mall in West Seneca (1969), McKinley Mall in Hamburg (1985), and the Walden Galleria in Cheektowaga (1989). Spaces of middle class leisure and consumerism included restaurants, dance halls, roller rinks, and bowling alleys. For example, New Chicago Lunch, at the corner of Main and Utica Streets, became a centre of youth activity because of its proximity to Delwood Ballroom, Skateland, a bowling alley and a pool hall. This corner, in particular, served as one key gathering place for youth because it was between the inner city and suburbs.<sup>58</sup> This demonstrates how the single-focus metropolis disappeared and was replaced by an amorphous sprawl of population without a single unifying hub or culture.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Broussard, James. *Ronald Reagan: Champion of Conservative America*. (New York: Routledge, 2014), 121-122.

<sup>58</sup>When the Seneca Mall opened as the first mega mall in 1969, it became the centre of youth culture. Grabner, William. *Coming of Age in Buffalo: Youth and Authority in the Postwar Era*. (Temple University Press, 1993), 79.

<sup>59</sup> Teaford, Jon. *The Metropolitan Revolution: The Rise of Post-Urban America*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 7-9.



**Figure 4.2: Comparative Map of Buffalo Pizzerias 1970 and 1960**  
 (Created in ArcGIS, Esri Light Gray Canvas Map, 2020)

As suburbs grew, pizzerias moved from within the Buffalo city limits towards North Tonawanda, Kenmore, West Seneca, Lackawanna, Harris Hill and Lancaster. Pizzerias followed arterial roads, including Niagara Falls Boulevard to the North, Seneca Street to the South and Transit Road to the East. Between 1960 and 1970, very few

pizzerias opened in downtown industrial, residential, and commercial areas of Buffalo. This reflects the impact that suburbanization and the ghettoization of Buffalo's downtown core had on the commodification of pizza in the city.

The decentralization of Toronto and Buffalo led to the expansion of roads and multiple focal sites including shopping malls and plazas. Suburban pizzerias opened in plazas, in attempts to cater to and profit from middle class suburban incomes. The transformation of pizza from a commodity produced by Italians for the co-ethnic market to a commodity and business controlled by Italian ethnic economies with capitalistic intentions was a result of these processes. The proliferation of suburban pizzerias led to efforts of innovation, in order to differentiate pizzerias, attract and maintain customers, and increase profits.

By the 1960s, the female figure of "Mama" became increasingly absent from pizzerias. The commodification of pizza on the streets was a masculine endeavor, especially the delivery driver position. Information from oral interviews, as well as newspaper articles in Toronto and Buffalo (often dealing with crime, with the driver's name listed as the victim), reveal that the delivery driver role was primarily a male occupation. Female figures appeared occasionally in the pizza industry as innovators of new technologies (including Carmela Vitale, inventor of the pizza saver). Women also continued to perform work in family-owned pizzerias as cooks and in front-of-house roles, as contributors to their household ethnic economies.

### III

Technological innovations, which facilitated easier pizza transportation and made consumption outside pizzerias possible, were developed in the broader Great Lakes

Region and adopted in both Toronto and Buffalo. Members of the Italian diaspora made some of these innovations, and the interconnected nature of the Italian ethnic economies led to their being shared. Other technological innovations were created by corporations for their own use but were replicated and used by Italian businesses.

An article in *Canadian Hotel & Restaurant* [CH&R] in 1955 praised the simplicity of packaging take-out food.<sup>60</sup> The article exalted products such as paper bags, waxed paper, cellophane, plastic wrap, and aluminum foil as options for easy packaging. While these types of packaging may have worked for traditional takeout foods including sandwiches, hamburgers, chicken, and ribs, they posed a challenge for hot and heavy foods like pizza. As CH&R reported in 1971, “Most people will eat tepid chicken, but cold pizza is a horse of a different colour.”<sup>61</sup> Pizzeria operators waged a constant battle trying to keep pizza warm for home delivery while maintaining the same structural shape it had when it left the restaurant. Pizzas are larger than finger foods, require space to be set down, and quickly lose their baked temperature, pizza was a difficult food to be eaten in a quick service location, on the streets, or in a vehicle. Thus, pizza consumption had been largely confined to restaurants or at-home delivery. Since customers wanted restaurant quality pizza at home, an innovation was required to improve the customer’s experience.<sup>62</sup>

Italian bakeries contributed the first take-out pizza box, the paperboard bakery box (cake, pastry and doughnut boxes), with pre-glued corners that flattened down for

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<sup>60</sup> “Packaging Take-Out is Simple.” *Canadian Hotel & Restaurant*. September 15, 1955. 27, 57.

<sup>61</sup> “Will Papa Joe do for Pizza What Colonel Sanders did for Chicken?” *Canadian Hotel & Restaurant*. February, 1971. 42.

<sup>62</sup> Other fast food and street foods were prepared for consumer pick up, whereby consumers picked up their food by walking into a restaurant or in a drive-through, and ate on-site or in a vehicle. Fast food were often finger foods, which could be eaten without the aid of cutlery (including plates) or had packaging like newspaper, the fry box or clamshell container, which aided in consumption and maintaining heat.

shipping and could be built quickly. Italian bakeries sold pizza in paperboard boxes to the co-ethnic community and the idea was soon borrowed by the pizza industry. The paperboard bakery boxes, which preceded the modern pizza box, were expensive to produce and did not retain heat. Pizza was also sold on a paper plate and packaged in a paper bag.<sup>63</sup> These packaging options were not sturdy because pizza weakened the bakery box, paper plate and paper bag from the inside with condensation and grease.<sup>64</sup>

There were no disruptive innovations in pizza transportation until 1966 when Tom Monaghan, co-owner of Dominick's Pizza located in Ypsilanti, Michigan (36 miles or 58km from Detroit), created the corrugated cardboard pizza box. Dominick's was an independent pizzeria that was developed into the mass conglomerate, Domino's Pizza.<sup>65</sup> At Dominick's, Monaghan built a reputation for speedy cooking and delivery, and recognized that the pizza box required improvement.<sup>66</sup> His creation, the corrugated cardboard pizza box, had a sturdier structure than bakery boxes and was insulated for pizza delivery.<sup>67</sup> The box had structural integrity that protected it from condensation and grease of a freshly baked pizza and maintained the warmth of the pizza better than bakery

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<sup>63</sup> This is one of the ways that pizza is still sold and packaged by the slice. While this may result in heat loss, the assumption is that a consumer will quickly eat the slice, rather than carry it around. The alternative is the slice-sized box, but this is a costly product for pizzerias.

<sup>64</sup> Wiener, Scott. *Viva La Pizza: The Art of the Pizza Box*. (Brooklyn: Melville House, 2013), 8.

<sup>65</sup> The Monaghan brothers were not Italian. Domino's pizza and other franchises represented a shift in the pizza industry as non-Italians co-opted the popularity of pizza and opened their own pizza businesses, a focus of Chapter 4. Despite not being Italian, Domino's created some important pizza innovations that were used by Italian pizzerias after being mass-produced by Italian foodservice companies. As the role of the pizza ethnic economies changed from being one of the few sources of employment for Italians to being an industry controlled by Italians, outsiders played a prominent role in developing new technologies and as competition.

<sup>66</sup> Innovations in pizza delivery came in the wake of the rise of popularity of other fast food chains including McDonalds, A&W and White Castle (all discussed in Chapter 4). As other fast foods became competition for pizza, pizza businesses recognized the need to find a way to compete. Fast food hamburgers did not lose heat like pizza did, and pizza businesses needed to compete with the fact that other foods could be served hot and quickly to customers. This was a catalyst behind the pizza innovations. Helstosky, *Pizza*, 65.

<sup>67</sup> Weiner, *Viva La Pizza*, 10.

boxes or paper plates in bakery bags. Neither Monaghan nor Domino's pizza emerged from the Italian ethnic economy, yet the corrugated pizza box was widely adopted by large pizza franchises like Domino's, and independent pizzerias alike, because Monaghan did not patent the box design. Italian-owned food service companies, mass produced the box and sold them to independent pizzerias.

The corrugated pizza box offered new marketing potential for pizzerias. Large operators were able to print boxes with a pizzeria name, phone number and logos displayed on the outside, while smaller pizzerias were able to get short-run customized boxes by the 1970s.<sup>68</sup> The design on these original boxes was limited to a single colour and printed as small dots that formed the images and text. Some of the earliest custom pizza boxes in the United States featured generic images of Italian nationalism including an outline of Italy, steaming pizza, a chef, and Italian flags.<sup>69</sup> In addition to custom boxes, food distributors sold generic boxes, which featured pizza imagery that included Italian street scenes, pizza ingredients, or a slice or whole pie with a variety of customer appreciation slogans.<sup>70</sup>

The creation of the pizza box facilitated the transportation of pizzas outside pizzerias and also provided new avenues for the promotion and advertising of pizzerias. Unlike street food, which was prepared and handed directly to the consumer, one of the concerns of the food delivery industry was maintaining the warmth of products during delivery. An article from *CH&R* in 1955 states, "One of the first problems encountered on entering this competitive field...was that of keeping the food warm until it arrived in

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Weiner, *Viva La Pizza*, 22.

<sup>70</sup> Weiner, *Viva La Pizza*, 24.

the customer's living room."<sup>71</sup> These concerns were met with a variety of innovations, including insulated food boxes, and a system where the hot water radiator of a vehicle was connected to a wooden box within the cab.<sup>72</sup> Tonino's Spaghetti House on Queen Street in Toronto used a Fiat car and modified the engine system to allow warm water from the radiator to circulate through an oven on the passenger side of the vehicle, to keep the pizzas warm. This process was noted in the *Toronto Star* in 1967, as local residents complained of the noise from delivery cars always running while sitting idle in front of the restaurant.<sup>73</sup> The modification of a vehicle produced in Italy illuminates a connection to the Italian ethnic economy.<sup>74</sup>

As one pizzeria's innovation involved using a car radiator heating system, other pizzerias looked for further innovations dedicated to keeping pizza warm during delivery. In a patent application, Domino's stated that, "a major problem in the delivery of hot food baked at a store and delivered to a home by store employees lies in the maintaining of the food at an elevated high temperature during delivery."<sup>75</sup> Domino's claimed that during the winter, northern climates caused high levels of environmental heat loss from products in a pizza box.<sup>76</sup> Domino's Pizza found an effective solution to the warm pizza problem that did not require modifying the delivery vehicle: they developed and patented a food delivery bag in 1988. The bag was a thermally insulated rectangle attached to an

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<sup>71</sup> MacLean, James W. "How to profit from a hot box." *Canadian Hotel & Restaurant*. April 15, 1955. 52.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Haggart, Ron. "Help Wanted". *Toronto Star*. December 21, 1967, 7.

<sup>74</sup> The vehicle was either a Fiat 600 or 1300 produced in Italy. The Fiat brand was not popular in North America, but was widely driven in Europe and used as a rally car. The car was most likely imported by an Italian-Canadian and modified by an Italian mechanic. This highlights the interconnected nature of Italian businesses in Toronto.

<sup>75</sup> Harold D. Solomon and Wayne R. Greve (Domino's Pizza Inc). 1988. Food Delivery Hot Bag with Electric Hot Plate. US Patent 4816646A, filed March 21, 1988, and issued March 28, 1989.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

electric power conductor, which maintained 200 degree Fahrenheit temperature throughout the delivery process. The cigarette lighter adaptor in vehicles charged the bag.<sup>77</sup> This innovation was eventually used in all cities with Domino's pizza locations, including Toronto and Buffalo. The pizza bag could be used in any type of delivery vehicle, in contrast to the modified Fiat. This innovation was an example of non-Italian businesses providing solutions that replaced the knowledge and resources of the Italian ethnic economy.

While heat loss was one key issue related to home delivery, there was another problem. As pizzas came out of the oven after cooking, they were stacked in boxes to facilitate delivery, resulting in pizzas often being crushed. This resulted in the toppings of cooked pizzas sticking to the corrugated cardboard pizza box. Pizzas also tended to slide in the box when being handled by the customer or the delivery driver. In order to combat these problems, Carmela Vitale, of Dix Hills, New York, created the Pizza Saver (commonly known as the pizza table or package stool). (Vitale, an Italian-American, was a mother and city councillor and was not directly connected to the food industry.<sup>78</sup>) The Pizza Saver was “[a] temperature resistant moulded plastic device, described for use in boxes or packages such as pizza boxes where there is a tendency for a cover to sag downwardly and therefore damage the soft pizza or other packaged products. To use, the saver is positioned near the center of the package to support the box cover for protecting the contents.”<sup>79</sup> Interestingly, Vitale only held the patent for four years prior to its

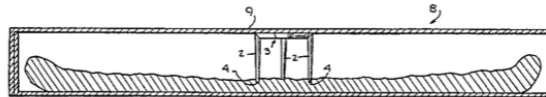
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<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> McKinney, Kelsey. “All Hail The Pizza Saver, the tiny piece of plastic protecting your pie.” *Eater Magazine*. September 27, 2016.

<sup>79</sup> Carmela Vitale. 1983. Package Saver. US Patent 4498586A, filed February 10, 1983, and issued February 12, 1985.

expiration and there is no evidence that she ever owned the machines to produce the saver, nor mass-produced them.<sup>80</sup> The expiration on the patent allowed Italian food service supply businesses to produce the design and sell to pizzerias without paying royalties to the inventor.<sup>81</sup> The pizza saver became widely used in pizzerias in Toronto and Buffalo following its mass production by Italian food service operators.



**Figure 4.3: Schematic of the Package Saver, holding a pizza box from destroying a pizza. From Vitale's US Patent 4498586A.**

The creation of the pizza box and other pizza innovations made the transportation and handling of pizza on the streets easier. These innovations came from members of the Italian ethnic economies and non-Italian pizza businesses, but Italian-owned companies facilitated the purchase and manufacturing of these pizza technologies which were responses to urban economic changes that, in turn, facilitated the commodification of pizza outside pizza restaurants.

The pizza industry responded to urban economic changes and competition from fast-food restaurants by offering delivery. For an additional fee, pizzerias provided consumers with an additional service, the delivery of pizza by a driver on bicycle or car. The process of consumers calling a local pizzeria for a pizza made on demand and then

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<sup>80</sup> McKinney, "All Hail The Pizza Saver."

<sup>81</sup> Not much is known about Vitale and why she created the invention in the first place, or why she let the patent expire. An article in *Boo York City* in 2018 attempted to locate Vitale, but even the lawyer who originally filed the patent did not remember Vitale or the patent. An *Eater Magazine* article from 2016 says that Vitale died in 2005 at the age of 68. However, archived obituaries for the Carmela Vitale who died in 2005 on Long Island do not make mention of the Pizza Saver yet mentioned her city council service. Carmela Vitale remains elusive, as do her motivations for creating the Pizza Saver. However, assumptions that she was somehow connected to the extended Italian ethnic economy can be speculated, based on her name of Italian origins. Nonetheless, she is to be thanked for keeping pizzas free from a crushed cardboard demise.

packaged and dispatched to the consumer was one of the most important changes in the pizza industry. Delivery facilitated the sale of pizza to consumers outside of a particular pizzeria's immediate area of operation.



**Figure 4.4: Early 1970's, a Mini Morris delivery vehicle parked next to Porretta's Pizza (97 Harbord Street, Toronto). The vehicle was bought after the oldest Porretta son, Sal, turned sixteen and got a driver's license. Previously, Porretta's Pizza relied on their four sons to deliver pizza on bicycles, a prime example of the household ethnic economy. Photo: Harbord Village History Project.**

Many independent pizzerias attributable to the ethnic economies in Toronto and Buffalo offered pizza delivery starting in the late 1950s, with one of the oldest advertisements featuring pizza delivery in Toronto being La Pizza on Bathurst Street. In October 1959, La Pizza celebrated that their pizza was available for both take-out and delivery to the area immediately near the pizzeria.<sup>82</sup> Similar advertisements appeared in Buffalo with restaurants like Pizza & Submarines by DiRose advertising their “hot box” technology for deliveries after 4pm and free delivery to the University of Buffalo campus.<sup>83</sup> Delivery was a popular concept in both Toronto and Buffalo by the 1960s. In

<sup>82</sup> “La Pizza” Advertisement. *Toronto Star*. October 14, 1959.

<sup>83</sup> “Pizza & Submarines by DiRose” Advertisement. *The Spectrum*. November 1, 1966. 9.

1962 in Toronto, La Pizza explained that they delivered one thousand pizzas per week.<sup>84</sup> Delivery of pizza within Buffalo increased; in 1969, one page of the University of Buffalo student newspaper, *The Spectrum*, featured three advertisements for pizza delivery.<sup>85</sup> Competing advertisements for Bocce Club Pizzeria, the Clam Casino (a pizzeria and seafood restaurant) and The Chicken Broaster (a chicken restaurant that served pizza), each advertised delivery services. Bocce Club was the only dedicated pizzeria, which advertised itself as being the “Pizza Headquarters of Buffalo located ½ Mile from the University of Buffalo Campus.”<sup>86</sup> Local delivery was emphasized in early advertisements for pizza delivery, as was the case with many local restaurants that were not primarily pizzerias.

Advertisements for pizza delivery touted both convenience and speed. For example, an advertisement in 1965 for Primo Pizza on Brimley Road in Scarborough announced the speediness of their home delivery service.<sup>87</sup> An advertisement for Abbott Pizza & Subs in Lackawanna touted a fifty-nine cent delivery fee and free delivery in a two-mile radius.<sup>88</sup> Regardless of the fee, Abbott Pizza emphasized both quality and speed. Speed of delivery was one of the criteria a *Toronto Star* panel in June 1971 used to rank the top pizzerias in Toronto. The panel ordered pizzas, asked for an estimated time of arrival, and then timed the deliveries to evaluate and rank the pizzerias. The rankings noted, “George’s which constantly advertises its speedy delivery, should be the only late arrival.”<sup>89</sup> The article claimed that quick delivery was an advertising gimmick, with most

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<sup>84</sup> “In and Out Town: La Pizza.” *Toronto Star*. October 9, 1962.

<sup>85</sup> *The Spectrum*, November 7, 1969, Page 16.

<sup>86</sup> *The Spectrum*, November 7, 1969, Page 16.

<sup>87</sup> “Primo Pizza” Advertisement. *Toronto Star*. August 13, 1965.

<sup>88</sup> “Abbott Pizza” Advertisement. *Lackawanna Leader*. April 9, 1981. 7.

<sup>89</sup> “Eating Out: All Pizzas are not Created Equal.” *Toronto Star*. June 5, 1971. A2.

pizzerias delivering ahead of the estimated delivery times.<sup>90</sup> Advertising gimmick or not, speed of delivery was the focus of many pizzeria advertisements and was a factor influencing the pizzeria choice of consumers.

While many independent pizzerias made deliveries as early as the 1950s, the American franchising conglomerate, Domino's Pizza, championed delivery service, making it central to their business in the 1960s.<sup>91</sup> Domino's did not have franchises in Toronto or Buffalo in the 1960s but their delivery methods were adopted by pizzerias in the cities. When Domino's was franchised in 1967, corporate strategy suggested opening franchises in close proximity to university campuses and military bases -- demographics that appreciated the convenience of pizza delivery.<sup>92</sup> Domino's deviated from the pizza cooking technologies used by pizzerias attributable to ethnic economies; they used "ferris-wheel" style rotating ovens to enable the cooking of more pizzas in a faster amount of time, with quicker handling.<sup>93</sup> The franchise's confidence in rapid cooking processes resulted in the marketing gimmick, the delivery guarantee. The guarantee, "thirty minutes or its free" was created in the 1970s.<sup>94</sup> This led to dangerous work conditions for delivery drivers who were pressured to ensure the corporate guarantee was met, or face repercussions, such as loss of salary or termination. A statistic from the American National Safe Workplace Institute in 1989 indicated that Domino's employees had a death rate of fifty per one hundred thousand workers, putting Domino's employees in the same category as workers in dangerous occupations like mining and heavy

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Barrett, *Pizza, A Slice of American History*, 147.

<sup>92</sup> Helstosky, *Pizza*, 88.

<sup>93</sup> Helstosky, *Pizza*, 89.

<sup>94</sup> Helstosky, *Pizza*, 89.

construction.<sup>95</sup> Domino's rapid cooking and delivery processes came from outside the Italian ethnic economies of pizza and challenged the offerings of independent pizzerias, to be discussed in a subsequent chapter.

In Toronto and Buffalo, many Italians were employed in pizza industry jobs. Pizzeria hiring was dependent on the ethnic economy, whereby ethnocultural entrepreneurs hired fellow countrymen, in hopes of elevating the economic mobility of their ethnic community. This also included the household ethnic economy because the family business was an extension of the ethnic family home, and family members worked in the business as a contribution to the household economies. Pizzerias hired workers for two main service roles: kitchen staff and front of house wait staff for the dine-in restaurants. In Buffalo, employment in the service industry was integral to the city's survival. As jobs in manufacturing declined from 44.8% in 1950 to 17.8% in 1990, jobs in the service industry grew exponentially from 10.7% in 1959 to 26.4% in 1990.<sup>96</sup> Employment opportunities within a pizzeria for non-Italians and Italians alike were one of the few sources of employment in Buffalo that grew between 1950 and 1990. The role of the delivery driver introduced a new form of service employment within the pizza industry, and was an opportunity for Italians and non-Italians alike. The delivery driver required skills including navigation, driving, and vehicle ownership to deliver hot pizza to customers in a timely manner and then collecting payment.

For insight regarding the experiences of working in Toronto's pizza delivery industry, Rick McCabe was interviewed in September 2018. He started as a delivery driver at a Pizza Pizza franchise at Victoria Park and Lawrence in Toronto in the early

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<sup>95</sup> Helstosky, *Pizza*, 89.

<sup>96</sup> City of Buffalo. *Consolidated Plan: Volume I, Draft Technical Compendium*. Buffalo: 1995.

1980s. As a teenager with a “new driver’s license”, McCabe worked Friday and Saturday nights from 4pm until 3am delivering pizzas throughout the Scarborough area. When asked about his delivery area, McCabe said, “We went from Victoria Park and Lawrence, south to Don Mills, east on Lawrence to Kennedy, as far as Ellesmere and Highway 401. It was a huge area.”<sup>97</sup> He explained the process of a delivery started with a dispatch from Pizza Pizza’s call center (this was not the norm for most pizzerias, but is explored in Chapter 4) and upon receipt of the order, the pizza was made in the pizza kitchen, then the drivers were handed the pizza box to be inserted into the heated delivery bag, and given a paper stub with the address of delivery. At this stage, the real challenge for delivery drivers commenced, locating the address for delivery. McCabe recounted that on the back wall of the store there was a map of the delivery area. He said, “As a new driver unless you knew side streets, you looked at the map and tried to remember turn by turn where you were going.” McCabe’s father worked for the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) and gave him a TTC address book that listed every street in Toronto, which helped him make deliveries.<sup>98</sup> McCabe said, “It really had its challenges [looking for streets]. Today it is so easy with GPS or your phone with Google Maps. Even though I live in Georgetown, I grew up and worked in Scarborough. I still remember, and if I’m ever in that area, I remember everything.”<sup>99</sup> This illustrates how one of the greatest challenges for delivery drivers was locating addresses.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Rick McCabe, interviewed by author, Toronto, September 2018.

<sup>98</sup> McCabe also worked for the TTC as a Bus Operator and continued to deliver pizzas on the side. He worked for both Dominos through the 1990s, and Pizzaville to the present day (2019).

<sup>99</sup> Rick McCabe, interviewed by author, Toronto, September 2018.

<sup>100</sup> Pizza delivery drivers did not face this challenge alone. Other professions including taxi drivers, home delivery services, and food trucks also had challenges locating addresses. Perly’s (founded in 1949 in Toronto) produced street atlases with maps, charts and descriptions of many addresses in Toronto. American company, Rand McNally (founded in 1856 in Chicago) made similar street atlases on a larger scale for many American cities. These street atlases were similar to the TTC atlas mentioned by Rick

McCabe said that drivers were compensated with a “minimum wage hourly rate plus tips.” Drivers used their own car, paid for their own gasoline, maintenance and insurance. In McCabe’s case, he received no gasoline or vehicle allowance from his employer but got large discounts on the price of pizza. McCabe spoke about this benefit, saying, “At Pizza Pizza if you wanted a pizza, and didn’t want it in a box, it was free. We would use the cardboard boxes that pop came in, cut off the plastic and use that for our pizza. You would make your own pizza when your shift was over and take it home on the cardboard pop box.”<sup>101</sup> While no benefits were provided for driving your own vehicle, to a teenager like McCabe, the pizza benefits made the job worth it.

Delivery drivers like McCabe worked in a semi-skilled position with long hours. In this service role, they were the “face” of the pizzeria, dealing directly with the customer. The service provided by the driver, and their ability to mitigate conflicts correlated to the customer tips they received to supplement their hourly wages. McCabe reflected on the tip earnings, “You make some friendships with regular customers, and those who tip well. Then you have customers who don’t tip, and I always grumble about, how can you provide them a service and they don’t tip you.”<sup>102</sup> When prompted about where he got some of his best tips, McCabe stated, “One of our best delivery areas was the Bridle Path (a high income, affluent neighbourhood in Toronto’s East End) for big tips. But the best tips were at hotels, especially Inn on the Park at Leslie and Lawrence.”<sup>103</sup> McCabe worked at Pizza Pizza during the “thirty minutes or it’s free”

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McCabe. In 2004, the Toronto based Perly’s became a subsidiary of Rand McNally with the goal of expanding the brand to a national Canadian market.

Partridge, John. “Perly’s Maps hits end of the road.” *Globe and Mail*. November 19, 2004.

<sup>101</sup> Rick McCabe, interviewed by author, Toronto, September 2018.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

delivery policy. He explained that customers would often dispute delivery time under this policy, “There were times when you would get to somebody’s house and they say its ‘30 minutes or it’s free, but it’s been 35. [McCabe would explain the situation] say I got stuck at a light... it goes over the time limit.”<sup>104</sup> The fault in these scenarios was placed on the storeowner who had to pay for the expense of the pizza. Problems that included traffic congestion, heavy lake effect snow, and frigid winter temperatures contributed to delivery challenges. Snow would delay the delivery arrival time, and frigid temperatures could affect the overall warmth of a pizza, despite the use of a delivery bag. As McCabe reflected, “I don’t remember giving too many pizzas away at Pizza Pizza, at Dominos [in the 1990s] it was very rare, at Pizzaville [2000s- Present], the amount of free pizza we give out to customers was ridiculous.”<sup>105</sup> Aside from free pizza resulting from slow deliveries, McCabe reflected on free pizzas give as a result of driver mishaps like having a pizza fall off a car seat, or flip in the box, “I walked outside, slipped, dropped the box and immediately turned around to have a new pizza made, I knew it was done for.”<sup>106</sup> Financial disputes would occur when customers didn’t have enough cash to pay the driver (in an era before credit and debit cards). McCabe would have to, “Make the decision as the driver; do I leave the food and go back later to collect [money]?”<sup>107</sup> McCabe’s experiences underline the fact that delivery drivers were often front line customer service representatives presented with difficult decisions related to financial transactions, delivering pizza on time and collecting payment.

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<sup>104</sup> Rick McCabe, interviewed by author, Toronto, September 2018.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid. An article in the *Toronto Star* on December 2, 1961 joked that a sliding pizza cost \$445. A pizza slid off a passenger seat in a delivery car, as the driver tried to save the pizza, he rear-ended another car, costing \$445 in damages. This demonstrates the cost of human error in the transportation of pizza, similar to stories told by Rick McCabe.

<sup>107</sup> Rick McCabe, interviewed by author, Toronto, September 2018.

As Rick McCabe said, “I keep coming back [to pizza delivery driving] because nothing too crazy has happened to me.”<sup>108</sup> Although McCabe eventually delivered pizza only to supplement his income, his experiences demonstrate many of the challenges faced by delivery drivers. Despite minimum wage hourly rates, vehicle ownership, and the challenges associated with being the “face” of a pizza chain or an independent pizzeria, the creation of the position and expanding roles in the pizza industry allowed non-Italians like McCabe to gain employment in the industry. The delivery driver role was once part of the household ethnic economy, but as demand for pizza delivery increased, pizzerias were forced to hire skilled drivers who owned their own cars.<sup>109</sup>

The employment of delivery drivers created a series of new problems for pizzerias.<sup>110</sup> Incidents of robbery and assault targeted delivery drivers who worked alone at night and carried large sums of cash. In Toronto in 1968, local newspapers reported many instances of crime against pizza delivery drivers. In May 1968, Bartolomeo Iaconis, a twenty-six year old delivery driver for Lido’s Spaghetti House on Yonge Street, was shot twice with pellet guns while delivering pizzas in the Bloor and Bathurst area. Four men in nylon stocking masks stole Iaconis’ pizza order, and \$119 in cash.<sup>111</sup> In October 1968, Toronto Police celebrated the capture of the “pizza pirates,” a gang of

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Pizzerias attributed to the Italian ethnic economies, Porretta’s and Vesuvio pizza, relied on family members to work as delivery drivers on bikes or by car. Oral history interviews with Mario Porretta and photographs of Porretta’s and Vesuvio from the 1960s featured branded Mini cars used for delivery.

<sup>110</sup> This chapter examines crime against the pizza industry. I would also like to acknowledge that crime occurs within the pizza industry. Cases like the “Pizza Connection Trial,” (United States v. Badalamenti et al. 1987) reveal how some pizzerias acted as a business front to move illegal drugs and legitimize income for organized crime syndicates including the mafia, motorcycle, and street gangs. The use of pizzerias for the activities of organized crime in Toronto and Buffalo are not limited to the confines of history, and have been reported on by the *Toronto Star*, *Globe & Mail*, and *Buffalo News* as recently as February 2021. This dissertation does not explore the relationship between organized crime and pizza in order to avoid making potentially libelous comments against individuals and businesses that are still in operation.

<sup>111</sup> “Delivery Man Shot in 2<sup>nd</sup> Pizza Robbery.” *Toronto Star*. May 29, 1968. 29.

twelve-year old boys in the Flemington Park area of Don Mills, who preyed upon delivery vans parked in front of high-rise apartment buildings. As the driver entered the building, the boys, “stole pizzas with military precision.”<sup>112</sup> A similar incident took place in November 1968 as pizza delivery driver Gino Aternino sought directions to the Hilliard Girls’ residence on the Glendon Campus of York University. The driver knocked on the door of a men’s dormitory and the man who answered attempted to purchase the pizza, but Aternino refused to sell it. This resulted in the assault of the driver.<sup>113</sup> Each of these crimes against pizza delivery drivers varied in severity from petty theft to bodily harm, but taken together they demonstrated a new trend of crime aimed specifically at pizza delivery drivers.<sup>114</sup>

Crimes against delivery drivers in Toronto were not isolated to 1968. The severity of crimes increased over the next decades and continued to be reported in Toronto newspapers. Some of the notable incidents included an October 1969 stabbing and robbery of a delivery driver, theft of an idling delivery car and subsequent crash as the driver violently recovered his car from the perpetrator in December 1970, a January 1975 assault and subsequent hospitalization of a driver who delivered a cold pizza, and a series of robberies by gunpoint throughout the decade.<sup>115</sup> Violent crimes against delivery drivers usually occurred at night in an attempt to steal the delivery vehicle, money and

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<sup>112</sup> “Police Pounce on 3 Precise Pizza Pirates.” *Toronto Star*. October 12, 1968. 75.

<sup>113</sup> “Pizza Man Beaten Up.” *Toronto Star*. November 1, 1968. C57.

<sup>114</sup> These instances of crime also demonstrate the significance of Italian ethnic economies on the Toronto pizza industry as each driver had an ethnically Italian name, and some follow-up articles talked about the Italian community rallying around the victim.

<sup>115</sup> *Toronto Star* and *Globe and Mail* articles. Again, the ethnic economy was essential to the commodification of pizza on the streets, as many of the victims had ethnically Italian names. It can be assumed that their employment in pizzerias was attributed to the co-ethnic hiring practices of ethnic economy businesses. The instances of bodily harm and hospitalization mentioned the mobilization of the Italian community through donation collections for the victim.

pizza. However, there was also the potential for Toronto delivery drivers themselves to commit crimes as the position was dedicated to nighttime work with little oversight.<sup>116</sup> In October 1979, Toronto Police arrested a prostitution ring led by delivery drivers. When a customer called and ordered the, “\$50 Pizza Special” a delivery driver would deliver a prostitute and a pizza.<sup>117</sup> An oral history interview claimed that Pizza Gigi in the Harbord Village was a front for drug trade, and was, “a real eyesore for the community.”<sup>118</sup>

Crimes against pizza delivery drivers and pizzerias were not isolated to Toronto, as Buffalo newspapers reported instances of pizza crime as well. In one event on May 24, 1975, a sixteen-year-old employee at Di Rose Pizzeria on Kenmore Ave in Tonawanda was held at gunpoint and robbed of \$78.<sup>119</sup> As in Toronto, threats of violence against pizzeria employees were used to rob the pizzerias of relatively small amounts of money. However, in Buffalo, pizza was also used as a ransom payment, as one case at Canisius College in 1974 revealed: a male dormitory student awoke to find his jacket stolen and a message telling him to leave a large pizza in a lobby on campus to secure its return.<sup>120</sup> The prosperity of the pizza industry attracted criminals who preyed upon the money to be made and food to be taken. Unlike Toronto, with many mentions of pizza-related crime

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<sup>116</sup> While pizza delivery drivers were often the target and occasionally the culprits of crime, a *Toronto Star* article from 1983 suggested that delivery drivers could also be used as preventers of crime. In November 1983, Montreal City spokesman Sid Stevens suggested that Montreal should enlist pizza delivery drivers as the “eyes and ears” of police while making deliveries. A program existed in Ann Arbor, Michigan that Montreal hoped to replicate. In 2020, electronic communications with the Section Des Communications of the Service de police de la Ville de Montreal (SPVM), they were unable to confirm if a formal program existed. Similar emails were sent to the Toronto Police Service and the Buffalo Police Department, who were also unable to confirm if a formal program existed in their cities and refused to comment on investigative techniques.

<sup>117</sup> “Pizza Place Sex Ring.” *Toronto Star*. October 3, 1979.

<sup>118</sup> Betty Pratt and Arthur Zimmerman interviewed by Harbord Village Oral History Project, 2013.

<sup>119</sup> “Pizzeria Robbed of \$75.” *North Tonawanda News*. May 24, 1975. Fulton History Archive. The name of the victim in this instance of crime was ethnically Italian, demonstrating the significance of the Italian ethnic economy in Buffalo’s pizzerias in the 1970s.

<sup>120</sup> “Crimes Plague the Campus.” *The Griffin*. February 15, 1974. 2.

in the popular press, the press of Buffalo reported limited instances of petty crime against the pizza industry. This might be attributable to the dwindling population of the city between 1970 and 1990.<sup>121</sup>

Innovations altered the methods in which pizza was delivered, and the package in which pizza was delivered but some of the most striking innovations of the 1960s and 1970s included modifications of the pizza itself. Pizzerias modified recipes and introduced side dishes to differentiate their offerings from local competitors. Italian pizzeria owners used traditional cooking knowledge and Italian cultural foodways to develop unique products, which appealed to a wider range of non-Italian tastes. Non-Italian consumers prompted a change in the pizza product as pizza production shifted from production for co-ethnic consumers to non-Italians. Pizza innovations including the Pizza Rolla, the Minitreet, and the white pizza originated from Italian culinary foodways and were produced in pizzerias attributable to Italian ethnic economies.

Joe Maiola, owner of Little Caesar's pizzeria in Toronto, created the Minitreet, a hollow disc five inches in diameter made of pizza dough (like a calzone or panzerotti), and the Pizza Rola, a ten-inch dough cylinder that wrapped up pizza toppings (like a stromboli).<sup>122</sup> Maiola was an Italian-Canadian and borrowed the concept of the Minitreet

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<sup>121</sup> As reported in local newspapers in Toronto vs. Buffalo. Crime statistics for both cities between 1970 and 1990 suggest that Toronto was the more crime-ridden city. However, these statistics lack pizza crime as a category.

<sup>122</sup> Maiola owned a pizzeria called Little Caesar's, not to be confused with the pizza franchise from Detroit. An additional distinction needs to be made between the calzone, panzerotti and stromboli. A calzone is from Italy and is a folded baked pizza made with salted bread dough and stuffed with ingredients. The panzerotti was smaller in size, originating from Central and Southern Italy. A panzerotti is a fried turnover, rather than oven-baked folded pizza, sold as quick snacks or lunches at lunch counters and by street vendors in Italy. The stromboli is an Italian-American creation dating to 1950 in Essington, Pennsylvania (just outside Philadelphia) where the owners of Romano's Italian Restaurant rolled cheeses and cold cuts into pizza dough and baked it. The Stromboli is a close relative to the calzone and panzerotti, attributed to the modification of Italian foodways by Italian-American ethnic economies. "Will Papa Joe do for Pizza What Colonel Sanders did for Chicken?" *Canadian Hotel & Restaurant*. February, 1971. 44.

from Italian culinary traditions and the Pizza Rola from Italian-American culinary modifications. He explained to *CH&R* in 1971 that the purpose behind these innovations was, “a whole new way of merchandizing pizza,” to entice the tastes and consumption habits of non-Italians.<sup>123</sup> The coverage of these innovations in the trade publication gives the impression that pizza innovations had a wide appeal to the restaurant industry.

*CH&R* claimed that the Minitreet had some major benefits for the restaurant industry including minimal spillage of contents for portability, an edible package for fairs and exhibitions that did not require additional packaging. It also met food requirements for restaurant owners dealing with liquor requirements, and the suggested retail price (fifty cents) constituted a strong price point for the consumer and restaurant operator alike.<sup>124</sup> As a portable snack that could be served in a variety of locations, the Minitreet met the lifestyle and demands of Torontonians. However, to produce the Minitreet, restaurants needed to purchase a specially modified Bardeau Toastreat machine. The requirement of a new restaurant tool limited the mass commodification of the product.

The Pizza Rola was served as either a single meal or divided into bite-sized pieces for a group. It used the same amount of dough and toppings as a standard eleven-inch pizza, and baked in an Old Hickory Quartz Rod oven, the same used by the Christies commercial bakeries, at 400 degrees Fahrenheit.<sup>125</sup> Once baked, Maiola froze the product, to be sold as a convenience item to Toronto restaurants. As was the case with the Minitreet, Maiola approached oven companies to produce smaller countertop versions of the Old Hickory oven to facilitate an expansion of the product to other pizzerias across

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> “Will Papa Joe do for Pizza What Colonel Sanders did for Chicken?” *Canadian Hotel & Restaurant*. February, 1971. 45.

Canada and the United States.<sup>126</sup> Maiola sought to create a franchising agreement to lease equipment and recipes to pizzerias, despite the fact that the Rolla was just a concept co-opted from Italian culinary traditions.

*CH&R* suggested that Maiola was, “trying too hard to be the Little Caesar of the pizza business overnight.”<sup>127</sup> They explained that Maiola’s business model was flawed as he tried to retain too much control over the large-scale distribution of his product beyond the machines. *CH&R* further commented that, “product franchising is very chancy endeavor because franchisees realize they can make the products themselves without renting or leasing any special equipment from foodservice czars.”<sup>128</sup> Despite positive reviews of Maiola’s pizza innovations, and praise for the marketability of these products, *CH&R*’s criticism effectively ruined the future of the Pizza Rola and Minitreet, “he needs the wisdom to understand that this skill [creating a new innovative food based on the popularity of pizza] has no bearing on ultimate success.”<sup>129</sup>

While the Pizza Rola and Minitreet might be considered failures in pizza innovation because they were not commoditized outside the region, other creations attributable to ethnic economies like the Hawaiian pizza and white pie pizza emerged as mass commodities. These styles of pizza reflect innovation and the improvisation of ingredients and blending of culinary traditions to meet the demands of urban consumers. The significance of regionalism and connections owing to ethnic economies made the expansion of these innovations possible. The regional connection between Canada and

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<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

<sup>127</sup> “Will Papa Joe do for Pizza What Colonel Sanders did for Chicken?”, 47.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

the United States on the Great Lakes encouraged a process of culinary exchange, modification of taste, and innovation of new pizza styles to appeal to a wider market.

The Hawaiian Pizza, or the concept of pineapple on pizza, originated in the town of Chatham, Ontario, three hours west of Toronto, (sandwiched between Lake Erie to the South and Lake Huron to the North). Sam Panopoulos, owner of the Satellite Restaurant, has been credited as the creator of the Hawaiian Pizza. The restaurant was owned by his Greek-Canadian family and primarily sold American dishes like burgers, hot dogs and fries, as well as some Greek dishes.<sup>130</sup> Inspired by visits to nearby Detroit, Michigan, where he sampled Chinese food and pizza, both cuisines were added to the menu in 1960.<sup>131</sup> Panopoulos co-opted the cooking styles of Italian and Chinese cuisine to offer a range of popular cuisines in his small town. One day in 1962 he considered the use of tropical fruits, like pineapple in Chinese-Canadian dishes as sweet and sour pork, and experimented with pineapple in other dishes, including pizza. As food historian Donna Gabaccia claimed, Americans and Canadians, “experiment with their food, to combine and mix the foods of many cultural traditions into blended gumbos or stews.”<sup>132</sup>

Panopolus’ combination of Italian cuisine with Chinese-Canadian ingredients

demonstrates this process of food experimentation. This creation quickly became a

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<sup>130</sup> Satellite Restaurant demonstrates how restaurants were also an essential part of Greek-Canadian ethnic economies. Panopoulos co-opted both Chinese food and pizza from Italian restaurants in Detroit, and served them in his restaurant. In Chatham, Greek-Canadians controlled the restaurant industry, and did not have a large population of consumers. This left no space for Italians to own a pizzeria, so Italian culinary styles were adapted by other ethnic economies who profited from the popularity of the cuisine. Figures such as Panopoulos contributed to the commodification of pizza in Canada and the United States by creating new styles of pizza. This is an example of the Pizza Effect whereby a cultural product is taken from its original producers, reinterpreted and returned to the original creators. Greek-Canadian contributions to their ethnic economies also shaped the ethnic economies of Italians in Canadian and American urban centres.

<sup>131</sup> Scoble, Devin. “The History of Hawaiian Pizza.” *Great Canadian Cookbook*. April 5, 2016.

<sup>132</sup> Gabaccia, Donna. *We Are What We Eat: Ethnic Food and the Making of Americans*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), 2.

favourite with his customers, and came to be known as the Hawaiian Pizza, in homage to Hawaii, the source of many pineapples consumed in North America.<sup>133</sup> Other toppings added to the Hawaiian Pizza included ham, bacon and other pork products.

The production of Hawaiian pizzas in Toronto and Buffalo pizzerias and the advertisements for frozen Hawaiian pizza in local newspapers highlights how this style of pizza spread throughout the Great Lakes region. “Big” Joe Todaro, owner of La Nova Pizza in Buffalo, explained that their proximity to the Canadian border and Canadian clientele contributed to the addition of the Hawaiian pizza to their menu. However, La Nova modified the Hawaiian pizza to include maraschino cherries and almonds alongside ham and pineapple.<sup>134</sup> In Toronto, an advertisement for McCain Frozen Hawaiian Pizza used Hawaiian themes to promote their pizza, “Say Aloha to a new delicious combination from paradise.”<sup>135</sup> The McCain advertisement displayed a pizza with pineapple, ham, and green peppers, emphasizing the pineapple, throughout the advertisement by displaying images of full pineapples. Similar advertisements appeared for the chain, Pizza Hut, in 1990, advertising a sale on Hawaiian pizzas topped with pineapple, ham and extra cheese. Pizza Hut’s campaign offered the chance to win a vacation to Hawaii for every Hawaiian Pizza purchased in the month of February.<sup>136</sup> A notice in the *Island Dispatch* in 1990 featured the menu for local public school lunches that included Hawaiian pizza made by local pizzeria, St. Angelo’s Grand Island Pizza.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Scoble, “The History of Hawaiian Pizza.”

<sup>134</sup> Bovino, Arthur. *Buffalo Everything: A Guide to eating in the Nickel City*. (New York: WW Norton, 2018), 127.

<sup>135</sup> “McCain Hawaiian Pizza” Advertisement. *Toronto Star*. September 26, 1984.

<sup>136</sup> “Pizza Hut: Hawaiian Pizza” Advertisement. *Toronto Star*. February 17, 1990.

<sup>137</sup> “Grand Island School Menu.” *Island Dispatch*. September 28, 1990.

The white pizza, white pie, or pizza bianca originated in Rome but became a popular pizza style in Buffalo. The pizza has no tomato sauce but has a ricotta cheese base topped with other white cheeses, including mozzarella and provolone and a few toppings.<sup>138</sup> The pizza style was made in New York City by Italian immigrants and sold in pizzerias alongside other Italian styles including the Sicilian slice, and the standard Margherita slice.<sup>139</sup> The white pizza first arrived in Buffalo in 1971 at La Nova pizzeria.<sup>140</sup> An interview with “Big” Joe Todaro, owner of La Nova, explained, “In the old days, my grandmother made white pizza completely differently...my father started with a white pizza, and one day while fooling around, I added tomatoes.”<sup>141</sup> Todaro’s story demonstrates participation in the household ethnic economy. At La Nova, the white pizza is served with grated cheese, tomatoes, garlic, onion, herbs and anchovies.<sup>142</sup> Other Italian-owned Buffalo pizzerias including Bocce Club, La Hacienda, Carbone’s and Lovejoy Pizza all featured white pizza on their menus.<sup>143</sup>

The connections among the cities of New York State facilitated the expansion of the white pizza style in the state. Despite similar connections to Italian culinary tradition and foodways amongst pizzeria owners and proximity to Buffalo, the white pizza was not popularized in Toronto. This can be explained by different taste preferences between

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<sup>138</sup> Barrett, *Pizza, A Slice of American History*, 78.

<sup>139</sup> The Sicilian style pizza or *sfincione* was a style of pizza popular in Sicily that used a thick focaccia crust, thick tomato sauce and topped with toppings and cheese. Italian immigrants in the United States sold it by rectangular slices. In Italian communities in New York and the North Eastern United States it is called Grandma or Nona pizza as homage to Italian grandmothers who produced the pizza in their homes. The name of the slice demonstrates the centrality of home ethnic economies. This slice was not overtly popular in Toronto and Buffalo’s pizzerias, but was sold in Italian bakeries for the co-ethnic consumer.

<sup>140</sup> “History” La Nova Pizzeria. <https://lanova-pizza.com> (Accessed June 6, 2019)

<sup>141</sup> Bovino, *Buffalo Everything*, 126.

<sup>142</sup> Bovino, *Buffalo Everything*, 123.

<sup>143</sup> Based on examinations of modern menus online, and menus in the collection of the Buffalo History Museum and Buffalo and Erie County Public Library Archives.

Canada and the United States, with Torontonians preferring a thicker tomato sauce pizza. The lack of tomato sauce on a white pie could explain the absence of this style of pizza in Canada. The white pizza was eventually commoditized in Toronto in the late 1980s as part of the California pizza craze as a way to showcase premium toppings, including buffalo mozzarella, Prosciutto di Parma and truffles.<sup>144</sup>

Another product created by the Italian ethnic economy and popularized as a complementary product to pizza in pizzerias were Italian soft drinks. Carbonated drinks in North America, including Coca Cola and Pepsi, were widely available in many pizzerias and fast food restaurants by the 1950s. Italian migrants in Canada and the United States produced Italian-style soft drinks. One of these soft drinks was the chinotto soda, a soda flavoured with the juice of myrtle-leaved oranges, with a dark colour, similar to that of cola. Chinotto was invented in Italy in the 1930s with San Pellegrino and Neri brands claiming to be the first producers. To Italians, chinotto was a patriotic alternative to drinking American brands like Coca Cola and Pepsi.<sup>145</sup>

Three Italian-Canadian entrepreneurs, Elio Madonia, Giuseppe Panacci and Angelo Perrello identified a demand for a chinotto soda amongst the Italian diaspora in Toronto and created Brio in 1956.<sup>146</sup> In addition to Brio, they also created, Mio, a line of flavoured gassosas (carbonated water with flavouring). Brio and Mio were created for the ethnic economy and sold directly to co-ethnic consumers, with no marketing; sales grew by word of mouth on the streets. The soda was sold in twenty-eight ounce

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<sup>144</sup> The California pizza craze of the late 1980s is discussed in Chapter 5.

<sup>145</sup> In Canada, chinotto became a symbol representing Italian banal nationalism amongst the Italian diaspora.

Zahuranec, Diane. "The cult of Chinotto, Italy's national soda." *The Grand Wine Tour*. June 4, 2016.

<sup>146</sup> Email Correspondence with Alice Chan, Director of National Dry Company Limited (Parent Company of Brio). November 21 and 22, 2018.

returnable bottles by delivery truck that roamed Italian neighbourhoods. As was the case with other street food vendors, customers would approach the truck to place their order on the spot.<sup>147</sup> The streets were essential to the commodification of Brio and Mio prior to their introduction to non-ethnic consumers in pizzerias.<sup>148</sup>

While the Brio products were initially sold as a consumer product on the streets, their connection to the pizza industry can be rooted in the interconnected nature of Italian businesses. The Italian-Canadian owned, Saputo Cheese Company, distributed Brio to pizzerias alongside the delivery of cheese and other pizza products.<sup>149</sup> This resulted in the sale of Brio alongside pizza products. In pizzerias, non-Italians were exposed to chinotto and found it to be a refreshing and tasty accompaniment to pizza.

Much like branded hot dog carts, Brio's advertisements for pizzerias featured the exclusive sale of the product. However, much of Brio's advertising focused on emphasising the Italian origins of the soda and featured symbols of symbolic Italian nationalism. The consumption of chinotto was an ethnic foodway for Italians, but for non-Italians was part of an authentic ethnic food experience. The colour scheme of the product used the same white, green and red of the Italian tri-color flag. One undated advertisement reads, "From the people who brought you the Ferrari, the Lamborghini, and the Gina Lollobrigida."<sup>150</sup> The advertising images of the tri-colours, the Ferrari and Lamborghini automotive brand names, and the name of actress, Gina Lollobrigida,

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<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> In the late 1970s, Brio and Mio grew their consumer distribution away from truck-based delivery to supermarkets stocking their product. Initially Brio and Mio were available in IGA, Miracle Mart and Food City grocery stores in Toronto and surrounding areas; and subsequently in early 1980s expanded to Loblaws and Price Choppers.

<sup>149</sup> Email Correspondence with Alice Chan, Director of National Dry Company Limited (Parent Company of Brio). November 21 and 22, 2018.

<sup>150</sup> Photograph of a Brio Advertisement and Brio Bottles, undated, courtesy of Alice Chan, National Dry Company, 2018.

convey Italy through symbolic nationalism. Herbert Gans noted that consumer goods, most notably food, are a source of ethnic symbols.<sup>151</sup> Brio is an example of symbolic nationalism, whereby a particular symbol is used for an immigrant group to express their connection to a shared identity.<sup>152</sup> While Brio communicated a shared sense of national belonging to Italians in Toronto, to non-Italians, the consumption of Brio and the message associated with its marketing presented the opportunity to consume authentic Italian cuisine. Brio soda is only available in Canada and continues to be served alongside big name soda giants, Coca Cola and Pepsi.



**Figure 4.5: Brio Advertisement and Bottles. Courtesy of Alice Chan, Director of National Dry Company Limited, November 2018.**

Much like the centrality of Brio soda to a study of pizza in Canada, the chicken wing is an innovation central to any study of pizza, and especially a history of Buffalo, New York. The creation of the Buffalo style wing grew out of the Italian ethnic economy,

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<sup>151</sup> Gans, Herbert. "Symbolic Ethnicity: The Future of Ethnic Groups and Cultures in America." *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, January 1979, 1-20, 1.

<sup>152</sup> Gans, "Symbolic Ethnicity," 10.

and became an accompaniment to pizza in the United States and Canada.<sup>153</sup> The wing was created at the now-famous Frank and Theresa's Anchor Bar, located at 1047 Main Street (the intersection of Main and North Street), just north of Downtown Buffalo. Frank Bellissimo emigrated from Italy in 1900 at the age of four, and settled in Buffalo's Italian West Side. He met Teresa in 1920, and by 1935 they worked together, as part of the household ethnic economy, in his Uncle Steve's bar and restaurant, the predecessor to the Anchor Bar.<sup>154</sup> The original bar was located on Canal Street and catered to the co-ethnic Italian consumer market of sailors, seamen, and longshoremen who worked along the nearby Erie Canal. Following the Second World War, Frank and Teresa pooled their money and restaurant experience to open Frank and Teresa's Anchor Bar.<sup>155</sup> The Anchor Bar became part of their household ethnic economy and was staffed by their extended family including Uncle Steve and their son, Domenico (Domenic). The bar built a reputation in Buffalo for providing entertainment and Italian food as many top singers and comedians performed at the bar.<sup>156</sup>

Anchor Bar corporate history claims that the Buffalo style of wing was created on March 4<sup>th</sup>, 1964.<sup>157</sup> However, there are two different stories about Anchor Bar's creation of the wing. The story advertised by the Anchor Bar (officially), is that Domenic was bartending, when a group of his friends arrived at the bar. He asked his mother to

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<sup>153</sup> The Buffalo style wing is known in Buffalo simply as "wings" but "Buffalo-style" or "Buffalo Wings" in Toronto and many other Canadian and American cities.

<sup>154</sup> Angelo, Ann M. "Frank and Teresa's Anchor Bar". November 10, 1991. The Buffalo History Museum Archives, 1.

<sup>155</sup> Angelo, "Frank and Teresa's Anchor Bar," 2.

<sup>156</sup> Angelo, "Frank and Teresa's Anchor Bar," 2.

<sup>157</sup> "The Real Story". The Anchor Bar. [www.anchorbar.com/history](http://www.anchorbar.com/history) (Accessed April 30, 2019)

prepare something off-menu for his friends to eat.<sup>158</sup> Teresa used a pile of chicken wings, normally thrown away from chicken carcasses or used to produce chicken stock for soup, deep-fried the wings and tossed them in a mixture of Frank's Red Hot Sauce and butter.<sup>159</sup> Domenic recounted a slightly different story for *New Yorker* magazine in 1980. He claimed it was a Friday night and he asked his mother to make something special for the bar's regular customers at midnight to break the fish and vegetable fast observed by Roman Catholics on Fridays. Domenic recounted that a misplaced-delivery of wings instead of chicken necks were deep-fried and sauced for the customers. Each wing was chopped in half and made into a drumette and a wing. The wings were served with celery from the antipasto menu, and the house salad dressing, blue cheese.<sup>160</sup> Both stories attribute the creation of these wings to the household ethnic economy and the creation of a special dish out of hospitality for co-ethnic community members.

However, the Buffalo style chicken wing may have originated with John Young, an African-American, and proprietor of John Young's Wings 'n Things in Buffalo in the 1960s. He served full wings, breaded with a mumbo sauce.<sup>161</sup> *The New Yorker* confirmed with a poultry supplier that both the Bellissimo's and Young purchased a lot of wings in bulk in the 1960s. However, it wasn't clear who started buying them first.

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<sup>158</sup> This act may potentially be an experience of the household ethnic economy, whereby the family business acted as an extension of their home. March 1964 fell in the observance of Lent in the Catholic Church. Catholics observed fasts and avoided meat consumption on Friday's (or for the entire length) during Lent. By asking his mother to produce a special an off-menu item for friends suggests that this dish was of hospitality during Lent and not for commercial production. This demonstrates the blurred distinctions between ethnic owned business and ethnic household owing to the ethnic economies.

<sup>159</sup> Frank's Red Hot Sauce is a cayenne pepper based hot sauce made of spices, vinegar and garlic. A company in Cincinnati, Ohio first made the sauce in 1920. The Frank of the sauce has no connection with Frank Bellissimo of the Anchor Bar, just a simple coincidence of shared names.

"The Real Story". The Anchor Bar. [www.anchorbar.com/history](http://www.anchorbar.com/history) (Accessed April 30, 2019)

<sup>160</sup> Trillin, Calvin. "An Attempt to Compile a Short History of the Buffalo Chicken Wing." *The New Yorker*. August 17, 1980.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

Regardless, the wing definitely originated in Buffalo.<sup>162</sup> A relatively cheap cut of poultry met the local demands for a cheap and tasty snack. At the Anchor Bar, wings were commoditized alongside pizza and other Italian foods. Italians who sampled the wings at Anchor Bar may explain why wings expanded to the menus of independent pizzerias in Buffalo.

While Buffalo is credited with creating the distinctive wing style, chicken wings were already prominent in Canadian restaurants prior to the 1960s. A recipe column in *CH&R* in 1958 featured baked chicken wings from Riviera Restaurant in Saint John, New Brunswick. The recipe was recommended for Canadian restaurants as a cheap and popular dish, only costing thirty cents per order. The recipe prescribed baking of chicken wings with celery, onion and covering them in tomato puree and dry mustard.<sup>163</sup> Chicken wings were a product of interest in Canadian restaurants prior to the invention of the Buffalo-style wing.

The wing may have been created at a restaurant that was part of the Italian ethnic economy, but the connection between pizza and wings did not exist on a national and international scale until the 1990s. Wings were served alongside pizza in Buffalo at Italian owned restaurants since the 1960s, including the aptly named Sorrentino's Casa Pizza & Wing.<sup>164</sup> The popularity of wings outside of New York State is attributed to Buffalonians retiring in Southern states in the 1970s. In 1975, former Buffalonian

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<sup>162</sup> Cynthia Van Ness, Director of Library and Archives at the Buffalo History Museum, points towards the longer history of the Chicken Wing in Buffalo, New York. A menu in their collection from July 1, 1857 at the Clarendon Hotel (Intersection of Main and South Division) included fried chicken wings as an entrée. Another item in their collection, an August 16, 1894 recipe in the Buffalo *Commercial Advertiser* suggested that the wings of fowls could be simmered in a puree of peas. Therefore, the chicken wing had a long history of consumption in Buffalo prior to the creation of the Buffalo style wing in the 1960s.

<sup>163</sup> Maniatis, George. "Most Popular without Guests." *Canadian Hotel and Restaurant*. February 15, 1958.

<sup>164</sup> Harmon and 1980 Buffalo City Directory.

Edmund Hauck opened the chain Wings N’Curly in South Florida.<sup>165</sup> The Florida wing connection continued as the Hooters chain of restaurants opened in Clearwater, Florida in 1983.<sup>166</sup> Florida-based wing franchises grew across the United States through the 1980s, and popularized the taste of Buffalo with new consumers.

In 1992, the national pizza franchise, Dominos, introduced wings to their restaurants in Buffalo. While the sale of wings was already widespread in the independent pizzerias of Buffalo, Dominos was the first franchise pizzeria to commoditize pizza and wings. In November 1994, Dominos started to sell wings nationally. To promote their launch, Dominos purchased a \$32 million dollar advertising campaign on NBC television network during National Football League (NFL) games.<sup>167</sup> The choice of advertising a product from Buffalo during NFL games in the early 1990s was a marketing tactic as the Buffalo Bills played in the NFL Championships, the Super Bowl, consecutively between 1991-1994.<sup>168</sup> Following Domino’s lead, American pizza franchises Pizza Hut and Little Caesars introduced wings to their menus in 1995. Toronto pizza franchises, Pizza Pizza, Pizza Nova and Pizzaville all added wings to their menus in the mid 1990s.<sup>169</sup> By June 1995, Dominos claimed that one third of all their orders included wings.<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> Harmon, John E. “Buffalo Wings” in *The Atlas of Popular Culture in the Northeastern United States*. (Central Connecticut State University, Department of Geography: 1998).

<sup>166</sup> Harmon, “Buffalo Wings.”

<sup>167</sup> Harmon, “Buffalo Wings.”

<sup>168</sup> “List of Super Bowl Champions” ESPN. [www.espn.com/nfl/superbowl/history/winners](http://www.espn.com/nfl/superbowl/history/winners) (Accessed April 30, 2019).

<sup>169</sup> Harmon, “Buffalo Wings.” It is important to note that Buffalo Wings were sold in Toronto bars and restaurants prior to being served at pizzerias. An article from the *Toronto Star* from January 1982, claims that the opening of Wing King on Cumberland Street marks the first specialty restaurant in Toronto serving “Buffalo’s food fad.” Articles from 1984 and 1985 featured recipes to make Buffalo style wings at home.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

The chicken wing was a relatively cheap cut of poultry, with a style developed by an Italian-American business in Buffalo. A cheap bar snack for the Italian working class in Buffalo was commoditized by the pizza industry as an accompaniment. Wings became the most popular accompaniment to pizza in Canada and the United States by the 1990s after being commoditized by franchised restaurants. However, wings were not only an innovation to the pizza industry, but also emerged as an innovative fast food, restaurant and bar menu option. Wing franchises, including Buffalo Wild Wings, Buffalo Wings & Rings, Wild Wing, Wing Zone, and Wingstop all opened in the 1990s following the success of wings in the pizza industry.

### **Conclusion**

Streets connected pizzerias to the homes of Toronto and Buffalo. While some foods were commoditized for sale on the streets (from street food vendors), pizza was commoditized for delivery via the same streets. The streets were the space where pizza traveled from the primary producer, the pizzeria, to consumers in their homes. As Toronto's population and economy grew and Buffalo's population and economy declined, urban citizens moved from the downtown cores into new developments and communities on the outliers of the city. Pizzerias followed this flow of population and broadened their services to include delivery and takeout. Other innovations were made in the late 1960s and early 1970s within pizzerias themselves to differentiate their product offerings and services from other competitors on the streets.

Pizza was not the first food commoditized on the streets of Buffalo and Toronto, as the sale of food on the streets of urban centres in Canada and the United States can be connected to the labour and businesses of a variety of ethnic economies. As pizza was

sold on the streets, the contributions of the Italian ethnic economies in Toronto and Buffalo facilitated processes of delivery and innovation, which led to the commodification of pizza on urban streets. The growth of the pizza industry can be explained by co-ethnic employees gaining technical knowledge through working in the pizzerias of ethnocultural entrepreneurs. Technological and food innovations were a result of ethnic entrepreneurs adapting traditional recipes and relying on the interconnected nature of Italian food businesses via the ethnic economy. While the diverging economies of Toronto and Buffalo complicated the processes of pizza commodification in each city, the contributions of Italian ethnic economies remained central to the commodification process.

As the 1970 Ontario Pizza Survey revealed, pizza made by restaurants and delivered to homes in Toronto and Buffalo came to dominate the commoditized pizza market of the two urban centres.<sup>171</sup> The home was the first location where Torontonians and Buffalonians consumed pizza, but the quality of pizza produced in restaurants drew consumers out of their homes. The creation of pizza delivery took the consumption of pizza full circle - - back to the home. Innovations made to support street pizza transformed the business of pizza to an industry controlled by the Italian ethnic economy, with the support of some non-Italians. Non-Italians entered the pizza industry as delivery drivers, workers, and pizza innovators. The commodification of pizza on the streets represented a transitional phase in the pizza industry from independent pizzerias rooted in the Italian ethnic economy to a mass-market capitalist industry controlled by both Italians

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<sup>171</sup> Of Toronto households who ate pizza in the past year, 74% purchased it from a pizzeria. Elliott Research Corporation. "January 1970 Pizza Survey for General Foods." February 1970. Archives of Ontario, F245-23-0-3315.

and non-Italians. Chapter 4: The Big Business of Pizza examines how the growing consumer base and the growth of the pizza industry attracted non-Italians, fast food franchises, and conglomerate food businesses to the pizza industry in Toronto and Buffalo.

## **Chapter 4: Big Business of Pizza- The Rise of the Franchise**

In 1977, an article in the University at Buffalo's student newspaper, *The Spectrum*, exclaimed, "Fast food junkies probably drool at the sight of Main Street between Bailey Avenue and Minnesota Avenue. This strip of business establishments is a microcosm in Buffalo of the fast food phenomena of the United States."<sup>1</sup> The segment of Main Street ran parallel to the University at Buffalo Campus, and was home to a variety of hamburger, chicken, donut, sandwich, and seafood franchise restaurants.<sup>2</sup> The article focused on the mass conglomerates Burger King, Ponderosa Steakhouse, McDonalds, Jack in the Box, and Kentucky Fried Chicken but failed to mention pizza as a part of the, "big business of food service."<sup>3</sup> Sotera's Pizzeria, an independent pizzeria located at 3620 Main Street, was sheltered amongst the conglomerate franchises. The pizza industry had undergone a transformation in the late 1960s and 1970s - - from independent pizzerias that were a product of the ethnic economy to conglomerates and franchises owned by non-Italians and conglomerate businesses. However, the *Spectrum* article gave the impression that the franchised pizza industry in Buffalo in 1977 did not exist. With the shrinking urban economy and population decline in Buffalo in the 1970s, pizza conglomerates were not attracted to open businesses in the city. By contrast, in Toronto, the growth of the city's population and its economy fostered the development of franchised pizzeria businesses and attracted the business of American pizza conglomerates.

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<sup>1</sup> Amplo, Tony. "Keeping up with fast food." *The Spectrum*. December 14, 1977. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Data reflects 1977 Buffalo Yellow Pages.

<sup>3</sup> Amplo, Tony. "Keeping up with fast food." *The Spectrum*. December 14, 1977. 2.

This chapter examines the history of franchises and conglomerates in order to understand their domination and influence on the pizza industry in Toronto by 1990, and their lack of success and expansion in Buffalo. Conditions in Toronto supported the development of local franchises Pizza Nova, Pizzaville, and Pizza Pizza, and attracted the business interests of American branch plant franchises and conglomerates Pizza Hut, Dominos, Little Caesars, and Chuck E. Cheese's. As Buffalo's commercial prominence and population declined, pizza franchises did not develop locally and few major American franchise chains were attracted to conducting business in the city.<sup>4</sup> American chains sought to establish branch plants in prosperous Canadian cities like Toronto, where they could earn greater profit at a low operating cost, in contrast to the low profits in a dwindling city like Buffalo. Coinciding with these developments, pizza was co-opted by the business interests of non-Italians looking to profit from the popularity of the dish. The growth of Toronto's population, suburbs and branch plant economy contributed to the erosion of Italian ethnic economies from the pizza industry, in favor of franchises owned by non-Italians and conglomerates. Franchises not linked to Italian ethnic economies were forced to standardize pizza and the operation of a pizza restaurant to replace the human resources, training, supply chain, and business operations that connections to Italian ethnic economies provided to independent pizzerias.

As the popularity of pizza grew amongst non-Italians in the early 1960s, some Italian-owned pizza businesses expanded their businesses from one pizzeria to two or more. The multi-shop pizzeria model enabled business owners to expand their businesses to different parts of a city, province/state or country. The success of some multi-location

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<sup>4</sup> Buffalo supported the growth of multi-location independent pizzerias like Santora's, which grew to five locations by the 1990s. Independent pizzerias during the age of franchising are examined in Chapter 5.

pizzerias eventually led to the establishment of franchising and conglomerate businesses. Coinciding with the increasing popularity of pizza was the growth of fast food restaurants, many of which operated on franchising or conglomerate models. Franchising encompassed the sale of a brand's name, supply chain, kitchen technologies, sales technologies, and advertising to a smaller company or individual who operated a restaurant. A conglomerate operated in a structure in which one business entity owned and operated a variety of restaurant locations and associated businesses (supply chain, logistics, farming, food processing), and relied on local and regional management to oversee operations.

The growth of franchised pizza chains and their intrusion into the pizza markets of Toronto and Buffalo illustrates the ways in which a food item was subject to capitalist commodification. Pizza initially entered Toronto and Buffalo markets through the homes of Italian immigrants in the 1950s, and was capitalized upon by ethnic Italian entrepreneurs who opened restaurants and pizzerias through the 1960s and 1970s. However, as pizza was commoditized by ethnic economies, non-Italians were attracted to the profitability of pizza and opened their own pizzerias franchises. The control of the pizza industry by Italian-Canadian and Italian-American ethnic economies became increasingly marginal and associated with independent pizzerias as non-Italian conglomerates and franchise enterprises entered the industry in the late 1960s. The divergent economies of Toronto and Buffalo influenced what role Italian ethnic economies would play in pizza franchising, and determined how enterprises which were not part of the ethnic economies entered the respective cities and operated businesses.

Toronto's role as a centre of the American branch plant economy facilitated the development of pizza franchises in the city. While branch plants were established across the country, the economy of many of the cities of the Golden Horseshoe region, including Toronto, were reliant on employment in plants, factories and offices owned by American firms.<sup>5</sup> According to Michael Bliss, branch plants emerged from the economic dominance of the United States, the failure of Canadian economic nationalism, strong tariffs and reciprocity policies.<sup>6</sup> American companies were attracted to Southern Ontario because of cheaper operating costs and the belief that short-term investments in regional economies would be prosperous.<sup>7</sup> Branch plants ranging from manufacturing, to automotive production, to steelmaking opened in Ontario. While some viewed the establishment of branch plants as a threat to Canada, the American investments provided some regional employment, and helped build working class incomes. In the 1960s and early 1970s, the Liberal governments of Lester Pearson and Pierre Trudeau created policies to regulate foreign investment. These policies resulted in the creation of Canadian subsidiary corporations and autonomous branch corporations.<sup>8</sup> However, Brian Mulroney's Progressive Conservative government, elected in 1984, dismantled the Foreign

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<sup>5</sup> Watts, H.D. *The Branch Plant Economy: A Study of External Control*. (London: Longman Publishing, 1981), xii.

<sup>6</sup> The high tariffs of the Canadian National Policy (1879-1930) encouraged American businesses to set up branch plants in Canada to avoid the tariffs. Others argue that the foreign investments overwhelmed Canadian industrialists, who chose to work alongside American investors.

Bliss, Michael. "Canadianizing American Business: The Roots of the Branch Plant Economy." In *Close the 49<sup>th</sup> Parallel Etc. The Americanization of Canada*. Ed. Ian Lumsden. (University of Toronto Press, 1970), 29-30;

Laxer, Gordon. "Class, Nationality, and the Roots of the Branch Plant Economy." *Studies in Political Economy*, January 1986.

<sup>7</sup> As Steven High demonstrates in *Industrial Sunset*, American multinational companies looked to Canada because they could pay workers, especially female workers, lower wages than they would be paid in the United States.

High, Steven. *Industrial Sunset: The Making of North America's Rust Belt, 1969-1984*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 101.

<sup>8</sup> Watts, *The Branch Plant Economy*, 3.

Investment Review Agency and increased economic integration between Canada and the United States. Between the 1960s and 1990s, a series of American branch plant fast food franchises opened in Canadian urban centres, including McDonald's, which opened a franchise in Richmond, British Columbia in 1967. Kentucky Fried Chicken opened in Winnipeg, Manitoba in 1954; A&W opened in Winnipeg, Manitoba in 1956; Arby's, opened in Quebec in 1982, and Subway, opened St. John's Newfoundland in 1986.<sup>9</sup> This paved the way for American pizzerias to establish branch plant franchises in Toronto.

The first pizzeria franchises in Toronto grew out of the success of the Italian ethnic economies that operated pizzerias. Ethnocultural entrepreneurs hired co-ethnic family members and friends to open and manage the first franchises.<sup>10</sup> Italian-owned franchises, Pizza Nova and Pizzaville, relied on these co-ethnic connections to start and expand their franchises.<sup>11</sup> The reliance on family and co-ethnic relations was advantageous to the ethnic community as a way to elevate status and build community outside of formal structures. In Buffalo, relationships linked to the Italian community supported the growth of independent pizzerias as multi-location independent pizzerias.

As non-Italians adopted pizza and pizzerias from Italian ethnic economies and created franchises and conglomerates, Italian-owned franchises and independent pizzerias in Toronto and Buffalo capitalized upon their Italian heritage by presenting pizza as a

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<sup>9</sup> The Richmond, British Columbia McDonald's location highlights how McDonald's opened the first branch plant franchises in large Canadian cities close to the United States border. Richmond is a 42km (26mile) drive from the border crossing at Blaine, Washington. Nearby American cities, including Seattle and Everett had McDonald's prior to the opening in Canada. Canadians may have first tried McDonald's on driving vacations in the United States, and wanted the same food at home.

<sup>10</sup> Harney, Nicholas. *Eh Paesan! Being Italian in Toronto*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 104-105.

<sup>11</sup> In the case of Pizzaville, a co-ethnic industry connection allowed the business to continue, following the death of its founder. Mayer, Tiffany. "Pizzaville Taste of the Canadian Dream." *National Post* July 1, 2017.

symbol of Italian nationalism. They claimed authenticity over the pizza-making process, and the quality of ingredients used. The Italian ethnic economies provided cheese, tomato and other supplies to Italian-owned pizzerias, which supported their claims of authenticity. Non-Italian franchises and conglomerates did not have access to the employment systems and supporting industries that were part of the ethnic economies. They had to create their own systems of supply chain and training, which contributed to the standardization of pizza. Business connections, subsidiary companies, the stock market and multinational firms supported the operations of non-Italian franchises and conglomerates.

The concept of ethnic economies can be applied to the rise of pizza franchise business in Toronto and Buffalo to highlight the differences between ethnic Italian franchise businesses, Italian owned independent pizzerias, and non-Italian conglomerates and franchises. However, ethnic economies, suburbanization and the diverging economic paths of Toronto and Buffalo illuminate the ways in which the urban centres supported the development of franchising businesses, accepted the incursion of outsider franchises, and consumed franchised pizza. Studies in the history of the pizza industry have overlooked Canada, urban economic growth and decline, ethnic economies, and the role of non-Italian fast food outsiders in the development of conglomerate franchises. This chapter aims to contribute to existing pizza historiography by analyzing the role of urban economies in the creation of pizza franchising and consumption.

## I

The fast food franchise has been imprinted on the urban landscapes of the United States and Canada since the 1920s. Food items ranging from hamburgers, sandwiches,

chicken, coffee, donuts, and eventually pizza were sold in franchised fast food restaurants in suburbs. The popularity of fast food can be rooted in its mass appeal and changes in postwar consumerism and lifestyle, including the affordability of automobiles, the driving vacation, and suburbanization.<sup>12</sup> The fast food franchise became ubiquitous with suburban consumer culture as restaurants opened near such sites of suburban consumerism as malls and strip mall plazas. For example, the first McDonald's in Toronto opened in 1969 at the corner of Keele Street and Lawrence Avenue West, near the Yorkdale Mall, which had opened in 1964.<sup>13</sup> Fast food franchises and other consumer products advertised directly to children and teenagers, as such fast food franchises became sites of suburban teenage socialization.<sup>14</sup> Franchises exemplified the idea of a consumer republic, a political, economic and cultural phenomenon that emerged following the Second World War, in which the idealistic goals of freedom and democracy were bound to mass consumption and consumer culture, especially in the United States.<sup>15</sup> Historian Lizabeth Cohen explains that Americans of the 1950s saw the United States as a model for mass consumption and its inherent benefits, in contrast to the Soviet Bloc and communist ways.<sup>16</sup> Franchised restaurants offered a wide range of choices for the mass consumption of fast foods. As they opened outlets in new locations, more American towns and cities became participants in this consumer republic.

American fast food franchises had regional roots; White Castle, Steak n' Shake and Culvers in the Midwest; Bojangles and Chick-Fil-A in the Southeast; In-N-Out-

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<sup>12</sup> Chandler, Adam. *Drive-Thru Dreams: A Journey Through the Heart of America's Fast-Food Kingdom*. (New York: Flatiron Books, 2019), 4-5.

<sup>13</sup> *Might's Toronto City Directory, 1969*.

<sup>14</sup> Cohen, Lizabeth. *A Consumers' Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America*. (New York: Vintage Books, 2003), 121-122.

<sup>15</sup> Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic*, 7.

<sup>16</sup> Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic*, 7.

Burger on the West Coast; Pollo Tropical and Checkers in Florida; Whataburger in Texas; and Dunkin' Donuts in New England.<sup>17</sup> In Canada, coffee and doughnut chains, Country Style and Tim Horton's, competed for urban franchise supremacy starting in Ontario and eventually growing across the country, while smaller submarine sandwich and hamburger franchises also developed.<sup>18</sup> While fast food franchises preceded pizza franchises, they established the business model and practices that the pizza industry would emulate. Some of these fast food franchises were also products of the ethnic economies and provided employment for co-ethnic community members.

The franchising model allowed a company to expand geographically without investing great sums of its own money. In the model, the company (the franchisor) sought out a person or business (the franchisee) with local knowledge to buy franchising rights to operate a local franchise. The risk and personnel costs were the responsibility of the franchisee, who hoped to profit from the reputation, supply chain, and branding of the franchise company. For a franchise to be successful, the franchisor needed to replicate the original restaurant and trust a franchisee to uphold a corporate image at an autonomous branch. The Coca-Cola Company founded the practice of food franchising in 1888, when it licensed businesses to mix, bottle, and sell their beverage in drugstores and soda fountains.<sup>19</sup> While Coca-Cola did not franchise restaurants, they created the process of standardized marketing, reputation, supply chain, and a food product.

Franchised restaurants in the United States and Canada, including Howard Johnson's, A&W, White Castle and McDonalds, were the first to franchise aspects of

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<sup>17</sup> Chandler, *Drive-Thru Dreams*, 4-5.

<sup>18</sup> Penfold, Steven. *The Donut: A Canadian History*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 4-5.

<sup>19</sup> Chatelain, Marcia. *Franchise: The Golden Arches in Black America*. (New York: WW Norton, 2020), 7.

their restaurants and established standards for franchising. None of these businesses served pizza (with the exception of McDonald's, briefly, in the 1990s, as we shall later see). However, the way in which they conducted business and developed their operations was fundamental to the franchised commodification of pizza in Toronto and Buffalo.

The opening of franchised restaurants and their popularity was facilitated by a series of urban conditions and postwar consumer culture, including suburbanization, drive-ins, highway and interstate systems, and vacation travel. As suburbs grew, spaces of consumerism and leisure were built to insulate suburban middle class consumers from the social and economic hardships of the downtown centre, including panhandlers.<sup>20</sup> Shopping malls, plazas, bowling alleys, arcades, roller rinks, drive-in movie theatres, and restaurants, including both drive-ins and franchises, were built to cater to the suburban middle class. As U.S. historian, Kenneth Jackson, explained, "with the automobile came the notion of grabbing something to eat...fast food franchises, not only decimated the family-style restaurant but cut deeply into grocery store sales."<sup>21</sup> Suburbanites drove their cars to restaurants where they were able to order food, including hamburgers, hotdogs, French fries, and barbeque, and dine in their car. Equally popular were drive-in movie theatres, which played second-runs of horror and teenage romance films for audiences in their cars.<sup>22</sup> These suburban venues were both convenient and a fun leisure activity for the middle class, and were immortalized in American popular culture, including the film, *American Graffiti* (1973), and the television series *Happy Days* (1974-

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<sup>20</sup> Teaford, *The Metropolitan Revolution*, 9.

<sup>21</sup> Jackson, Kenneth. *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 694.

<sup>22</sup> In the 1960s and 1970s, drive-in movies slipped in popularity because of rising fuel costs, the seasonal business, and the incursion of suburban shopping malls with movie theaters. Jackson, 673.

1984). However, the demand for suburban drive-ins and drive-up venues is attributable to the popularity of the roadside travel industry, which emerged in the 1920s. As postwar family incomes grew, expenditures like travel and recreation became regular parts of household budgets; the automobile holiday was one of the trends popularized by these economic changes.<sup>23</sup> As a network of highways and interstates developed in both the United States and Canada and the family driving vacation was popularized, a market for roadside overnight accommodation and dining developed, including the drive-in motel, rest stop, and roadside restaurant.<sup>24</sup> These venues catered to traveler's demands for reliability, uniformity, child-friendliness, and hygiene standards, when far from home. Many of these same standards were adopted in drive-in and drive-up businesses in the suburbs, including franchise restaurants.

Howard Johnson's was a newsstand that was opened in 1925 in Quincy, Massachusetts by its namesake, Howard Johnson. Johnson was impressed by the ice cream sold by a local German pushcart vendor, and purchased their ice cream recipes to produce and sell at his newsstand's soda counter.<sup>25</sup> The co-opting of an immigrant-produced snack was similar to the co-opting of pizza by non-Italians who attempted to profit from the popularity and work of ethnic economies. In 1932, Howard Johnson opened a second franchised location, a restaurant alongside the highway in Orleans, Massachusetts. The Howard Johnson business model was dependent on automobile travel as it opened roadside restaurants (and eventually hotels) alongside Interstate and Thruway highways to cater to the needs of highway travelers and vacationers who

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<sup>23</sup> Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic*, 336.

<sup>24</sup> Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 667.

<sup>25</sup> Smith, Andrew F. *The Oxford Companion to American Food and Drink*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 305.

wanted predictability when far from home. As Johnson's added more restaurants, they adopted a vertical integration strategy similar to those perfected by the Ford Motor Company in the 1920s. As was the case with Ford, who produced raw materials and parts rather than relying on outsourcing, Howard Johnson's constructed their buildings, centrally prepared pre-made food, dictated the furnishings and look of the restaurants, standardized menus, and established service standards.<sup>26</sup> Howard Johnson's control over their products even went as far as being the sole customer of the business that caught and processed the raw clams they served.<sup>27</sup> The restaurants defined concepts of reliability, uniformity, child-friendliness, and hygiene standards that other franchise chains would try to adopt.<sup>28</sup>

While the focus of the franchised Howard Johnson's was dine-in restaurants, burgermakers A&W and White Castle were the first fast food franchises. Their models of fast food franchising were the closest model to what the pizza industry adopted in Toronto and Buffalo. A&W started as a drive-in hamburger stand in 1919 in Lodi, California. In 1925, they franchised their name and specialty root beer, allowing other restaurants to open under the A&W name, serve root beer and create their own menu items.<sup>29</sup> The modern iteration of A&W's restaurant franchise model was established in the 1950s when the founders, Roy Allen and Frank Wright, sold the company.<sup>30</sup> Under

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<sup>26</sup> Freedman, Paul. *The Restaurants that Changed America*. (New York: WW Norton, 2016), 131.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Freedman, *The Restaurants that Changed America*, 133.

<sup>29</sup> Chatelain, *Franchise*, 8.

<sup>30</sup> When Allen and Wright, the A and W of the brand's name, did not find success as restaurant franchisors, they sold their franchise company to J. Hungerford Smith Company (who produced the root beer concentrate). The company was sold again to the United Fruit Company, who restructured the franchise agreement, and focused on the commercial sale of the root beer. In 1978, the standardized menu was created and the franchises grew internationally. One of the original franchisees, J. Willard Marriott was inspired by Allen and Wright's partnerships in franchising, and opened his national hotel chain, Marriott.

new ownership, A&W grew as a uniform fast food franchise opening branch plants in Canada, Japan, the Philippines and Malaysia in the late 1950s.<sup>31</sup> In Canada and the United States, A&W opened stand-alone drive-through and drive-in franchises to cater to suburban automobile-owning consumers. The franchising of a standardized restaurant, serving standardized food was popular with consumers, and many other franchises followed A&W's lead.

White Castle was founded in 1921 in Wichita, Kansas as a hamburger restaurant.<sup>32</sup> A few years prior to the opening of White Castle, Upton Sinclair's 1906 novel, *The Jungle*, made many Americans hesitant about eating ground beef as the book publicized the poor sanitation processes of the meat industry.<sup>33</sup> Adopting the Howard Johnson franchise model, White Castle dedicated their operations to consistency, hygiene and sameness across all locations. The design of the restaurants in small white buildings, with white painted interiors and stainless steel counters was an attempt to evoke a sense of cleanliness to combat the negative stereotypes depicted in Sinclair's novel. White Castle created cooking methods including the shaping of burgers into small squares to cook more quickly, and the creation of the Tin Lizzie burger bun to absorb burger juices and maintain the burger's structural integrity.<sup>34</sup> As a franchise, White Castle grew across cities in the Midwestern United States and New York State alongside new interstates and

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Smith, Andrew. *The Oxford Companion to American Food and Drink*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 1.

<sup>31</sup> Smith, Andrew. *The Oxford Companion to American Food and Drink*, 27.

<sup>32</sup> White Castle serves small hamburgers that were originally sold for five cents. These hamburgers are now referred to as sliders, a term originating from the US Navy in the 1940s that referred to greasy burgers that "slid in easily." Postwar, the term nickel-slider was used to describe the small five-cent hamburgers sold to working class clientele. White Castle started to officially use the term slider soon after, and patented the name "Slider" in the 1980s.

Chandler, *Drive-Thru Dreams*, 12-14.

<sup>33</sup> Chandler, *Drive-Thru Dreams*, 13.

<sup>34</sup> Chandler, *Drive-Thru Dreams*, 16.

highways. Unlike A&W, White Castle opened in both urban and suburban locations for walk-in and take-out service. In 1932, the Paperlyen subsidiary was formed to manufacture the paper hats worn by employees and other paper products for the restaurants, and to handle the distribution of baked goods and meat for the restaurants.<sup>35</sup> In 1934, the Porcelain Steel Building subsidiary was created to manufacture prefabricated steel frame structures with enamel interior and exterior panels that could be assembled as restaurant sites.<sup>36</sup> Unlike businesses that were the product of ethnic economies, which could rely on co-ethnic businesses to support their operation, White Castle formed subsidiary companies.

Nearly twenty years after the opening of hamburger fast food franchises A&W and White Castle, brothers Richard and Maurice McDonald opened McDonald's in San Bernardino, California in May 1940. The restaurant served a limited menu of hamburgers, fries, milkshakes, milk, orange juice, Coca Cola and pie. They followed hygienic standards established by White Castle and created the fishbowl kitchen, which allowed customers to watch the cooking process.<sup>37</sup> Key to the fishbowl kitchen was the "Speedee Service System," which used custom kitchen supplies to maximize efficiency and assembly line for production of a standardized product.<sup>38</sup> In 1953, the McDonald brothers sought franchisees to expand their business to cities and towns in Arizona and California. Impressed by a visit to McDonald's in 1954, a Czech-American mixer salesman, Ray Kroc, went into business with the brothers and opened his franchise in Des

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<sup>35</sup> Smith, Andrew. *The Oxford Companion to American Food and Drink*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 621-622.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Chatelain, *Franchise*, 30-33.

<sup>38</sup> Boas, Max and Steve Chain. *Big Mac: The Unauthorized Story of McDonalds*. (New York: Mentor Books, 1976), 11.

Plaines, Illinois in 1954. (It was the ninth McDonalds franchise).<sup>39</sup> Following his success as a franchisee with multiple suburban locations, Kroc purchased the McDonald brothers' equity in the company and became the sole owner.<sup>40</sup> Under Kroc's leadership, the red and yellow color scheme and the golden arches logo were created to standardize the exterior of the restaurant. As the restaurants were standardized, Kroc's business partner, Harry Sonneborn, suggested that they supplement the franchising income with income from land and rentals. Sonneborn created the McDonald's Franchise Realty Corporation, which purchased urban and suburban land near centres of leisure and industry to build restaurants to rent to franchisees.<sup>41</sup> This made McDonald's both the franchisor and the landlord for franchisees. McDonald's became the largest fast food franchise chain and one of the highest grossing fast food companies, expanding to over one hundred countries. The standards, business practices, and mass expansion of McDonald's set the guidelines that all fast food franchisors would attempt to emulate.

While only a few of the aforementioned franchises were rooted in ethnic economies, they created methods of restaurant and food standardization, including innovative cooking methods, health standards, and branding which would be adopted by

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<sup>39</sup> Kroc's parents immigrated to the United States in the late 1800s from what was then the Czech Republic. His father made a fortune on land speculation outside Chicago but lost it all in the stock market crash of 1929. With the collapse of his father's company, Ray Kroc became a Red Cross Ambulance driver in World War I alongside fellow Chicagoan, Walt Disney. He became a traveling salesman and realtor following the war. The evolution of McDonald's as a real estate company under Kroc's leadership can be attributable to an ethnic economy. Kroc learned the skills of land speculation and real estate investment from his father, who turned to speculation and real estate after exclusion from other industries. Napoli, Lisa. *Ray and Joan: The Man Who Made the McDonalds Fortune and the Woman Who Gave it All Away*. (Dutton Publishers, 2016), 28.

Boas and Chain, *Big Mac*, 11-13.

<sup>40</sup> Boas and Chain, *Big Mac* 15-20.

<sup>41</sup> Boas and Chain, *Big Mac*, 23-25.

pizza franchises. The processes of hiring, finding franchisees, and supply chain created by fast food chains replicated the processes of ethnic economies.

By 1969, the fast food industry was opening one new outlet per day in Canada, a process that can be attributed to the establishment of American branch plant franchises and suburbanization.<sup>42</sup> In Toronto, franchises raced for lots to open stand-alone suburban franchises. One article in the *Toronto Star* in 1971 explained, “The fast food business is growing so fast in Metropolitan Toronto at least one fast food chain is making a public appeal for sites on which to build new outlets.”<sup>43</sup> McDonald’s opened its first Toronto restaurant on Keele Street in 1969, and appealed to land owners in 1971 in an attempt to purchase new sites near places of leisure and industry to build more restaurants. The reporter noted, “With competition keen some fast food outlets are bound to fall by the wayside.”<sup>44</sup> This suggests the popularity of franchises with consumers, the limited suburban spaces for franchises to open in Toronto, and increased competition between domestic franchises and American branch plants. Franchises sought large suburban lots with ample room for parking to cater to dine-in, car-hop, and take-out services.<sup>45</sup> As these spaces became increasingly difficult to obtain, franchise operations entered the downtown, where the visual elements of their suburban architecture appealed to customers.<sup>46</sup> Another American fast food chain, Kentucky Fried Chicken, opened a branch plant in Canada in 1955. The spokesman for Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC),

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<sup>42</sup> Penfold, Steven. “Are we to go literally to the hot dogs? Parking Lots, Drive-ins and the Critique of Progress in Toronto’s Suburbs, 1965-1975.” *Urban History Review*, Fall 2004, Vol. 33, No 1. 8-23, 9.

<sup>43</sup> Parliament, Mack. “There’s lots of money now to speed house building.” *Toronto Star*. April 22, 1971.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>45</sup> McDonald’s for example redesigned suburban restaurants in the 1960s to include 50 dine-in seats. By 1974, only two Canadian McDonald’s were drive-in only restaurants. This allowed franchises to open on smaller lots, with larger buildings to accommodate consumers.

Penfold, “Are we to go literally to the hot dogs?” 17.

<sup>46</sup> Wood, Joseph. “Suburbanization of City Centre.” *Geographical Review*. no. 3, (July 1988), 327.

Colonel Harland Sanders said, in a CBC Radio interview that food in Canada was, “plumb tasteless...there’s no specialty that I’ve run into, none whatever.”<sup>47</sup> Sanders explained that it was one of his motivations for expanding his franchise across Canada, to bring tasty and quality fast food products.<sup>48</sup> However, by 1968, after a decade of living in Canada, Sanders exclaimed, “I’ve traveled all over North America as a restaurateur, and think Toronto has taken prodigious strides in establishing fine restaurants.”<sup>49</sup> Not surprisingly, as KFC opened a Canadian subsidiary and grew across Canada, Sanders spoke of the advances of the fast food industry in Toronto. Other chains including A&W, and the Canadian franchises Harvey’s and Mr. Sub all opened in Toronto’s suburbs in the early 1970s.<sup>50</sup>

Fast food was also popularized in Buffalo in the 1970s. The 1977 *Buffalo Yellow Pages* lists nineteen Your Host’s, sixteen Burger King’s, eleven McDonalds, eleven Kentucky Fried Chickens, seven Red Barns, and four Arthur Treacher’s Fish and Chips.<sup>51</sup> Unlike Toronto, where many franchises were attributable to the branch plant economy, each chain in Buffalo was an expansionary American chain. None of the franchises were founded in Buffalo, but in the postwar era, fast food franchises expanded to industrial cities across the United States to cater to working and middle class Americans.<sup>52</sup> Many

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<sup>47</sup> Colonel Harland Sanders interviewed by CBC Radio, Edmonton. 1957. CBC Online Archives.

<sup>48</sup> In 1964, after opening nearly six hundred locations in Canada and the United States, Sanders sold Kentucky Fried Chicken for \$2million to venture capitalists. Sanders continued to serve as the face of the company in advertisements, and retained the rights to KFC in Canada, with profits going to the Harland Sanders Charitable Foundation of Canada. In 1965, he moved to a bungalow at 1337 Melton Drive in Mississauga, Ontario to oversee his Canadian franchises. In Canada, the majority of the KFC locations operated under the Scott’s Chicken Villa banner. Scott’s was owned by George Gardiner, president of Scott’s Hospitality, and the Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Arts (established 1984). Sanders lived between Mississauga and Kentucky until his death in 1980.

“Colonel Sanders in Mississauga.” YourSauga.com September 13, 2019.

<sup>49</sup> Feeny, Edwin. “The People Say.” *Toronto Star*. March 27, 1968.

<sup>50</sup> Toronto City Directory 1965, 1970, 1975.

<sup>51</sup> Buffalo Yellow Pages Directory, 1977.

<sup>52</sup> Chandler, *Drive-Thru Dreams*, 15.

of the fast food chains arrived in Buffalo in the 1960s when the city had both a booming economy and growing population. One of the Burger King locations, at Main Street and Bailey Avenue, was noted in an article in *The Spectrum* to be on the “gravesite of a former Buffalo landmark, Onetto’s Restaurant.”<sup>53</sup> While the opening of the Burger King was criticized for replacing a community restaurant staple, the journalist did note that Burger King attempted to connect to their community by including the emblem of State University of New York at Buffalo behind the counter.<sup>54</sup>

Conglomerate and franchise chains important to the study of pizza commodification in Toronto and Buffalo include Pizza Nova, Pizzaville, Pizza Pizza, Pizza Patio, Mother’s Pizza, Frank Vetere’s, Pizza Hut, Dominos, Little Caesars, and Chuck E. Cheese’s. Among these businesses, only the Toronto franchises, Pizza Nova and Pizzaville were attributable to the Italian ethnic economy. Both chains were founded in 1963 and relied on co-ethnic connections to grow their businesses. Other Canadian chains, Pizza Pizza, Pizza Patio, Mother’s Pizza, Frank Vetere’s, did not have ethnic origins and were formed by non-Italians who sought to profit from the popularity of pizza. American pizza chains Pizza Hut (founded 1958), Little Caesars (founded 1959), and Domino’s (founded 1960) were founded by non-Italians in diverse regions of the United States spanning from Kansas to Michigan. The opening of franchises and conglomerates by non-Italians illuminates the erosion of the Italian ethnic economies in Toronto and Buffalo’s pizza industries.

Between 1970 and 1990 fast food franchises opened restaurants in Buffalo and Toronto. During the same period, Toronto saw the development of homegrown pizza

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<sup>53</sup> Amplo, Tony. “Keeping up with fast food.” *The Spectrum*. December 14, 1977. 2.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

franchises and conglomerates. Conversely in Buffalo, no local franchises developed and no Canadian franchises opened in the city. The commodification of franchised pizza in Toronto resulted from both domestic entrepreneurialism and Toronto's position as a centre of the American branch plant economy. Buffalo's dwindling economy and population did not attract franchise chains or led to the development of local franchises.

As big business interests increasingly controlled the pizza industry, the role of women in the industry became more and more marginal. Women were absent from the major American and Canadian franchises and from conglomerates Pepsico and Robinhood Multifoods, none of which had a female founder, corporate officer, or board member.<sup>55</sup> Women's employment in both franchise and independent pizzerias were confined to kitchen and front-of-house roles, including working as servers at Frank Vetere's and Pizza Patio. The delivery driver was a male occupation, and very few women delivered pizza because of the threats of crime and bodily harm that came with the occupation.<sup>56</sup> The work in some independent pizzerias can be credited to contributions to the household ethnic economy. The female figure of "Mama", who first introduced pizza to the households of Toronto and Buffalo and played a role in some of the first pizzerias, was notably absent from the franchise pizza industry.

## II

Coinciding with the popularization and growth of fast food restaurants in Toronto in the 1970s, the city was growing as a Canadian centre of commerce. Between 1971 and 1981, Metro Toronto's population surpassed Montreal, making it the largest urban centre

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<sup>55</sup> Survey of Robinhood Multifoods Annual Shareholder Reports 1980, 1985 and Pepsico Annual Report and Proxy Information, 1980 in the Howard Ross Library of Management at McGill University.

<sup>56</sup> See Section III in Chapter 3.

in Canada, with a population of 2.99 million.<sup>57</sup> Following the election of René Lévesque's separatist Parti Québécois in Quebec in 1976, many Montreal-based firms moved their head offices to Toronto, including, the Royal Bank of Canada, Bank of Montreal, Sun Life Assurance, and the law firm, Stikeman Elliot moved to Toronto in the late 1970s and early 1980s. By the mid-1980s close to half of Canada's most successful corporations were headquartered in Toronto, in the blocks around Bay and King Streets.<sup>58</sup> Toronto-based companies generated an estimated \$2 billion every day in the 1980s.<sup>59</sup> American branch plants, including automakers Ford and General Motors, oil brand Imperial Oil (ExxonMobil), retailer Sears, and IBM computing had factories, stores, and offices in and around Toronto. The growth of big business in Toronto facilitated a variety of other changes in the city. Downtown real estate in Toronto increased to \$1000 a square foot, and employment increased 25%.<sup>60</sup> Toronto's economic growth facilitated the development of pizza franchise businesses, the ownership of franchised businesses, the incursion of American branch plant franchises, and the middle class incomes that could purchase franchised pizza.

While Toronto prospered in the 1970s and 1980s, Buffalo entered a troubling period of economic and social decline. The population of the city dropped from 462,768 in 1970 to 357,00 in 1980, a decline of 23%.<sup>61</sup> As population declined, the once Polish and Italian neighbourhoods of Fillmore-Leroy and Broadway-Fillmore became increasingly African American as whites (Polish, Italians and other European ethnic

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<sup>57</sup> Levine, *Toronto: Biography of a City*, 274.

<sup>58</sup> Levine, *Toronto*, 275.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> Levine, *Toronto*, 275-277.

<sup>61</sup> United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1970 and 1980 United States Census of Population- Census Tract Buffalo, N.Y.*

groups) left for the suburbs.<sup>62</sup> The industrial base alongside the Niagara River also declined as the Pratt and Letchworth ironworks, J.H. Williams toolmakers, two steel mills, automotive factories, and the Wood and Brooks piano key factories closed over the decade.<sup>63</sup> The lower costs associated with conducting business in Sunbelt states, and branch plants in Canada and Mexico contributed to the closure of some industries in Buffalo. The 1970 Census revealed that 11.2% of families in Buffalo lived below poverty level, with a median household income of \$46318, nearly \$2000 lower than neighbouring towns Lackawana, Lockport, Niagara Falls and Tonawanda.<sup>64</sup> The purchasing power of Buffalo's working class was far lower than that of Toronto's middle class. The decline of the city did not stop the process of urban expansion. The 1946 *Urban Area Report* set the urban planning vision for the city, including the building of the Niagara Thruway, the Skyway, Kensington Expressway, and the Scajaquada Creek Expressway. However, two other highways, the Elm-Oak Arterial on the East Side and the Lower West Side Arterial, had still not been built by the 1970s because the construction of the Lower West Side Arterial was going to cut through the residential Lower West Side, following the route of Virginia Street.<sup>65</sup> The threat of the project caused the Italian and Puerto Rican residents to leave the neighbourhood for the suburbs. However, a community group representing Puerto Rican Buffalonians lobbied the state assembly and halted the project in 1976.<sup>66</sup> Other improvement projects, including the

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<sup>62</sup> Goldman, *City on the Edge*, 255.

<sup>63</sup> Goldman, *City on the Edge*, 257.

<sup>64</sup> The median household income of \$46,318 reflects the value of \$6568 adjusted for inflation to 2020 figures using the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics CPI Inflation Calculator. United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1970 Census of Population and Housing-Census Tract Buffalo, N.Y.*

<sup>65</sup> Goldman, *City on the Edge*, 260.

<sup>66</sup> Goldman, *City on the Edge*, 265.

construction of the Buffalo Niagara Convention Centre (1978), a new rapid transit system connecting the suburbs of Amherst, Hamburg and Tonawanda to Buffalo (completed 1990), and the Main Street Mall project (a never completed mall, hotel, office and retail space) were supposed to increase business in Buffalo.<sup>67</sup> However, as historian Mark Goldman notes, many of these plans were “surreal in [their] failure to understand the current reality of the city.”<sup>68</sup> Although Buffalo was a city in economic decline in the 1970s and the 1980s, planners proceeded with dated infrastructure and building plans.

Toronto’s growing economy and urban growth, on the other hand, fostered the development of local pizza franchises. Two franchises that developed in Toronto, Pizza Nova and Pizzaville, can be attributed to the successes of independent pizzerias and the Italian ethnic economy. Pizza Nova was founded on May 12, 1963 at the corner of Lawrence Avenue East, just west of Kennedy Road in Scarborough by brothers, Sam, Mike, Vince and Joe Primucci. Sam Primucci recalled the family moving to Toronto from Basilicata, Italy in 1952, when he was twelve years old. The family settled on Denison Avenue, near Bathurst and Queen Street.<sup>69</sup> As a teenager, Sam recalled eating pizza from ethnic economy businesses, including Italian Home Bakery (15 Denison Avenue) and pizzerias Toto and Vesuvio.<sup>70</sup> Sam’s brother, Mike, had been a racecar driver, and delivered pizzas on the side to supplement his income. Having gained technical knowledge and experience from his employment in a pizzeria owned by an ethnocultural entrepreneur, Mike approached his brothers and suggested they open a

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<sup>67</sup> Goldman, *City on the Edge*, 272.

<sup>68</sup> Goldman, *City on the Edge*, 273.

<sup>69</sup> Sam Primucci. Interviewed by Mark Cirilo, 2017. *Pizza Cultura*.

<sup>70</sup> Sam Primucci. Interviewed by Mark Cirilo, 2017. *Pizza Cultura*.

pizzeria, as he was looking for a safer way to make money.<sup>71</sup> The pizzeria was originally named Pizza Nuova, Italian for new, but *nuova* was altered to Nova. According to Domenic Primucci, CEO of Pizza Nova and son of the founder, “My father and his brothers had the insight that *nuova* was difficult [for non-Italians] to pronounce, Nova was simple and easy.”<sup>72</sup> The first pizzeria, according to Sam Primucci, was “mostly a delivery pizza place, but we had three or four tables as well. We delivered to a wide area that included West Hill to the east and Don Mills to the west.”<sup>73</sup> The menu for the original “dining room” location was an expansive offering of Italian cuisine including pizza, spaghetti, lasagna, and ravioli.<sup>74</sup> By the mid-1960s, the demand for pizza in the North York suburbs was high, as many Italian-Canadians had moved from the downtown Italian neighbourhoods to North York (in the area between Wilson and Finch Avenues, Dufferin and Jane Streets).<sup>75</sup> Traffic congestion between Kennedy Road to Victoria Park made deliveries difficult, so a second location was opened on Betty Ann Drive at Yonge and Finch.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Pizza Nova’s 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Film Clip provided by Company, 2013.

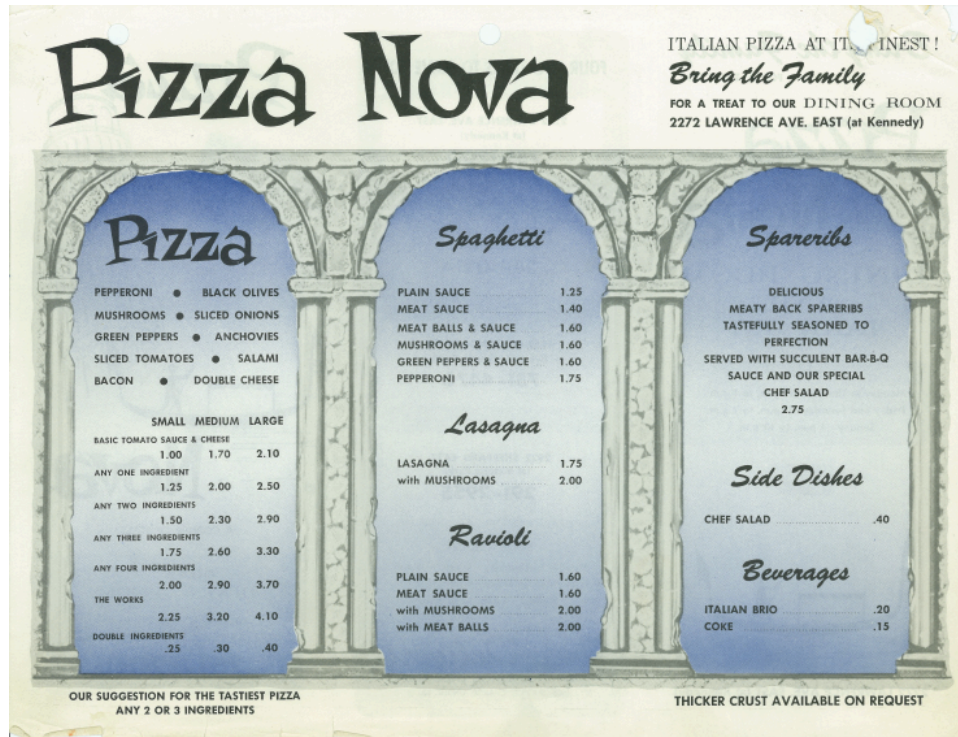
<sup>72</sup> Domenic Primucci, Interviewed by Alexander Hughes. November 2<sup>nd</sup> 2019, Toronto.

<sup>73</sup> Sam Primucci. Interviewed by Mark Cirilo, 2017. *Pizza Cultura*.

<sup>74</sup> Menu provided by Domenic Primucci in 2019. A Large two topping pizza cost \$2.90 and there was only a selection of ten toppings on the menu.

<sup>75</sup> Harney, Nicholas. *Eh Paesan! Being Italian in Toronto*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 28.

<sup>76</sup> Domenic Primucci, Interviewed by Alexander Hughes. November 2<sup>nd</sup> 2019, Toronto.



**Figure 5.1: Pizza Nova Menu from the original location at Lawrence Avenue East and Kennedy Road. Approximately late 1960s early 1970s. Provided by Domenic Primucci.**

In 1969, Pizza Nova adopted a franchise strategy and opened both dining room and take-out counter franchises.<sup>77</sup> According to Domenic Primucci, “the franchise model at that time was really in infancy stages...it was community based, friends and people who worked within our locations [were our first franchisees].”<sup>78</sup> Pizza Nova’s franchising was reliant on connections to the Italian ethnic economy: the Primucci family were ethnocultural entrepreneurs who relied on familial and kinship labour in the restaurants. By 1974, the franchise grew to fourteen stores in Toronto.<sup>79</sup> Following the McDonalds franchising model, Pizza Nova selected potential franchise locations and subleased stores and equipment to a franchisee. The capital cost for a franchisee in the early 1970s was

<sup>77</sup> Domenic Primucci, Interviewed by Alexander Hughes. November 2<sup>nd</sup> 2019, Toronto.

<sup>78</sup> Domenic Primucci, Interviewed by Alexander Hughes. November 2<sup>nd</sup> 2019, Toronto.

<sup>79</sup> “Franchising.” *Canadian Hotel & Restaurant*, June 1974.

between \$17,000 and \$18,000 according to *Canadian Hotel & Restaurant*.<sup>80</sup> In return, franchisees made royalties of 5% on gross sales under \$1000, and 6% on sales over \$1000.<sup>81</sup>

Coinciding with the opening of Pizza Nova in 1963, Teddy Adelman, a photographer, manufacturer of women's clothes, and a hotel and restaurant supplier, opened Pizzaville.<sup>82</sup> Adelman was not Italian, but his experiences in the hotel and restaurant industry led him to open a pizzeria.<sup>83</sup> He looked at the operation of Italian restaurants and decided it was not profitable to have a waiter serve cheap pizza to a customer, and a busser and dishwasher to clean up.<sup>84</sup> Adelman opened Pizzaville as a counter service pizzeria, in contrast to full service Italian restaurants. The original location was at Keele Street and Sheppard Avenue West, near Downsview Air Force Base in North York, a location that catered to both industry and suburban communities.<sup>85</sup> Adelman expanded Pizzaville to twelve franchise locations in Toronto prior to his death in 1975.

Following Adelman's death, the company remained in the ownership of the Adelman family until 1979 when it was sold to Angelo Contardi.<sup>86</sup> Despite the fact that

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> "Teddy Adelman, 45 Owner of Pizza Chain." *Toronto Star*. Obituary, November 18, 1975.

<sup>83</sup> Adelman's obituary reveals that he was Jewish. In the 1950s and 1960s, Jewish Torontonians, like Adelman, moved from the downtown to the Bathurst Street corridor in North York. In North York, they were able to obtain suburban housing, build new synagogues, and start ethnic economy businesses. Adelman's opening of Pizzaville in North York suggests that he was part of this migratory flow, and the business was part of the North York Jewish ethnic economy. The location is also remarkable because in the 1960s, Italian-Canadians also migrated from downtown Toronto to North York. Adelman may have sought to capitalize on their business by opening a pizzeria in North York.

Diamond, Etan. *And I Will Dwell in Their Midst: Orthodox Jews in Suburbia*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 41.

Harney, Nicholas. *Eh Paesan! Being Italian in Toronto*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 28.

<sup>84</sup> Harvey Adelman on his brother Teddy Adelman, correspondence, July 15, 2020.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Gager, Russ. "Peddling Pizza." *Food & Drink*, Spring 2010.

Adelman was not a member of the Italian diaspora in Toronto, Pizzaville is connected to the Italian ethnic economy through Contardi's involvement in the business. Contardi's father, Marco, was a cheesemaker who moved from Puglia, Italy to Toronto in the 1950s. Marco Contardi supplied cheese to Pizzaville and other Italian restaurants until his death in 1978.<sup>87</sup> Angelo had worked alongside his father and learned cheese-making and gained connections to Italian restaurants in Toronto. Contardi's connection to the Italian ethnic economy facilitated his purchase of Pizzaville.<sup>88</sup> When Contardi purchased Pizzaville, the franchise was faltering, shrinking from fifteen outlets, to five outlets in 1979.<sup>89</sup> The leadership and resources of a co-ethnic entrepreneur saved Pizzaville, growing to ten outlets in Toronto by 1990.

The 1970s ushered in a new era of pizza franchising in Toronto as non-Italians were attracted to the profitability of pizza. As outsiders entered the pizza industry in the 1970s, they did not build connections or relationships to the Italian ethnic economies. The outsiders sought to profit from the popularity of pizza and co-opted the product from the Italian ethnic economy. Non-Italian entrepreneurs had to create their own systems of support to replicate the processes and functions of the Italian ethnic economy, including the operation of the supply chain, acquisition of products, hiring and training of workers, and franchising systems. The non-Italian ownership of franchises was not unique to Toronto as the founders of many American franchise pizzerias were not Italian. The

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Despite Pizzaville not being a true Italian ethnic economy enterprise, as a non-Italian owned it, Adelman relied on his connections to Italian businesses as a hotel and restaurant supplier to open a pizzeria. Pizzaville was supplied by Italian businesses and employed Italian-Canadians that Adelman had befriended in his previous ventures. A non-Italian entrepreneur relied on the supports of the Italian ethnic economy to support his business, despite his outsider status. It was these connections to the Italian ethnic economy which ultimately saved the business from failure.

<sup>89</sup> Mayer, Tiffany. "Pizzaville Taste of the Canadian Dream." *National Post* July 1, 2017.

founding of pizza franchise chains by non-Italians led to the gradual erosion of the role of Italian ethnic economies in the pizza industry.

Michael Overs was one of the first non-Italians in Toronto to open a franchised pizza chain. He opened Pizza Pizza on December 31, 1967 at the corner of Wellesley and Parliament Streets in Toronto. Pizza Pizza's original store was three hundred square feet, catering to takeout and delivery orders. Like Pizzaville, Pizza Pizza's business focused on take-out counter and delivery pizza. Overs and Adelman tried to keep personnel costs minimal by eliminating front of house roles and the restaurant element from their commodification of pizza.

The original Pizza Pizza was a small storefront with a kitchen on the lower level of the store. Overs recalled that in the original store, "We dropped the orders through a hole in the floor. With the static electricity they'd often get stuck to the ceiling. The cook had to bang the wall with a broom to get them down."<sup>90</sup> When asked by the *Toronto Star* about the name of the restaurant, Overs said that he thought, "he'd be getting a lot of late-night drunks who'd have trouble with the word," he even registered the name Pizza Pizza Pizza for the, "chronically debilitated."<sup>91</sup> Pizza Pizza's downtown location catered to the popularity of take-out and delivery pizza amongst downtown Torontonians, and the proximity to Ryerson Polytechnic, downtown nightlife and industry, different audiences than the suburban Pizza Nova and Pizzaville franchises.

Overs directly managed the growth of the business through the late 1960s by replicating the structures of the ethnic economies. To open the first store, Overs worked as a dry-cleaning delivery driver, and used the income from that job to purchase supplies

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<sup>90</sup> Picton, John. "Any way you slice it, he's making millions." *Toronto Star*. January 25, 1981.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

for Pizza Pizza.<sup>92</sup> In order to find franchisees, Overs posted a cold advertisement in the *Toronto Star* in September 1972. Michael Overs did not have the same ethnic connections to the pizza business and knowledgeable pizzeria operators like franchises connected to ethnic economies. The small advertisement appeared amongst job postings, and sought a hardworking manager, not listing any qualifications or expectations.<sup>93</sup> In 1981, Overs stated that the cost of a franchise was \$90,000 upfront, or one-third down payment. The purchase of a franchise came with the guarantee that if the upfront payment was not made back in the first year, the franchiser would refund the money.<sup>94</sup> The payment provided the franchisee with the right to use the brand, access to supply chain and equipment purchasing, an initial advertising budget, and a course in managing the business - - "PizzaU."<sup>95</sup> Unlike franchisees from the Italian ethnic economy who gained experience from working in the pizzerias owned by co-ethnic entrepreneurs, Overs created PizzaU as a quick education for outsiders to learn the pizza business.

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> "Pizza Pizza is Expanding." *Toronto Star*. September 9, 1972. 90.

<sup>94</sup> Picton, John. "Any way you slice it, he's making millions." *Toronto Star*. January 25, 1981.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid. The concept of PizzaU was taken from Ray Kroc at McDonalds who established Hamburger University in Chicago in 1961. Hamburger University was set up to teach franchisees and store management the corporate ways to operate a McDonalds. Hamburger University courses also counted towards credits at accredited universities. Other fast food franchises including In-N-Out and Taco Bell have established their own "universities". Nonetheless, most fast food franchisers have some form of corporate training for franchisees, but McDonalds' Hamburger University was the standard in corporate fast food training.



**Figure 5.2: The original Pizza Pizza location at Wellesley and Parliament Streets (on the right), 1972. Photo by Jean-Francois Despres, “Parliament Street Corners from Bloor to Gerrard Street.” City of Toronto Archives.**

Pizza Pizza rapidly grew from three locations in Toronto in 1975, to twenty-three franchises in 1980, to forty-two franchises in the Greater Toronto Area by 1981.<sup>96</sup> Overs followed the models of other fast food franchises, like McDonald’s, and implemented technological innovations and procedures to ensure efficiency and meet consumer demands across all locations. In the early 1970s, Overs acquired the phone number, 967-1111 from Bell Telephone, and by 1981, it became one of the most frequently called numbers in Toronto.<sup>97</sup> Call centre operators took orders and dispatched them to local franchises for pizza production and delivery. To support this centralized operation, Pizza Pizza purchased a \$300,000 computer system to maintain customer details, connect to franchises, and provide directions to all streets in Metro Toronto and the surrounding

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<sup>96</sup> Toronto City Directory compiled list. 1970, 1975, 1980.

<sup>97</sup> The number had once belonged to the Eaton’s department store, who asked for the number back a few weeks after Overs started to promote the number as the central Pizza Pizza call centre. To promote the number, Overs bought billboard advertisements, newspaper advertisements, flyer advertisement, and the jingle “967-11-11, Call Pizza Pizza Hey Hey Hey!” was played constantly on Toronto radio stations. The jingle continues to be used by Pizza Pizza on radio and television, but was altered to “967-11-11 Call Pizza Pizza Dot CA” in reference to Internet ordering.

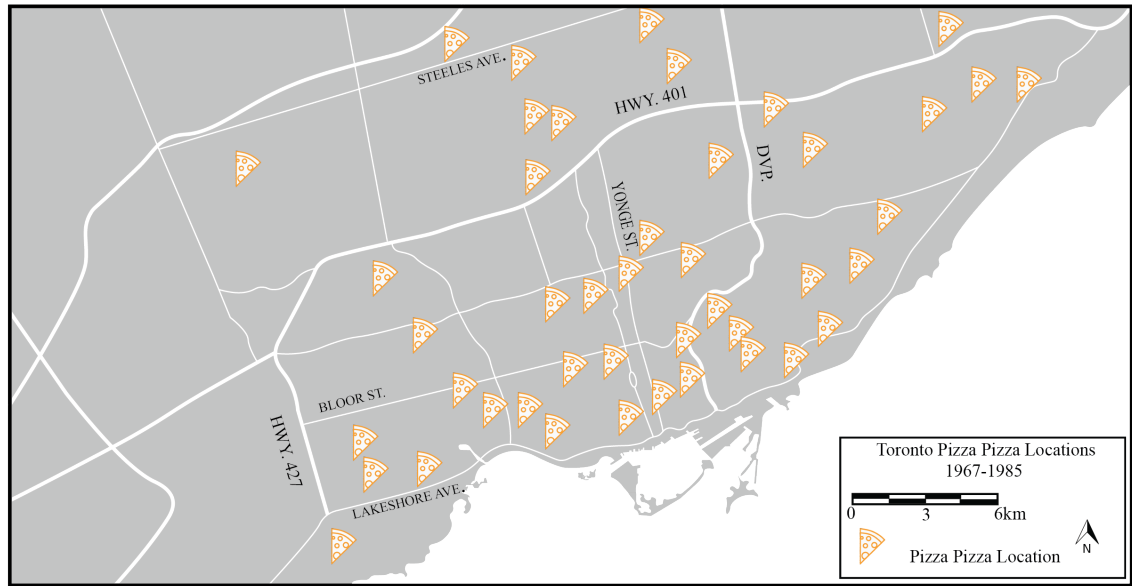
Picton, John. “Any way you slice it, he’s making millions.” *Toronto Star*. January 25, 1981.

municipalities.<sup>98</sup> In addition to the call centre and computer systems, Pizza Pizza had a flying squad of employees who monitored computer operations, and dispatched extra delivery drivers and kitchen staff to busy franchises. Pizza Pizza's phone system and computerized efficiency facilitated their offering customers a satisfaction policy, "thirty minutes or it's free," similar to the policy created by Domino's in Michigan.

Michael Overs' entrance into the Toronto pizza industry marked a significant change in Toronto franchising, as he did not cook food that was part of his own ethnic background, nor did he rely on co-ethnic community members to support his business. Overs recognized a market demand and developed business methods and innovations to replicate the processes and functions of the Italian ethnic economy. Pizza Pizza's rapid expansion and business development suggests that Torontonians were willing to consume non-Italian franchise pizza, hinging on the convenience and accessibility of the pizza product.

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<sup>98</sup> Picton, John. "Any way you slice it, he's making millions." *Toronto Star*. January 25, 1981.



**Figure 5.3: Map of Toronto Pizza Pizza Franchises 1985 (Created in ArcGIS, Esri Light Gray Canvas Map, 2020)**

Similar to Pizza Pizza, Frank Vetere’s Pizza was also a product of the 1970s outsider Toronto pizza franchise boom. The chain was opened in 1972 by Foodex Systems and named after Frank Vetere, Vice President of Foodex. The corporation used the name of their Italian employee to convey a sense that the chain was authentically Italian. Foodex was a restaurant operations business that owned eighty-six Ponderosa Steak Houses across Canada prior to developing the Vetere chain.<sup>99</sup> Harold Shneer, President of Foodex, told *Canadian Hotel & Restaurant* in 1979, “We started Vetere’s in

<sup>99</sup> Ponderosa expanded to Canada when Harold Sheer, President of Foodex Systems bought franchises. A former door-to-door bible salesman, Sheer also owned franchises of Mr. Donut and Red Barn (hamburgers and chicken). Ponderosa was a buffet style steakhouse, featuring steak, seafood and entrees. In the United States, Ponderosa also operated under the name Bonanza Steakhouse. The names were derived from the television series, *Bonanza*, and the fictional Ponderosa Ranch, which the chain’s founder, Dan Blocker starred in. When the Ponderosa brand failed in 1985, General Mills Restaurant Group purchased the Ontario and Quebec locations and converted them to Red Lobster. “Frank Vetere’s Pizzeria.” Review. *Toronto Star*. July 9, 1977. 15. Peredo, Sandra. “Is there a cheap place to eat around here?” *Toronto Star*. May 5, 1973. Brandon, Deanne. “General Mills Restaurants.” *Orlando Sentinel*. November 1, 1985.

December 1972 to serve but one purpose...for the day Ponderosa started to slow down. That day arrived last year [1976]. We've already gone from seven to thirty-one Vetere units."<sup>100</sup> Initially a holding operation for Foodex, Vetere's became their main focus as Ponderosa slipped in popularity with consumers. The first Vetere pizza location opened in a suburban plaza amidst a residential neighbourhood at 2575 Eglinton Avenue East near Midland Avenue in Scarborough.<sup>101</sup> Unlike other franchises founded by non-Italians, Vetere's was a sit-down pizza restaurant with red-checkered cloth table coverings and an offbeat interior of carnival mirrors, arcade game cabinets, gumball machines and cartoons, alongside pizza.<sup>102</sup> Vetere's served a Chicago style deep-dish pizza, sold as a "pizza in the pan."<sup>103</sup> By 1977, the chain grew to seven restaurants in Toronto, and nine by 1979.<sup>104</sup> Foodex claimed that the target audience of the franchise was the, "college crowd, ages 18 to 25, young families and young couples with ample income."<sup>105</sup> Sheer argued that 'ma and pa' operations and strictly take-out operations were not competitors for Vetere's, and their only competitor was Hamilton, Ontario-based Mother's Restaurants.<sup>106</sup> Beyond food, Vetere's used liquor licensing to capture the business of their target audiences. Alcohol sales represented 20-23% of their sales

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<sup>100</sup> Weiss, Gary. "Vetere: vistas of pizza and past." *Canadian Hotel & Restaurant*. October 1979. 110.

<sup>101</sup> Not listed in 1972 or 1973 Toronto City Directory but Help Wanted advertisement in the *Toronto Star* on November 25, 1972 seeks Pizza Cooks, Waitresses and Dishwashers to apply in person at the location on Eglinton. "Frank Vetere's Pizza" *Toronto Star*. November 25, 1972. 94.

<sup>102</sup> O'Neill, Dorothy. "Vetere's offers generous, tasty helpings." *Toronto Star*. March 21, 1981. 28.

<sup>103</sup> "Frank Vetere's Pizzeria." Review. *Toronto Star*. July 9, 1977. 15.

<sup>104</sup> "Frank Vetere's Pizza" Advertisement. *Toronto Star*. November 21, 1979 and July 9, 1977.

<sup>105</sup> Weiss, "Vetere: vistas of pizza and past," 111.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.* Mother's Pizza was not in the Toronto market until 1980. It had focused on South-Western Ontario- Hamilton, Niagara, London and Windsor prior to expansion to Toronto.

volume.<sup>107</sup> In 1979, Vetere's rapidly grew, with the average location grossing \$500,000 a year in revenue.<sup>108</sup>

Unlike other franchised pizza chains, whose main objective was the commodification of fast food pizza across Toronto, Frank Vetere's was a national restaurant chain capitalizing on the pizza trend. Vetere's was not interested in competing with independent pizzerias and local franchises but was a national restaurant chain comparable to Swiss Chalet (founded 1954, in Toronto), St-Hubert (founded 1951, in Montreal), and Olive Garden (founded 1982, in Orlando, Florida). Suburban middle class Torontonians enjoyed eating at chain restaurants, and Vetere's met these economic demands by capitalizing on the popularity of pizza.

Pizza Patio was another non-Italian outsider in the Toronto pizza franchise industry in the 1970s. Unlike other non-Italian franchises, Pizza Pizza and Frank Vetere's, which were founded in Toronto, Pizza Patio was an expansionary pizza chain from British Columbia. British-Canadian twin brothers, Peter and Jeffery Barnett, founded the chain in Vancouver as a small takeout shop in the city's West End. In exchange for cutting the neighbouring house's lawn, the brothers were allowed to set up patio chairs in front of the house for their customers, resulting in the name Pizza Patio.<sup>109</sup> The chain expanded across British Columbia before becoming publicly traded on the Toronto Stock Exchange in March 1970. The proceeds from the public trading of company shares, gross sales of \$779,000, and a bank line of credit for \$300,000 made a Toronto expansion possible.<sup>110</sup> The allure of Toronto as the Canadian centre of

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> "Pizza Patios opening in Toronto." *Canadian Hotel & Restaurant*. September, 1971.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

commerce and an economically viable expansionary market, led to Pizza Patio's cross-country expansion. Peter Barnett selected the first Toronto location based upon research he conducted by driving around Toronto in a rental car and counting pedestrians. Pizza Patio opened their first Toronto outlet at 3391 Yonge Street in North York, amidst the commercial centre of the suburban Bedford and Teddington Park neighbourhoods (near Yonge Street and Lawrence Avenue East), in 1971. The location cost \$75,000 to build, serving both takeout and dine-in pizza.<sup>111</sup> Unlike Pizza Nova, Pizzaville, Pizza Pizza, and Frank Vetere's, which relied on franchisees to open new restaurants, Pizza Patio wholly owned the twelve outlets in Vancouver and the expansionary restaurants in Toronto.<sup>112</sup>

The history of Pizza Patio illuminates the creation of Canada's first mass conglomerate pizza franchising operation following a forced merger with Pizza Delight in October 1979. Pizza Delight was founded in Shediac, New Brunswick in 1968 and opened locations across the Maritimes, Quebec and Ontario. In September 1970, Pizza Delight advertised in Toronto newspapers proclaiming, "the golden franchise is coming, low \$20,000 investment for a \$12-20,000 return."<sup>113</sup> Pizza Delight had two locations in Toronto by 1975, and twelve by 1979.<sup>114</sup> In October 1979, Toronto-based business conglomerate, Robinhood Multi Foods, purchased the seventy Ontario outlets of Pizza Delight, and Pizza Patio.<sup>115</sup> Robinhood Multi Food was a conglomerate of consumer, industrial, and agricultural products. Prior to the purchase of the franchises, Robinhood was already in the pizza business with the consumer Robin Hood flour brand, industrial

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> "The Golden Franchise: Pizza Delight." *Toronto Star, Globe and Mail*, September 19, 1970.

<sup>114</sup> *Might's Toronto City Directory*, 1975 and 1980.

<sup>115</sup> "Pizza Parlors Bought." *Toronto Star*. October 6, 1979. A11.

bakery supply, and Gusto frozen pizzas.<sup>116</sup> The purchase of Pizza Patio and Pizza Delight placed Robin Hood Multi Foods in a position where they owned businesses in all aspects of the pizza industry; homemade pizza, restaurant supply, and pizzeria franchise ownership. The corporate purchase illuminates how the capitalist commodification of pizza worked, with one private owner controlling the commodification of pizza in Toronto's homes, restaurants and franchises. This was a far reach from the Italian ethnic economy, which established pizzerias in Toronto as a response to exclusion from mainstream economic activity.

The commodification of pizza by conglomerates occurred much earlier in the United States. In November 1977, soda giant, Pepsico, purchased Pizza Hut, a chain of franchise pizzerias based in Wichita, Kansas. The purchase of 1,477 franchises in the United States, and branch plants in Canada and the United Kingdom was valued at \$316 million.<sup>117</sup> The purchase merged Pizza Hut with the Pepsi soda brands and Frito-Lay's snack food brands Fritos, Doritos, Lay's and Rold Gold Pretzels.<sup>118</sup> Rumors in the fast food industry suggested that a conglomerate would also purchase Taco Bell (a Tex-Mex franchise), Friendly's (an ice cream and family restaurant franchise), and Shoney's (a hamburger franchise also known as Big Boy).<sup>119</sup> Unlike Robinhood, Pepsico was an

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<sup>116</sup> Robinhood Multi Foods Ltd. (1980). *1980 Annual Report*. McGill University, Howard Ross Library of Management Collection.

<sup>117</sup> "Pizza Hut Becomes a Pepsico Subsidiary." *New York Times*. November 8, 1977.

<sup>118</sup> "Rumors of Fast-Food Takeovers." *New York Times*. August 15, 1977.

<sup>119</sup> Many of these rumors turned out to be true as Pepsico purchased Taco Bell in 1978, and Kentucky Fried Chicken in 1986. Pepsico's fast food division purchased California Pizza Kitchen in 1992 and Chevy's Fresh Mex, D'Angelo Grilled Sandwiches and Canadian chain East Side Mario's in 1993. In 1997, Pepsico dissolved the restaurant business, and Tricon Global Restaurants (now Yum! Brands) became the owner of the aforementioned brands. Hershey Foods purchased the other rumored restaurant purchases- Friendly's in 1979. Royal Hospitality Corporation purchased Shoney's in 2006.

"Rumors of Fast-Food Takeovers." *New York Times*. August 15, 1977.

outsider to the pizza industry. The Pepsico purchase illuminates how outsider businesses sought to profit from the popularity of pizza and acquire foreign branch plants.

Prior to the Pepsico purchase, Pizza Hut opened its first international franchise in Winnipeg, Manitoba in 1968.<sup>120</sup> As Pizza Hut grew across Canada, the International Pizza Hut Franchise Holders Association (IPHFHA) was formed by a group of Canadian franchisees representing 40% or 120 of Pizza Hut franchises.<sup>121</sup> IPHFHA served as a pool for franchisees to pool resources and lobby the franchiser. For example, in 1976 when Pizza Hut fired the advertisement agency, Noble-Dury, IPHFHA paid a \$4 million retainer to keep the agency as the advertiser for member franchises.<sup>122</sup> IPHFHA acted similar to the supports of the Italian ethnic economy by offering franchisees a system of business support including marketing, lobbying, hiring, and supply chain.

The financial backing of the Pepsico conglomerate and IPHFHA in Canada allowed Pizza Hut to open more restaurants in Toronto and Buffalo. Toronto had three Pizza Hut branch plants in 1975, five in 1980, fifteen in 1985, and twenty by 1990.<sup>123</sup> Buffalo had five Pizza Hut restaurants in 1975, thirteen in 1980, twelve in 1985, and five in 1990.<sup>124</sup> Both cities added more franchises following the Pepsico purchase, but as the

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<sup>120</sup> California pizza chain, Shakey's and hamburger chain, A&W also selected Winnipeg for their first international expansion locations, in 1968 and 1956 respectively.

"Pizza Hut." *Winnipeg Free Press*. March 19, 1969.

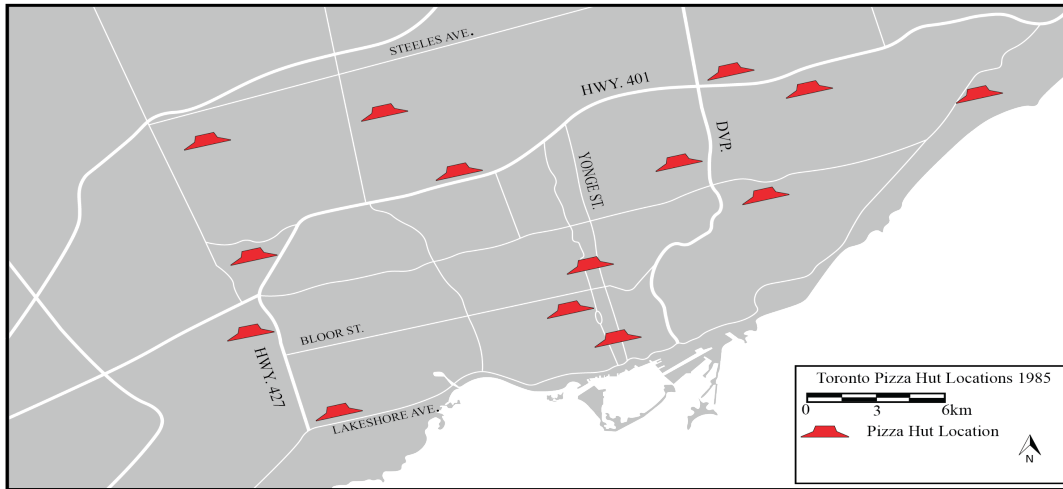
<sup>121</sup> Gumpert, David. *The Pizza Hut Story: How to Create a Successful Business Plan*. (Wichita: Business Plan Publishing, 1990).

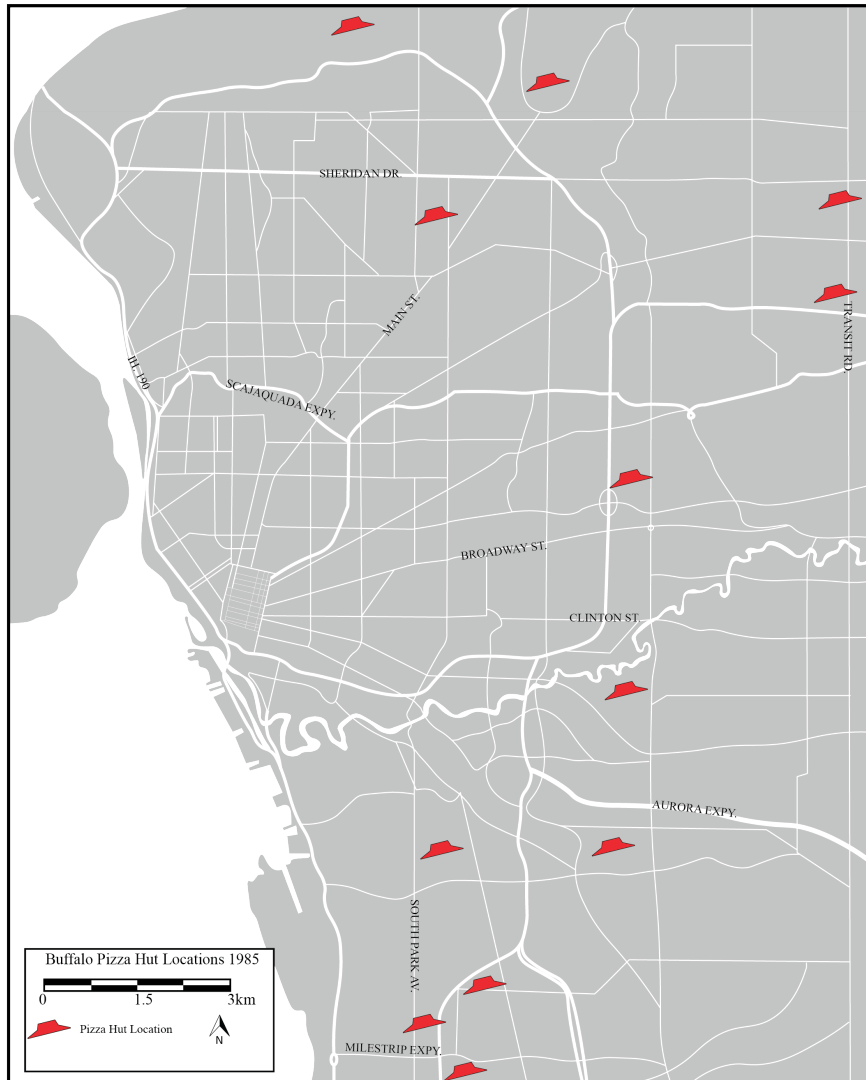
<sup>122</sup> "Pizza Hut Seeking a New Agency." *New York Times*. May 3, 1976. 52.

<sup>123</sup> Toronto City Directories 1970, 1975, 1980, 1985, 1990.

<sup>124</sup> Buffalo City Directories 1970, 1975, 1980, 1985, 1990.

population of Buffalo dwindled several franchises closed.





**Figure 5.4: Maps of Toronto and Buffalo Pizza Hut Locations 1985  
(Created in ArcGIS, Esri Light Gray Canvas Map, 2020)**

As industry left Buffalo and workers sought employment elsewhere, the population of the city declined from 462,768 in 1970 to 357,000 in 1980.<sup>125</sup> The suburbs of Buffalo drained its working class population, while those who remained in the urban downtown of Buffalo were in poverty.<sup>126</sup> Some franchises and conglomerates attempted to open locations in the suburbs of the city to attract middle and working class incomes.

<sup>125</sup> US Census, Buffalo, New York 1970 and 1980.

<sup>126</sup> Goldman, *City on the Edge*, 39.

Buffalo had a single location of Shakey's (1970-1974), Chuck E. Cheese (opened 1982), and Little Caesars (opened 1990). These franchises opened on arterial roads which facilitated traffic flow to the suburbs: Little Caesars on Union Road in West Seneca, Shakey's on Niagara Falls Boulevard in Kenmore, and Chuck E. Cheese in Cheektowaga. The absence of pizza franchises in downtown Buffalo is a telling story of the city's decline.

Between 1950 and 1990, the City of Toronto's population grew by nearly 1.6 million residents, while the City of Buffalo's population decreased by nearly two hundred thousand residents in the same forty-year period. Similarly, Toronto's median household income in 1990 was \$51,300 (CAD) and Buffalo's was \$34,303 (CAD).<sup>127</sup> Toronto had a far greater population, with a larger and stronger middle class in contrast to Buffalo. The growth of Toronto's population, middle class incomes, and role as a centre of the branch plant economy attracted American branch plant franchises, Pizza Hut, Dominos, Shakey's, Little Caesars, and Chuck E. Cheese's to the city.

American pizza franchises were attracted to business in Toronto in the 1970s because of cheaper operating costs and the belief that short-term investments in regional economies would be profitable.<sup>128</sup> Amidst established Canadian pizza franchises, Pizza Hut was the first to open branch plant franchises in Toronto between 1971 and 1974. The first three Pizza Huts in Toronto were geographically spread across the city, located in

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<sup>127</sup> Statics Canada, *The Daily Report*, Tuesday, May 12, 1998. And U.S. Census Bureau, *Estimate of Median Household Income for Erie County, NY* [MHINY36029A052NCEN], retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis.

<sup>128</sup> As Steven High demonstrates in *Industrial Sunset*, American multinational companies looked to Canada because they could pay workers, especially female workers, lower wages than they would be paid in the United States.

High, Steven. *Industrial Sunset: The Making of North America's Rust Belt, 1969-1984*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 101.

suburban strip mall plazas with walk-up sidewalk storefronts, on Finch Avenue, Kennedy Road and Yonge Street. Competition between franchises for suburban commercial land in Toronto resulted in Pizza Hut not utilizing the pre-fabricated buildings, with red pavilion style roofs that the chain had become known for in the United States.<sup>129</sup> They adapted a suburban storefront model in Toronto to build restaurants in pre-existing spaces at a lower cost than purchasing a lot and fabricating a building. American branch plants were attracted to Toronto for the lower costs of conducting business, and attempted to save further money by modifying their business models.

While Pizza Hut only had five locations in Toronto in 1975, it was a brand recognized by Canadian consumers. A toy advertisement from 1975 sold the “Pizza Hut by Coleco,” an electric oven, similar to the Easy Bake, that used a 100 watt light bulb to “cook” pizzas.<sup>130</sup> The toy was designed to resemble the red pavilion roof Pizza Hut building, despite only two red pavilion roof Pizza Huts in Toronto by the late 1970s. However, the sale of the toy in Toronto suggests both a strong postwar consumer culture for children and the advertising of fast food directed at children. American conglomerates

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<sup>129</sup> In the book *Food and Drink in American History* [2013], historian, Andrew F. Smith states that the Pizza Hut building style was designed by Chicago architect George Lindstrom in 1963, and was first implemented by the company in 1969. According to the article “Who Designed the Roof,” by Andrew Wasson, interviews with Pizza Hut co-founder Dan Carney revealed that his college friend and architect Richard D. Burke designed the restaurant. Following White Castle’s lead of differentiating themselves from other hamburger chains with their castle-style restaurant, Pizza Hut sought a design that would make their restaurants stand out from the expansion of Shakey’s Pizza Parlors in the early 1960s. The buildings of Foothill College, a community college in Los Altos Hills, California, allegedly inspired the red pavilion style roof. Built in 1957, the college was celebrated for its modern architectural style. It is suggested by Wasson that Burke was inspired by the design of the college, and the modular construction of the college would be easily applied to building restaurants across the country. Nonetheless, the design of Pizza Hut buildings became as iconic as the orange roof of Howard Johnson, the White Castle, and the McDonalds arches. They would come to Toronto in 1975 as Pizza Hut opened locations on Burnhamthorpe Road East in Etobicoke and on Lakeshore Boulevard.

<sup>130</sup> “Pizza Hut by Colico.” *Toronto Star*. November 15, 1975. K28.

had far stronger marketing (attributed to their larger capital) and could reach consumers in more ways than independent pizzerias and regional franchises.



Figure 5.5: Pizza Hut by Coleco Advertisement from *Toronto Star*, November 15, 1975.

The growth of Pizza Hut in Toronto, from fifteen locations in 1985 to twenty in 1990, was attributable to the failure of Foodex Systems' chain, Frank Vetere's in 1984.<sup>131</sup> Foodex stopped issuing financial statements to shareholders in June 1983 when the company reported a loss of \$4.5 million on sales of \$34.6 million. PepsiCo purchased sixteen Toronto area Vetere's locations for an undisclosed amount.<sup>132</sup> The locations were to be converted into Pizza Huts at the cost of \$200,000 per location for redecoration.<sup>133</sup> This purchase granted Pizza Hut access to stand-alone suburban lots to build pavilion-style restaurants, and shift their business away from storefronts in suburban strip-mall plazas. Although Vetere's was eliminated from Toronto, twelve restaurants remained in Canada.<sup>134</sup> This purchase demonstrates the power of the American branch plant and American conglomerate in Toronto as an American business purchased a faltering Canadian franchise to reduce urban competition and obtain restaurant locations.

<sup>131</sup> Might's City Directory, 1985 and 1990.

<sup>132</sup> "Local Veteres excluded from sale." *The Ottawa Citizen*. April 10, 1984. 43.

<sup>133</sup> "Local Veteres excluded from sale." *The Ottawa Citizen*. April 10, 1984. 43.

<sup>134</sup> "Local Veteres excluded from sale." *The Ottawa Citizen*. April 10, 1984. 43

American chains, Dominos and Little Caesars, opened Canadian branch plant franchises in Toronto in the 1980s. Detroit's Dominos Pizza first arrived in Canada in 1983 in Winnipeg and Saskatoon before expanding to Southern Ontario branch plant cities, Kitchener-Waterloo and London, Ontario in 1984. In 1985, Tom Monaghan, founder of Dominos, announced that by 1990 there would be five hundred Dominos franchises across Canada. He specifically announced expansion to multiple centres of the branch plant economy including Toronto, Mississauga, Hamilton, Windsor, Ottawa and Montreal.<sup>135</sup> This projection was highly inaccurate, as Dominos only had three locations in Toronto in 1990.<sup>136</sup> Little Caesar's opened their first Canadian franchise in 1969, but did not enter the Toronto market until April 1989, when they bought the bankrupt Mother's Pizza chain from receivership.<sup>137</sup> The Hamilton-based Mother's chain had stores across Southwestern Ontario, the United States, and England. In 1987, Toronto Blue Jays player, Ernie Whitt, and batting coach, Cito Gaston, purchased Mother's for \$9.8 million, but ran the chain into bankruptcy in 1989.<sup>138</sup> Mother's owed \$20 million to Citibank Canada.<sup>139</sup> The sale of Mother's added one hundred restaurants to Little Caesar's operations. By 1990, Little Caesars had three Caesars franchises, and five Mother's franchises in Toronto.<sup>140</sup>

The entry of Little Caesars and Pizza Hut into the franchise pizza market in Toronto highlights the financial dominance of American branch plant conglomerates over

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<sup>135</sup> Languedoc, Colin. "Pizza King wants slice of Metro." *Toronto Star*. June 8, 1985. D3.

<sup>136</sup> *Might's Toronto City Directory*, 1990.

<sup>137</sup> Although a Little Caesar's Pizza Restaurant was in Toronto on Avenue Road in 1970, the restaurant was not connected to the Detroit based conglomerate; Joe Maiola, of Pizza Rolla fame, owned it. Mother's was a sit-down restaurant like Vetere's, specializing in pizza, pasta and root beer floats.

"Our Story: Little Caesars Canada." [LittleCaesars.ca/our-founders-history/](http://LittleCaesars.ca/our-founders-history/) accessed June 1, 2019.

<sup>138</sup> Mayers, Adam. "Little Caesars taking over Mother's Pizza Chain." *Toronto Star*. April 6, 1989. D1.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>140</sup> *Toronto City Directory*, 1990.

Canadian franchise chains. Branch plant franchises were attracted to the low operational costs and the profitability of the Toronto market, and had the capital to purchase faltering Canadian franchises. The commodification of pizza by conglomerates and franchises was far from pizza's origins as a commodity sold by Italian ethnic economies as the result of economic exclusion from the mainstream; pizza was now a mainstream commodity.

### III

The growth of conglomerate and franchise pizzerias in Toronto and Buffalo resulted in the standardization of pizzas. Independent pizzerias relied on the connections to the Italian ethnic economies, co-ethnic employees, and supply chain to control the production of pizza, food supply and the labour of employees. Conglomerates and franchises had multiple stores across wide geographic areas, complex supply chain and distribution systems, employees who were not centrally hired, and a wide range of consumers with different tastes. Conglomerate and franchises were forced to rely on the standardization of product, supply, and employee training to support the operation of their businesses. Standardization replaced the role and supports of Italian ethnic economies and resulted in the creation of the standardized pizza. The standardized pizza differs from the artisanal, original pizzas produced by independent pizzerias and home pizza chefs as they were made with pre-sized dough, weighed toppings and had prescribed preparation methods. The supply of pizza products to independent pizzerias and franchises facilitated the kind of pizza they could produce – artisanal or standardized. While Canadians and Americans had consumed the standardized pizza since the 1950s when purchasing a frozen pizza, the standardized pizza sold by conglomerates and franchises was the first standardized ready-to-eat pizza.

To ensure standardization at all stores, conglomerates and franchises needed to purchase ingredients and supplies en masse. Domenic Primucci of Pizza Nova explained, “We’ve always had our own distribution centre. Unlike other companies which use companies like Saputo as a distributor, we use Saputo cheese, but distribute ourselves.”<sup>141</sup> This allowed Pizza Nova’s headquarters to control which products were used by franchisees, to ensure that franchisees did not order cheaper alternatives. Primucci explained, “I credit my father and his brothers, they stayed true to who they were...if it costs us a few pennies more to buy a product because it’s better grade or quality, that’s what we’re going to do.”<sup>142</sup> While Pizza Nova maintained control along distribution lines, they also ensured the control of product in store by having vegetables sliced, spices added to canned tomatoes, and blocks of cheese grated in store.<sup>143</sup> This eliminated the risk of product flavors being affected by prolonged shelf life.

The distribution of tomatoes, cheese and toppings was central to the commodification and production of standardized pizza. Foodservice companies McCain Foods, Robinhood Multifoods, Kraft, and Campbell’s advertised in industry publications such as *CH&R*, *Canadian Pizza Magazine* and *Pizza Today*, and sold ingredients directly to the pizza industry.<sup>144</sup> Some pizza supply businesses distributed by the foodservice companies, including Saputo Cheese, Sargento Cheese, Stanislaus Tomatoes, and Unico Tomatoes were rooted in Italian ethnic economies. While flour is essential to the

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<sup>141</sup> Domenic Primucci, Interviewed by Alexander Hughes. November 2<sup>nd</sup> 2019, Toronto.

<sup>142</sup> Domenic Primucci, Interviewed by Alexander Hughes. November 2<sup>nd</sup> 2019, Toronto.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> The aforementioned companies were listed in CH&R’s *Buyers Guide* for 1978 and 1980 under Pizza Products.

production of dough for pizza, the Italian ethnic economy was not part of the production of flour in Canada and the United States.<sup>145</sup>

Tomatoes were central to the production of pizza sauce. The choice between canned, frozen and fresh produce influenced the profit margins for pizzerias and the standardization of their sauce. The value of fresh produce, like tomatoes, diminished after harvesting and inherently carried the risk of profit loss if it spoiled before being sold to the consumer. Canned and frozen produce limited the possibility of spoilage but also modified the taste of produce. An article in *CH&R* in 1955 claimed that canned foods offered uniform quality across all products that were assured by the government supervision of the labeling of fancy, choice, standard and substandard canned produce labeling.<sup>146</sup> One of the fears, with the use of canned produce, was metallic damage to the food. The United States Department of Agriculture eased these fears by informing consumers that canned foods were safe if the cans were stored in a cool and covered location, and not emptied into containers until a short period before consumption.<sup>147</sup> Pizzerias in Toronto and Buffalo primarily relied on canned tomatoes because of a short regional tomato harvest season (which ran from May to October) and the high costs

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<sup>145</sup> Different dough types are produced in independent pizzerias and franchises in Canada and the United States based upon the different types of flour available in each country. In Canada and the United States, different varieties of wheat, moisture content and additives used in flour production altered the production and taste of standardized pizza dough. The Canadian flour brand, Robin Hood was founded in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan in 1909. Robin Hood flour was originally intended for home consumer use, but following massive floods in Saskatchewan in 1950, Robin Hood was forced to diversify their business and created product lines to serve bakeries and the restaurant industry. These connections facilitated the development of Robinhood Multifoods in the 1970s. American flour brands, King Arthur Flour predates the mass farming of wheat in the United States, having started in 1790 as an English wheat importer. Gold Medal Flour started in 1866 as a domestic wheat grower in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Unlike Robinhood, the American brands transitioned from industrial production to production for household consumers.

<sup>146</sup>. "What will you have canned, frozen or fresh?" *Canadian Hotel and Restaurant*. February, 1955. 20-22.

<sup>147</sup>. *Ibid*, 21.

associated with frozen produce and freezers. However, the price of canned tomatoes was not stable. In 1963, the price of Ontario tomatoes increased because there was a June frost that required replanting, a labour shortage of pickers that resulted in higher employee wages, as well as a labour shortage in canneries.<sup>148</sup> The increased price of Canadian tomatoes led Canadian pizzerias to import canned American or Italian products at a higher cost, which meant less profit for a pizzeria if the increased price was not placed upon consumers. As supplies from Ontario and Quebec diminished in 1960, food brokers relied on imported tomatoes from year-round growing seasons in the southern United States and Mexico.<sup>149</sup>

Stanislaus Tomatoes was a farm co-operative and canning factory started by Italian-American immigrants in 1942 in Stanislaus County, in the central valley of California, just east of the San Francisco Bay Area<sup>150</sup> Stanislaus relied on the interconnected nature of Italian-American businesses as they expanded their distribution across the country to centres of Italian-American life, including New York, Chicago, Philadelphia and Buffalo in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Stanislaus never sold directly to customers, but to pizzerias through networks of Italian-American suppliers.<sup>151</sup> As Steve Rouse, Director of Creative Marketing and corporate historian explained in an interview, “most of our customers bought unseasoned tomato products and scratch-made their sauces. The main Stanislaus brands in the early days would have been Full Red, Saporito, Tomato Magic, and 7/11. We used to call these the ‘Workhorse Brands’

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<sup>148</sup> Running, Arnold. “Food Market Forecast”. *Canadian Hotel and Restaurant*. October, 1963. 6.

<sup>149</sup> In the United States, tomatoes were primarily grown in Florida and California.

Running, Arnold. “Food Market Forecast”. *Canadian Hotel and Restaurant*. July, 1960. 6.

<sup>150</sup> “About Us”. Stanislaus Tomatoes. <https://www.stanislaus.com/company> (Accessed May 1, 2019)

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

because they represented the vast majority of our sales volume.”<sup>152</sup> These brands of tomatoes include tomato strips, tomato puree and unpeeled and peeled ground tomatoes in different ratios of grounding and skin.<sup>153</sup> Canning near the farms controlled tomato quality, which allowed pizzerias to rely on a standardized canned tomato to make a standardized tomato sauce.

In Canada, Unico was an important tomato supplier with origins that grew out of the Italian ethnic economy. In 1917, Edward Pasquale settled in Toronto from Abruzzo, Italy, and opened a food store, the Pasquale Brothers. The store was first located at 100 Elm Street and later at 145 Elizabeth Street in the Downtown Ward neighbourhood.<sup>154</sup> In addition to importing Italian made goods, Pasquale manufactured Italian-style olives, meats, cheeses, canned tomatoes and sauces under the brand name Unico.<sup>155</sup> Pasquale’s goal for Unico was to, “bring the culture of Italian eating to every Canadian table by becoming the country's leading distributor of authentic Mediterranean style ingredients and products.”<sup>156</sup> Unico predates the pizza industry in Toronto, but as an established Italian food supplier owned by Italians, Unico played an important role in the Italian ethnic economy. Domenic Primucci of Pizza Nova revealed in an interview that Pizza Nova relied on tomatoes imported from Italy up until the 1990s.<sup>157</sup> A company like Unico was able to fill this supply chain need for Toronto’s independent pizzerias and franchises.

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<sup>152</sup> Correspondence with Steve Rouse, Director of Creative Marketing and Editor of *La Trattoria* at Stanislaus Food Products. Emails April and November 2019.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> Keung, Nicholas. “Pasquale Brothers immigrant family store to celebrate 100 years in Toronto”. *Toronto Star*. December 5, 2016.

<sup>155</sup> Unico: Our History”. Unico. <http://www.unico.ca/corporate.php?id=3> (Accessed April 17, 2019)

<sup>156</sup> Unico: Our History”. Unico. <http://www.unico.ca/corporate.php?id=3> (Accessed April 17, 2019)

<sup>157</sup> Domenic Primucci, Interviewed by Alexander Hughes. November 2<sup>nd</sup> 2019, Toronto.

Unlike all other pizza ingredients, which are raw materials transformed by a pizzeria, cheese is a manufactured good. Prior to industrialization, cheese in Canada and the United States was made in home kitchens. Industrialization moved cheese production to factories where standardized processes of fermentation and pasteurization of milk ensured every block of cheese was similar. European varieties of cheese, including Emmenthaler, Limburger and Mozzarella were produced in artisanal cheese shops at the start of the 1900s.<sup>158</sup> Mozzarella, a soft *pasta-filata* or stretched curd cheese, is the primary variety of cheese used in pizza production. In Italy, mozzarella was traditionally produced from the milk of the water buffalo, but in North America it was produced from the milk of dairy cows.<sup>159</sup>

The Saputo Cheese Company was central to the development of the independent and franchised pizza industries in Toronto and Buffalo. In 1950, Italian cheesemaker Giuseppe Saputo immigrated to Montréal from Montelepre, Sicily to provide a better future for his family. In September 1954, Saputo opened a cheese-making business, which quickly established itself in Montréal's Italian community by serving products to the co-ethnic community.<sup>160</sup> In 1957, Saputo opened a production facility in Montréal's Saint-Michel neighbourhood and employed Italian immigrants.<sup>161</sup> In the 1960s, Saputo went through a considerable period of growth, coinciding with the expansion of the pizza industry and demand for Italian cheeses by non-Italians.<sup>162</sup> Saputo responded to these

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<sup>158</sup>. Paxson, Heather. "Cheese Cultures: Transforming American Tastes and Traditions." *Gastronomica* 10, no. 4 (2010): 35-47, 35.

<sup>159</sup>. Correll, John. "Chapter 8 – Cheese". *The Original Encyclo Pizza: Pizza Ingredient Purchasing and Preparation*. Fulfillment Press.

<sup>160</sup>. "A Family Heritage- 1950" Saputo. <https://www.saputo.com/en/our-company/history-overview/1950> (accessed April 16, 2019)

<sup>161</sup>. *Ibid.*

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*

changes and acquired several manufacturing plants and developed a national distribution network.<sup>163</sup> The Saputo distribution network was used by pizzerias to supply ingredients and Italian products like Brio soda.<sup>164</sup> In 1988, Saputo acquired two American cheese plants and became a multinational cheese producer.<sup>165</sup>

The Sargento Cheese Company, followed a similar path to Saputo. In 1949, Italian-American, Leonard Gentine, opened a cheese store in Plymouth, Wisconsin.<sup>166</sup> In the 1950s, he noticed growing demand for Italian-style cheeses amongst the Italian diaspora and non-Italians alike. Gentine approached his neighbour, Joe Sartori, and convinced him to be his partner in a larger cheese business, which would sell Italian cheeses to local stores.<sup>167</sup> The two men took the “Sar” from Sartori, the “Gent” from Gentine, added an “o” to sound more Italian, and the Sargento Cheese Company was born in 1953.<sup>168</sup> Sargento sold Parmesan, Romano, Mozzarella and Provolone cheeses to the consumer market. In the 1960s, Gentine invented the first vacuum-sealed package of cheese, the first packaged sliced cheese and the first packaged shredded cheese in the United States.<sup>169</sup> As was the case with Saputo, Sargento focused on production for restaurants and home consumers.

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<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

<sup>164</sup> Email Correspondence with Alice Chan, Director of National Dry Company Limited (Parent Company of Brio). November 21 and 22, 2018.

<sup>165</sup>. As of 2020, Saputo remains Canadian owned, and operates divisions in Argentina, Australia and the United Kingdom. The brand has expanded beyond dairy to baking and retains the rights to Hostess Brands including the Twinkie.

“A Family Heritage- 1960-1980” Saputo. <https://www.saputo.com/en/our-company/history-overview/1960> (Accessed April 16, 2019)

<sup>166</sup> “A Modest Cheese Store” Sargento. <https://www.sargento.com/our-story/our-history> (Accessed April 16, 2019)

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup>. “A Modest Cheese Store” Sargento. <https://www.sargento.com/our-story/our-history> (Accessed April 16, 2019)

<sup>169</sup>. Ibid.

The supply of canned tomatoes and cheese from across Canada, the United States, Mexico and Italy facilitated the production of artisanal and standardized pizza. As the supply chain for pizza grew, some companies like Robinhood Multifoods and Pepsico adapted the methods of early fast food franchises like Howard Johnson and White Castle, where they controlled the manufacturing of raw ingredients and distribution. For example, Pizza Nova relied on Italian imported tomatoes until the 1990s, while brands like Pizza Hut domestically sourced their tomatoes. This ultimately changed the character of their sauce, and the product they standardized across franchises.

While access to a supply chain was one way that franchises ensured consistency of product across all locations, Domenic Primucci of Pizza Nova explained, “consistency is a lot of hard work and training.”<sup>170</sup> Unlike an independent pizzeria that oversaw the hiring of all employees and training under the guise of the owner or manager, the franchise was a decentralized operation. Franchises had to develop stringent training programs to ensure that workers at franchises produced the same standardized product. At independent pizzerias, the ethnic economies facilitated training as a co-ethnic employee tended to work in a pizzeria before opening their own pizza business. Training was emphasized in a variety of pizza hiring advertisements in Buffalo and Toronto. In Buffalo, job advertisements highlighted training for employment in local pizzerias. An advertisement for Jaco’s Pizza sought, “sub and wing cooks and pizza makers,” and emphasized training, with the words, “we will train,” bolded and underlined beneath the wage rate.<sup>171</sup> Another help wanted advertisement in *The Spirit* sought a pizza baker in

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<sup>170</sup> Domenic Primucci, Interviewed by Alexander Hughes. November 2<sup>nd</sup> 2019, Toronto.

<sup>171</sup> “Help Wanted: Jaco’s.” Advertisement. *Island Dispatch*. October 5, 1990. 23.

Tonawanda, and explained that training would be provided.<sup>172</sup> In Toronto, advertisements for franchise conglomerates, Pizza Hut and Pizza Pizza, emphasized training for those in assistant management and franchise partner roles. A Pizza Hut assistant manager job posting in 1985 explained that managers were “setting the pace for the 1980s.”<sup>173</sup> Pizza Hut emphasized that managers could, “contribute to Canada’s fastest growing restaurant chain with a solid training program.”<sup>174</sup> In 1982, Pizza Pizza sought joint-venture partners (partnered franchising with the franchisee and the franchiser each owning half stakes) to invest in a franchise after successful completion of a three to six month training program, PizzaPizzaU.<sup>175</sup>

In 1979, *CH&R* celebrated Foodex, the parent company of Frank Vetere’s Pizza, for creating training videotapes for employees.<sup>176</sup> Vetere’s was not the first pizzeria to create a fast food training video but they were one of the first in Canada.<sup>177</sup> Foodex purchased a Sony Betamax video camera and traveled to stores to record meal preparation footage with the employee manual used as a script.<sup>178</sup> The Vice President of Management Development for Foodex explained, “Television is a medium which is familiar to everyone, especially to the students who make up much of the part-time staff.”<sup>179</sup> By using technology to train employees to prepare a standardized pizza and to

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<sup>172</sup> “Help Wanted.” *The Spirit*. September 4, 1979. 8.

<sup>173</sup> “Pizza Hut Canada- Assistant Manager.” *Careers. Toronto Star*, June 13, 1985.

<sup>174</sup> “Pizza Hut Canada- Assistant Manager.” *Careers. Toronto Star*, June 13, 1985.

<sup>175</sup> “Pizza Pizza Joint Venture Partner.” *Business. Toronto Star*. November 13, 1982.

<sup>176</sup> “Foodex says videotape is a perfect teacher.” *Canadian Hotel & Restaurant*. January, 1979. 16.

<sup>177</sup> A 1972 video was made for McDonalds employees to teach customer service. The video features no training on how to use point of sale, or cooking processes. The video focuses on dealing with customers including the old grouch, customers who can’t make up their mind, rude children, grumpy coworkers, and people in a rush. The film follows McDonalds employees as they travel to other businesses in their time off and experience good and bad customer service skills that they can apply to working at McDonalds. McDonalds Training Film, 1972, 13:55.

<sup>178</sup> “Foodex says videotape is a perfect teacher.” *Canadian Hotel & Restaurant*. January, 1979. 16.

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid*.

communicate messages, Foodex was able to control the access to knowledge and training of employees, as they grew and decentralized operations. The training video replaced the training of Italian employees in the household economy or by an ethnic entrepreneur in a pizzeria.

Pizza Hut also introduced the training video into its operations in 1988. Pizza Hut's video explained to employees that making a pizza was one part of the "experience we hope to deliver to customers."<sup>180</sup> The training video featured a teenage employee being taught by an older manager how to make Pizza Hut pizzas. The trainer kept telling the new employee that customers "expect the same product regardless if it is a busy Friday night or a slow Tuesday afternoon."<sup>181</sup> The video went through the steps of preparing a pizza, including weighing toppings and using the timed carousel oven, which maintained the consistency of product.<sup>182</sup> The video's focus on creating the same product time and time again demonstrates how employee training was central to enforcing the product's uniformity across the franchise's multiple locations.

Each of the training videos highlights how conglomerate chains and franchises were obsessed with the speed of pizza production -- factors thought to influence a consumer's decision when picking a franchise from which to purchase pizza.<sup>183</sup> Ovens were a central technological factor in pizza production. Unlike the independent pizzerias of the Italian ethnic economies, which used gas and wood burning ovens designed for baking and pizza-making, franchises and conglomerates had the capital to design their own style of ovens to hasten cooking time. Domino's created "ferris-wheel" rotating

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<sup>180</sup> Pizza Hut Training Department, Training Video, 1988. YouTube. Accessed April 14, 2020.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

<sup>183</sup> "Eating Out: All Pizzas are not Created Equal." *Toronto Star*. June 5, 1971. A2.

ovens to encourage high volume production with quick handling.<sup>184</sup> These ovens could accommodate more pizzas in less space than a conventional oven and pizzas were placed in rigid screens rather than directly on the oven shelves to allow for faster and easier handling.<sup>185</sup> Similarly, Pizza Hut's training video revealed the use of a conveyor belt oven and panned pizzas.<sup>186</sup> This oven facilitated rapid continuous production, and the pans allowed for easier handling from the production line, through the oven to the pizza box. The entire process took around twelve minutes, of which eight to nine minutes were spent on the conveyor oven.<sup>187</sup> Rapid cooking technologies were proprietary to franchises and conglomerates and replaced the technical know-how and skills of Italian *pizzaiolos*.

The franchise conglomerate's obsession with speed extended beyond the kitchen to consumer delivery. Dominos offered the delivery guarantee "thirty minutes or its free" in the 1970s, amidst supreme confidence in their rapid cooking processes.<sup>188</sup> Canadian chain, Pizza Pizza, also followed this policy.<sup>189</sup> An editorial in the *Toronto Star* in 1985 claimed that delivery drivers "are terrorizing our streets with reckless irresponsible actions."<sup>190</sup> The author asked, "Who needs their pizza to be delivered so fast?" after watching a delivery car nearly run over a group of children playing on a Scarborough street.<sup>191</sup> The speed of delivery may have been a factor in the choice of some consumers, while others saw only the risks associated with speedy delivery.

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<sup>184</sup> Helstosky, *Pizza*, 89.

<sup>185</sup> Dicke, Thomas S. *Franchising in America: The Development of a Business Method 1840-1980*. (UNC Press, 1992), 133.

<sup>186</sup> Pizza Hut Training Department, Training Video, 1988. YouTube. Accessed April 14, 2020.

<sup>187</sup> Pizza Hut Training Department, Training Video, 1988. YouTube. Accessed April 14, 2020.

<sup>188</sup> Helstosky, *Pizza*, 89.

<sup>189</sup> Rick McCabe, Interviewed by Alexander Hughes.

<sup>190</sup> Magill, Kenneth. "Who needs their pizza delivered so fast?" *Toronto Star*. August 15, 1985. A18.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*

The standardized pizza was the result of the emergence of decentralized conglomerates, franchises, and American-owned branch plants, and the need for a uniform product and restaurants across the United States and Canada. In Toronto, the standardized pizza can be attributed to the economic capacity of the city to support new conglomerate businesses and Toronto's position as a centre of the branch plant economy, while in Buffalo, standardized pizza was created in other urban centres and was brought to Buffalo as franchises attempted to operate in the city.

### **Conclusion**

Between the late 1960s and 1980s, franchises and conglomerates opened take-out pizzerias, pizza restaurants, in Toronto and Buffalo. Toronto's booming economy, population growth, suburbanization, and position as a centre of the branch plant economy facilitated the development of local franchise chains, attracted expansionary Canadian chains, and attracted the incursion of American branch plant franchises. In Buffalo, the declining industrial base and dwindling population did not attract many conglomerates or franchises, with many leaving after a few years of existence.

Ethnic economies facilitated the early growth and development of franchised pizza in Toronto. In Toronto, the successes of multi-location pizzerias like Pizza Nova and Pizzaville led ethnocultural entrepreneurs to franchising. The profitability and popularity of pizza associated with independent pizzerias attracted non-Italians to enter the pizza industry. The intrusion of non-Italians and mass conglomerates in the pizza industry suggests that the mass commodification of pizza no longer hinged upon the ethnic economy. In both Toronto and Buffalo, ethnic economies were essential to the development of supporting pizza industries, namely the tomato and cheese industries.

The commodification of pizza by mass conglomerate franchises resulted in the standardized pizza. The standardized pizza was created as a result of the efforts of franchises to replicate the processes of the Italian ethnic economies, including supply chain, training, and production tools. It is evident that middle class consumers in Toronto demanded standardized pizza, as the city supported multiple franchises and conglomerates. In Buffalo working class incomes and a small dwindling population did not support the commodification and consumption of standardized pizza at franchises.

The franchise and conglomerate were the result of the capitalist commodification of an ethnic food item. The rise of the franchise and conglomerate pizzeria owned by non-Italians in Toronto and Buffalo resulted in competitive war between franchise chains and independent Italian-owned pizzerias in the 1980s and 1990s. The Italian ethnic economy fought for survival against multinational corporations, as discussed in the next chapter.

## **Chapter 5: Franchise Pizza Wars- Mama Fights Back**

On April 20, 1994 dozens of the Greater Buffalo Area's small business owners, including pizzeria owners, gathered to hear Jacob J. Palillo, (son of Niagara Falls, New York Mayor Jacob A. Palillo) describe plans to create a nighttime entertainment district on several blocks of Main Street.<sup>1</sup> Palillo and his brother, Anthony, owned a series of small businesses including Jaco's Pizzeria, Siltone Building, a limousine company and two nightclubs.<sup>2</sup> The "Main Street USA" proposal was a plan to develop a series of "trendy, upscale and artsy shops, bars and restaurants."<sup>3</sup> Palillo described the section of Main Street as, "an eyesore filled with vacant storefronts, and many more businesses slated to close in the near future."<sup>4</sup> As the result of population and economic decline, independent businesses in the Greater Buffalo Area struggled. Timothy Shiah of Formaggio's Pizzeria on Third Street said he wanted, "three storefronts down there," upon seeing Palillo's plan.<sup>5</sup> Palillo asked the city's development department for \$916,001 (CAD) in financing, but it was denied, and the plan fell through less than a month later, with Palillo blaming "politics" of City Council members.<sup>6</sup>

Independent businesses in the Greater Buffalo Area were threatened by a dwindling urban economy and the incursion of franchised conglomerate businesses. Conglomerates could afford to operate a restaurant franchise as a loss leader, which was a

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<sup>1</sup> Lowery, Arch. "Nighttime Plan Finds a Receptive Main Street Audience." *The Buffalo News*. April 20, 1994.

<sup>2</sup> Lowery, Arch. "Palillo Sons Cleared in Boat Death." *The Buffalo News*. September 29, 1992.

<sup>3</sup> Lowery, Arch. "Nighttime Plan Finds a Receptive Main Street Audience." *The Buffalo News*. April 20, 1994.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Figure of \$400,000 USD reported in article, adjusted to \$740,377 USD in 2021 using a US Inflation Calculator, or \$916,001 CAD.

Lowery, Arch. "Main St Plan Pushed Despite Palillo Pullout." *The Buffalo News*. May 23, 1994.

strategy used to hold geographic territory away from competitors, and a luxury that independent businesses could not afford. The owners of two independent pizzerias supported the Main Street USA plan, which suggests that independent pizzerias were struggling and looking towards alternative development plans to increase their customer base and foot traffic. The proposed nighttime entertainment district suggests that the consumption patterns of Buffalonians had once again changed, and pizza had become part of a night-out and leisure, rather than a quick snack or after work dinner. As was the case in Buffalo, independent pizzerias in Toronto were also threatened in the 1980s. A strong urban economy and an expanding population with middle class incomes facilitated the growth of franchise chains and American branch plant franchises in Toronto, and threatened the business of independent pizzerias.

By the 1980s, Italians in the pizza industry were losing the ethnic economy's command of the pizza market in both Toronto and Buffalo as non-Italians opened businesses, which sought to capitalize upon the popularity of pizza. Pizzerias that were products of the Italian ethnic economies tried to capitalize upon their ethnicity to promote authenticity and the quality of product that they could sell in comparison to non-Italians. Independent pizzerias served items including gourmet pizzas, submarine sandwiches, and "old school" pizza, which promoted Italian authenticity and nostalgia. However, independent pizzerias also adopted some of the business practices of franchises and conglomerates, including centralized ordering phone numbers, and liquor sales, in order to compete. As independent pizzerias adopted the business practices and marketing techniques used by non-Italian pizzerias, their connection to the Italian ethnic economies was eroded. The role of ethnic economies was limited to co-ethnic franchisees, Italian-

owned supply chain businesses and independent pizzerias. Independent pizzerias offered similar side dishes to mass conglomerates, were involved in marketing cross-promotion schemes, and organized to lobby local government. The distinction between franchised businesses linked to the Italian ethnic economy and those of the non-Italian economy were beginning to blur as they became more standardized in the interests of capitalist competition.

The introduction of the franchise to Toronto and Buffalo in the late 1960s and 1970s brought a series of small commodity wars to the streets of the cities in the 1980s and 1990s. These wars were fought on multiple fronts between the major commoditizers of pizza – the independent pizzeria, the franchise and the conglomerate franchise. Changing urban economies, the role of ethnic economies, the branch plant economy, and changing processes of consumer leisure and spending facilitated these wars. On one front, franchises and independent pizzerias fought for control of urban spaces, and for consumers. Independent pizzerias created new products and attempted to play on memories of nostalgia and authenticity to differentiate themselves from standardized pizzas. Another front was fought amongst conglomerates and franchises, both aiming to reign supreme over the pizza industry. This front was fought through the use of advertising campaigns, product innovation, and in court cases. This front was widely fought in Toronto, where multiple conglomerates and franchises vied for urban supremacy. The final front of these commodity wars was related to the health risks associated with the consumption of junk foods, namely pizza. Concerned advocates, primarily health professionals, journalists, women concerned with their children's health,

and fitness professionals spread the message and directly challenged the pizza industry in support of healthier alternatives and lifestyles.<sup>7</sup>

Toronto's growth and prosperity and Buffalo's economic decline, in conjunction with the role of Italian ethnic economies, shaped the interactions between independent pizzerias, franchises, conglomerates and consumers in the two cities and facilitated the pizza wars. For example, the war over the health concerns of pizza consumption can be understood from positions of economic inequality rather than attempts to ensure the health and well-being of Canadians and American children at home and at school. Health concerns were inherently tied to middle class incomes, which could provide for healthier alternatives to pizza. In Toronto, health concerns resulted in the commodification of high-end "healthier" pizzas with a higher prices, which middle class residents could afford. Similarly, patterns of leisure, which included restaurant consumption, were influenced by economic status. In the postwar era, increased spending power and leisure time facilitated patterns of tourism and leisure consumption. As historians Richard Fox and Jackson Lears suggested, value systems based on work, sacrifice and saving were replaced by consumer ethic and a consumer culture.<sup>8</sup> This consumer culture was a lifestyle based on one's economic ability to consume goods and services. The emerging wealthy middle class in Toronto and working class in Buffalo had different patterns of consumption, which accounted for how and where they consumed pizza. Torontonians consumed

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<sup>7</sup> A movement of health food consciousness in Canada emerged in the 1960s and 1970s as Canadian consumers became skeptical of modern science, medicine and technology, while seeking "total health." The movement popularized practices of alternative medicine, nutritional science, and alternative fitness programs.

Carstairs, Catherine. "The Granola High: Eating Differently in the Late 1960s and 1970s." in *Edible Histories Cultural Politics: Towards a Canadian Food History*. Eds. Iacovetta, Korinek. Epp. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012).

<sup>8</sup> Fox, Richard and Jackson Lears, "Introduction" in *The Culture of Consumption: Critical Essays in American History 1880-1980*, ed. Richard Fox and Jackson Lears (New York: Pantheon, 1983), x.

franchise pizza, luxury styles of pizza, alcohol alongside pizza in restaurants, and nostalgic pizza, while Buffalonians consumed pizza from independent businesses, pizzeria-made submarine sandwiches and also ate at pizza-tainment restaurants.<sup>9</sup>

In the 1980s, Toronto became Canada's hub for corporate headquarters, banking and industry.<sup>10</sup> Stemming from its economic growth in the 1980s, Toronto's average annual household income grew from \$84,690 to \$90,641 between 1981 and 1989.<sup>11</sup> Coinciding with growing middle class incomes, Toronto's role as a major Canadian cultural hub advanced. Some middle class Torontonians sought to use their economic prosperity to adopt upper class tastes through the purchase of luxury food and goods.<sup>12</sup> Despite some middle class striving for affluence, Toronto's middle class supported the development of a Major League Baseball franchise and baseball stadium in 1977, the Fest of Festivals (Toronto International Film Festival) in 1976, and musical and theatre performance venues including Roy Thompson Hall (which opened in 1982), O'Keefe Center (1960), and Mirvish Productions (1987, owner of the Royal Alexandra Theatre). Food was another aspect of Toronto culture that changed in accordance with economic growth and middle class incomes. Food critic Joanne Kates of the *Globe and Mail* (from 1974 to 2012) claimed that her critique of the restaurant, Noodles, at Bloor and Bay

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<sup>9</sup> Pizza-tainment is a term I have created to describe the business of franchises like Chuck E. Cheese, Pizza Time Theatre and later concepts like Dave and Busters. It describes restaurants that served pizza alongside entertainment experiences. The concept can also be used to describe the early pizza and theatre or pizza and live music restaurants in Toronto in the early 1960s. Pizza-tainment encouraged middle and working class consumers to spend both dining and entertainment budgets in one location.

<sup>10</sup> Levine, 275.

<sup>11</sup> Figures of \$54,214 (1981) and \$58,024 (1989) taken from Statistics Canada, *Income Distributions by Size in Canada (1995)*. Using the Bank of Canada's Inflation Calculator, the 1981 and 1989 figures (originally adjusted by Statistics Canada to 1995 rates), the figures have been adjusted to 2020 rates.

<sup>12</sup> Veenstra, Gerry. "Culture and Class in Canada." *The Canadian Journal of Sociology*, no. 1 (2010): 83-111, 86.

Streets in 1974 signified the change in Toronto's dining scene.<sup>13</sup> Unlike earlier Italian restaurants in Toronto with candles in Chianti bottles, and checkered tablecloths, Noodles, "bridged the gap between formal and informal dining."<sup>14</sup> Prior to the opening of Noodles, Toronto's culinary scene was comprised of family restaurants, fast food and what Kates referred to as restaurants of "grand excesses."<sup>15</sup> In a retrospective, Kates described Noodles as, "a great equalizer, and a hip restaurant for middle class Torontonians."<sup>16</sup> As the economic capacity of the city changed, Toronto's middle class supported restaurants like Noodles that were trendy, had mid-priced dishes, and gourmet trained chefs.

As Buffalo entered the 1980s, its once vibrant industrial core had almost disappeared. In June 1982, a *Buffalo Evening News* headline announced, "Strength of Buffalo Steel Industry Melting Away" as the Bethlehem Steel Company closed its plant in Lackawanna and fired thirty-nine hundred workers.<sup>17</sup> Bethlehem was just one of the many companies including Harrison Radiator, Republic Automotive, and Trico Windshield Wiper Corporation, that closed in Buffalo in the early 1980s. As industries

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<sup>13</sup> Joanne Kates trained as a chef at Cordon Bleu in Paris, and spent 38 years as the food critic for the *Globe and Mail*, before retiring as a Camp Director in Northern Ontario. Despite having a weekly column, Kates was unlike most food critics and didn't keep her likeness under wraps, and established a high profile for herself in Toronto for writing both the highest praise of restaurants and for skewering others. Comments in *Toronto Life* in 2012 described her reviews as childish, off-side, elitist, and fussy-duddy. While others praised her reviews for, "savaging pretentious restaurants with mediocre food." In November 1994 she wrote a one word review of Lox Stock & Bagel, "feh." Kates had an oversized reputation and was not a be-all and end-all authority on food in Toronto; however, she reviewed more restaurants than any of her contemporaries, and published annual restaurant review books and cookbooks in the 1980s and 1990s. D'Cruz, Andrew. "Joanne Kates to Leave Globe After 38 Years." *Toronto Life*, May 18, 2012; Kates, Joanne. "Signs off After 38 Years at the Globe." *Globe and Mail*, May 26, 2012; Warzecha, Monika. "Five Things We Learned about Toronto's Dining History from Joanne Kates." *Toronto Life*, May 28, 2012.

<sup>14</sup> Kates, Joanne. "Noodles." *Globe and Mail*, April 22, 1974. And in Kates' retrospective in Levine, 288.

<sup>15</sup> Levine, *Toronto*, 288.

<sup>16</sup> Levine, *Toronto*, 288.

<sup>17</sup> "Strength of Buffalo Steel Industry Melting Away," *Buffalo Evening News*, June 14, 1982. A1  
"Bethlehem to Cease Steelmaking in Lackawanna," *Buffalo News*, December 27, 1982. A1

faltered, retail chains, restaurants, shops, service organizations and the *Courier Express* closed. Cultural institutions, including the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, Buffalo Museum of Science, and the Buffalo Historical Society were on the brink of bankruptcy.<sup>18</sup>

By the end of the 1980s, Buffalo was a city in search of a new economic role. It had declined as a manufacturing hub, and its role as a maritime trade route was made negligible by the St Lawrence Seaway's opening in 1959. The flow of business and population to the suburbs continued through the 1980s, and only a few law firms and bank headquarters remained in the downtown.<sup>19</sup> The suburbs of Amherst, Cheektowaga and Hamburg had become strong financial centres and offered tax incentives to lure businesses away from the city. The McKinley Mall in Hamburg, and Walden Galleria in Cheektowaga attracted the suburban middle class and the working class of Buffalo.<sup>20</sup> As businesses left the city of Buffalo, the average annual household income in 1989 for Erie County was \$73,541, far less than \$90,641 in Metropolitan Toronto.<sup>21</sup>

Between 1980 and the early 1990s Buffalo and Toronto became polar opposites, economically and culturally. Toronto had a vibrant economic and cultural environment while Buffalo's economy declined, and its population moved to the suburbs. As conflicts between the commoditizers of pizza emerged in the 1980s, the ways in which the pizza industries participated and responded to these challenges in Toronto and Buffalo was drastically different.

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<sup>18</sup> Goldman, *City on the Edge*, 311-312.

<sup>19</sup> Goldman, *City on the Edge*, 315.

<sup>20</sup> Goldman, *City on the Edge*, 321.

<sup>21</sup> Buffalo 1989 figure of \$26,226 from U.S. Census Bureau, *Small Area Income and Poverty Assessments*. Adjusted to 2020 rate of \$54,972 USD using US Inflation Calculator, and converted to \$73,541 CAD.

One of the notable changes during the period of the pizza wars was the role of women in the pizza industry in Toronto and Buffalo. Despite the growth of conglomerates and franchises, which were controlled by men, the role of women became increasingly important to the operation of independent pizzerias. As pizzerias linked to the ethnic economies commoditized, nostalgia and authenticity to sell pizza, the female figure of “Mama” once again became central to the sale of pizza. Mama became the symbol for authenticity and nostalgic pizza production used in advertisements, on menus, and by food critiques to describe pizza. However, the image of Mama was not the only female figure during the Pizza Wars. Women played significant roles as mothers, health practitioners and concerned consumer advocates who challenged the health concerns associated with pizza and junk food consumption, and the alleged moral corruption of pizza-tainment.

## I

In the 1980s conglomerates, franchises and independent pizzerias sought to control urban spaces, and to establish consumer relationships in Toronto and Buffalo. In 1985, 140 of the 257 pizzerias in Toronto were independent pizzerias with less than two locations, and in Buffalo 162 of the 182 pizzerias were independent pizzerias with less than two locations.<sup>22</sup> Mass conglomerate franchise chains represented 46% of the pizza for sale in Toronto, and 11% in Buffalo; a situation explained by the diverging urban economies.

Liquor licensing was one of the disadvantages independent pizzerias faced when trying to compete with franchises and conglomerates. The liquor license, or the

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<sup>22</sup> 1985 City Directories for Toronto and Buffalo.

government permit to sell and serve alcohol to patrons, was issued under the authority of the Liquor Licensing Board of Ontario and the New York State Liquor Authority.

Conglomerate franchises often applied for liquor licenses before opening new pizzerias, such as when Pizza Hut came to Toronto.<sup>23</sup> Independent pizzerias often did not apply for liquor licenses when they opened because of the exorbitant costs and volumes of paperwork associated with the licensing process. However, as independent pizzerias diversified their offerings to compete with the dine-in services of chain pizzerias, they applied for liquor licenses to serve alcohol at their restaurants.<sup>24</sup> Alcohol sales catered to the leisure activities of both the working class and the middle class consumers, who wanted after-work drinks, mid-day lunch drinks, drinks for socialization and drinks with meals.

Toronto's oldest pizzeria, Vesuvio, fought a ninety-four year old ruling that prohibited the sale of liquor in the Junction neighbourhood.<sup>25</sup> Under a 1904 ruling by the Village of West Toronto Junction, the town enacted prohibition following a series of fights between railroad workers at a bar located at Weston Road and St. Clair Avenue.<sup>26</sup> When the town was annexed by the City of Toronto in 1909, the prohibition along

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<sup>23</sup> Pizza Hut, Pizza Patio, and Frank Vetere's also served alcohol. "Liquor License Application." *Toronto Star*. April 9, 1975.

<sup>24</sup> While not all franchise and conglomerate pizzerias sold alcohol as their businesses were centred on take-out and delivery operations, alcohol and cigarette sales were a side business for some delivery drivers. Toronto oral history interviews with Rick McCabe and Domenic Primucci revealed, cigarettes were often sold from vending machines in store and delivered alongside pizza. In Buffalo with more relaxed liquor laws than Ontario, delivery drivers were able to sell beer alongside pizza deliveries through both formal and informal channels.

<sup>25</sup> This section was written on April 20, 2020, the same day that Vesuvio closed forever. Amidst the financial turmoil of the COVID-19 pandemic, Vesuvio was forced to close. The restaurant had a sixty-three year history, and was owned by the same family the entire time. Over the weekend of April 18 and 19, 2020 lines wrapped down Dundas St West as customers purchased the final pizzas for sale. The City of Toronto blocked portions of Dundas St West, which allowed a line to form on the street that adhered to the six-foot social distancing protocol.

<sup>26</sup> "Junction Prohibition," Toronto Junction Historical Society, accessed (April 20, 2020).

Dundas Street was absorbed into the laws of the city. The Pugliese family understood their customers' desire to eat pizza with wine and beer and wanted to compete with restaurants that offered alcohol sales.<sup>27</sup> The Pugliese family joined other local restaurant owners and pro-liquor community members on the "yes/wet" faction of a series of local plebiscites. Local plebiscites held in 1962 and 1973 resulted in continued prohibition.<sup>28</sup> Following the 1973 plebiscite, a discouraged Dominic Pugliese left Toronto for Italy where he opened a car dealership.<sup>29</sup> However, the loss of a third plebiscite in 1984 was most damning for Vesuvio's business. As the "No" result was announced, Ettore Pugliese nailed the door of Vesuvio shut and announced the closure of the restaurant. Ettore picked up the tab for all diners in the restaurant and remarked, "Three strikes and you're out. That's the way I look at it."<sup>30</sup> The next day, the Pugliese family closed the sit-down restaurant, purchased a jewelry store next-door, and turned it into a take-out pizzeria counter and delivery business.<sup>31</sup>

In 1996, Piera Pugliese (wife of Ettore) joined forces with Santa Cuda of the Flamingo Banquet Hall, and Maureen Lynett of Lynett Funeral Home to form W.E.T. (Working for Equal Treatment).<sup>32</sup> W.E.T. was a collective of Junction businesses who

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<sup>27</sup> "About" Vesuvio Pizza. (Website Archived by Alexander Hughes, April 20, 2020).

<sup>28</sup> The liquor plebiscites were held during municipal elections under the supervision of provincial election officials, as the province regulated the sale of alcohol.

"East York to Vote on Cocktail Lounges." *The Globe and Mail*. September 16, 1969, 5.

<sup>29</sup> Dominic's departure from Toronto demonstrates the malleability of the ethnic economy in Toronto. As he feared that his business in Canada would fail without liquor, he moved back to Italy where he would open another business with skills gained in Canada. However, he would eventually return to Toronto to support the family business. "About" Vesuvio Pizza.

<sup>30</sup> "3 Strikes and I'm Out." *Toronto Star*. April 15, 1984. A3.

<sup>31</sup> "About" Vesuvio Pizza.

<sup>32</sup> The organization of W.E.T demonstrates how ethnic economies worked together to fight prohibition. Piera Pugliese was a member of the Italian ethnic economy and Santa Cuda was the Chair of the Malta Village Business Association, a group of Maltese ethnic entrepreneurs in Toronto. W.E.T also reveals the centrality of women to family businesses. Vesuvio's was once primarily a male family business, relying on the immigration of brothers and uncles, however, Piera's role in W.E.T. reveals that she became central to the business in the 1990s.

believed that it was best for the economic and social well being of their community to allow restaurants to serve alcohol. On November 10, 1997 another alcohol plebiscite was held, which determined (by a vote of 60-40) that the Junction was a wet neighbourhood.<sup>33</sup> In 2000, Vesuvio re-opened their dining room, serving alcohol.<sup>34</sup>

The sale of liquor was one the features advertised by franchises and conglomerates to attract customers. Toronto's Mr. Pizza featured the availability of liquor in a series of testimonial advertisements in the *Toronto Star*. A typist's testimonial exclaimed that liquor and pizza after work was a perfect match.<sup>35</sup> Another testimonial from a TTC operator boosted the pizza, atmosphere, liquor and the rather sexist opinion - that the appearance of the waitresses made Mr. Pizza worth visiting.<sup>36</sup> By using employment themed advertisements, Mr. Pizza sought to attract an after-work audience for drinks and pizza. Pizza Hut, Pizza Patio and Frank Vetere's ran similar post-work advertisements.<sup>37</sup>

In order for independent pizzerias to attract customers away from the mass conglomerate franchises, they needed to have similar offerings. Independent pizzerias, like Vesuvio's, returned to their origins as restaurants serving pizza rather than take-out and delivery pizzerias to attract middle class consumers. The growing middle class saw

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Rainford, Lisa. "The Junction Capitalizes on the Power of Alcohol." *Bloor West Villager*. January 17, 2011.

<sup>33</sup> Immen, Wallace. "Junction's 94 year long dry spell over." *Globe and Mail*. November 6, 1998. A17.

<sup>34</sup> "About" Vesuvio Pizza.

<sup>35</sup> "Mr. Pizza" Advertisement. *Toronto Star*. July 4, 1977.

<sup>36</sup> The opinion expressed in this advertisement suggests that pizza restaurants were still a masculine space for socialization. The TTC operator commented on the alcohol, food and appearance of the staff of Mr. Pizza. While the advertisement is blatantly sexist, it does also suggest that women were working as servers in pizzerias in the late 1970s. What is also concerning about the advertisement is that the testimonial is provided by a TTC employee, a public servant, which begs the question if the TTC was endorsing the pizzeria or the sexist comments. "Mr. Pizza" Advertisement. *Toronto Star*. June 16, 1977.

<sup>37</sup> Sample of advertisements in the *Toronto Star* in the late 1980s.

restaurants as a place to socialize and consume. Chain restaurants re-popularized the pizza dining room in a more casual setting, which appealed to the middle class.

While alcohol sales were a feature of the competition between franchise and independent pizza restaurants, the ease of central telephone ordering was a competitive advantage that franchises had over independent pizzerias. As we have seen, the Toronto franchise, Pizza Pizza, was the first to successfully implement a centralized ordering phone number and computer dispatch system.<sup>38</sup> Pizza Nova and Pizzaville also created centralized ordering numbers. One central call centre took all orders, and dispatched them to appropriately located franchises, which baked and delivered the pizza. Independent pizzerias had one phone line, which consumers had to search for in a telephone directory, or record in a rolodex. Other challenges came as consumers traveled outside their home delivery zone and wanted to order a pizza to work or school. The centralized phone number allowed conglomerates to market the ease of ordering from the same number anywhere in the city, which made franchises more convenient for the consumer.

Central phone numbers for franchises and conglomerates became highly marketable symbols of the brand's identity. For example, Pizza Pizza appealed to the Canadian Federal Court of Appeal to register their 967-1111 phone number as a trademark, after a lower court ruled against it.<sup>39</sup> The Appeal Court allowed Pizza Pizza to trademark their phone number in 1989 after the federal trademark registrar continuously denied their attempts.<sup>40</sup> The centralized number Pizza Pizza was assigned

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<sup>38</sup> See Chapter 4 for more information on Pizza Pizza's central phone number, proprietary computer software and "flying squad" that provided labour support to busy franchises.

<sup>39</sup> Appeal Court swallows idea of 967-1111 as pizza trademark." *Toronto Star*. June 9, 1989. F2.

<sup>40</sup> "Appeal Court swallows idea of 967-1111 as pizza trademark." *Toronto Star*. June 9, 1989. F2.

by Bell Canada was a former Eaton's department store phone number, which Eaton's attempted to buy back after the initial success of their ordering line.<sup>41</sup> Centralized and advertised phone numbers like Pizza Pizza's 967-111 or Pizza Nova's 439-0000 were familiar to Toronto consumers because of their frequently played radio and television jingles. Pizza Nova's adaptation of the centralized phone number is notable as it demonstrates how ethnic enterprises adapted the business practices of mass conglomerates to compete. In an article in the *Toronto Star* in 1984, one reporter claimed that, "some large chains like Pizza Pizza have pushed independent pizzerias to the wall."<sup>42</sup> The article suggested that it was the dominance of the centralized phone number that was hurting the business of independent pizzerias.

The *Toronto Star* determined in 1988 that 74% of children between the ages of nine and sixteen in Toronto had eaten Pizza Pizza in the past month and knew the Pizza Pizza number by heart. The article explains that some parents allowed their children to call and order a pizza themselves.<sup>43</sup> The domination of Pizza Pizza's centralized phone number can be attributed to how Pizza Pizza marketed directly to children. Pizza Pizza followed the lead of other fast food chains and consumer products, which advertised directly to children and teenagers, starting in the 1950s.<sup>44</sup> The "Camp Pizza Pizza" and "Pizza Pizza University" advertising campaigns sold collectable t-shirts and marketed the brand directly to youth.<sup>45</sup> PepsiCo, the owner of Pizza Hut, conducted research that identified Pizza Pizza as one of the most popular brands amongst young-teens in

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<sup>41</sup> Picton, John. "Any way you slice it, he's making millions." *Toronto Star*. January 25, 1981.

<sup>42</sup> Kidd, Kenneth. "Will ads sell well in the loo?" *Toronto Star*. September 23, 1984.

<sup>43</sup> Kidd, Kenneth. "Baby's first phone call leads to loyal customers." *Toronto Star*. June 12, 1988. D2.

<sup>44</sup> Cohen, Lizabeth. *A Consumers' Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America*. (New York: Vintage Books, 2003), 121-122.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

Canada.<sup>46</sup> Pizzerias connected to the ethnic economy did not have the same access to marketing, nor marketing audiences like Pizza Pizza and were unable to compete.

As a response to the domination of Pizza Pizza's central phone number, Pizza Hotline was born. Pizza Hotline offered independent pizzerias access to the same marketing power and tools that franchise conglomerates had. Similar to a franchise agreement, independent pizzerias purchased membership rights to Pizza Hotline at a cost of \$4800/year and a 20% royalty on food orders received through the hotline.<sup>47</sup> Pizza Hotline divided Toronto into eighty-five territories, granting exclusive territory rights to franchisees delivering to each area. By September 1984, thirty outlets had signed up to cover seventy-seven of the territories.<sup>48</sup> The hotline managed to franchise the independent pizza industry's advertising and service offerings, which allowed for independent pizzerias to compete with franchises and conglomerates. The independent pizzerias that were the product of ethnic economies were forced to adopt the model of franchise conglomerates in order to ensure their survival in Toronto.

While some independent pizzerias adapted the methods and technologies of franchises, others modified their product offerings and promoted nostalgia and authenticity linked to Italian ethnic economies. Traditional Italian recipes and cooking methods were passed down through Italian households and were commoditized in some independent pizzerias. These products contrasted with the standardized pizzas sold by franchise pizzerias. Franchises and conglomerates never produced authentic-style pizza products and accompaniments because of the variety of ingredients required, and the

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid. While Pepsico owned Pizza Hut, their interest in Pizza Pizza's domination of the Canadian market was conducted as Pepsi was the soft drink supplier to Pizza Pizza.

<sup>47</sup> Kidd, Kenneth. "Will ads sell well in the loo?" *Toronto Star*. September 23, 1984.

<sup>48</sup> Kidd, Kenneth. "Will ads sell well in the loo?" *Toronto Star*. September 23, 1984.

technical knowledge required to produce them. Adults, who had come of age in the 1980s, first consumed pizza in Italian-owned independent pizzerias in the 1960s. The styles of pizza sold in independent pizzerias appealed to their senses of childhood nostalgia. The independent pizza industry appealed to a new base of middle class consumers with growing incomes, and was able to charge slightly more than the cost of a standardized product.

In contrast to nostalgic styles of pizza, Toronto pizzerias produced luxury, gourmet, Yuppie, or California-style pizzas. These pizzas were a modification of the white pizza, an Italian style of pizza with no tomato sauce but with premium toppings. The luxury pizza can be accredited to the Italian culinary styles of Sicilian style pizza (*sfincione*) and the Roman Pizza Bianca.<sup>49</sup> Independent pizzerias modified Italian culinary traditions to commoditize artisanal pizzas with unique ingredients and toppings. The production of luxury pizza relied on an independent pizzeria's access to the co-ethnic food supply businesses, which supplied pizzerias with high quality ingredients, many of which were imported from Italy.<sup>50</sup> By commoditizing premium pizza products, independent pizzerias were able to capitalize upon Toronto's wealthier middle class consumers who sought to project affluence through the purchase of luxury goods and foods.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> *Sfincione* was a style with premium crust and basic toppings, while Pizza Bianca was a basic crust with premium toppings. Both styles featured a premium ingredient.

<sup>50</sup> One example of high quality products was using a pure shredded mozzarella cheese rather than a soy-mozzarella blend. Many franchise conglomerates used the soy and cheese blend because it was cheaper than just cheese, added "cheese stretch" to the final product, and was hard for customers to identify. Toronto's Pizza Nova continued to use the more expensive shredded mozzarella rather than a soy-blend owing to their ethnic economy connections. However other pizza franchises opted for the cheaper product blend for cost efficiency. Products including olives, artichokes, truffles, and San Marzano tomatoes were imported by Italian-owned companies including Unico and Saputo.

<sup>51</sup> Veenstra, Gerry. "Culture and Class in Canada." *The Canadian Journal of Sociology*, no. 1 (2010): 83-111, 86.

The luxury pizza styles popularized in Toronto were arguably influenced by the Southern California pizza style, popular amongst Hollywood celebrities. The California pizza style was created by Chef Ed LaDou at the restaurant, Prego, in San Francisco. In the 1970s, LaDou experimented with toppings including liver pâté, eggplant, and clams on pizza.<sup>52</sup> In 1980, Austrian chef, Wolfgang Puck ate a pizza made by LaDou's featuring ricotta cheese, red peppers, pâté and mustard. Puck offered LaDou the position as pizzemaker at his upcoming Los Angeles restaurant, Spago. When Spago opened in Beverly Hills in 1982, pizzas with smoked salmon and duck sausage became very popular amongst the restaurant's celebrity clientele.<sup>53</sup> In 1985, two Los Angeles attorneys, Larry Flax and Rick Rosenfield, poached Ed LaDou from Spago to create the menu for the franchise restaurant, California Pizza Kitchen.<sup>54</sup> California Pizza Kitchen was a chain of restaurants that mass commoditized and standardized variants of the California-style pizza across the United States throughout the late 1980s and 1990s.<sup>55</sup> While a California Pizza Kitchen had not opened in Toronto or Buffalo by 1990, the style of pizza was commoditized by Toronto's independent pizzerias.

The California-style pizza used plain or whole-wheat crust to showcase premium ingredients, including heirloom tomatoes, asparagus, avocado and broccoli, locally sourced non-Italian cheeses, and a variety of proteins including duck, mussels, lobster

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<sup>52</sup> Barrett, *Pizza, A Slice of American History*, 116.

<sup>53</sup> One popular story about a celebrity who loved the Spago pizza was television host and comedian, Johnny Carson who would order ten pizzas at a time. One night, Puck found out that Carson kept the pizzas in his freezer to save as a snack or dinner. Puck tried the process himself and found that it worked well. He started to sell his pizzas made at Spago and then frozen to the Gelson's supermarket chain. As Puck's popularity grew through cookbooks and television appearances, he licensed his frozen pizzas to ConAgra foods under a multi-million dollar deal. "About Wolfgang." WolfgangPuck.com (accessed April 24, 2020).

<sup>54</sup> Barrett, *Pizza, A Slice of American History*, 117.

<sup>55</sup> Barrett, *Pizza, A Slice of American History*, 118.

and salmon.<sup>56</sup> Other styles of California pizza used barbecue sauce, garlic, truffle oil, ranch dressing, Alfredo sauce, and olive oil rather than a tomato sauce. Internationally themed pizzas, including Mexican and Thai, emerged as part of the California pizza craze because of the influence of Mexican and South-East Asian cuisines in California's urban centres in the 1980s.<sup>57</sup>

The California pizza trend was popularized in New York, Miami, Boston and Toronto in the mid 1980s, owing to Hollywood celebrity culture, and celebrity gossip magazines like *Sunset*, *People*, and *Us Weekly*, which popularized the celebrity consumption of the style outside California.<sup>58</sup> One of the first mentions of "California inspired" cuisine in Toronto, coincided with the opening of the Daily Planet restaurant at 40 Eglinton Avenue East (Yonge Street and Eglinton Ave) in 1985.<sup>59</sup> Following the health conscious trend popularized by the 1982 revisions to *Canada's Food Guide*, Daily Planet was opened in consultation with a nutritionist who consulted with the culinary team to produce a menu that was low in fat, cholesterol and sodium. The restaurant catered to health conscious middle class Torontonians who could afford premium menu items including pizzas, inspired by LaDou and Puck, topped with artichoke hearts and smoked salmon.<sup>60</sup> Despite arriving in Toronto in a restaurant that served a variety of cuisines, California pizza became a staple product for the independent pizzerias.

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<sup>56</sup> Barrett, *Pizza, A Slice of American History*, 113.

<sup>57</sup> Ethnic culinary styles were popular in Southern California and influenced culinary experimentation and fusion cooking. California style pizza became an umbrella term for fusion pizzas and premium toppings. Barrett, *Pizza, A Slice of American History*, 113.

<sup>58</sup> Gordon. Bertram. "Shifting Tastes and Terms: The Rise of California Cuisine." *Revue Française D'études Américaines*, no. 27/28 (1986), 109-126, 114.

<sup>59</sup> "This eatery is California-inspired." *Toronto Star*. August 2, 1986. 23.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

In 1988, the *Toronto Star* exclaimed, “Gourmet Pizza, designer pizza, Yuppie pizza, upscale pizza. Call it what you want, but pizza has moved from cardboard boxes to linen table cloths.”<sup>61</sup> The California pizza movement was an attempt in Toronto to shift middle class consumer perceptions away from the standardized pizza experience of ordering takeout from a franchise, towards a dine-in experience at an independent pizzeria. As middle class Torontonians sought to project affluence through the purchase of luxury goods and food, Toronto’s independent pizzerias adapted a new style and were able to return to the roots of their ethnic economy, dining in restaurants.

Restaurants across Toronto modified their kitchens to install woodfired ovens, associated with the California style pizza and used at Spago. Most independent pizzerias in Toronto used gas ovens, while franchises and conglomerates used electric carousel and conveyor ovens. Wood burning pizza ovens were rooted in Italian culinary traditions, but had been replaced by gas ovens because their unequal distribution of heat could result in air pockets and charred pizza crusts.<sup>62</sup> Gas ovens were cheaper and more effective for urban Italian ethnic economies to operate but with a resurgence of traditional pizza styles, Italian ethnocultural entrepreneurs relied on traditional cooking methods. One Toronto restaurant, Centro, at Yonge Street and Castlefield Avenue, purchased a wood-burning oven that was a replica of Wolfgang Puck’s at Spago.<sup>63</sup> Other pizzerias, including Il Fornello, Orso, and Panevino all had wood-fired ovens, which could reach 500-degrees.<sup>64</sup> Wood-fired high-temperature ovens required skill and knowledge that could be obtained from training in pizzerias linked to Italian ethnic economies. In contrast, the electric pizza

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<sup>61</sup> Kingsmill, David. “Gourmet Pizza.” *Toronto Star*. February 3, 1988.

<sup>62</sup> Barrett, *Pizza, A Slice of American History*, 26.

<sup>63</sup> Kingsmill, David. “Gourmet Pizza.” *Toronto Star*. February 3, 1988.

<sup>64</sup> Kingsmill, David. “Gourmet Pizza.” *Toronto Star*. February 3, 1988.

ovens used by conglomerates and franchises did not require any technical knowledge or skill and could be used by almost anyone.

Aside from cooking methods, California style pizza was notable for the use of unique ingredients. In one *Toronto Star* food review, the reviewer listed the “yuppie toppings” as pesto, brie, sundried tomato, snow peas, herbs, braised onions, artichokes and gorgonzola cheese.<sup>65</sup> This is different from the standardized pizzeria, which traditionally used shredded mozzarella cheese and fifteen traditional toppings.<sup>66</sup> The *Toronto Star* claimed that Toronto had several “over-night” pizzerias open, to appeal to the craze.<sup>67</sup> While Italians, who trained in Italian-owned restaurants, owned some of these restaurants, non-Italians who attempted to profit from the craze also opened restaurants. The California pizza was not uniquely Italian, with much of its popularity attributed to an Austrian-American, but ethnocultural entrepreneurs in Toronto played on Italian culinary traditions to produce the product.

Food critics attacked California pizza in Toronto for being too expensive and served in smaller portions than standardized pizza.<sup>68</sup> In the 1987 *Toronto Restaurant Guide*, critic Joanne Kates wrote about the whole-wheat crust at Porretta’s Pizza, “The whole wheat, which is surely a nod in the direction of the neighbourhood’s interest in healthy things,” she said, “is politically correct but lousy-tasting.”<sup>69</sup> In her review of Orso, Kates described the pizza as “great” but focused instead on the ambiance of the restaurant, “many people with money wear their taste buds just to the right of their Holt

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<sup>65</sup> “Designer Pizza Scored: Il Fornello.” *Toronto Star*. January 7, 1988. D2.

<sup>66</sup> The fifteen traditional toppings included pepperoni, sausage, ham, salami, ground beef, anchovies, green pepper, mushroom, green and black olives, red pepper, onion, sliced tomato, banana peppers, and extra cheese.

<sup>67</sup> Kingsmill, David. “Gourmet Pizza.” *Toronto Star*. February 3, 1988.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>69</sup> Kates, Joanne. *Toronto Restaurant Guide 1987*. (Toronto: Sommerville Books, 1987).

[Renfrew]’s charge cards, a restaurant has a good chance of making it if it simply looks fabulous and attracts the right clientele.”<sup>70</sup> She clearly felt that the food was secondary to the ambiance of upper-middle-class patrons eating at this restaurant. While standardized pizza catered to families and university students, California style pizza attracted a more affluent middle class consumer. However, as critics ridiculed California style, they suggested that independent pizzerias should return to their roots and produce “old school” pizza for the middle class.<sup>71</sup>

As we have seen, traditional styles of pizza were attributable to the commodification of pizza by Italian ethnic economies, and evoked authenticity and nostalgia among consumers. These styles were produced in gas-fired ovens, and used basic toppings of higher quality than standardized pizzas. This style of pizza was created in North America and had been made in pizzerias and pizza restaurants owned by Italian-Canadians and Italian-Americans since the 1950s. A review of Monte Carlo Pizzeria in 1989 noted how the restaurant had been open for thirty-two years and was known for “Mama’s pizza.”<sup>72</sup> The review explained that in the 1980s, because of a large “on slot [sic] of new pizzerias,” the Monte Carlo abandoned its pizza parlor ambiance for a white tablecloth and waiters donning tuxedos. The reviewer said that patrons should avoid fancy dishes and opt for the pizza for which the restaurant was once known.<sup>73</sup> The Monte Carlo changed their business from a take-out and delivery pizzeria to a dine-in experience to differentiate themselves from competitors and appeal to middle-class consumers;

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<sup>70</sup> Kates, *Toronto Restaurant Guide 1987*, 143.

<sup>71</sup> Kates, Joanne. *Toronto Restaurant Guide 1987*. (Toronto: Sommerville Books, 1987).  
Kingsmill, David. “Gourmet Pizza.” *Toronto Star*. February 3, 1988.

<sup>72</sup> Wine, Cynthia. “Dining Out.” *Toronto Star*. May 31, 1989.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

however, the review suggested that their old-school “Mama” style pizza is what drew customers. The reviewer’s insistent use of “Mama” to describe the pizza highlights the central role of women in early pizza production in Toronto.

Other reviewers used the term “old school” to describe nostalgic styles of pizza. A review of Pizza Olympic 76 (Gloucester Street and Yonge Street) said they served “old school pizza with a rich tomato sauce.”<sup>74</sup> The reviewer stated, “no designer pizza,” was sold at Pizza Olympic 76.<sup>75</sup> A review for Cammara’s Pizza touted that it was, “not gourmet pizza” and was “pizza the whole family will love.”<sup>76</sup> Cammara’s was also a product of the Italian ethnic economy and focused on producing authentic pizza rather than ones based on gourmet crazes.<sup>77</sup>

In Buffalo in the 1980s, the commodification of pizza occurred primarily in independent pizzerias rather than in conglomerates and franchises. Some independent pizzerias with origins in the Italian ethnic economies including Avenue Pizzeria, Leonardi’s Pizza, and P&R Pizzeria had two or three locations in Buffalo. However, they cannot be compared to conglomerates and franchises with standardized products and many locations, like those in Toronto with fifteen to twenty locations. The one conglomerate to open in Buffalo was Pizza Hut, which had thirteen locations in 1980, twelve in 1985, and eleven in 1990.<sup>78</sup> While the sole pizza conglomerate in Buffalo decreased in size in the decade between 1980 and 1990, the number of independent pizzerias in Buffalo grew.

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<sup>74</sup> “Review Pizza Olympic 76.” *Toronto Star*. March 29, 1988.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> “Pizza You Could Die For.” Review. *Toronto Star*. January 14, 1985.

<sup>77</sup> The authentic style of pizza referred to by the reviewer actually meant authentically Italian-Canadian rather than authentic to Italy. Pizzas were modified in Canadian and American pizzerias in the 1950s and 1960s, and these were the authentic and nostalgic styles consumed in the 1980s and 1990s.

<sup>78</sup> Buffalo City Directories 1980, 1985 and 1990.

Unlike Toronto's pizzerias, which produced high-end pizzas for middle class incomes to differentiate their food from standardized pizzerias, Buffalo's independent pizzerias produced submarine sandwiches. Sandwiches catered to the needs of Buffalo's working class for quick lunches, and inexpensive but filling meals. The history of the submarine sandwich is directly correlated to the commodification of Italian foods in Italian bakeries. As Italian bakeries opened in centres of Italian life in the late 1800s, the Italian fieldworker's lunch and sandwiches based on the panini (stuffed with salami, mortadella, capicola, and provolone cheese) were sold to Italian customers.<sup>79</sup> Italian bakeries created the American sandwich, filled with American cheese, bologna and ham to cater to the taste preferences of non-Italians.<sup>80</sup> Italian restaurants also served sandwiches made with the hot fillings from other Italian dishes including meatballs, eggplant, and veal parmigiana. The Italian-American sandwich was an important food, commoditized for sale by the ethnic economies outside of Italian communities because like pizza, it could be served as a rapid lunch and was an easy item to add to the menu of Italian restaurants.<sup>81</sup> Following the Second World War, the sandwich was known in the Buffalo area as a sub, as the bread roll shared a similar shape to submarines.<sup>82</sup> As food historians Andrew Smith and Bruce Kraig explained, "Not all of the sandwiches have Italian names, but most are understood as Italian American food, even when purveyed by

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<sup>79</sup> Smith, Andrew and Bruce Kraig. *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Food and Drink in America*. (Oxford University Press, 2013), 351.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Smith and Kraig, *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Food and Drink in America*, 351.

<sup>82</sup> The same sandwich is known by different names in different regions. Hoagie in Philadelphia, Hero in New York City, Grinder in New England, Wedge in the counties north of New York City, Spukie in Boston, Blimpie in Hoboken, Zep/Zeppelin in Eastern Pennsylvania. In Canada it is commonly known as a Sub or Submarine Sandwich.

Smith and Kraig, *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Food and Drink in America*, 266.

Greek Americans who have also moved into pizza parlors.”<sup>83</sup> The sub was sold in restaurants and take-out pizzerias alongside other Italian foods including pizza.

In Buffalo, twenty-one pizza-sub shops operated in 1980, twenty-seven by 1985, and eighteen in 1990.<sup>84</sup> The sub sandwich used similar toppings to those used on pizza, was quick and easy to make, and offered the same convenience as pizza. The sale of subs in Buffalo’s pizzerias was convenient to take-out, provided a cheap lunch for working class consumers, and attracted customers looking for different meals.

It is important to note that the submarine and Italian sandwiches were not unique to Buffalo. In Toronto, Italian sandwiches were sold at hot tables in Italian bakeries and restaurants dating back to the 1950s. Predating Toronto’s first pizzeria, San Francesco Food on Clinton Street, was an Italian hot-table bakery that opened in 1954 and specialized in sandwiches. Their menu included hot veal and chicken with tomato sauce and peppers, meatball and sausage subs, and the muffuletta.<sup>85</sup> Sub sandwiches in Toronto were primarily sold at hot-tables and dine-in restaurants rather than take-out pizzerias, as they were in Buffalo. For example, in 1980, only four Toronto pizzerias featured the word sub in their name, two in 1985, and one by 1990. However, the commodification of Italian-style and submarine sandwiches in Toronto is illuminated by the growing submarine sandwich franchise industry in Toronto in the 1980s and 1990s. Mr. Submarine (now known as Mr. Sub) opened at 130 Yorkville Avenue, in Toronto in 1968, and was franchised by 1972.<sup>86</sup> The chain grew across Canada, as the only major

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<sup>83</sup> Smith and Kraig, *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Food and Drink in America*, 351.

<sup>84</sup> Buffalo City Directories 1970, 1980, 1985 and 1990.

<sup>85</sup>“About Us.” SanFrancescos.com (accessed May 17, 2021).

<sup>86</sup> “About Us.” Mr.Sub.ca (accessed September 23, 2020).

franchise retailer of sub sandwiches until the 1990s when the American franchise, Subway, established branch plant franchises in Canada. Mr. Sub, which started to decline in the 1990s with the incursion of Subway, continued to operate but focused on the rural Canadian market. In Toronto, the submarine sandwich was commoditized along the same lines as pizza but as a separate franchise which also had ethnic economy origins.

Independent pizzerias adapted marketing techniques and business infrastructure from franchises in order to compete and serve the demands of middle class and working class consumers. However, independent pizzerias also relied on their origins in Italian ethnic economies to create products that evoked a sense of nostalgia and authenticity.

## II

As independent pizzerias fought conglomerates and franchises for urban consumers, franchises fought one another to control the commodification of standardized pizza. Franchises reinvented their offerings, value, services and business practices to be different from other chains, and attract customers. This resulted in legal battles, the creation of new chains, and the development of new products. Unlike the battles between independent pizzerias, franchises, and conglomerates, ethnic economies were virtually absent from this front because of the co-opting of pizza in franchises and conglomerates by non-Italians.

The combination of pizza and family entertainment in the 1970s, or pizza-tainment, was an attempt to create a new franchise restaurant that encouraged middle and working class consumers to spend both dining and entertainment budgets in one location. However, trends in postwar consumer culture combined food and entertainment long before pizza-tainment. Sites like drive-in movie theatres, and drive-in franchise

restaurants had combined leisure with food since the 1950s. Summertime events like the Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto, or the Erie County Fair in Hamburg, New York attracted Torontonians and Buffalonians to visit the midways, shop, attend concerts and performances, and consume different types of summertime foods including corndogs, pizza, French fries, funnel cake, and candy apples.<sup>87</sup> Other urban spaces, including college campuses, airports, bars, arcades, bus depots, hotel recreation rooms, shopping malls, corner stores and pizzerias also provided leisure time with pool tables, coin operated pinball, air hockey, and arcade machines.<sup>88</sup> Mechanical coin-operated machines date to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, but were popularized in urban and beachside penny arcades by 1910, which attracted consumers to play coin operated musical recordings, shooting games, slot machines, and use automatic scales.<sup>89</sup> Between the 1930s and 1950s jukeboxes and skill-based manual operation machines, like pinball, became popular in the United States and Canada. Pinball machines attracted both teens and young adults alike, and became a cultural phenomenon. The British rock band, The Who, wrote a 1969 rock opera, *Tommy*, about a “deaf, dumb, and blind kid,” who became a hero for his pinball skills. The song, “Pinball Wizard” reached the top-25 most popular songs on the Billboard chart, and became even more popular when covered by Elton John for the 1975 film adaptation of *Tommy*.<sup>90</sup> Games like pinball could be played with a beverage, or while waiting for food, which intertwined the machines with the business of bars, pizzerias, and other quick service food venues. However, the popularity of pinball

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<sup>87</sup> Carosa, Christopher. *A Pizza The Action: Everything I Ever Learned about Business I Learned by Working in a Pizza Stand at the Erie County Fair*. (2014). Buffalo History Museum Collections.

<sup>88</sup> Lendino, Jamie. *Attract Mode: The Rise and Fall of Coin-Op Arcade Games*. (Audubon, NJ: Steel Gear Press, 2020), 9-11.

<sup>89</sup> Lendino, *Attract Mode*, 37.

<sup>90</sup> Elton John’s likeness as the Pinball Wizard appeared on pinball machines thereafter. Sternheimer, Karen. *Pop Culture Panics*. (New York: Taylor and Francis, 2014).

declined in favor of video game cabinet machines in the 1970s, a craze that would be exploited by the pizza-tainment industry.<sup>91</sup>

Nolan Bushnell, who developed the video game, Pong, in 1971, and the video game production company Atari, created the pizza-tainment restaurant.<sup>92</sup> *Pong*, a table-tennis themed game, was one of the first home video game consoles, was marketed directly at male teenagers and young adults.<sup>93</sup> In Buffalo and Toronto, *Pong* was sold exclusively at Sears department stores to cater to middle and working class consumers.<sup>94</sup> In 1976, Warner Communications (a conglomerate owning film studios, music labels, cable television networks MTV and Nickelodeon, DC Comics and *Mad Magazine*) purchased Atari from Bushnell.<sup>95</sup> While working for Warner, Bushnell was given the task of creating a new arcade entertainment concept for families, rather than the teenage market.<sup>96</sup> Arcades had poor reputations and were associated with teenage male rowdiness and disobedience.<sup>97</sup> Pizzerias had pinball and arcade cabinets since the 1950s, and were a part of both suburban teenage and urban young adult culture and socialization. Bushnell's concept, Pizza Time Theatre, had family friendly video games and performing animatronic robots.<sup>98</sup> Bushnell recognized the pizzeria and arcade as middle and working class spaces of leisure, and countered the poor reputation of arcades by making the concept family friendly. Bushnell recognized that robots were cheaper than live entertainers and worked alongside Atari engineers to build the Pizza Time Players,

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<sup>91</sup> Lendino, *Attract Mode*, 14.

<sup>92</sup> Cohen, Scott. *Zap! The Rise and Fall of Atari* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1984), 19.

<sup>93</sup> Newman, Michael. *Atari Age: The Emergence of Video Games in America*. (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2017), 4.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>95</sup> Cohen, *Zap!* 33-34.

<sup>96</sup> Cohen, *Zap!* 83.

<sup>97</sup> Newman, *Atari Age*, 5-6.

<sup>98</sup> Smith, Andrew F. *Encyclopedia of Junk Food and Fast Food*. (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2006), 51.

including Chuck E. Cheese, a cigar-smoking rat and the leader of the Pizza Time Players.<sup>99</sup> The first Pizza Time Theatre opened in an abandoned super-market in San Jose, California in 1977.<sup>100</sup> An article in the *New York Times* in 1981 describes how children and adults alike were in awe of the animatronics performing songs like “Yankee Doodle Dandy” and “Hello Dolly.”<sup>101</sup> The restaurants were unlike conventional restaurants, which just served food, but focused on the combination of eating and leisure-activities including video games and robot shows. The marketing director, Pat Saign, described the concept as, “the sizzle, rather than the steak.”<sup>102</sup>

In November 1978, Bushnell purchased Pizza Time Theatre from Warner Communications. Under Bushnell’s leadership, a partnership with Robert L. Brock, the largest domestic Holiday Inn franchisee forged plans to expand the franchise to two hundred restaurants in sixteen Midwestern and southern states.<sup>103</sup> Many of these franchises opened in centres associated with the vacation habits of Americans and Canadians including in such locales as Richmond, British Columbia, San Juan, Puerto Rico, St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands, Orlando, Florida, and Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.<sup>104</sup> Middle and working class consumers from Buffalo and Toronto were participants in consumer culture, including vacations, and may have first experienced Chuck E. Cheese in vacation destinations. The franchises opened near such centres of middle class suburban leisure as bowling alleys, cinemas, and shopping malls to cater to

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<sup>99</sup> Smith, *Encyclopedia of Junk Food* 51 and Cohen, *Zap!* 83.

<sup>100</sup> Cohen, *Zap!* 83.

<sup>101</sup> “Show Time at Pizza Chain.” *New York Times*. September 5, 1981.

<sup>102</sup> “Show Time at Pizza Chain.” *New York Times*. September 5, 1981.

<sup>103</sup> Cohen, *Zap!* 84.

<sup>104</sup> Richmond, British Columbia and Burlington, Ontario were the first Chuck E. Cheese locations in Canada. Richmond was also the location of the first McDonald’s franchise in Canada. Both cities are close to the border, and may have appealed to Canadians who first visited the chain on driving vacations in the United States.

middle and working class consumerism. Chuck E. Cheese was also the byproduct of the development of video game companies in the 1970s and 1980s, like Namco, the creator of *PacMan*. Video game companies popularized video games with middle class youth, teens and young adults, as they made video games and consoles more affordable and accessible.<sup>105</sup>

Brock separated from Bushnell and formed ShowBiz Pizza Place in 1981.<sup>106</sup> ShowBiz was a replica of Pizza Time Theatre, and replaced Chuck E. Cheese with a ‘hillbilly’ bear named Billy Bob Broccoli. Bushnell sued Brock over the creation of ShowBiz, which resulted in a settlement where ShowBiz paid Pizza Time Theatre a portion of its profits for fourteen years.<sup>107</sup> However, Pizza Time Theatre filed for bankruptcy in 1984, and was purchased by ShowBiz Pizza Palace. By 1992 ShowBiz Pizza Palace remodeled all Pizza Time Theatre and ShowBiz locations into the brand Chuck E. Cheese.<sup>108</sup>

Amidst the corporate infighting between ShowBiz and Pizza Time, the Chuck E. Cheese concept opened in Buffalo in 1982 and Toronto in 1983. The first Chuck E. Cheese in Buffalo opened at the Thruway Mall in Lackawanna in November 1982. The venture capital arm of the University of Rochester under the corporate name, Pizza Concepts, owned the franchised location in Lackawanna.<sup>109</sup> Pizza Concepts opened other

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<sup>105</sup> In the 1970s, Namco became a distributor for rival, Atari’s video games. Other companies, including Sega, Nintendo, Coleco and the Apple I personal computer allowed middle class consumers to play games at home, while also producing cabinet arcade machines. Lendino, *Attract Mode*, 123.

<sup>106</sup> The separation happened after Brock traveled to Orlando, Florida and met an inventor named Aaron Fletcher whose company, Creative Engineering made better robots than Bushnell. Creative Engineering created the characters for ShowBiz Pizza in exchange for 20% of the company. Cohen, *Zap!* 84-86.

<sup>107</sup> Smith, *Encyclopedia of Junk Food*, 51.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> “Chuck E. Cheese to be at the Hilton.” *Lackawanna Leader*. November 11, 1982.

Chuck E. Cheese locations in Rochester and Syracuse in 1982, with plans to complete locations in Utica and Albany in 1983.<sup>110</sup> Pizza-tainment in Western New York was controlled by one corporate entity, rather than the ethnic economy. The Buffalo location was similar to Bushnell's original concept and featured an eleven thousand square foot establishment, with space to seat three hundred customers, and video games.<sup>111</sup> New to the Buffalo location was a separate cabaret lounge featuring "King", an eight-foot tall animatronic lion that sang Elvis Presley songs.<sup>112</sup> While most locations featured the Pizza Time Players as the main musical robotic attraction, the addition of the cabaret lounge and sports bar section suggests that the Buffalo location was also trying to lure working class adults into the restaurant. By providing affordable entertainment and pizza for adults and families alike, Chuck E. Cheese attracted suburban consumer leisure spending.

Pizza Concepts tried to establish roots in Buffalo, despite the declining economy and population. A hiring advertisement for Buffalo-area Chuck E. Cheese management sought individuals with a food service background and offered a benefit package that included medical insurance, paid vacation and maternity leave, and life insurance.<sup>113</sup> The employment package suggests that the company planned to develop roots in Buffalo by retaining management through employment perks. The connection to the Buffalo community was further highlighted in 1985 as Chuck E. Cheese was selected as one of the forty groups selected to march in the Towpath Festival Parade.<sup>114</sup> Chuck E. was the

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> "Chuck E. Cheese" Advertisement. *Courier Express*. August 8, 1982.

<sup>114</sup> Gerard, Alice E. "Towpath Days Start Thursday in Riverside." *Island Dispatch*. May 17, 1985.

only corporate mascot mentioned in a news article about the parade. This suggests that Chuck E. Cheese was a well-recognized brand with developed roots in the Buffalo area. Even amidst the corporate chaos of ShowBiz Pizza and Chuck E. Cheese in 1984, Buffalo remained receptive and supportive of the brand as a Chuck E. Cheese town.

On the other hand, Toronto was not nearly as receptive to the Chuck E. Cheese brand. While some Torontonians may have visited the franchise while cross-border shopping in Buffalo or while on vacation in the United States, other middle class Torontonians attacked pizza-tainment as lowbrow and morally corrupt entertainment. The first Canadian location opened in Burlington, Ontario (57 kilometers or 35 miles from Toronto) strategically located near centres of family entertainment including the Burlington Roller Garden and the Odeon six-plex movie theater.<sup>115</sup> Reviews of the franchise in the *Toronto Star* revealed a moral panic about the combination of videogames and pizza as detrimental to child development, the product of lazy parenting, and poor quality food. Journalist Michael Bennett explained that the video games were defeating for anyone, “who’s had more birthdays than its convenient to put candles on the cake,” and the food was, “not gourmet and unoriginal.”<sup>116</sup>

As Chuck E. Cheese announced their intentions to open a franchise in Toronto, local politicians and newspaper editorials attempted to sway public opinion against the opening of the restaurant. In April 1983, *Toronto Star* reporter, Frank Jones, conducted a review of the Burlington restaurant, and claimed, “I feel a bit of rotten cheese about this

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<sup>115</sup> In 1980, the Burlington GO Transit Station (commuter rail connecting Toronto to many Southern Ontario municipalities) opened just south of the roller garden, movie theatre, and Chuck E. Cheese. The entertainment sites may have been strategically located to appeal to after-work commuters. Bennett, Michael. “Kids Go Wild at Chuck E.” *Toronto Star*. December 1, 1981.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

place.”<sup>117</sup> Jones described the restaurant as barn-like, and that he was disturbed to see children, “being programed to respond to robots.”<sup>118</sup> He also claimed that the value was rather poor, as children quickly spent tokens on the video games, and bought poor quality items with game redemption tickets. While Jones criticized the establishment, the Burlington location was popular with middle class suburbanites, hosting 14,000 visitors in 1982, including 1800 birthday parties, and a month long waiting list.<sup>119</sup> K.T. Lilley, the President of Chuck E. Cheese Burlington, responded to Frank Jones in a letter to the editor. Lilley said that parents who bring their children to the establishment are not cop-outs, but rather “bringing their kids here because they have fun.”<sup>120</sup> He claimed that children were not programmed to watch the robots, but the robots were programmed to entertain children. Lilley concluded, “he [Jones] is an old grouch. If he were a robot, I would install a new chip and reprogram him.”<sup>121</sup>

In May 1983, North York Alderman Betty Sutherland echoed the objections in the *Toronto Star* regarding the planned June opening of a 750-seat Chuck E. Cheese at Victoria Park and Sheppard Avenue. The Alderman announced at a public consultation that she feared the impact of the video games on children and demanded the franchise not install video games.<sup>122</sup> Al Morgan, who represented the owners of the North York location, told the planning board hearing, that the owners would not forego the installation of videogame machines because that would cut into their teenage market.<sup>123</sup> Arcades and pizzerias with video games had poor reputations associated with youth

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<sup>117</sup> Jones, Frank. “Chuck E. Cheese an awful place for a kid’s party.” *Toronto Star*. April 27, 1983.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Jones, Frank. “Chuck E. Cheese an awful place for a kid’s party.” *Toronto Star*. April 27, 1983

<sup>120</sup> Lilley, K.T. “Jones needs reprogramming.” *Toronto Star*. May 12, 1983.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> “Pizza Parlor Plans run into objections.” *Toronto Star*. May 19, 1983.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

rowdiness, and area residents feared that video games would bring vandalism and theft to their neighbourhood, and would encourage teenagers to hang around outside.<sup>124</sup> In response to these claims, Morgan explained that Chuck E. Cheese was not an arcade, and children were not allowed to visit without an adult.<sup>125</sup> Ken Lilley, president of Chuck E. Cheese Canada, said that he had doubts, “that teenagers and young adults probably wouldn’t want to play video games in a pizza parlor filled with animated robots that sing and dance, and children at birthday parties.”<sup>126</sup>

Despite opposition to the franchise, North York City Council voted 10-4 in favor of the franchise operating with video game machines.<sup>127</sup> The restaurant debuted in October 1983 to a champagne and pizza reception. Despite the past criticisms in the *Toronto Star*, entertainment reporter, Rob Salem described the restaurant as “McDonald’s meets Disneyland.”<sup>128</sup> Salem explained that children could hardly contain themselves and, “adults seemed to get a kick out of it too.”<sup>129</sup> Salem also commented on his fondness for the lion animatronic that did “the best mechanical Elvis impersonation you’d ever seen, right down to the hip sway.”<sup>130</sup> While Torontonians did not welcome the chain like Buffalonians, both cities shared a fondness for the Elvis robot. Pizza-tainment grew in

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<sup>124</sup> Beyers, Jim. “Pizza-video parlor gets ok in North York.” *Toronto Star*. September 13, 1983.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>128</sup> Using the Disneyland theme park to describe Chuck E. Cheese highlights how Torontonians considered the franchise to be a space of leisure and amusement. By the 1980s, wealthier middle class Torontonians allocated more money towards travel. This included southern destinations like Walt Disney World in Florida. However, many people make the mistake of referring to Disney World as Disneyland (the California equivalent), so it can be assumed the journalist made the same error.

<sup>129</sup> Salem, Rob. “Chuck the big cheese at video food bar.” *Toronto Star*. October 11, 1983.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

Toronto as Chuck E. Cheese opened a second location at the Sheridan Mall on Jane Street in 1990.<sup>131</sup>

While Chuck E. Cheese commoditized pizza-tainment as a way to attract consumers in Toronto and Buffalo, other franchises created new products, diversified their services, and used innovative marketing schemes to stand out from competitors. Marketing techniques were deployed in newspapers and flyers sent directly to consumers. One of the techniques implemented by franchises was the cross promotion, a technique where customers of one product or service are enticed by the promotion of another product. In Toronto, Pizza Hut and Pizza Pizza, used the cross promotion technique in the late 1980s. While cross-promotions usually target the promotion of related products, some of the pizza promotions did not promote similar products or services. For example, between 1986 and 1990, Pizza Hut Canada partnered with Becker's Convenience Stores, After Eight Mints, Canadian Tire and *Auto Trader Magazine* and Pizza Pizza partnered with Amazing Video Machines, and *Metropolis Magazine*. While some of these cross promotions were sensible, like After Eight Mints as a dessert, or Amazing Video Machines VHS rentals as entertainment to accompany a pizza, other cross promotions were nonsensical. Automotive cross promotions did not connect with delivered pizza, as the consumer did not drive to retrieve a pizza.<sup>132</sup> However, cross promotions highlight the marketing power of the Toronto pizza industry as outside industries wanted to be affiliated with the branding and consumer marketing associated with pizza.

One notable Toronto pizza cross promotion was between *Metropolis* magazine, a free alternative newspaper covering arts and local news, and Pizza Pizza. In early 1990,

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<sup>131</sup> Toronto City Directory, 1990.

<sup>132</sup> "Pizza Hut" Advertisement. *Toronto Star*. June 2, 1990.

the publication entered a distribution agreement with Pizza Pizza, which had a delivery distribution network and delivered the magazine with pizza orders to nearly 75,000 Toronto homes per week.<sup>133</sup> Pizza Pizza was granted veto power over the magazine's content, which forced *Metropolis*, "to gradually abandon its coverage of the city's alternative arts scene," in favor of international entertainment news, horoscopes, and advice columns.<sup>134</sup> The magazine ceased publication and fired all staff in October 1990 after losing an estimated \$60,000 a month. While the magazine was a failure, the partnership with Pizza Pizza demonstrates the economic power of Toronto's pizza conglomerates as distributors and advertisers.

Aside from marketing, conglomerates and franchises attempted to differentiate their standardized product offerings to stand out from competitors. They relied on culinary trends and food scientists to develop products, as unlike independent pizzerias, they did not have roots in Italian culinary traditions.

The menu of the Toronto franchise, Pizza Nova, included pasta and sandwiches as accompanying products, foods attributed to their origins as a restaurant of the Italian ethnic economy.<sup>135</sup> However, ribs were one menu item that made them stand out from competitors. According to Domenic Primucci, CEO of Pizza Nova, "We were known for our pizza and ribs. We sold ribs as an item that could be shared."<sup>136</sup> Primucci recalled that it was not lack of customer interest that eliminated ribs from Pizza Nova's menu, but market demands, "Japan started buying up a lot of the ribs from Canadian sources, and it really skyrocketed the prices. All of a sudden there was a change in the market and

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<sup>133</sup> MacInnis, Craig. "Now's Rival, Metropolis Folds." *Toronto Star*. October 2, 1990.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

<sup>135</sup> 1970s Pizza Nova Menus, Provided by Domenic Primucci, CEO of Pizza Nova.

<sup>136</sup> Domenic Primucci, Interviewed by Alexander Hughes. November 2<sup>nd</sup> 2019, Toronto.

customers were not willing to absorb that price increase, and we had to change.”<sup>137</sup> Pasta appeared and disappeared from Pizza Nova’s menu over the years. Primucci explained, “There was an explosion in the supermarket industry, you’ve got an aisle full of pasta and sauces. Pasta is simple to make, you boil water, throw your pasta in, cook it to your liking, and add sauce. When sauce came in [supermarkets] people made their pasta at home, this decreased the market for delivery pasta.”<sup>138</sup> The one pasta that stays on the menu is lasagna, as according to Primucci, “lasagna is something that is very hard to make as a home cook.”<sup>139</sup> Unique offerings like ribs and lasagna allowed Pizza Nova to stand out amongst other franchises in Toronto. While ethnic economies enabled the production of these items, changing market demands facilitated changes in the menu.

The sale of barbequed meat alongside pizza at Toronto’s Pizza Nova was similar to the sale of the Buffalo-style chicken wing in Buffalo pizzerias. Both products came from the restaurants of the Italian ethnic economies. The sale of wings was widespread in Buffalo’s independent pizzerias, but was first sold nationally by the Domino’s franchise in the 1990s. Toronto franchises Pizza Pizza, Pizza Nova and Pizzaville added wings to their menus in the mid 1990s.<sup>140</sup> The consumption of wings with pizza occurred far later in Toronto than Buffalo. However, evidence suggests that Canadians ate chicken wings in the 1980s as part of other ethnic cuisines. A *Toronto Star* article in 1986 about the eating habits of Toronto’s aldermen explained that two of the four alderman consumed chicken wings as part of a Chinese restaurant meal.<sup>141</sup> Another article in the *Toronto Star*

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<sup>137</sup> Domenic Primucci, Interviewed by Alexander Hughes. November 2<sup>nd</sup> 2019, Toronto.

<sup>138</sup> Domenic Primucci, Interviewed by Alexander Hughes. November 2<sup>nd</sup> 2019, Toronto.

<sup>139</sup> Domenic Primucci, Interviewed by Alexander Hughes. November 2<sup>nd</sup> 2019, Toronto.

<sup>140</sup> Keyword searches in Toronto’s *Globe and Mail* and *Toronto Star* revealed advertisements for these chains in the 1990s featuring wings on the menu.

<sup>141</sup> Hurst, Lynda. “What price an alderman’s supper.” *Toronto Star*. October 15, 1986.

in 1986 discussed how wings were popular in Toronto's Chinese restaurants and in Buffalo. The article included a recipe for Buffalo-style wings that closely resembled a barbeque sauce rather than a true Buffalo sauce.<sup>142</sup> Advertisements for bars and taverns in Toronto serving "Buffalo Style Chicken Wings" first appeared in 1986.<sup>143</sup> But it wasn't until 1989, when wings were advertised by a Toronto pizzeria, Pizzeria Uno at Front Street and Church Street. Uno offered wings, pizza potato skins, garlic bread and salad as accompaniments to their pan pizzas.<sup>144</sup>

By 1994, chicken wings, submarine sandwiches, bread sticks, and salads were introduced at Pizza Hut, Pizza Pizza and Domino's in Canada.<sup>145</sup> While submarine sandwiches and chicken wings were sold in Buffalo's independent pizzerias, franchises and branch plants in Toronto commoditized them. Pizza Pizza's Vice-President, Lorn Austin said, "It's tough to get everybody in the same room to agree on what they want for dinner. I want to deny the other guy [competitor] a meal...we're looking for different ways to sway the customer towards us, instead of the other guy."<sup>146</sup> American branch plant, Domino's, announced the sale of breadsticks and wings in Toronto franchises in a series of advertisements featuring Canadian hockey player, Wayne Gretzky, in 1994.<sup>147</sup>

Pizza Hut embraced diversification and product innovation as they hired Dr. Tom Ryan in 1988. Ryan was a food scientist who previously worked at Proctor and Gamble on Jif peanut butter and Pillsbury's pizza dough.<sup>148</sup> As the Director of New Products,

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<sup>142</sup> "Spicy Sauces Enhance Flavor of Chicken Wings." *The Gazette/Toronto Star*. May 28, 1986.

<sup>143</sup> "Victoria's Chicken Wings" Advertisement. *Toronto Star*. May 27, 1986.

<sup>144</sup> "It could only happen at Uno's" Advertisement. *Toronto Star*. June 7, 1989.

<sup>145</sup> Pizza Hut was Canada's largest pizza franchise.

Strauss, Marina. "Choice tactic for pizza wars marketing." *Globe and Mail*. February 17, 1994.

<sup>146</sup> Strauss, Marina. "Choice tactic for pizza wars marketing." *Globe and Mail*. February 17, 1994.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> Schonberger, Chris. "From Stuffed Crust to Smashburger: inside the mind of a fast-food savant." *First We Feast*. December 3, 2012.

Ryan was given the task of developing new product lines to encourage consumers to distinguish Pizza Hut from competitor's products.<sup>149</sup> His first development was the "Lover's Line" a series of curated pizzas with toppings to satisfy the tastes of different customers, including Meat Lovers, Pepperoni Lovers and Cheese Lovers. Ryan recalls that after the success of the line, the Chief Operating Officer walked into his office and said, "Well you're in trouble, because everything there is to do with pizza has now been done."<sup>150</sup> Ryan's next creation was the "Big Foot", a one-foot by two-foot pizza, designed to compete with the two-pizza value combination that competitor, Little Caesar's, offered. However, Ryan recognized that the Big Foot was a failure as it was not a pan-pizza like every other Pizza Hut pizza. He said, "I learned that you can design a really killer product for a target audience but the promise that you establish and the position you get in people's heads is equally as important as the product you sell."<sup>151</sup> Perhaps Ryan's most important development was the stuffed crust pizza. This pizza was a traditional Pizza Hut pan pizza that used Armenian string cheese pressed into the crust prior to baking. Stuffed crust was not replicated by any competitors in the 1990s and became one of Pizza Hut's best selling products.<sup>152</sup>

The creation of new products at Pizza Hut highlights the importance of a brand sticking close to their original products, while offering new trends to entice customers. In an interview with the *Globe & Mail*, Domino's Vice-President of Acquisitions, Michael Gelmon explained, "if you diversify for the sake of covering all your bases, you'll run

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<sup>149</sup> Ryan held a similar role at McDonald's after leaving Pizza Hut. At McDonald's he created the McGriddle breakfast sandwich and the fruit and yogurt parfait. He then went on to create the concept and entire menu for the Denver, Colorado based burger chain, Smashburger.

<sup>150</sup> Tom Ryan, Interviewed by Chris Schonberger. November 2<sup>nd</sup> 2012,

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Schonberger, Chris. "From Stuffed Crust to Smashburger: inside the mind of a fast-food savant." *First We Feast*. December 3. 2012.

into operational problems.”<sup>153</sup> Innovation was a process in which franchises sought to capture middle class spending by creating extravagant fast food items. However, the creation of these products demonstrates the erosion of ethnic economies in the pizza industry as franchises and conglomerates created products that did not remotely represent traditional Italian pizzas, and led some franchises to operational issues.

As franchises and conglomerates developed new products to gain customers, they also fought one another in courtrooms across Canada and the United States in attempts to expand their companies, limit the business of competitors, and prevent the incursion of American branch plants. Some of the biggest court battles took place in Toronto between 1987 and 1989, as Pizza Pizza was in a series of legal disputes over ownership, business strategy and trademarked advertising phrases. These cases highlight the strength of the Pizza Pizza brand and how the economic growth of Toronto helped to enable its domination of the fast food pizza market in the city.

Pizza Pizza’s legal troubles began in 1987 over an ownership fight between Chairman and founder, Michael Overs and President John Gillespie. Gillespie left rival conglomerate, Pizza Delight (Robinhood Multifoods) in 1978 to help Overs expand Pizza Pizza.<sup>154</sup> In a court ruling, Justice Robert Sutherland remarked, “it is not denied that Gillespie made a major contribution to the rapid growth.”<sup>155</sup> In 1981, Overs sold Gillespie an 11% stake in the company at the cost of \$200,000, which was paid for from his executive bonus.<sup>156</sup> In 1986, Overs and Gillespie decided to sell their personal stock

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<sup>153</sup> Strauss, Marina. “Choice tactic for pizza wars marketing.” *Globe and Mail*. February 17, 1994.

<sup>154</sup> Kidd, Kenneth. “Pizza Feud has the works and it comes piping hot.” *Toronto Star*. August 22, 1987.

<sup>155</sup> *Gillespie v. Overs*. 1987 Carswell Ontario 3404, 5. A.C.W.S. (3d) 430, [1987] C.L.D. 1217, [1987] O.J. No. 747. (Ontario H.C. August 14, 1987)

<sup>156</sup> Kidd, Kenneth. “Pizza Feud has the works and it comes piping hot.” *Toronto Star*. August 22, 1987.

interests in Pizza Pizza. Gillespie approached the H.J. Heinz food conglomerate in the fall of 1987, which offered the outright purchase Pizza Pizza for \$50 million, the purchase half of Gillespie's of shares, and to retain him as the President.<sup>157</sup> The American conglomerate sought to purchase the franchise as a branch plant operation. Overs rejected the takeover and sought a court order to gain sole control over the company. At the time, Pizza Pizza owned 105 stores, and controlled 50% of the Toronto pizza market.<sup>158</sup>

The ownership battle created a toxic environment at Pizza Pizza headquarters as fights between Overs and Gillespie over new franchising rules, accounting procedures, and the use of the 967-1111 phone number outside of Toronto, stalled any expansion or operational progress.<sup>159</sup> To bypass the stalemate, Overs offered Gillespie \$1 million to sell his shares and step down from his role. Gillespie responded by meeting with the American chain, Domino's to negotiate a buy-out of Pizza Pizza as a branch plant operation for Domino's. Overs was notified of these meetings and secretly met with Domino's to negotiate their purchase of Gillespie's shares in Pizza Pizza.<sup>160</sup> Corporate memos written by Overs and Gillespie downplayed the competency of each other, which created a hostile work environment and rendered the daily operation of the chain nearly impossible.<sup>161</sup>

On August 14, 1987 the Supreme Court of Ontario ruled that Michael Overs could remove John Gillespie from his position as President of Pizza Pizza.<sup>162</sup> However, the

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<sup>157</sup> Kidd, Kenneth. "Lawyers fail to unravel Pizza Pizza control fight." *Toronto Star*. May 28, 1987.

<sup>158</sup> Kidd, Kenneth. "Pizza Pizza truce struck pending ruling by court." *Toronto Star*. May 30, 1987.

<sup>159</sup> Kidd, Kenneth. "Spicy pizza power struggle." *Toronto Star*. August 22, 1987.

<sup>160</sup> Kidd, Kenneth. "Spicy pizza power struggle." *Toronto Star*. August 22, 1987.

<sup>161</sup> Kidd, Kenneth. "Pizza Pizza truce struck pending ruling by court." *Toronto Star*. May 30, 1987.

<sup>162</sup> Kidd, Kenneth. "Chairman wins battle for control of Pizza Pizza." *Toronto Star*. August 18, 1987.

court case did not determine the status of Gillespie's share ownership. In a *Toronto Star* article on May 28, 1987 it was reported that Overs owned 80% and Gillespie owned 20%. However, other *Toronto Star* articles reported an 89% and an 11% split, and that Gillespie's 11% stake could be as high as 20% from an exercised stock option.<sup>163</sup> The dispute became even stranger when an American telecommunications business, TeleCommerce, offered to buy out Gillespie's shares in exchange for 100 million of their own shares or a 90% ownership and the role of President and CEO.<sup>164</sup> Gillespie rejected the deal pending an Ontario Court of Appeal ruling over his Pizza Pizza ownership percentage. On July 15, 1988, during the second day of court proceedings, Gillespie settled with Overs out of court, for a \$4 million buyout of a twenty percent stake in the company.<sup>165</sup>

The Gillespie and Overs ownership case set significant legal precedents for corporate ownership.<sup>166</sup> The case highlights the growing prominence of Toronto-based pizza franchises and the wealth that could be made by non-Italians in the franchised pizza industry. Overs and Gillespie were outsiders to the Italian ethnic economy, yet profited as millionaires from their co-opting of the pizza business and commodification of the standardized pizza. However, the court case made franchisees leery of the company's

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<sup>163</sup> Kidd, Kenneth. "Pizza Pizza has a party, guess who didn't show." *Toronto Star*. March 16, 1988.

<sup>164</sup> "Fledgling Firm offers to buy out feuding Pizza Pizza Partner." *Toronto Star*. August 27, 1987.

<sup>165</sup> Kidd, Kenneth. "Gillespie's \$4 million from pizza settlement going towards travel firm." *Toronto Star*. July 16, 1988.

<sup>166</sup> This case set a Canadian precedent regarding Canadian shareholding practices. A 2014 dissertation by Nicolas William Juzda, *Unanimous Shareholder Agreements* (Osgoode Hall Law School, York University) examines the significance of the *Gillespie v. Overs* 1987 case for oppressive corporate directors and majority shareholders. This dissertation was significant for understanding the business implications of the court case beyond the reporting of primary sources.

future, and encouraged some to terminate their franchise agreements in favor of partnering with other conglomerates or opening independent pizzerias.<sup>167</sup>

When Gillespie left Pizza Pizza, he used his settlement to start a travel agency, Goliger's Travel, and a barbeque chicken take-out franchise, Chicken Chicken.<sup>168</sup> He sold franchises of both businesses across Canada.<sup>169</sup> In October 1990, Pizza Pizza Limited, took John Gillespie to the Ontario Court of Justice over Chicken Chicken. Pizza Pizza alleged that by creating a chicken franchise, Gillespie breached his non-competition clause and misused confidential Pizza Pizza information including the know-how to establish a fast food business with a 30-minutes or free delivery guarantee, the Pizza Pizza franchise agreement, Pizza Pizza's computer software, the name Chicken Chicken, and Pizza Pizza's marketing methods.<sup>170</sup> Evidence claimed that Pizza Pizza intended to enter the chicken business in the early 1980s, registering the name Chick N Feed in 1981, and the trademark Chicken Chicken in 1982. However, Pizza Pizza's chicken business went no further than name and concept.<sup>171</sup> Presented evidence argued that Gillespie knowingly hired the same software programmer who developed the one-number telephone ordering software for Pizza Pizza. However, the judge ruled that the software developer was in the business of creating software for the fast food business and it was not proprietary for Pizza Pizza.<sup>172</sup> Other claims made by Pizza Pizza suggested that

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<sup>167</sup> Kidd, Kenneth. "Pizza Pizza has a party, guess who didn't show." *Toronto Star*. March 16, 1988.

<sup>168</sup> *Pizza Pizza Limited v. John Gillespie et al.* 1990 Toronto, Ontario. Action No/ 462396/90. Ontario Court of Justice. October 2, 1990. Justice David H.W. Henry Judgments, Archive of Ontario. 3.

<sup>169</sup> Kidd, Kenneth. "Pizza Pizza has a party, guess who didn't show." *Toronto Star*. March 16, 1988.

<sup>170</sup> *Pizza Pizza Limited v. John Gillespie et al.* 6-7.

<sup>171</sup> *Pizza Pizza Limited v. John Gillespie et al.* 47.

<sup>172</sup> *Pizza Pizza Limited v. John Gillespie et al.* 43.

Gillespie replicated their business as a chicken franchise. However, the judge ruled, “the case against the defendant lacks credibility,” and dismissed the case.<sup>173</sup>

While the Chicken Chicken-Pizza Pizza case was dismissed and ended the saga of fights between Michael Overs and John Gillespie, the case is telling as it suggests that the commodification of pizza by franchising operations held proprietary knowledge and technology desired by others in the fast food industry. Non-Italians in the pizza industry developed businesses and supporting technologies that replaced the supports of Italian ethnic economies. This case suggests that the development of a franchise in Toronto was facilitated by the commodification of food-based business knowledge and technology, not just the commodification of a food item.

When American franchise chain, Little Caesar’s, purchased Mother’s Pizza in April 1989, they became one of the largest pizza restaurant conglomerates and branch plant operators in Canada with forty-one Little Caesar’s locations and one hundred Mother’s locations.<sup>174</sup> In the United States, Little Caesar’s introduced the advertising catchphrase, “Pizza Pizza” in 1979 to refer to the sale of two pizzas in one long box at the same price as one pizza by competitors.<sup>175</sup> The phrase was used in television and print advertisements alongside a cartoon of Julius Caesar, with a pizza on a spear. While the chain had been in Canada since 1969, its growth following the purchase of Mother’s made it a direct threat to Pizza Pizza. Pizza Pizza responded to the threat with an injunction in the Federal Court of Canada to restrict Little Caesar’s use of the phrase “Pizza Pizza” in their Canadian advertisements. Little Caesar’s spokesperson, Lisa Ilitch

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<sup>173</sup> *Pizza Pizza Limited v. John Gillespie et al.* 52.

<sup>174</sup> “Appointment Little Caesar International.” *Globe and Mail*. April 22, 1989.

<sup>175</sup> “Our Story” [littlecaesars.ca](http://littlecaesars.ca)

Murray, claimed, “We’ve been using this pizza trademark legally in both the United States and Canada since 1980 and now they’ve decided to pursue an injunction.”<sup>176</sup> Pizza Pizza claimed that they reached out to Little Caesar’s in 1984 to request that they stop infringing on their trademark name and orange color scheme. The Federal Court ruled that Pizza Pizza retained the right to use the words “Pizza Pizza” in their advertising, and Little Caesar’s must cease the use of the phrase in Canada.<sup>177</sup> This case highlights the growing competition between pizza franchises and the importance of brand advertising and trademarks to their businesses. As American branch plant franchise conglomerates grew their business in Canada, one Canadian conglomerate attempted to deter their incursion through legal challenges.

Coinciding with the commodification of pizza by conglomerates and franchises owned by non-Italians in Toronto and Buffalo, the world’s largest fast food franchise and restaurant branch plant operator, McDonald’s, started to serve pizza. McDonald’s was known for their hamburgers, fries and milkshakes but their sale of pizza indicates that they wanted to attract consumers away from the pizza industry. The first McDonald’s pizza was tested in 1985 as they introduced a cross between a Greek pita-sandwich and a stuffed pizza calzone at locations in Philadelphia.<sup>178</sup> The pizza was reconfigured as a family-sized fourteen-inch pizza that was cooked in three minutes and delivered to a dine-in table by an employee. It targeted working and middle class families and couples who did not frequent McDonald’s for dinner.<sup>179</sup> In 1989, pizza was sold at 8,300

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<sup>176</sup> Van Alphen, Tony. “Little Caesar’s ads restrained by court.” *Toronto Star*. November 4, 1989.

<sup>177</sup> Pizza Pizza LTD. V Little Caesar International Inc. et al. June 5, 1989. T-1175-89. Trade Mark Infringement. Federal Court of Canada.

<sup>178</sup> “McDonald’s Test Pizza in U.S.” *Globe and Mail*. October 2, 1985.

<sup>179</sup> “McPizza?” *Toronto Star*. August 28, 1989,

McDonald's stores in Canada and the United States, including Toronto and Buffalo.<sup>180</sup> In response to McDonald's pizza, Pizza Hut launched a campaign that claimed it was a "McStake" to order a McDonald's pizza.<sup>181</sup> A spokesperson for Pizza Hut even described McDonald's pizza as a "serious threat" to their business.<sup>182</sup>

McDonald's made further inroads into the Toronto pizza market when they secured the exclusive food service contract for the multipurpose stadium, SkyDome in 1989. The ninety-seven year contract was estimated to gross \$400 million in the first ten years.<sup>183</sup> Aside from selling traditional McDonald's fare, baseball food including hotdogs, sausages, nachos and pizza were also sold.<sup>184</sup> Reporter Cynthia Wine of the *Toronto Star* visited both New York Yankee Stadium, and Detroit Tiger's stadium and said that Toronto was "batting zero" in comparison.<sup>185</sup> New York's stadium served New York style pizza, Detroit served Little Caesar's, and Toronto served McDonald's pizza in their stadium. Despite each stadium serving franchised pizzas, the journalist rated Toronto's McDonald's cuisine the poorest.<sup>186</sup> Another article from the *Toronto Star* described the pizza served by McDonald's in SkyDome as, "so salty they could suck the moisture from Lake Ontario."<sup>187</sup> While the contract was a successful business deal, fans did not like the food offerings, especially the McDonald's pizza.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

<sup>181</sup> "Battling Pizza Hut bites at McDonald's Pizzas." *Globe and Mail*. September 18, 1989.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

<sup>183</sup> Wine, Cynthia. "Sky Dome dining is strictly McDull." *Toronto Star*. August 23, 1990.

<sup>184</sup> Wine, Cynthia. "Sky Dome dining is strictly McDull." *Toronto Star*. August 23, 1990.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid.

<sup>187</sup> "Dome Food Fight." *Toronto Star*. August 15, 1990.

<sup>188</sup> The stadium food contract was reviewed in the late 1990s and Pizza Pizza was awarded the title of "official pizza of the Toronto Blue Jays." This contract was granted to Pizza Nova in 2014 (until the 2020 Major League Baseball Season, played in Buffalo, New York as a result of travel bans attributed to the COVID-19 Pandemic). This gave pizza franchises the rights to be the only pizza sold in SkyDome (renamed Rogers Centre in 2005) and exclusive marketing rights with the Toronto Blue Jays.

Despite selling pizza at Toronto's SkyDome in 1989, McDonald's pizza was not available in many of its Toronto locations until 1992. McDonald's invested \$25 million in advertising and equipment to transform its 633 restaurants across Canada for pizza sales. This investment made McDonald's Canada's largest pizza chain.<sup>189</sup> Comments from Canada's largest pizza franchises, Pizza Pizza and Pizza Hut, to the *Toronto Star* claimed that McDonald's would have difficulty transferring its reputation for hamburgers to pizza, and there was still space for the product offerings of pizza chains.<sup>190</sup> In 1993, McDonald's used Toronto-born comedian, Howie Mandel, in a series of advertisements promoting their pizza, suggesting that it "may be gone soon."<sup>191</sup> The advertisement predicted the future, as McDonald's stopped serving pizzas by the late 1990s.<sup>192</sup> McDonald's pizza briefly posed a threat to the business of Canadian and American franchised pizzerias, but was gone within a decade as their success with rapid hamburger production did not translate to the slower production of pizza, and customer expectations were not met.

The development of new businesses, advertising, new product creation, and legal challenges highlight how the business of pizza changed from a business created for immigrant survival to a capitalist industry controlled by non-Italians. During the

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<sup>189</sup> Papoe, Bob. "McDonald's spends \$25 million to tempt Canadians." *Toronto Star*. March 19, 1992.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

<sup>191</sup> "McDonald's Pizza" Television Advertisement. Recorded on VHS, uploaded to YouTube by Michel Lemieux, January 4, 2014. In 1993, Mandel had the popular Fox animated children's series, *Bobby's World*. A recognizable Canadian celebrity, this was not Mandel's first foray into the pizza industry. In 1984, Howie's brother Steven, created a "pizzagram" business in North York. The business allowed users to send messages to friends that were created by pizza toppings. An example of Canadian pizza innovation, the pizzagram business was not long lasting. However, Howie Mandel served as spokesman for his brother's pizza business. "Send your message via pizza." *Toronto Star*. December 2, 1984.

<sup>192</sup> In 2015 three McDonald's in the United States still served pizza. Locations in Pomeroy, Ohio, Spencer, West Virginia and Orlando, Florida all served pizza. There is no exact date for when McDonald's pizza stopped being produced in Canada, as it slowly disappeared from franchises at seemingly random intervals.

franchise pizza wars, a significant transition from the food-centric focus of independent pizzerias to the commodification of pizza businesses by non-Italians occurred.

### III

A movement of health food consciousness in Canada emerged in the 1960s and 1970s, which popularized practices of alternative medicine, nutritional science, and alternative fitness programs.<sup>193</sup> In 1982, a revision to *Canada's Food Guide* issued a warning about the relationship between diet and heart disease. Fast food and convenience foods like pizza with high calories, high sodium, and high cholesterol levels were linked to heart disease and obesity in children.<sup>194</sup> Health-conscious individuals including doctors, nutritionists, fitness professionals, journalists, and concerned children's advocates argued for the consumption of a balanced diet that did not include processed and convenience foods.<sup>195</sup> The creation of healthier pizzas, including the California style pizzas, was one way in which the pizza industry countered this claim. California pizzas were perceived to be healthier than the standardized pizza because they used a variety of flours to make dough and premium toppings.

While attending the National Fitness Show at the Canadian National Exhibition (CNE) in Toronto, television fitness guru Richard Simmons said, "Toronto, I've never seen so many pizza joints. Canadians are very family-oriented. They want to get married

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<sup>193</sup> Carstairs, Catherine. "The Granola High: Eating Differently in the Late 1960s and 1970s." in *Edible Histories Cultural Politics: Towards a Canadian Food History*. Eds. Iacovetta, Korinek. Epp. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012).

<sup>194</sup> Health Canada, "History of Canada's Food Guide from 1942-2007." January 22, 2019.

<sup>195</sup> The health consciousness movement included health food stores, vitamins, and health food books and magazines. The movement attracted affluent middle class consumers who could afford the higher prices associated with the purchase of health foods, had access to suburban health food stores, the time and appliances to make their own health foods (like home made bread and pasta), and leisure time to study health food philosophy books and attend seminars. Arguably the movement was facilitated by suburban middle class affluence in Toronto in the 1980s. Carstairs, 310.

and do God's purpose, which is to procreate, and have kids. And then stuff them full of fast food!"<sup>196</sup> Simmons, who was in Toronto promoting a new fitness book, claimed that it was all the pizzerias he saw across the city made Torontonians unhealthy. He said, "Shame, shame, Toronto. I have your number and it's 967-1111."<sup>197</sup> Simmons referred to the Pizza Pizza phone number as one of the factors contributing to obesity and unhealthiness in Toronto. While he did not actually tell Torontonians not to eat pizza, he gave the impression that pizza negatively affected the health of children. Simmons' message and sale of his book directly targeted health conscious middle class Torontonians.

Other opinions against the consumption of pizza in Toronto were expressed by a group of attendees of the CNE in a letter to the editor of the *Toronto Star*. The CNE was an inexpensive summertime leisure activity for middle class Torontonians. The attendees wrote, "Many health conscious people tend to shy away from precooked foods such as pizza kept under heat lamps for hours."<sup>198</sup> The letter suggests two different attitudes against the consumption of pizza -- that pizza could carry foodborne viruses after sitting under a heat lamp for hours, and that pizza is simply an unhealthy food option for those who are health-conscious.

An interesting case of the cross-border health-conscious movement appeared in the *New York Times* in 1985. The article claimed, "like their southern neighbors, Canadians today are eating healthier, lighter, faster food."<sup>199</sup> Nevertheless, the article quotes a study from the Canadian Restaurant and Food Service Association, which

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<sup>196</sup> Taylor, Bill. "Fitness guru's got your number and its 967-1111." *Toronto Star*. May 5, 1986.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid.

<sup>198</sup> "CNE Slipping" Letters to the Editor. *Toronto Star*. September 2, 1980.

<sup>199</sup> "Health and Nutrition: The Concerns in Other Nations." *New York Times*. May 8, 1985.

predicted that by 1990 the most popular foods in Canada would be pizza, pasta and Mexican cuisine.<sup>200</sup> While the article does not dismiss foods like pizza as unhealthy, it gives the impression that under the 1982 edition of *Canada's Food Guide*, caloric reduction, exercise and consuming foods from a variety of food groups would make Canadians healthier and not limit their food choice options.<sup>201</sup> This opinion was contrary to the views of the health conscious movement in Canada, which suggested healthy eating was paramount.

Criticisms of pizza consumption were far less apparent in Buffalo's newspapers. An article in Buffalo's *Courier Express* argued that Chicago style pizza was "tasty and healthful," because it had more protein, vitamins and fiber, despite using more dough, sauce, cheese and toppings than a standardized pizza.<sup>202</sup> The article focused on the affordability of old-school pizza and its nutritional value, rather than higher priced healthier alternatives. These options were more attractive to Buffalo's working class population, most of whom did not have the same household income, leisure time, and access to health food as their affluent middle class Toronto counterparts.

In response to the health-focus craze, the pizza industry sought methods to retain customers and win-over health-conscious consumers. In 1986, Pizza Hut developed an elementary reading school program, "Book It." As students read a book, they were presented with a coupon for a personal pan pizza. Nearly fifteen million school children in Canada and the United States participated in the program by 1990.<sup>203</sup> While parent complaints about the program were minimal, one Canadian school board trustee said, "A

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<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid.

<sup>202</sup> Sylvia, Schur. "Two crust pizza, twice as good." *Courier Express*. July 6, 1980.

<sup>203</sup> Oake, George. "See Dick. See Jane. Get Big Mac." *Toronto Star*. September 23, 1990.

lot of teachers believe that it is encouraging kids to read. I guess my concern is do the ends justify the means?"<sup>204</sup> Pizza Hut was criticized for producing unhealthy food and marketing directly to children in their classrooms. However, most criticisms of the program focused on the partnerships between schools and corporations, suggesting that if the government provided adequate financing for education there would be no need for business partnerships.<sup>205</sup> In the United States, criticisms were directed at the program rather than the junk-food element, suggesting that the program would make reading a competitive activity for children.<sup>206</sup>

The Book It program was not Pizza Hut's first attempt to use literacy to market to children. In October 1986, a cross promotion in Toronto between Pizza Hut and Becker's convenience stores gave children a coupon for a personal pan pizza when they purchased *Care Bears* at Becker's.<sup>207</sup> Conglomerates like Pizza Hut had the financial and marketing resources to develop narratives which circumnavigated the middle class health conscious movement and marketed their product directly to children.

## **Conclusion**

The franchise pizza wars raged between 1980 and the 1990s. The introduction of the franchise pizzeria in the 1970s introduced a new space for pizza commoditization. However, by the 1980s, the franchise pizzeria attracted the interests of big businesses and emerged as pizza conglomerates. These currents were not unique to the pizza industry, as the way in which franchises took over the pizza businesses mirrored the impact of franchises across food preparation and consumption industries more generally. Between

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<sup>204</sup> Ibid.

<sup>205</sup> Enchin, Harvey. "A wordy investment." *Globe and Mail*. September 27, 1990.

<sup>206</sup> Rosenberg, Maxi. "Read a book, win a pizza." *New York Times*. April 5, 1992.

<sup>207</sup> "Pizza Hut Becker's" Advertisement. *Toronto Star*. October 11, 1986.

the late 1960s and the 1990s, the food industry adapted capitalist overproduction ideals, which encouraged the proliferation of food consumption outside the home, larger food portion sizes, fierce competition between food sellers, and the dominance of franchise and conglomerate food businesses.<sup>208</sup> Capitalist overproduction of food commodities changed the way consumers bought products and where they ate. For example, franchise and conglomerate bakeries like Tim Horton's, Panera Bread, Cobbs Bread, and in-house grocery store bakeries replaced independent bakeries, and franchise hamburger and fast food chains, including McDonald's, Burger King, and Wendy's, replaced diners and greasy spoons. Much like pizza, other ethnic cuisines once sold in independent restaurants connected to ethnic economies, most notably Mexican/Tex-Mex and Chinese, were co-opted for capitalist overproduction by mass conglomerate franchises. Popular franchises including Taco Bell, Mighty Taco, Chipotle, Chi-Chi's, Manchu Wok, Panda Express, and PF Chang's opened across Canada and the United States.

The Italian ethnic economies which once dominated the pizza industry in Toronto and Buffalo were pushed aside as ethnic-owned franchises and independent pizzerias modified their offerings to compete with non-Italian conglomerate franchises. Independent pizzerias utilized the support of Italian ethnic economies to modify their product offerings. However, they did not have the same influence over the pizza industry as they did between 1950 and the 1970s. Non-Italian outsiders entered the pizza industry as owners of franchises, conglomerates, and innovators of pizza products, which shaped the pizza industries in Toronto and Buffalo. The commoditized pizza product had been

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<sup>208</sup> Holt-Gimenez, Eric. *A Foodie's Guide to Capitalism: Understanding the Political Economy of What We Eat*. (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2017), 18.

co-opted by non-Italians who sought to profit from the commodity and pizza emerged as a mass commodity.

Between 1950 and the 1990s, the commoditization of pizza had shifted from the home, to restaurant, to the streets and eventually to the franchise. By the time the pizza was commoditized in the franchise, the Italian ethnic economies were virtually erased from the pizza industry. However, the urban economic conditions corresponded with patterns of leisure, suburbanization and health consciousness in Toronto and Buffalo, which shaped the commoditization of pizza by non-Italians. A series of small commodity wars were the result of these urban economic conditions, and were fought between the major commoditizers of pizza, each vying to attract more consumers. Mass conglomerate franchises, branch plant franchises, and independent pizzerias fought for control over geographic urban spaces, and for consumers, while concerned middle class advocates, fought pizzerias over the health and lifestyle risks associated with the consumption of pizza.

Most importantly, between 1980 and the early 1990s, urban economic conditions shaped different pizza cultures and consumption patterns in Toronto and Buffalo. Torontonians seemed to want premium pizza products, dine-in restaurant service, alcohol sold alongside pizza, and health-conscious products in contrast to Buffalonians who seemed to prefer quick-service pizza, pizza-tainment, and traditional Italian recipes. The growing affluence of Toronto's middle class, and decline of Buffalo's working class facilitated these demands and consumption patterns. The consumption of pizza in Toronto had become a dichotomy between premium pizza consumption in restaurants and quick-service pizza consumption from franchise and conglomerate pizzerias. In

Buffalo the consumption of pizza was primarily quick service sold by independent pizzerias, but pizza-tainment and the Pizza Hut conglomerate attempted to offer mid-range products to working class consumers. The consumption of different styles of pizza in drastically different spaces in Toronto and Buffalo in the early 1990s highlights a sharp contrast between the pizza consumption cultures in the two cities.

Between 1980 and the early 1990s, pizza was firmly established as a capitalist commodity. The period of franchised pizza commodification demonstrates how pizza became an object of capitalist intentions, detached from the Italian ethnic economies. Small business owners fought for a piece of the capitalist pizza pie and urban consumers in Toronto and Buffalo demanded more pizza. Pizza was far from the hands of Mama in the homes of Toronto and Buffalo, though, the space where pizza was first commoditized.

### **Conclusion: The Lake Effect Took Pizza Far From Mama's Hands**

In May 1988, Joanne Kates described a scene in Toronto of middle-aged yuppies sitting on the grass in linen clothes, with what she described as the, “appropriate dejeuner sur l’herbe,” a slice of Toronto’s designer pizza. She claimed that Torontonians needed a moral barometer to decide if eating designer pizza was fashionable or harmful.<sup>1</sup> Kates disparaged the popularity of California pizza in Toronto in the late 1980s, suggesting that there was pizza for everyone and pizza, “made for BMW drivers who need a rest from having to make up their own minds about the taste of things.”<sup>2</sup> She claimed that a five hundred degree pizza oven is no way to treat designer ingredients like snow peas, goat cheese, papaya, sun-dried tomatoes and smoked salmon. In her column, she was advocating that pizza in Toronto should return to traditional Italian styles. She described these as, “real food since before mid-1987, where they use basic toppings and have respect for the ingredients without jumbling them together with, such American abandon.”<sup>3</sup> Her article described the growth of Toronto’s upper-middle class in the 1980s, and how the pizza industry created designer pizza to attract this group’s consumption choices. While affluent middle class Torontonians debated which style of pizza to consume, Canadians spent \$425 million on takeout pizza in 1987, which made pizza the fastest growing segment of the Canadian food service industry.<sup>4</sup> By 1990, the commoditization of pizza in Toronto resulted in a dichotomy between the styles of pizza - standardized, designer, and “old school”.

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<sup>1</sup> Kates, Joanne. “Designer Pizza Hot and so are Debates on Whether it Works.” *Globe and Mail*. May 7, 1988.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

This study has demonstrated how far the pizza in Toronto and Buffalo in the 1990s was from the hands of “Mama” who first produced pizzas in her home kitchen in the 1950s. Between 1950 and 1990, pizza was co-opted by non-Italians and emerged as a capitalist commodity produced and sold by conglomerate businesses with no affiliation to the Italian ethnic economies. As this study shows, the commodification of this particular immigrant food item between 1950 and 1990 was the result of urban conditions, including the interplay between changing urban economies of Toronto and Buffalo, population growth and decline, urban development, and suburbanization. Equally important were patterns of middle and working class culture and changing household incomes. Coinciding with these changes in the urban centres were the Italian ethnic economies that established pizzerias, created supply chains, provided labour, and trained *pizzaiolos* as a response to the initial exclusion of Italians from mainstream communities and commercial activity in both Toronto and Buffalo. The commodification of pizza in these urban centres was the result of the interplay between ethnicity, postwar cultural currents and urban economies.

This dissertation is a study in food history that highlights the significance of immigration, ethnicity and urban cultural currents to the commodification, production, and modification of an ethnic dish. Italian immigrants were compelled to modify pizza recipes and cooking methods in Toronto and Buffalo because of ingredient availability and the varying types of cooking appliances. Unique styles of pizza emerged in Toronto and Buffalo alongside the use of electric ovens, faux-Italian ingredients, local recipes, and locally improvised ingredients. Pizzas were also modified to adapt to the taste preferences of non-Italian Canadians and Americans. The modification of pizza included

the introduction of pizza-style products like the PizzaRolla and Minitreet, the addition of local toppings like the Hawaiian and white pizzas, and influenced the development of local side dishes and drinks, including Brio soda and chicken wings. As pizza was accepted outside Italian communities, business interests facilitated another change made to the pizza recipe -- the standardized pizza. Pizza was not the only ethnic dish modified for wider commodification in Toronto and Buffalo, but followed patterns discernible in other ethnic cuisines, including Jewish deli, and Chinese food. Currents in food consumption and preparation, including street food, food delivery services, and convenience food also contributed to the popularization of pizza in Toronto and Buffalo. In ways unique to other food history studies, this dissertation examined two urban centres within the same region rather than adopting national or multi-national approach to the study of the commodification of food items. This local study of two urban centres within a regional and transnational context has revealed the ways in which immigration, ethnicity and urban cultural currents influenced the forces of modification, improvisation and standardization on pizza, as the dish was popularized outside of the Italian community. These forces were unique to Toronto and Buffalo and explain why the pizzas sold and consumed were considerably different from those in New York, Chicago, and Montreal, thereby illustrating the importance of adopting a localized approach in the study of food history.

In 1950, as this study highlighted, Toronto and Buffalo were growing cities, with similar industries and Italian immigrant populations, but by 1990, changes in the composition and function of their urban economies had created a large divide. This study is not a direct comparison of the two urban centres, rather a study of two cities within

close proximity and the same region. Despite their regional organization, different economic forces built Toronto into a centre of Canadian industry, the branch plant economy, and a national cultural centre, while Buffalo's population and economic function declined as industry left the city for the Sunbelt region or to branch plants operations in Canada. Between 1950 and 1990 the population of the consolidated metropolitan City of Toronto grew by nearly 1.6 million residents to 2,290,753 while the population of the metropolitan statistical area of Buffalo decreased to 968,532, with only 328,117 residents in the central city.<sup>5</sup> Average household incomes from 1990 also demonstrate the divergent paths of the two cities: in the City of Toronto, the average household income was \$89,408 (CAD) and in Erie County, New York it was \$74,420 (CAD).<sup>6</sup> Toronto had a far greater population, with a strong middle class, in contrast to the declining population with working class incomes in Buffalo. This dissertation does not aim to compare the economic prosperity of the two cities, however the different economic characteristics of Toronto and Buffalo, two cities within the same region, shaped the different modes of pizza commoditization. Conditions in Toronto facilitated the development of an independent pizza industry linked to Italian ethnic economies, the development and growth of local franchises, and attracted the business of American branch plant franchises. In contrast, conditions in Buffalo did not support the

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<sup>5</sup> Since 1950, the population of Buffalo's central city decreased by nearly 200,000 residents. Buffalo's metropolitan statistical area includes 640,409 residents who did not live in the City of Buffalo but in neighboring towns, and did not include Niagara Falls, New York. The consolidated metropolitan City of Toronto includes residents in the boroughs, which became the amalgamated City of Toronto. Statistics Canada, *Canada Year Book 1990*. "Population of Census Metropolitan Areas." U.S. Census Bureau, *1990 United States Census*. "General Population Characteristics- New York State."  
<sup>6</sup> Statics Canada, *The Daily Report*, Tuesday, May 12, 1998. and U.S. Census Bureau, *State Urban and Rural Incomes, Erie County, 1990 Census of Population Social and Economic Characteristics New York*. Toronto rate adjusted to \$89,408 consistent with 2020 inflation. Buffalo rate adjusted from \$28,508USD in 1989 to 2020 inflation of \$60,121 (USD) or \$74,420 (CAD).

development of any local franchises, nor attract the business of multiple franchise conglomerates, but maintained a network of independent pizzerias linked to Italian ethnic economies.

This study also suggests that ethnicity and immigration were central pillars in the commodification of pizza in Toronto and Buffalo. Pizza was first commoditized by businesses that were rooted in the Italian ethnic economies, but was co-opted by non-Italians who sought to profit from the popularity of the commodity by opening fast food pizzeria franchises. As some independent pizzerias found success, they expanded their businesses to the multi-store model. The success of some multi-store pizzerias led ethnic entrepreneurs to adopt the franchising model, a standard established by fast food restaurants. The franchising of pizzerias led non-Italian entrepreneurs, conglomerate businesses, and multi-national franchises to open pizzerias in Toronto and Buffalo. With Toronto's position as a centre of the branch plant economy in Southern Ontario, American conglomerates formed branch plant franchises in the city. American-owned pizzeria franchises operating in Toronto were a far reach from the homes and Italian-owned businesses where pizzas were first produced. Under Buffalo's dwindling population and economy, only the conglomerate, Pizza Hut, operated franchises in the city as a loss leader to prevent the incursion of any other franchises. The growth of the non-Italian pizza industry in Toronto and Buffalo was facilitated by the urban economic conditions and the role of ethnic economies in developing a profitable industry.

The third and final pillar central to this study is the role of postwar cultural currents in Canada and the United States. As consumer habits developed and changed, the food item itself was modified. Postwar consumer habits were bound to the urban

economic conditions and cultural trends in Toronto and Buffalo. Under Toronto's prosperous and growing economy, a wealthier middle class emerged, while in Buffalo, the population remained primarily working class under the conditions of deindustrialization. Within the lifespan of some Torontonians and Buffalonians, pizza was originally considered an exotic and ethnic dish not for Anglo palates, but then became a commodity widely enjoyed. As pizza was commoditized in homes, restaurants, the streets, and franchises, it became more popular with non-Italians because of food innovations, restaurant services, marketing and mass urban availability. Accordingly, pizza was also modified for different tastes and dining options that could be found in such things as at home pizza recipes, restaurant-served pizza, standardized pizza, and traditional Italian styles of pizza. Each style of pizza was sold at a range of prices, which facilitated the economic access to different kinds of pizza, ranging from the low priced take-out slice to the high-end gourmet pizza. Despite the different styles and prices, by 1990 pizza became so ubiquitous in the diets of Torontonians and Buffalonians that hundreds of retailers in both cities sold the food item. Consumers had the choice to purchase pizza to make at home, or buy pre-made from restaurants, franchises, or conglomerates, or consume pizza in a pizzeria, at home, on the streets, or a stadium. Accompaniments to pizza, including wings, submarine sandwiches, Brio soda and alcoholic beverages were among the consumer choices that developed by 1990. The growing number of customers resulted in competition between pizzerias in an attempt to stand out and capture larger audiences. Modifications to pizza products, the development of accompaniments, the expansion of pizza services like delivery, and the freedom to

choose where to consume pizza were the result of competition and attempts to entice a wide range of consumer spending.

Toronto and Buffalo sit across the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel in the Great Lakes region, the principal theatre of this study. This study does not compare these cities; instead it has highlighted the significance of postwar prosperity, immigration, city building, suburbanization, and deindustrialization to the Great Lakes region. Following the Second World War, the cities of the region were prosperous industrial centres and attracted many immigrants. However, economic currents in the 1960s underlay increasingly divergent paths for the Canadian and American cities of the Great Lakes region. The process of deindustrialization reduced the industrial capacity of many American Great Lakes cities, and prompted a population exodus from cities like Buffalo. However, as this study has highlighted, Toronto did not experience the same decline as its population and economic capacity continued to grow. Factors that contributed to Toronto's growth and cultural vibrancy included the election of René Lévesque's separatist Parti Québécois in the 1976 Quebec Provincial election, which facilitated the relocation of many Montreal-based firms to Toronto, the Quebec sovereignty referendums of 1980 and 1995, and the arrival of American Vietnam War draft resisters in Toronto and other Canadian cities. While some deindustrialization occurred in Toronto and other Canadian Great Lakes cities, it was confined to industrial areas of the city, and did not result in major population exodus. By 1990, Toronto and Buffalo were not financially parallel cities. Toronto was the financial capital of Canada, whereas Buffalo was not an American financial centre, and was in the shadow of New York City as a financial centre of New York State.

This study reveals that despite regional ties which bound the cities of Toronto and Buffalo together prior to 1950s, a shift took place between 1960 and 1990 that realigned the prominence, economic capacity and culture of these cities. Canadian philosopher, Marshall McLuhan declared that borders exist as “intervals of resonance.”<sup>7</sup> While a mechanical system has natural frequencies of resonance along its system, a national border has pockets of regional power sources. However, resonance is reliant on force, and as force changes along a fixed line, the intervals of force produced different gaps along the system. This suggests that until the 1960s, the Great Lakes cities of Toronto and Buffalo existed in one regional interval, but a shift in postwar economic power created a new interval of resonance, which realigned the relationship between the cities. A study of cities, within a regional and transnational context, reveals how the history of Canadian and American urban centres can run parallel to one another, but different forces of economics, culture, and social movements in Canada and the United States can shape different histories for cities that are regionally aligned.

This dissertation has highlighted the economic growth and subsequent decline of the city of Buffalo between 1950 and 1990. It is important to note that Buffalo’s economic decline continued beyond the time period of this study, through the 1990s and early 2000s. The population loss doubled from 2100 residents per year between 1990 and 1994 to 4500 per year from 1995 to 1999.<sup>8</sup> In fact, by 2000 the city’s population had fallen to 297,000, which was nearly half of the recorded population in 1950. Much of the

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<sup>7</sup>In a mechanical system, resonance occurs when the frequency at which a force is applied is equal or nearly equal to one of the natural frequencies of the system. This causes objects to resonate based upon their exposure.

McLuhan, Marshall. “Canada: The Borderline Case” in *The Canadian Imagination: Dimensions of a Literary Culture* ed. David Staines. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977). 226-248, 226.

<sup>8</sup> Goldman, *City of the Edge*, 362.

white population, including Italians, had left the city, while modest increases in the number of African American and Hispanic population offset the white exodus.<sup>9</sup> As more manufacturing plants closed, employment in manufacturing in Buffalo declined from 93,000 jobs in 1990 to 73,000 in 2002.<sup>10</sup>

Outside of the temporal scope of this study, Buffalo continued to seek a new cultural role, as a centre for professional sports, tourism and education, despite its economic and population decline. The city's two major sports teams, the Buffalo Bills (National Football League) and Buffalo Sabres (National Hockey League) sought to leave the city in the 1990s and relocate to urban markets, where middle class consumers had incomes to purchase season's tickets and licensed merchandise. However, tax incentives from the State of New York were provided to the sports franchises, to retain the teams in Buffalo.<sup>11</sup> The City of Buffalo also sought alternative income streams, including a casino operated by the Seneca Nation. The popularity of the nearby Niagara Falls dwindled as the "Honeymoon Capital of the World," as tourists chose to visit Niagara Falls, Ontario for better attractions, including a new casino owned and operated by the Government of Ontario (Casino Niagara opened in 1996). A casino was perceived as something that would aid Buffalo's economy. The associated job creation appealed to Buffalonians; casinos offered jobs with starting salaries of \$28,000, in a city where half of the households earned less than \$25,000 a year.<sup>12</sup> After a series of legal proceedings between the State of New York, the Seneca Nation, and the Department of the Interior,

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Robinson, D. "Job Losses Increase in Buffalo Region." *Buffalo News*, June 20, 2003.

<sup>11</sup> Goldman, *City of the Edge*, 329-334.

<sup>12</sup> Goldman, *City of the Edge*, 329-334.

Buffalo was approved for casino development.<sup>13</sup> The Seneca Niagara Casino and Hotel opened in 2002 in Niagara Falls, New York, while the Seneca Buffalo Creek Casino opened in 2007 on the banks of the Buffalo River in downtown Buffalo.<sup>14</sup> While the casinos attracted jobs and brought tourists back to the region, the University at Buffalo's South Campus on Main Street expanded through the 1990s, and the \$5 billion "UB2020" project was launched in the early 2000s. The project included the opening of a Medical School and upgraded teaching hospital in downtown Buffalo, at Main and North Streets, which were completed in 2017.<sup>15</sup> The University at Buffalo revitalized portions of the city and had a total enrollment of nearly 25,000 students in 1999.<sup>16</sup>

Despite the population exodus and economic downturn, food culture remained important to Buffalo including the founding of the Taste of Buffalo festival in 1984. The annual festival, the largest two-day food festival in the United States, was first held on Main Street, but later near Buffalo City Hall at Niagara Square and Delaware Avenue, drew nearly 450,000 patrons each year to sample downtown Buffalo's restaurants.<sup>17</sup>

Other smaller festivals like Buffalo's Galbani Italian Heritage Festival focused on the

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<sup>13</sup> Goldman, *City of the Edge*, 356.

<sup>14</sup> The Seneca Nation also operated the Seneca Allegany Casino in Salamanca, New York on the Allegany Indian Reservation (completed in 2007). The casinos brought jobs and tourists to the Buffalo region. However, the Seneca investment in the Buffalo Creek Casino (downtown Buffalo) was much smaller than initially planned, following the Global Recession of 2007-2009.

<sup>15</sup> Kaplan, Thomas. "In Buffalo, Visions, Perhaps, Illusions, of a University-Fueled Revitalization." *The New York Times*, May 8, 2011.

<sup>16</sup> McGinnis, Mara. "UB Exceeds Fall Enrollment Targets." *UB News Center*. October 11, 1999.

<sup>17</sup> An article from the *Buffalo News* explains that the event was created in response to the construction associated with the building of Metro Rail in 1984, which kept people away from downtown businesses. A group of downtown business owners heard of a restaurant event in Hartford, Connecticut, which had favorable outcomes for downtown businesses. Members of the Hartford Chamber of Commerce visited Buffalo and helped organize the first event. Both cities had considerable Italian-American populations, which may have facilitated this connection. The festival prominently featured both wings and pizza, however the future of the festival is unknown after being canceled two years in a row due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"About Us." *TheTasteofBuffalo.com*

Curran, Bob. "Answers to Frequently Asked Questions Taste of Buffalo." *Buffalo News*. June 30, 1996.

sale of Italian foods.<sup>18</sup> Aside from festivals, independent pizzerias, La Nova, Bocce Club and Santora's, continue to operate in Buffalo. Much of their popularity has been accredited to the demand for wings as an accompaniment to pizza. When asked about the growing popularity of wings in the United States, one Buffalo pizzeria owner explained, "Pizza and wings go together like coffee and doughnuts."<sup>19</sup> The owners of Bob and John's La Hacienda (on Hertel Avenue in Buffalo), Penora's Pizza (5055 Broadway in Buffalo), and Leonardi's (in Amherst) revealed to the *Buffalo News* that pizza and wings were popularized by tourists and local customers during Buffalo Bills football games.<sup>20</sup> Independent pizzerias in Buffalo were the first commoditizer of wings before they became popular both nationally and internationally. In 1994, Joe Todaro III of La Nova Pizzeria founded La Nova Wings, a company that sold frozen wings and sauces to pizzerias across the United States.<sup>21</sup> Outside the pizza industry, chain restaurants specializing in wings including Buffalo Wild Wings (founded in Columbus, Ohio in 1982), Hooters (founded in Clearwater, Florida in 1983), and Wild Wing (founded in Sunderland, Ontario in 1999) commoditized a Buffalo pizzeria product nationally and internationally.

Amidst population decline, Pizza Hut was the only conglomerate to maintain a presence in Buffalo through the 1990s. The first Pizza Hut opened on Niagara Falls

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<sup>18</sup> The Galbani Italian Heritage festival is a twelve-day festival once known as "The Buffalo Lawn Fete" dating to 1921. The festival was traditionally held at the St. Anthony of Padua Church, which was a central space of Buffalo's Italian life, but moved to Hertel Avenue, Connecticut Street, the Waterfront and Niagara Square. The festival features a variety of Italian foods, and heritage events like music and grape stomping. LoJacono, Peter. "Galbani Italian Festival." Hertel Business Association, [hertel-ave.com](http://hertel-ave.com), accessed August 26, 2021.

<sup>19</sup> Ciemcioch, Mark. "Pizza and Wings: Buffalo's Perfect Combo." *Buffalo News*. January 31, 2019.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Epstein, Jonathan. "LaNova is Back in Business Four Months After Fire." *Buffalo News*. December 24, 2004.

Boulevard in 1969 and eventually grew to thirty-five franchises in Erie and Niagara Counties by 2020. A retrospective in the *Buffalo News* explained, “It might not be Buffalo pizza, but we Buffalonians have been eating it for longer than many of our beloved pizza places have been in business. The food wasn’t the big appeal – grandmas, for some reason, seemed to appreciate the service and décor that didn’t necessarily exist in most corner takeout pizzerias.”<sup>22</sup> Pizza Hut offered working class Buffalonians an affordable dine-in experience, which independent pizzerias did not, as they favored take-out counters and delivery over restaurant seating. One Buffalo journalist attributed Pizza Hut’s popularity to the “Book It!” reading program, which made many local children loyal fans of the brand through adulthood.<sup>23</sup> Despite the local fandom, the Director of Operations for Hospitality West, which owned thirty-one Pizza Huts in Buffalo, said, “They have been chronic losers, some of them for over twenty years.”<sup>24</sup> Pizza Hut’s conglomerate ownership allowed the restaurants to operate as loss leaders for twenty years to ensure that no competitors would open businesses in the city. However, the deteriorating urban economy and the financial repercussions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 resulted in the closure of the final seventeen Pizza Hut locations in Buffalo in July 2020.<sup>25</sup>

In contrast to Buffalo’s decline, Toronto’s population, industrial capacity and economy outgrew its metropolitan government structure in the 1990s. Formed in 1953, the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto oversaw real estate tax, and established arterial roads, public works, public transportation, parks and housing for the City of Toronto, the

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<sup>22</sup> Cichon, Steve. “BN Chronicles: 50 Years of Pizza Hut in Buffalo.” *Buffalo News*. July 29, 2020.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

villages of Long Branch, Swansea and Forest Hill, the towns of New Toronto, Mimico, Weston and Leaside and the townships of Etobicoke, York, North York, East York and Scarborough.<sup>26</sup> However, by the 1990s the former villages, towns, and townships that formed Metropolitan Toronto had grown from rural and agricultural land into dense suburban developments. An amalgamated Toronto government was proposed by a non-binding referendum during the 1994 municipal election, where 58% of voters supported the abolition of the Metro government system.<sup>27</sup>

On January 1, 1998, Bill 103, City of Toronto Act merged the seven municipal governments of Metropolitan Toronto into the singular City of Toronto.<sup>28</sup> Under the guidance of the new Mayor, Mel Lastman, Toronto continued to grow and prosper. Municipal property taxes were frozen, federal funding for social housing was secured, and public health inspections of restaurants were improved.<sup>29</sup> New developments attracted to the economic profitability of the city, included the City Place community, and the Air Canada Centre stadium (Scotiabank Arena 2018-Present), both commenced construction in 1997.

As Toronto's population and urban economy prospered in the 1990s, the pizza industry continued to grow and included the development of new franchises to serve the growing population. Gino's Pizza of Oakville, Ontario, developed the co-brand, 241

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<sup>26</sup> Levine, *Toronto: Biography of a City*, 315.

<sup>27</sup> Levine, *Toronto*, 315.

<sup>28</sup> Levine, *Toronto*, 317.

<sup>29</sup> Despite these successes in office, Lastman had a series of damages to his personal (and the City's) reputation including acknowledging a fourteen year long affair with an employee at his furniture store (with whom he fathered two sons), calling in the Canadian Army in January 1999 to shovel snow following a blizzard, a series of racist comments made on an International Olympic Committee delegation to Mombasa for a Toronto City Bid for the 2008 Summer Olympic Games in 2001, and a series of photographs with members of the Hells Angels outlaw motorcycle gang. Levine, *Toronto*, 326.

Pizza in Scarborough in 1986 as a quick service pizza chain.<sup>30</sup> The chain grew to 160 franchised and corporate outlets by 1997 when it was acquired by the Burlington, Ontario food conglomerate, Afton Food Group.<sup>31</sup> Afton believed the acquisition would increase annual revenue to \$100 million per year, and developed plans to expand to 500 retail outlets by the year 2000.<sup>32</sup> This expansion did not happen, as Afton Food declared bankruptcy in 2005, and Quinsam Capital purchased the 241 Pizza franchises for \$7 million.<sup>33</sup> In 2006, Chairman's Brand, the parent company of the Coffee Time chain of coffee shops (founded by Tom Micalopoulos in Bolton, Ontario in 1982), purchased 241 Pizza from Quinsam.<sup>34</sup> This demonstrates how by the 1990s, Toronto area pizza franchise chains were a commodity, a far reach from the period between 1950 and 1990, which saw the commodification of pizza as a food item.

Other Canadian chains including Panago (founded in 1986 in Abbotsford, British Columbia), Topper's Pizza (founded in 1982 in Sudbury, Ontario), and Boston Pizza (founded 1964 in Edmonton, Alberta) opened franchises in the Greater Toronto Area in the 1990s. Papa John's (founded in Jeffersonville, Indiana in 1984) joined other American branch plant franchises as they opened locations in the Greater Toronto Area in the mid 2000s.<sup>35</sup> As franchise and conglomerate pizzerias continued to open locations in Toronto in the 1990s, many independent pizzerias maintained control over local markets. Independent pizzerias linked to Italian ethnic economies, including Vesuvio's, Camarra's, Il Paesano, Bitondo Pizzeria, and Frank's Pizza House continued operation

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<sup>30</sup> "About Us" GinosPizza.ca (Accessed January 22, 2021).

<sup>31</sup> "Afton buys 241 Pizza Chain." *Toronto Star*, April 29, 1997. D2.

<sup>32</sup> "Afton buys 241 Pizza Chain." *Toronto Star*, April 29, 1997. D2.

<sup>33</sup> "Afton Food Acquired." *Toronto Star*. July 8, 2005

<sup>34</sup> "Chairman's Brand Grows on Spending Spree." Press Release, October 4, 2006.

<sup>35</sup> Murphy, Mark. "Papa John's: Come to Papa." *Canadian Business Franchise*, August 18, 2016.

through the 1990s and were featured at events like the Taste of Little Italy.<sup>36</sup> Family members of the original pizzeria owners and other Italian business connections operated many of the remaining independent pizzerias.

Urban economies, ethnicity, immigration, and cultural currents continued to shape the commodification and consumption of pizza in both Toronto and Buffalo in ways that are well beyond the chronological scope of this dissertation. Postwar Canadian and American histories of business, food, and consumption, ultimately reveal the significance of capitalism, consumerism and abundance to postwar Canada and the United States. North American Cold War ideals of capitalism, consumerism and abundance coincided with the introduction and commodification of pizza in Toronto and Buffalo. These ideals shaped consumption practices, sites of consumption and business, the formation of businesses, and the sale of commodities in Toronto and Buffalo. From the modern appliances and convenience foods that popularized pizza in homes, to suburbanization and roadways that popularized pizza on the streets, to the mass consumption of pizza in restaurants, drive-ins, and pizzerias, modernity and mass consumption facilitated the commodification of pizza.

Three interconnected arguments have formed the backbone of this dissertation to demonstrate the ways in which ethnicity, postwar culture, and urban economies shaped the commodification of pizza in Toronto and Buffalo. Between 1950 and 1990, the pizza itself was modified, the habits of consumers developed, and an industry based around pizza was built. The homes, the restaurants, the streets, and the franchises of Buffalo and Toronto are the spaces where “Mama” made the first pizzas, Italian ethnic economies

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<sup>36</sup> Camarra’s Pizza Closed in July 2019. Vesuvio’s closed in April, 2020 as a result of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Il Paesano, Bitondo and Frank’s all continue to operate as of January 2021.

operated businesses, and non-Italian franchises and conglomerates co-opted the production of pizza. Despite being made of only three basic elements -- dough, sauce and cheese, pizza illuminates the history of immigration, business, labour, urbanization, gender, culture, economics, consumption, and food. Pizza has always been a tasty snack or meal, but it also presents a deluxe slice of the history of Toronto and Buffalo.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A: Pizzeria Lists 1950-1990

The following is a list of all pizzerias, Italian hot table bakeries, pizza restaurants, and pizza franchises cited in this dissertation. These businesses were listed in city directories, telephone books, industry publications, distributor guides, and restaurant listings. The cited businesses represent a segment of the 1084 businesses in Toronto, and 788 in Buffalo, collected from sources on five-year increments between 1950 and 1990.

#### *Toronto Pizzerias*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Address</b>
Bitondo's Pizza	11 Clinton Street
Boston Pizza	Various Locations (1990s)
Caffe Centrale	1265 St. Clair Avenue West
Calabria Pizzeria	1352 St. Clair Avenue West
Camarra's Pizzeria & Restaurant	2899 Dufferin Street
Centro	Yonge Street/Castlefield Ave
Chuck E. Cheese	2200 Jane St, 2452 Sheppard Ave E
Commisso Bros & Racco Italian Bakery	8 Kincort Street
Daily Planet	Yonge/Eglinton Streets
Dolomiti Pastieceria Fresh Pizza	1348 St. Clair Avenue W
Domino's Pizza	Various Locations
Don Valley Pizza	1090 Don Mills Rd
Frank Vetere's Pizza	Various Locations
George's Spaghetti House and Jazz Bar	290 Dundas St E
Gino's Pizza	Various Locations (1990s)
Il Fornello	486 Bloor Street West
Il Paesano Pizzeria	396 Browns Line
Italian City Restaurant	587 College Street
Italian Home Bakery	271 Attwell Drive
La Pizza	3017 Bathurst St
La Pizza West	2111 Jane St
Lido's Spaghetti House	662 Yonge Street
Little Caesar Pizzeria	108 Avenue Road
Little Caesar's	Various Locations
Margellina Pizzeria	2882 Dufferin St
Mario's Basement	1144 Eglinton West
Mario's Spaghetti House and Pizzeria	1009 Dupont St, 662 Yonge Street
Milano's Pizza	3886 Bloor Street
Mona Lisa Tavern	2954 Dufferin Street
Monte Carlo Pizzeria	1028 Eglinton Ave W
Mother's Pizza	Various Locations
Mr. Pizza	146 Dupont Street
Orso	106 John Street

Panago Pizza	Various Locations
Panevino	770 Bay Street
Papa John's Pizza	Various Locations (1990s)
Pizza Gigi	143 Harbord Street
Pizza Hut	Various Locations
Pizza Nova	Various Locations
Pizza Olympic 76	3 Gloucester Street
Pizza Patio	Various Locations
Pizza Pizza	Various Locations
Pizza Romi (49 Dundas Street West)	49 Dundas Street West
Pizzaville	Various Locations
Pizzeria Toto	482 College Street
Pizzeria Uno	73 Front Street E
Porretta's Pizzeria	97 Harbord Street
Ragno D'Oro Restaurant	1231 St. Clair Avenue W
San Francesco Food	10 Clinton Street
Tonino's Spaghetti House	1374 Queen Street W
Topper's Pizza	Various Locations (1990s)
Vesuvio Restaurant	612 College Street
Vesuvio's Pizza & Spaghetti House	3010 Dundas Street W
Vulcan Pizza	697 College Street

*Buffalo Pizzerias*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Address</b>
AAA Pizzeria (Ingham Avenue, Lackawanna)	Ingham Avenue
Abbott Pizza & Subs	1020 Abbott Road
Avenue Pizzeria	504 Elmwood Ave
Bob and John's La Hacienda	1545 Hertel Ave
Bocce Club Pizzeria	630 Clinton Street
Carbone's Pizza	568 South Park Ave
Chuck E. Cheese	41 Thruway Mall
Di Rose Pizzeria	Kenmore Ave
Dino's Pizzeria	Various Locations
Drago's Restaurant	Grand Island Boulevard
Formaggio's Pizzeria	Third Street
Frank & Theresa's Anchor Bar	1047 Main Street
Ilio DiPaolo's Restaurant	3785 South Park Ave
Italian Submarine Sandwich Shop	Bailey Ave
Jaco's Pizzeria	7202 Buffalo Ave
John Young's Wings 'n Things	Jefferson and Carlton Streets
La Hacienda Pizza	2065 South Park Av
La Nova Pizzeria	2473 Delaware Ave, 371 W Ferry St
Leonardi's Pizza	2916 Bailey Ave
Lovejoy Pizza	1244 Lovejoy St
Mr. Submarine	1977 South Park Ave
P&R Pizzeria	2450 Elmwood Ave
Penora's Pizza	5055 Broadway St
Pizza Hut	Various Locations
Radice Pizzeria	74 West Chippewa St
Santora's Pizza	Various Locations
Shakey's	Niagara Falls Boulevard
Sotera's Pizzeria	3620 Main Street

## **Appendix B: Pizza Slice Tracker**

This table tracks the number of pizza slices that I consumed in collecting data for this dissertation. Below are the finalized results.

<b>Month/Year</b>	<b>Number of Slices of Pizza Consumed</b>
April 2018	18
May 2018	10
June 2018	17
July 2018	9
August 2018	28
September 2018	10
October 2018	17
November 2018	10
December 2018	7
January 2019	6
February 2019	22
March 2019	55
April 2019	14
May 2019	29
June 2019	12
July 2019	18
August 2019	18
September 2019	6
October 2019	14
November 2019	11
December 2019	18
January 2020	6
February 2020	12
March 2020	20
April 2020	4
May 2020	4
June 2020	16
July 2020	10
August 2020	19
September 2020	18
October 2020	38
November 2020	17
December 2020	16
January 2021	21
February 2021	29
March 2021	6
April 2021	14
May 2021	18
June 2021	0
July 2021	30
August 2021	8
September 2021	16
October 2021	13
November 2021	12
December 2021	12
January 2022	4
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>712</b>