More than just a Fine Drink: Processes of Cultural Translation, Taste Formation and Idealized Consumption in the Wine World

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Department of Sociology
University of Toronto

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2018

Abstract

My dissertation, presented as three interrelated studies prepared as standalone articles, uses the cultural practice of wine to examine how ideas, tastes and consumption practices travel and are adopted in new places. Through field observations, interviews and discourse analysis in the established Châteauneuf-du-Pape and the emerging Niagara, I begin by examining how the concept of terroir is expressed and used across a French and a Canadian regional cultural context in Chapter 3. Through a comparative analysis of terroir, a complex French cultural term used to identify and classify artisanal foods and drinks in relation to a specific place, this first study clarifies the factors that drive consistency and change in the translation of a cultural idea like terroir, advancing our understanding of what translates and what must be adapted when a cultural idea travels in a globalized context.

In Chapters 4 and 5, I further deepen this questioning by examining how wine consumers and producers in the emerging, non-traditionally wine producing Ontario wine market consider the development of a taste for wine, a cultural good that is often viewed as complex and intimidating. In Chapter 4, I consider how consumers frame their interest in wine to understand how cultural practices and tastes “take”, and become more interesting to cultural consumers. I
show that consumers frame their interest in learning about wine in terms of different cognitive, sensory and status pleasures. This chapter builds on emerging research that examines the pleasurable and embodied aspects of cultural practices by investigating how the sensory and cognitive interact to produce engagement with cultural objects and practices like wine appreciation. Chapter 5 examines how wine producers conceptualize the domestic market for their product in a context of emerging wine connoisseurship and nascent wine knowledge. I analyse how producers construct the “good wine consumer” through three key dimensions: 1) spending, 2) tasting, and 3) knowledge. This study contributes to better scholarly understanding of producers’ role in creating conventions of good taste, and of the contours of taste hierarchies in times of shifting cultural standards and cultural democratization trends, alongside continued patterns of distinction.
Acknowledgments

My name appears on this dissertation as its author, but it would not have been possible without the supportive, encouraging and inspiring words and actions of several people in my life. First, I want to acknowledge the incredible support I received from my supervisor, Dr. Josée Johnston, who has followed me through every step of this journey. I came to the University of Toronto because of her, and I never regretted that choice. Her ability to clarify ideas, point out the essential, and nurture students while allowing them to grow, are part of the qualities that make her an exceptional supervisor. I know I would not have completed this PhD and dissertation without her in my corner. I also want to thank my committee members – Dr. Shyon Baumann and Dr. Jeffrey Pilcher. I benefitted greatly from Shyon’s ability to provide “big picture” context in the field of the sociology of culture, and his capacity to focus on core questions, and eliminate superfluous/unessential ideas. I also greatly appreciated his knack for sensing what a given project is truly about, rather than relying on his own research interests to guide his advice and comments – a quality that is hard to find amongst academics. I am very thankful to Jeffrey for accepting to come on board even though my dissertation research had already begun, which is not always easy to do. Thank you for providing a broader anchoring and trans-disciplinary perspective in the field of food studies to my project. To all three: thank you for being enthusiastic and interested in my work from the beginning – it is your vote of confidence that buoyed this project through to its completion.

To all the wine world folks who agreed to be part of my project – thank you. Your generosity with your time and insights proved invaluable to my project. I take with me many great memories from my time “in the field” in both Châteauneuf-du-Pape and Niagara. I learned a lot and was treated with much kindness everywhere I went.

I owe much to the intellectual camaraderie of my colleagues in the Department of Sociology at the University of Toronto, and particularly, to the members of the food workshop group that Josée organized with her students. This group provided a helpful and encouraging environment for exchanging ideas and writing throughout my project. Merin, Ali, Anelyse and Tyler, but also Kate and Michelle from the early years: thank you for brainstorming and reading parts of this dissertation throughout its “life” stages! Thank you also for the warmth and friendship. I am also indebted to the Culinaria Research Centre at UTSC, which provided me with a community of
creative, forward-thinking and positive scholars at a time when the isolation from the last phase of the PhD was starting to set in. In addition to supporting my work financially and academically, Culinaria represented a source of new ideas and inspiration for me, both for my research and my teaching. In particular, I want to single out Dan, Jeffrey and Donna who are the core of that group. Thank you also to those who’ve been on this path with me, and who supported me in small and big ways: Sarah, Lior, Athena, Marianne and Louise.

Last, but by no means least, I am deeply grateful to my family and friends who cheered me along from the sidelines the whole way. First, my parents Patricia and Philippe who believed in me when I was no longer sure. They were soundboards for ideas, and major sources of emotional support throughout the phases of this PhD, including the very last one where the end was in sight, but not close enough! Maxime and Sheela (and, later Vikash!) thank you for making Toronto brighter and warmer at times when it felt more like my “office” than my home. To my “gang de filles” from Ottawa: we’ve lived all over the place, and I’ve been away for many years now, but I know I can still come back and find solace in your company – thank you for the years of friendship.

To the ones that came before and transmitted a love of cooking, tasting and conviviality to me: Patricia, Charles B., Madeleine and Charles C.
# Table of Contents

Acknowledgments .................................................................................................................. iv

Table of Contents .................................................................................................................. vi

List of Tables .......................................................................................................................... ix

List of Figures .......................................................................................................................... x

List of Appendices .................................................................................................................. xi

Chapter 1 Introduction ............................................................................................................. 1

1 1

1.1 Background ....................................................................................................................... 1

1.2 Outlines and Research Questions of Chapters ................................................................. 2

Chapter 2 Research Design and Methods .............................................................................. 7

2 7

2.1 Phase 1: Producers and Wine Worlds ............................................................................... 9

2.1.1 Châteauneuf-du-Pape Case ......................................................................................... 9

2.1.2 Niagara and Ontario Case ....................................................................................... 18

2.1.3 Websites .................................................................................................................. 22

2.2 Phase 2: Consumers ......................................................................................................... 24

2.3 Data analysis ................................................................................................................... 29

Chapter 3 How well does terroir travel? Illuminating cultural translation using a comparative wine case study ............................................................................................................. 30

3 30

3.1 Introduction ....................................................................................................................... 30

3.2 Terroir: A case for studying cultural translation ............................................................. 33

3.3 Methods ............................................................................................................................ 37

3.4 Terroir in principle: Shared ideas ................................................................................... 45

3.4.1 General principles of terroir: Place, “everything”, complexity ................................. 45
3.4.2 Operating principles of terroir: Nature, human intervention and historical tradition .......................................................................................................................... 48

3.5 Terroir in process: Divergent relationships with nature .................................................. 52

3.5.1 Châteauneuf-du-Pape: Nature as a friendly and knowable entity ................................. 53

3.5.2 Harmonious and reciprocal relationships with nature ................................................. 56

3.5.3 Niagara: Nature as a prevailing force .......................................................................... 58

3.5.4 Unpredictable and vulnerable relationships with nature ........................................... 60

3.6 Conclusion .......................................................................................................................... 62

Chapter 4 Wine nerds and pleasure-seekers: Understanding wine taste formation and practice . 67

4 67

4.1 Introduction .......................................................................................................................... 67

4.2 Forming and practicing taste ............................................................................................. 69

4.3 The pleasures of taste ........................................................................................................ 74

4.4 Data and methods ............................................................................................................... 77

4.5 Findings: The pleasures of drinking and thinking about wine ........................................ 82

4.5.1 The “nerdy disposition”, an enabling trait ................................................................. 83

4.5.2 Engaging the mind with cognitive pleasures .............................................................. 86

4.5.3 Sensory pleasures: Integral to wine education ......................................................... 91

4.5.4 Dancing around status pleasures and cultural sophistication .................................. 94

4.6 Discussion and conclusion: The intersecting pleasures of mind, body, and social status ......................................................................................................................... 99

Chapter 5 Classifying wine consumers: Towards a typology of “good” consumers for complex products ........................................................................................................... 105

5 105

5.1 Introduction .......................................................................................................................... 105

5.2 Shifting taste hierarchies in the wine world .................................................................... 108

5.3 Developing palates for “challenging” consumer goods ................................................. 111
5.4 Data and methods .................................................................................................................. 113

5.5 Findings: Wine experts’ understanding of the “good” wine consumer – and what this reveals about bad consumers and bad wine .................................................................................. 116

5.5.1 Spending: Recognizing quality, not just showing off ................................................. 116

5.5.2 Tasting: Moving beyond “yummy” to appreciate complexity and terroir ............ 120

5.5.3 Knowing: Appreciation for the details of wine production, classification and expertise ........................................................................................................................................ 128

5.6 Discussion and conclusion .............................................................................................. 135

Chapter 6 Discussion and Conclusion .................................................................................. 141

6 141

References .................................................................................................................................................. 150

Appendices ............................................................................................................................................. 159
List of Tables

Table 1. Comparison of Appellations..........................................................11, 39

Table 2. Interview participants – Châteauneuf-du-Pape and Niagara/Ontario cases.13, 41

Table 3. Websites.......................................................................................23, 42

Table 4. Interview participants – Consumers.............................................27, 79
List of Figures

Figure 1. VQA Ontario Appellation of Origin.........................................................131

Figure 2. Niagara Peninsula Appellation...............................................................132
List of Appendices

Appendix A. Interview guides for winemakers.............................................159
Appendix B. Example of interview schedule for cultural intermediary/wine expert...168
Appendix C. Interview schedule for consumers..............................................169
Appendix D. Consent Form.............................................................................171
Appendix E. Invitations to participate (Châteauneuf-du-Pape and Niagara cases)....175
Appendix F. Example of recruitment material for consumer study....................179
Chapter 1
Introduction

1

1.1 Background

The ideas and impetus for this study arose from my interest in artisanal foods, my studies in the history and culture of food in Europe in 2005-2006, and my subsequent work for Slow Food in Italy and France in 2006 and 2007. These different experiences introduced me to the European model of regional (and often, rural) identity projects and economic development through food and wine cultures. At the same time, in Canada, and in my home province of Québec in particular, I was witnessing a budding artisanal cheese movement, the emergence of numerous agro-tourism projects, and a growing interest in developing geographic indications. Local food was being promoted across North America as the way to grow food and eat it, especially if one was concerned about the environment, health, social justice, and good tasting food. Here and there, these North American food initiatives referenced “terroir”, a French term laden with meaning and history that was known to be “untranslatable” linguistically. My interest was piqued: since terroir as a concept and philosophy appeared so culturally rooted in France, and in Europe more broadly, how was it being extended to countries with lesser historical depth and knowledge of local foods and wine, like Canada?

This broad question serves as the starting point for the study presented in this dissertation. Specifically, this work takes up the concept of terroir – a term used to qualify and give value to regionally significant foods and drinks like Roquefort cheese and Burgundy wines. Terroir serves as the entry point for studying three interrelated cultural processes: cultural translation,
taste formation and idealized consumption examined in Chapters 3, 4 and 5 respectively. In investigating these cultural processes, the goal of this dissertation is to understand how ideas, tastes and consumption practices travel and are adopted in new places through the lens of terroir-driven winemaking practices and wine culture. In doing so, I aim to contribute to scholarly understandings of culture, food, and taste in a context of global cultural flows and shifting cultural standards of taste.

1.2 Outlines and Research Questions of Chapters

Terroir involves a special combination of natural and cultural elements that cannot be satisfactorily summed up in a single word like “soil” or “place”, and is often articulated in English as an expression, like “taste of place” (Trubek 2008) or “sense of place”. As such, terroir is notoriously difficult to translate from French into other languages (Amilien, Torjusen, and Vittersø 2005; Aurier, Fort, and Sirieix 2005; Barham 2003: 128; Trubek 2008: 9) and is deeply associated with French food and wine cultures as a result (Voronov, De Clercq, and Hinings 2013). Yet, in the current context of globalized culture, ideas and practices like terroir and its related winemaking and consumption practices, move and are adopted in new places (Amilien et al. 2005; Appadurai 2000; Barham 2003; Boullanne 2010; Bowen 2010, 2015; Bowen and Zapata 2009; Fantasia 1995; Garcia Canclini 1995; Paxson 2010, 2012; Robertson 1995; Smith Maguire 2013; 2016; Trubek 2008; Trubek and Bowen 2008). In Chapter 3, I begin my study by looking at the cultural translation of terroir through a comparative case of two contrasting wine regions – one in Châteauneuf-du-Pape, France, in the traditional “home” of winemaking and at the heart of the status hierarchy in the wine world (Smith Maguire 2016; Voronov, De Clercq,

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1 This first part of my dissertation – “How well does terroir travel? Illuminating cultural translation using a comparative wine case-study” – was published in the cultural sociology journal *Poetics* this past December.
and Hinings 2013), the other in Niagara, Canada, an emerging wine region where terroir is a newer idea. Through my examination of these regions’ understandings of terroir’s meanings and uses, I interrogate the adaptability of terroir and see how it manifests in similar and different ways when it is taken up in diverse cultural contexts. In my analysis, I further clarify the parts of terroir that translate and are shared across my case study sites, and show how wine actors articulate terroir’s definitions in surprisingly constant ways – even though discussions about terroir’s practices involving nature and human influence vary significantly across the case sites. Thus, I move beyond the idea that “terroir is adaptable”, an idea that has been upheld in most scholarly work on terroir’s applicability outside the French and European contexts. I argue that elements of a cultural idea that are connected to place are more likely to change, whereas normative principles appear more capable of remaining stable when traveling across diverse cultural contexts. The three research questions that guide Chapter 3 are:

1) What is the role of continuity in translating ideas like terroir to new cultural contexts, and what does this tell us more broadly about the overall stability of cultural ideas when they travel?

2) How can we further clarify the elements that easily translate to new surroundings (e.g., those that are maintained when terroir travels), while also looking at the parts that are more difficult to translate (e.g., those that are adapted and modified)?

3) When examining cultural translation more broadly, how are difference, but also sameness apparent (and necessary) for cultural ideas like terroir to take root in new places? What dynamics influence consistency versus change when these ideas travel?

In Chapters 4 and 5, I deepen this questioning into the process of cultural translation in the world of wine by looking at how wine consumers and producers in the emerging (and non-traditionally wine producing) Ontario wine market consider the development of a taste for wine, a cultural good that is often viewed as complex and intimidating. In the world of wine, terroir remains the benchmark for quality winemaking (Fitzmaurice 2017; Fourcade 2012; Rössel, Schenk, and
Eppler 2016; Smith Maguire 2016; Voronov et al. 2013). It is therefore taken up by emerging wine markets like the Ontario wine market as a way to construct themselves as legitimate and high quality winemaking regions within a highly competitive global wine market. This decision to produce and market terroir-driven winemaking practices and wines presents the challenge of forming a market and audience for one’s product (Paxson 2010b; Smith Maguire 2015, 2016, 2018). Thus, in Chapters 4 and 5, I look at the question of how an emerging market like the Ontario wine market conceptualizes taste formation, sophistication and “good consumption” of quality wine on the consumption (Chapter 4) and the production sides (Chapter 5). On the one hand, I look at how consumers frame their interest and engagement with wine and learn how to taste it in the emerging wine culture of Ontario (Chapter 4). On the other, I investigate how producers (e.g., winemakers and cultural intermediaries) describe their ideal, “good” consumer of their best quality products (Chapter 5). Through these two chapters, I illuminate the processes of taste formation and idealized consumption in an emerging wine culture.

First, in Chapter 4 I examine how wine consumers describe and frame their interest in learning about wine to unpack how they engage with wine and learn to taste it. I show that wine consumers display a knowledge-seeking “nerdy” disposition that enables the formation of their taste for wine in a manner that simultaneously achieves distinction while also avoiding outright snobbery. From this foundational disposition, I show how wine consumers develop and sustain their taste for wine through important cognitive, sensory and status-driven pleasures. By examining these pleasurable dimensions of engaging with wine, as well as how these interact and reinforce each other, I bridge social constructionist approaches of taste with research that emphasizes the embodied and pleasurable practices of taste formation. Further, I argue for
further incorporation of the embodied sensorial aspects of consumption into studies of cultural consumption and taste. The three research questions that underlie Chapter 4 are:

1) How do people learn to appraise and appreciate cultural objects and practices, and become informed, competent consumers?

2) How do wine interested consumers discuss their interest in wine? How do they describe learning about wine?

3) What does this tell us about the formation of taste within an emerging wine culture, and what is required to mobilize and engage consumers in a complex cultural practice like wine appreciation?

In Chapter 5, I turn my attention to wine producers, and look at how they evaluate and understand the ideal consumer for their product by analyzing the main dimensions of consumer attitudes and behaviours they describe. Based on my analysis, I propose a typology of the ideal consumer that reflects three key dimensions of consumer behaviours and attitudes that involve spending, taste and knowledge. These dimensions contribute to our understanding of wine experts’ conceptions of the ideal consumer for quality wine in a context of emerging wine connoisseurship and nascent wine knowledge. This typology, and the attributes of the ideal consumer that it identifies, suggest the key norms and conventions of good taste in the world of wine that wine experts consider important for their emerging market. By examining wine experts’ views of consumers (and the ideas about good taste that they imply), we can further understand the norms and conventions that underlie, support and reproduce taste hierarchies (Smith Maguire 2016). Looking at wine experts’ perceptions of consumers also draws attention to the way ideas about good taste are formulated by producers (and not just consumers). More broadly, it contributes to better understanding the contours of these hierarchies in times of shifting cultural standards and trends in cultural democratization, alongside continued patterns of cultural distinction and hierarchy. The two central research questions of Chapter 5 are:
1) How do wine producers evaluate and understand the ideal consumer for their product? What do they use as a foil to the “good” consumer in order to identify less valued consumer characteristics?

2) What do these overall perceptions of the ideal consumer tell us about wine experts’ ideas of good taste (e.g., the aesthetic principles they favour), and the shapes of taste hierarchies they suggest?

The methods of data collection and analysis that guide each of the analytical chapters of this dissertation are presented in each respective chapter. In addition, Chapter 2 provides an overview of the research design and methods that support the entire dissertation. I designed my dissertation study as a series of qualitative case studies, and used an approach inspired by constructivist grounded theory methods (Charmaz and Belgrave 2012). I engaged in two broad phases of data collection that are outlined in detail in Chapter 2. Broadly speaking, the first phase of data collection was focused on the production sphere of wine, as well as the broader wine worlds of Châteauneuf-du-Pape and Niagara/Ontario, and involved interviews with winemakers, regulators, marketers, sellers, educators, writers, and analyses of winery and wine industry websites. The data from this phase was used for the comparative analysis presented in Chapter 3. The Niagara/Ontario case data from this first phase was used for Chapter 5. The second phase of data collection examined the consumer side of the wine world, and involved interviews with wine consumers in Ontario, Canada. I used this data for Chapter 4 of this dissertation. Each of the three analytical chapters draws on distinct sets of literature that are most applicable to the research questions outlined in each. Following the analytical sections of this dissertation, Chapter 6 concludes the study by summarizing the chapters and outlining the key findings and contributions of the dissertation.
Chapter 2  
Research Design and Methods

In order to examine how ideas, tastes and consumption practices travel and are adopted in new places using the cultural practice of wine, I designed my research study as a series of qualitative case studies, and used an approach inspired by constructivist grounded theory methods (Charmaz and Belgrave 2012). I engaged in two broad phases of data collection (outlined below). Both of these phases involved interviews, website content and participant observation. In line with a grounded theory-inspired methodology, my data collection and analysis were iterative and entailed interview guide and sampling method adjustments throughout my data collection. In essence, there was an open, circular and ongoing relationship between my fieldwork (e.g., interviews and participant observation), and my analyses.

The first phase of data collection involved understanding the production sphere of wine, as well as the broader wine worlds (e.g., interviews with winemakers, regulators, marketers, sellers, educators, writers, and analyses of winery and wine industry websites) for each of my two comparative cases, Châteauneuf-du-Pape and Niagara/Ontario. For this first phase of my data collection (2013-2015²), I wanted to examine qualitatively how key cultural ideas and philosophies around winemaking and place are taken up in a newer wine region that is more self-conscious (and possibly, deliberate) in its use of these ideas (Voronov et al. 2013), particularly when compared to a context where a relationship to winemaking and place is culturally embedded and taken-for-granted. To this end, I directly compared two contrasting wine

² A small number of additional interviews were conducted by telephone in 2016 for the Châteauneuf-du-Pape case.
appellations – Châteauneuf-du-Pape, an eminently reputable French wine region, and Niagara, a less established wine region from the “New World” of Canadian winemaking. I selected these sites because of their historicity and centrality within their local and national wine markets, as well as their documented uses of terroir philosophy in their current winemaking and appellation systems. In food and wine, France is still hailed as the heart of gastronomy, fine dining and winemaking, even if that position is continually threatened by claims that French methods are outdated (Steinberger 2009). As such, France remains an important reference point in the world of wine (Fitzmaurice 2017; Smith Maguire 2016; Voronov, De Clercq, and Hinings 2013), which is why I chose it as my comparative case for this study. I selected the Niagara Peninsula appellation because it is one of the largest (VQA 2017) and oldest viticultural regions in Canada (Phillips 2006). These wine regions diverge in terms of winemaking conditions (notably, in climate), depth of winemaking history, reputation, and status within the broader global wine world. Because my aim was to compare differences and similarities across cases, these contrasts were intended and valuable to my analysis.

For the second phase of data collection (2014-2015), I turned my attention to the consumption side of the wine world, and extended my study of how culture is used (Pugh 2013: 50) to include wine consumers in the emerging wine culture of Niagara and Ontario more broadly. My aim here was to explore how wine interested consumers perceived the development of an interest in wine

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3 “New World” indicates the Americas, Oceania and South Africa (e.g., newer wine regions), while “Old World” refers to Europe and the Middle East (e.g., traditional wine regions). I recognize the contested (Banks and Overton 2010) and colonialist implications of these terms, but use them here as conventional terminology in this field.

4 At the same time, it is also continually reaffirmed through endeavours like France’s recent petition to inscribe the French baguette to the UNESCO (after having registered the French meal).
and in learning to taste it in a context where the wine culture is emerging and where the region’s reputation relative to other world class winemaking regions is still being constructed (Voronov, De Clercq and Hinings 2013). With this second phase of data collection, I explored what had drawn participants to wine, what they sought from this experience/practice, how they had learned about wine, and why they enjoyed learning about wine.

In the next sections, I present each of my two main phases of data collection, beginning with the first phase involving the production side of the wine world. For this phase, I will provide an overview of the Châteauneuf-du-Pape and the Niagara cases in terms of the participants, my fieldwork procedure and the websites I selected for analysis. I will continue by detailing the second phase of data collection on consumers with regards to the participants and the data collection procedure. I close with an account of my data analysis for both phases of data collection.

2.1 Phase 1: Producers and Wine Worlds

2.1.1 Châteauneuf-du-Pape Case

Châteauneuf-du-Pape is a well-known French wine appellation in the southern Rhone Valley, where viticulture has been an important part of the village’s culture and economy for centuries. The appellation includes both red and white wines, although the red wines account for 93% of

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5 I used the data collected in Phase 1 to write Chapters 3 (both cases used) and 5 (only the Niagara-Ontario case used).

6 The exact history of viticulture and winemaking in Châteauneuf-du-Pape is not fully established. Many credit the presence of the papacy in nearby Avignon in the 14th century with bringing winemaking to Châteauneuf-du-Pape. However, at the time the village was established in 1094 (Karis 2009: 4, 15), documents show that viticulture and winemaking were present in nearby areas, and historians thus theorize from this that Châteauneuf was also producing wine at that earlier period (interview data).
production and are the most renowned. The production of these wines is clustered around the village of Châteauneuf-du-Pape and the neighbouring municipalities, and there are approximately 30 km² of vineyards that produce 100,000 hectolitres of wine (Figaro Vin, n.d.). The website for the Fédération des syndicats des producteurs de Châteauneuf-du-Pape (Federation of the unions of Châteauneuf-du-Pape producers) (n.d.) lists 195 wineries (domaines). Châteauneuf-du-Pape (CDP) was decreed an Appellation d’origine contrôlée (AOC) on May 15, 1936 along with several other alcoholic beverages (including Cognac, Tavel and Cassis). It is therefore one of the first AOC decreed in France, and this is a point of pride for local winemakers. Baron Le Roy de Boiseaumarié, a prominent local winemaker, played a pivotal role in creating the current AOC system that serves as a model for European (and international) wine regulations. By organizing these regulations along terroir claims, Le Roy de Boiseaumarié effectively asserted CDP’s central position in defining terroir’s foundational meaning and relationship to quality and geographic indications within and outside France. The appellation’s part in connecting terroir to French wine regulations was a primary reason for selecting CDP as my French terroir case.
Table 1. Comparison of appellations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>No. of wineries</th>
<th>No. of grape varieties</th>
<th>Size (hectares)</th>
<th>Annual production (hectolitres)</th>
<th>Annual yield (hl/ha)</th>
<th>Average temp. in July (°C)</th>
<th>Growing Degree Days</th>
<th>No. of interviews/site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CDP</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3 161</td>
<td>81 732 hl (2013)</td>
<td>26 hl/ha</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>1670</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niagara</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>5 504</td>
<td>155 511 hl (2013)</td>
<td>28 hl/ha</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>1590</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


2.1.1.1 Participants

I interviewed seven men and seven women for a total of 14 participants involved in the CDP wine world. Eleven of these interviews were conducted in person during my fieldwork in CDP in April 2014. Three interviews were completed over the telephone between 2015 and 2016. These additional interviews were included after my trip to CDP to make the French sample more consistent with the Niagara sample, which had continued to evolve over various visits to the area. In brief, I had initially planned to focus on the winery as a unit of analysis, and to interview several individuals in a set number of wineries. However, as I continued my data collection in Canada, it became clear that extending my sampling to include other actors in the wine world, and particularly, to capture cultural intermediaries like wine educators, sommeliers, and wine writers, would greatly contribute to an overall understanding of both production and consumption spheres.

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7 Growing degree days measure heat accumulation during the growth season.
The CDP sample consisted of seven women and seven men, ranging in age from their mid-20s to their late 60s (average age=46). Participants were involved in a variety of activities and sectors within the CDP wine world. Six participants were involved in winemaking and winery management, and for all these participants, this work was within their own or their family’s wineries. From my observations and interviews, this is a typical model in CDP, as most of the land in the area has been passed down through generations. I also interviewed two sommeliers (one who worked within a larger winery, and one who was a freelance wine tour operator), two individuals who worked in sales/marketing/export\(^8\) (both working for wineries), one local historian, one individual who worked in wine tourism, and two involved in the management and legal aspects of the appellation. I determined a winery’s relative size through a combination of production and land size, where a “small” winery represents 10 acres or less of land, and a production level of less than 1,500 cases. A large winery possesses more than 100 acres and produces over 15,000 cases, whereas a medium sized winery figures somewhere in between those two poles. Furthermore, it is important to note that the medium-to-larger wineries within CDP also produce Rhône wines and not just CDP AOC wine.

\(^8\) CDP exports about 75% of its wine (Fédération des syndicats des producteurs de Châteauneuf-du-Pape n.d.).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Age range</th>
<th>Main sector(s) in wine world</th>
<th>Size of winery (if applicable)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nathalie Atkinson</td>
<td>Niagara</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>Winemaking</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nelly Thompson</td>
<td>Niagara</td>
<td>40s</td>
<td>Winemaking</td>
<td>Medium (owner)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nate Oaks</td>
<td>Niagara</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>Winemaking</td>
<td>Small (owner)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nick Ernst</td>
<td>Niagara</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>Winemaking</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neil Robin</td>
<td>Niagara</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>Winemaking</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noel Anderson</td>
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<td>50s</td>
<td>Winemaking</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tim Holmes</td>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>Writing, education</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tony Andrews</td>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>60s</td>
<td>Writing, education</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasha Abbott</td>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>Regulation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norman Idleman</td>
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<td>50s</td>
<td>Marketing, tourism</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Todd Rivers</td>
<td>Toronto</td>
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<td>Sommelier, education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tom Adriano</td>
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<td>30s</td>
<td>Sommelier</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tristan Rolland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tom Zachary</td>
<td>Toronto</td>
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<td>Sommelier, writing, education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christophe Roux</td>
<td>CDP</td>
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<td>Winemaking (owner)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Profession</td>
<td>Size</td>
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<tr>
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<td>40s</td>
<td>Tourism, sommelier</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caroline Arnaud</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>Exporting/Selling</td>
<td>Medium-large</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claude Robert</td>
<td>60s</td>
<td>Winemaking (co-owner)</td>
<td>Medium-large</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cédric Robert</td>
<td>40s</td>
<td>Winemaking (co-owner)</td>
<td>Medium-large</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>30s</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colette Imbert</td>
<td>60s</td>
<td>Winemaking (co-owner)</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantin Odet</td>
<td>20s</td>
<td>Winemaking</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Tomassin</td>
<td>50s</td>
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<td>Small</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Ortega</td>
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<td>Historian</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cécile Reynier</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>Regulation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clotilde Andrieu</td>
<td>20s</td>
<td>Law</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chloé Aubry</td>
<td>20s</td>
<td>Tourism</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### 2.1.1.2 Procedure

Because the world of wine can be a bit of an insiders' club, and winemakers in particular are busy year-round with different vineyard-related activities, I used established contacts in both cases (CDP and Niagara/Ontario) in order to introduce me to each wine world, and gain access to participants. Because I was interested in in-depth interviewing and an overall understanding of the wine worlds I was studying, using existing inroads proved to be a sound method (Small
2009: 14). Through past work in taste education for Slow Food France in 2007, I had met and worked with the current director of the *Fédération des syndicats des producteurs de Châteauneuf-du-Pape*, Michel Blanc. Mr. Blanc served as my primary contact in the region. He suggested I visit the area in April, because some key events take place in the appellation at that time of year, including an important wine show focused solely on CDP wines (the *Printemps de Châteauneuf-du-Pape*) where a majority of wineries would be present, as well as the traditional winemaker celebration, the *Saint-Marc*, which includes a wine competition and a gala dinner where prizes are given to the best winemakers. Mr. Blanc introduced me to a number of interview participants and allowed me to use the *Fédération des syndicats des producteurs* offices as my home base during fieldwork. Mr. Blanc also facilitated my participation and access to the wine show, competition and gala dinner, which were important sites for recruitment and field observations.

I spent the whole month of April 2014 living in the village of CDP, in a holiday home that belonged to local winemakers. Living on-site allowed me to engage in both participant observation and interviewing with a number of individuals, which were my two main sources of data collected during fieldwork. I began my recruitment of interview participants from Canada, by sending a short summary of my research project and a recruitment letter (see Appendix E) to Mr. Blanc who distributed it to his contacts. This allowed me to schedule a few interviews before arrival. For the remainder, I attended the wine show during my first weekend in CDP and used this as an opportunity to approach and recruit further potential participants. I used a combination of snowball and purposive sampling techniques to achieve my sample. As I aimed to gain an overall understanding of how CDP wineries work, I initially sought to interview participants from different sizes of wineries. When I contacted Mr. Blanc later in my project to fill gaps in
my sample (e.g., with respect to other roles in the CDP wine world), I specifically asked for connections to individuals working in wine tourism, marketing, regulation and education.

I interviewed participants for the most part at their respective workplaces. For those working in winemaking or winery management, interviews took place at the wineries, either in offices or the cellar/public area of the winery (where wine is tasted and sold). Interviews were individual and semi-structured. I used an interview guide that covered questions about how wines are made and sold, what role the person played in the CDP wine world, how they defined and viewed authenticity, quality and terroir (see Appendix A for winemaker interview guides for each case site; see Appendix B for an example of the interview guide for wine experts). All participants were asked for their consent to participate in the study (see Appendix D for consent forms).

In addition to interviews, I engaged in a number of activities while in CDP. When I visited wineries, I usually asked to be taken for a tour of the facilities. At three of the larger and more central wineries (e.g., closer to the centre of CDP village) where there was infrastructure for tourists, I toured the wineries more substantially, including tasting rooms, cellars, as well as production and bottling facilities. I also joined an English-speaking tour bus group from a Rhône cruise at one winery, and a group’s tutored tasting at another. I toured two museums dedicated to wine and winemaking in the region: the Musée du vin of the Maison Brotte winery and the Musée du vigneron in Rasteau, which belongs to a family winery in CDP, Domaine de Beaurenard. I visited four more caveaux in CDP village itself (e.g., a type of tasting cellar that acts as a storefront for some wineries), including Vinadea Maison des vins, the Fédération’s storefront that features a vast array of the region’s wines. Again, because not all the wineries are
open to the public, and many do not have a tasting cellar in the village, *Vinadea* is a way for some producers to be visible to tourists and other consumers.

I also participated in a number of activities and visits during my time in CDP. I spent several hours at the 3-day *Printemps de Châteauneuf-du-Pape* wine show to observe and establish connections with local wineries and winemakers. The event took place in a municipal event space in the village. In the main room, CDP winemakers had tables set up with their wines, and offered complementary tastings of any of the wines on display to attendees, who had paid about a 10 euro entrance fee. I visited the event both during trade-only hours (Mr. Blanc gave me a trade pass) and public hours. This first weekend in CDP at the wine show thus allowed me to familiarize myself with the appellation, the people within the appellation, as well as the overall geography of the area, and served as my first step towards planning the rest of my fieldwork.

I visited another wine show the following weekend (second weekend in CDP) in nearby Cairanne with the daughter of a winery owner I interviewed, and where a number of different regional appellations were showcased (Rasteau, Vacqueyras, Tavel, Gigondas). I observed and wrote field notes, and this wine show offered additional context to help put the CDP case study into perspective. I participated in the tastings for the St. Marc wine competition. This is an annual competition where winemakers can submit their white and red CDP wines from different vintages (including the latest vintage, so in this case, what had been made into wine at the end of 2013). I attended and participated in both the semi-final and the final tastings, which both took place at the same municipal event space as the wine show. At these tastings, I, along with other attendees, tasted and judged a number of wines blindly. Each vintage and style of wine in competition was allocated to a group. I was assigned to a group that tasted and judged 15 of the
newest 2013 vintage of red CDP in the semi-final, and to a group tasting six of the white CDP wines from 2010 in the final. As a group, we first tasted all the wines on our own, then we discussed our impressions as a group and tasted again if needed. We then finalized our individual ratings, which we submitted to the Fédération employees responsible for compiling the results. Finally, I attended the St. Marc gala dinner at the very end of my stay, where the winners of the wine competition were rewarded and where the appellation was celebrated with much pageantry.

2.1.2 Niagara and Ontario Case

Niagara is the largest and oldest viticultural area in Ontario. It is situated along a busy thoroughfare that connects New York State to Southern Ontario, about an hour to an hour and half outside of Toronto, Canada’s largest city. Like CDP, it is both a historically touristic area due to its proximity to Niagara Falls and the charming Niagara-on-the-Lake, and also a place that is celebrated for its agriculture, and fruit production in particular. Although winemaking in Ontario dates back to the 1800s (Phillips 2006), the historic reputation of the regions’ wines was sullied by quality issues and an overall poor reputation in winemaking that the industry has sought to turn around in recent decades. The Ontario wine industry broadly regards its true beginnings in winemaking as arising in the mid-1970s in Niagara, about at the time when European standards of quality were adopted by the industry (Voronov et al. 2013: 611; interview data). The Ontario appellation system is regulated by the Vintners Quality Alliance Ontario (VQA Ontario) and represents a conscious effort to draw on terroir claims. It is the oldest wine appellation system in Canada (though a similar program for wine now exists in British Columbia as well9), and this was a key motive for choosing an Ontario appellation for my research. Grape

9 Québec also has regulations and a register of recognized designations (like protected geographic indications and designation of specificity) for specific foods and drinks like Canadienne cow cheese, Québec ice cider and
varieties are not regulated; thus, the appellation produces an array of red, white and rosé wines of varying qualities. The area is known globally for its ice wine production (made from Riesling and Vidal mainly) but is also beginning to be recognized for uniquely Niagara wines made from other cool climate varieties like Chardonnay, Gamay noir, Pinot noir and Riesling.

2.1.2.1 Participants
I interviewed 16 individuals over the course of four research trips to the Niagara Peninsula appellation region. These trips lasted between one to four days each for a total of twelve days, and took place from December 2013 to September 2014. During these trips, I interviewed 8 participants in person and engaged in participant observation during various activities and events, which I will describe below in more detail. I also completed in-person interviews in Toronto between March 2014 and October 2015 with eight respondents who work/live in the city. My sample for the Niagara case was formed of 12 men and 4 women between the ages of 30 and 64 years (average=45 years). Like with the CDP case, participants were involved in a range of activities in the Niagara wine world. Six respondents were winemakers (of these, only two were also owners of their wineries). Five participants were involved in wine writing and education (some were also sommeliers). Two worked in the restaurant business and were sommeliers as well. One person worked in regulation, and the last two were in the marketing/sales side of the wine world. See Table 2 above for information on interview participants.

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Charlevoix lamb that are managed by the Conseil des appellations réservées et des termes valorisants (CARTV 2018).
2.1.2.2 Procedure

For the Niagara case, I recruited interview participants through different means. As with the CDP case, I began by using pre-existing contacts to obtain direct and more rapid introduction and access to participants. In Niagara, a university colleague who grew up in the area introduced me to two winemakers. I also contacted a wine writer and critic as a research participant and he put me in touch with a number of key participants in the field, including winemakers and wine writers. I used the contacts I made during my fieldwork as leverage for further interviews, with an eye to obtaining an overall sense of the Niagara wine world. In some cases, I directly contacted individuals I considered to be key informants, or that other participants had identified as central players. Like with the CDP case, I used a combination of snowball and purposive sampling to create my sample. These assorted strategies yielded the group of 16 informants described above. In addition to these individual interviews, I engaged in several participant observation activities on-site in Niagara, as well as in Toronto.

I first travelled to the Beamsville area in December 2013 for one-day trip to complete two scheduled interviews. I returned to the area in January 2014 for three days, and visited Jordan, Niagara-on-the-Lake and St-David’s Bench. I attended and volunteered at the Twenty Valley Winter Winefest. This festival takes place every January in the small town of Jordan. There was a main stage and audience area where music was played all day, and where concerts, dancing and friendly contests like barrel rolling, also took place. Under a large tent, a selection of local wineries provided glasses of wine along with food pairings that you could purchase with tokens. Another tent housed cooking demonstrations by celebrity chefs (that year, it was Montréal-based Chef Chuck Hughes), and other ticketed events. I spent a day volunteering as an event assistant
and was able to observe the happenings during the festival as a result. I also interviewed three participants during this research trip as well.

In May 2014, I spent more time in the region. I took this opportunity to interview a key informant I had been trying to track down, as well as visit three wineries. I returned to Niagara in September 2014 to attend the Niagara Grape and Wine festival. The yearly Niagara Grape and Wine festival takes place in Montebello Park in downtown St. Catharines. Much like the Winter Winefest, wine and food were available side by side at stalls, and could be purchased using tokens. There was a central stage and music playing, and when I arrived, some local celebrities were involved in a friendly contest of grape stomping to highlight the harvesting season that was just beginning. At the far end of the wine and food stalls, there was a mobile kitchen truck where seminars and cooking demonstrations were offered. I attended an “Educating the Senses” wine and cheese tasting seminar organized in part by the Canadian Food and Wine Institute and the Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute at Brock University at the festival. During my stay, I also visited and toured four wineries in the Niagara-on-the-Lake and St-David’s Bench areas, and conducted further interviews.

In Toronto, I also participated in a number of wine-related events and activities. I attended two events where Ontario winemaking and wines were the main focus. In October 2014, I attended a Taste Ontario wine event at the Royal Ontario Museum as a regular guest. Organized by the Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO) Vintages section, this rather posh event was meant to introduce people to Ontario wines through tasting and pairing with food. The LCBO organizes other such events that focus on other wine regions across the globe. A ticket to the event allows guests to access all the wine tastings they desire from the wineries present, and also some food
that is prepared to match the wines available. In May 2015, I volunteered at a wine talk and
tasting on Ontario terroir for the hospitality industry at the Terroir symposium. This talk/tasting
took place at the Arcadian Court, an event space in downtown Toronto. Winemakers and other
experts spoke at the talk, and attendees appeared to be professionals in the restaurant, wine or
hospitality businesses for the most part. To extend my understanding of wine education in the
Ontario context, I joined two events aimed at educating wine consumers to taste wine. In
November 2014, I observed a second level Wine and Spirit Education Trust (WSET) course over
the course of a weekend. The WSET is considered one of the top providers of wine and spirit
education in the world. The WSET courses are popular with professionals in the food and wine
industry seeking to improve their qualifications, but also with members of the broader public
interested in learning more about wine. In December 2014, I attended an evening workshop and
tasting designed to introduce the wine curious to wine tasting in an enjoyable and sociable
environment, providing me with another type of wine learning environment.

2.1.3 Websites

To round out my understanding of both CDP and Ontario cases, I analyzed the discourse of 33
winery and wine industry websites. More specifically, my sample contained 15 winery websites
for each case (total=30), as well as the main wine industry websites responsible for legislation
and marketing for each case site. A full list of the websites consulted is available in Table 3
below. I chose websites that reflected a variety of winery sizes, importance and styles of
winemaking (e.g., small to big, artisanal to more industrial) so as to obtain an overall sense of the
public wine discourse for each case site. For each website, I examined the following:

- How wines are described
- How wine is made
- What makes wine good
- What makes wine distinctive/special
- Descriptions of place (terroir was not always used explicitly, so I looked for references to “place”)
- Descriptions of vineyard
- Winemaker’s role
- Winemaker-vineyard relationship

Using discourse analysis (Phillips and Hardy 2002), I paid close attention to the definitions and uses of terroir, its absence in the websites, and the mention of natural and human elements of terroir that had already been identified by participants in my interviews for Chapter 3 (“How well does terroir travel? Illuminating cultural translation using a comparative wine case study”).

For Chapter 5 (“Classifying wine consumers: Towards a typology of “good” consumers for complex goods”), I examined the same website data but considered more closely how consumers were described, and whether particular products were explicitly associated with certain consumer characteristics (e.g., “complex wine” for a “discerning drinker”). The goal of the website analysis in my dissertation was to obtain a more in-depth view of the relative meanings and uses of terroir and the framing of wine consumers in the public domain by examining the materials that wineries and regulatory and marketing bodies produce to publicize and market their wines and appellations.

Table 3. Websites

*Châteauneuf-du-Pape, France:*
1. Château de Beaucastel
2. Château de la Gardine
3. Château de la Nerthe
4. Château Fortia
5. Château Mont-Thabor
6. Domaine Beaurenard
7. Domaine de Cristia
8. Domaine de la Janasse
9. Domaine de la Roncière
10. Domaine de la Solitude
11. Domaine de Nalys
12. Domaine du Banneret  
13. Maison Brotte  
14. Maison Chapoutier  
15. Maison Ogier  
16. AOC Châteauneuf-du-Pape website  

**Niagara, Canada:**  
1. Bachelder Wines  
2. Château des Charmes  
3. Clos Jordanne  
4. Domaine Queylus  
5. Five Rows Craft Wine of Lowrey Estates  
6. Inniskillin  
7. Malivoire  
8. Peller Estates  
9. Ravine Vineyard  
10. Southbrook Vineyards  
11. Stratus Vineyards  
12. Sue-Ann Estate Winery  
13. Tawse Winery  
14. Thirty Bench Wine Makers  
15. Trius Winery  
16. Vintners Quality Alliance Ontario (VQA Ontario)

### 2.2 Phase 2: Consumers\(^{10}\)

#### 2.2.1.1 Participants

For this second phase of my data collection, I interviewed 27 wine consumers (12 men and 15 women), but only retained 23 wine consumers (10 men and 13 women). In the analysis portion of the project (described below), I decided to screen out four individuals (two men and two women) because they either worked/had worked in the wine industry full-time (and were thus not simply “consumers” in this context), or they had grown up in a European context with an existing wine culture that I hypothesized might have affected their overall interest, knowledge and engagement of wine in a way that was perhaps too different from the rest of my sample.

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\(^{10}\) I used the data collected in Phase 2 to write Chapter 4. I also relied on some of my overall impressions from fieldwork and observations in Phase 1.
Participants ranged in age from 25 to 80 years (average=38 years). Participants were all “wine interested” (Howland 2013:333), in that they all shared a common interest in and enjoyment of wine, which was a key criterion of selection for my study since I was interested in consumers’ rapport with learning about the world of wine and how to taste it. While interest in wine was a constant, across the sample, participants varied in their level of engagement with wine, from the less experienced wine curious, to the more advanced and skilled wine connoisseurs. The participants in the sample are highly educated (22 out of 23 hold a university degree, and of these, more than half are graduate or graduate-level degrees). They also mostly work (or have worked) in white collar, professional occupations and are situated within a correspondingly comfortable income bracket. Table 4 at the end of this section provides information on the participants included in this part of the study.

2.2.1.2 Procedure
I began this second phase of data collection in the fall of 2014. My interest in understanding what draws people to develop an interest in wine and to further that interest, as well as to know more about how people learn about wine in the emerging wine culture of Ontario, emerged inductively from my first phase of data collection. Through my interviews with wine producers and cultural intermediaries in Ontario, I became interested in how these wine actors navigated the broad spectrum of wine interest, skills and to a certain degree, taste, of their wine consumers. Because of my past work in taste education with Slow Food, I was also very curious about how the taste for wine, and in particular, the taste for specific types of wines (e.g., the ones that Ontario produces best) were being cultivated in consumers with a broad range of backgrounds in wine. In light of these questions, I solicited interview participants who resided in the emerging wine market of Ontario, were interested in wine, and had sought to deepen their interest in wine in some way (e.g., through books, wine workshops, winery tours, or other activities). Because
my criteria were relatively broad, I began by interviewing all who expressed interest in my study (although as mentioned above, four participants were dropped from the analysis). See Appendix C for the interview guide used with consumers.

Because I recruited participants through a variety of means, I ended up with a spectrum of wine skills and levels of interest, from a participant who was just getting into wine and had been gifted a wine workshop by her father, to participants who were at sommelier levels of knowledge, and everything in between. I posted the invitation to participate in my study to my social media, including Twitter, Facebook and my academic website (see Appendix F for an example of recruitment posting used on my academic website). I also sent this invitation over e-mail listservs to different networks: my university networks, as well as the listserv for the Massey College graduate community at the University of Toronto (which extends beyond just academic circles to the arts, business, medical and other professional spheres). I also recruited participants when I attended the WSET course and the wine workshop in the fall of 2014. Like with my CDP and Niagara data collections, I used purposive sampling in that my objective was to obtain a sample that covered a range of wine skills/levels of wine interested consumers (and not just any consumers). I also benefitted from snowball sampling as participants and my social and academic networks passed along my study recruitment information up the chain of their own networks.
### Table 4. Interview participants – Consumers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Ethnic/Race Identity&lt;sup&gt;11&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Job title/occupation</th>
<th>Highest level of education</th>
<th>Household Income</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charles Gamache</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Policy researcher</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>60,000-99,999</td>
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<td>Carla Eades</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Course instructor, student</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>30,000-39,999</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charlotte Carlisle</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>British Canadian</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>40,000-59,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corina Ambrose</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caleb Coldwell</td>
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<td>Canadian</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Teaching assistant, student</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>60,000-99,999</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colin Ingram</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Project manager</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christopher Albert</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Teaching assistant, course instructor, student</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>20,000-29,999</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caitlin Alexander</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Japanese-Caucasian</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>General manager, fitness studio</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>40,000-59,999</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chelsea Atwood</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Lawyer</td>
<td>Professional degree</td>
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<tr>
<td>Claire Inglis</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>White-European</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Lecturer, teaching assistant</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carson Oberst</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Anglosaxon</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>Retired geologist</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>60,000-99,999</td>
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</table>

<sup>11</sup> Participants self-identified their ethnic and/or racial identity, which explains the different terms found in this column.
<table>
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<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Age</th>
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<td>Clément Auger</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Canadian</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Union advisor</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>100,000-199,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christine Ebeling</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Server</td>
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<td>30,000-39,999</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cole O’Hara</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Anglo-Irish</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Consultant</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>60,000-99,999</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cathy Nichols</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>Homemaker</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>More than 200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleen Dermott</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Trademark agent</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>60,000-99,999</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cyrus Galo</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Lawyer</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>More than 200,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cameron Osborne</td>
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<td>34</td>
<td>Mutual funds adjustment officer</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>40,000-59,999</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cassandra Barnes</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>WASP</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Writer</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>100,000-199,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connor Adams</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Aboriginal-Italian</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Freelance, advertising (copywriter)</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>100,000-199,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claudia Parks</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Senior producer, advertising</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>60,000-99,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cecily Edwards</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Senior producer, advertising</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>100,000-199,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Callie Eaton</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>British-Northern European</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Registered acupuncturist, massage therapist</td>
<td>Trade school/college</td>
<td>60,000-99,999</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.3 Data analysis

Because I conducted and transcribed all my interviews myself, I was in very close contact with the data throughout this study. I read and reread my interview scripts, as well as the content of the websites I analyzed several times over the course of the last three years. This familiarity with the data allowed me to pursue an in-depth interpretive discourse analysis of my interviews that was attentive to both participant’s intellectual ideas and emotional and embodied relationships to the wine world (Pugh 2013). It also allowed me to continually refine and shift my data collection and analysis methods as I proceeded with my study (Charmaz 2014; Charmaz and Belgrave 2012). I began with an inductive and open coding of both my producer/wine world and my consumer interviews, using Dedoose, an online cross-platform application for analyzing qualitative and mixed methods research. From this initial coding, I drew out emergent themes and categories, which I later refined by returning to the data to selectively code with those themes and categories in mind. With the websites, I approached this content with the selective codes that emerged from my interview analyses, and analyzed the discourse with these codes in mind. I coded this data by hand, and organized quotes and material in Excel spreadsheets. I also compared the interview and website themes and categories to the field notes completed after each and at all stages of my fieldwork to ensure that these themes were robust overall. Further detail about my analyses for each section of my study can be found in each of my chapters as these represent standalone papers.
Chapter 3
How well does terroir travel? Illuminating cultural translation using a comparative wine case study

3

Abstract

Terroir is a complex French cultural term used to identify and classify artisanal foods and drinks in relation to a specific place. Notoriously “untranslatable”, terroir has nevertheless travelled well beyond the borders of France and Europe more broadly. This paper illuminates the parts of terroir that translate culturally by using a qualitative comparative case study of two contrasting wine regions, and examines how terroir manifests in similar and different ways when it is taken up in a French and a Canadian regional cultural context. Through the analysis of terroir discourse in 30 interviews and 32 websites, this study further clarifies the factors that drive consistency and change in the translation of a cultural idea like terroir. Moving beyond the idea that “terroir is adaptable”, this paper shows how wine actors articulate terroir’s normative principles as constant, but describe terroir’s natural and human practices in locally contingent ways, nuancing our understanding of stability and change in how culture unfolds within a globalized cultural context.

3.1 Introduction

Terroir is a French term used to classify foods and drinks on the basis of their connection to a specific place and the characteristics (e.g., the taste, quality, etc) place transmits to these products. Terroir plays a particularly important role in defining, qualifying and classifying wine (Beckert, Rössel, and Schenk 2017: 213; Demossier 2010; Gade 2004: 848), and is considered central to the field of wine (Barham 2003:131; Paxson 2012: 187-88). Despite debates that dispute terroir’s existence and impact (Kramer 2016, for example), or that declare the demise of terroir-driven French wines (Steinberger 2009), recent research has demonstrated that terroir and terroir-based Old World winemaking remain the gold standard in the field of wine (Fourcade 2012; Rössel, Schenk, and Eppler 2016; Smith Maguire 2016).

12 A version of this chapter was published in the cultural sociology journal Poetics in December 2017.
13 Abbreviations: AOC: Appellation d’origine contrôlée; CDP: Châteauneuf-du-Pape; DO: Denomination of origin; INAO: Institut national de l’origine et de la qualité; VQA: Vintners Quality Alliance
As food and wine scholars note, terroir is notoriously difficult to translate on linguistic and cultural levels (Aurier, Fort, and Sirieix 2005; Barham 2003: 128; Trubek 2008: 9). Terroir involves a special combination of natural and cultural elements that cannot be satisfactorily summed up in a single word like “soil” or “place” and is often articulated in English in the form of an expression, like “taste of place” (Trubek 2008) or “sense of place”. As a fluid cultural category and philosophy in wine and food that is both fundamental to the French appellation of origin system and the globalized wine world (Voronov, De Clercq, and Hinings 2013), terroir can also be explored in the way it “translates” when it travels outside its implied French “home”.

In this paper, I qualitatively examine the parts of terroir that translate in the winemaking field using two contrasting case studies. My goal is to shed light on the factors that drive consistency and change when cultural concepts travel and are adopted in different cultural contexts. Indeed, the borrowing and travelling of cultural concepts like terroir permeate our connected world and are key features of local cultures in a globalized context (Appadurai 2000; Fantasia 1995; Garcia Canclini 1995; Robertson 1995). While research on the globalization of culture has shown that “cultural travelling” happens, it has not always fully examined which specific elements of concepts or ideas are more or less likely to take hold (e.g., remain stable or be adapted).

Terroir’s potential for developing and reinforcing local and rural economies has prompted scholars in disciplines like sociology, geography and anthropology to examine its capacity to adapt to contexts outside France (Amilien, Torjusen, and Vittersø 2005; Barham 2003; Boulianne 2010; Bowen 2010, 2015; Bowen and Zapata 2009; Paxson 2010b, 2012; Trubek 2008; Trubek and Bowen 2008). Some of the research on terroir’s translation to places outside France has demonstrated that the term “terroir” changes in meaning and application when it
travels (Bowen 2010, 2015; Bowen and Zapata 2009; Paxson 2010b, 2012; Trubek 2008; Trubek and Bowen 2008; Trubek, Guy, and Bowen 2010). These studies have overwhelmingly focused on the adaptability of the idea of terroir – how well it can be translated to new cultural settings. However, in emphasizing the flexibility and adaptation of terroir when it travels, these studies have also tended to focus on the differences in terroir’s meanings when it is taken up in new places. What about the role of continuity in translating ideas like terroir to new cultural contexts, and what does this tell us more broadly about the overall stability of cultural ideas when they travel? How can we further clarify the elements that easily translate to new surroundings (e.g., those that are maintained when terroir travels), while also looking at the parts that are more difficult to translate (e.g., those that are adapted and modified)? When examining cultural translation more broadly, how are difference, but also sameness apparent (and necessary) for cultural ideas like terroir to take root in new places, and what dynamics influence consistency versus change when these ideas travel?

In this paper, I shed light on this tension between sameness and difference when terroir travels to new cultural contexts by examining what parts of terroir translate when it travels to new spaces. Using a comparative case study of two distinct wine regions – one in Châteauneuf-du-Pape, France, in the traditional “home” of winemaking and at the heart of the status hierarchy in the wine world (Smith Maguire 2016; Voronov, De Clercq, and Hinings 2013), the other in Niagara, Canada, an emerging wine region – I interrogate the adaptability of terroir and see how it manifests in similar and different ways when it is taken up in diverse cultural contexts. Through this analysis of the meanings of terroir in one winemaking region compared to another, I further clarify what parts of terroir are translated and show how wine actors articulate terroir’s definitions in surprisingly constant ways, whereas their discourses about terroir’s practices
involving nature and human influence vary significantly. Thus, I move beyond the idea that “terroir is adaptable” to argue more broadly that elements of a cultural idea that are connected to place are more likely to change, whereas normative principles appear more capable of remaining stable when traveling across diverse cultural contexts.

3.2 Terroir: A case for studying cultural translation
Terroir is a powerful cultural category (Paxson 2010b; Spielmann and Gélinas-Chebat 2012; Spielmann, Jolly, and Parisot 2014; Trubek 2004, 2008) with clear linguistic, historic, and cultural roots in France. Complex and multi-layered, terroir fuses together several characteristics (physical, organoleptic/gustatory, symbolic, etc) into a single concept that works as local and national forms of attachment, and as a way to communicate and sell these forms of locality and nationality (along with their attributes) on global markets (Bohling 2014; Demossier 2011; DeSoucey and Téchoueyres 2009; Fourcade 2012). Although terroir historically referred to land or soil (Bérard and Marchenay 1995; Tomasik 2002) – a meaning it still retains today in its most simplified form – its definition has evolved over time to include specific references to taste and to wine (Tomasik 2002), as well as more recent references to the human role in expressing terroir (Bérard and Marchenay 1995; Demossier 2011; Parker 2015).

Terroir’s evolution from a one-dimensional concept referring to land, to a culturally validated and institutionalized classificatory notion emphasizes its fluidity and malleability over time and space (e.g., historically, culturally, politically and socially). Indeed, terroir is far from a fixed category, even within France (Daynes 2013; Demossier 2011; Ulin 2013). Terroir’s flexibility and evident symbolic power as a cultural idea has prompted scholars to examine and argue for its transferability to cultural contexts outside France, such as North America (Paxson 2012; Trubek 2008; Trubek and Bowen 2008; Trubek et al. 2010; Voronov et al. 2013). Today, terroir has
travelled well beyond the borders of France and even, of Europe more broadly. It has been taken up by producers of diverse foods and drinks in various countries (Amilien et al. 2005; Boulianne 2010; Bowen 2010, 2015; Bowen and Zapata 2009; Paxson 2010b, 2012; Trubek 2008). Overall, prior research on how terroir travels has emphasized the differences in translation that arise, and thus, how terroir’s definition changes as it travels. However, this research has not systematically analyzed the principles of terroir that most easily translate and remain relatively constant when terroir travels, and compared these to the aspects of terroir that are less translatable and more subject to change.

For example, Amy Trubek (2004) examines the mediatized attempt by the Californian winery Robert Mondavi to establish itself in France, and the resulting divergent definitions of terroir by American winemakers in a French context. Mondavi’s bid for winemaking land in the small town of Aniane was generally framed by the media as a combination of anti-American and anti-globalization resistance on the part of the French locals (Trubek 2004). Trubek (2004) argues instead that this response reflects deep cultural differences in sensibilities towards the land, resulting in contrasting interpretations of terroir’s meaning. Mondavi’s narrow perception of the land in Aniane as simply “good soil” left out a crucial part of its definition as a collective “place” with cultural meanings that did not involve wine cultivation for the townspeople. This case thus highlights the mutability of terroir and its tendency to take on different attributes depending on where (and by, or for whom) it is used (e.g., in France or in the United States, by small wine growers or by large transnational wineries, etc).

The translation of terroir to other contexts, and to the U.S. specifically, has also been examined through anthropological and rural sociological lenses. These studies suggest that terroir’s
interpretations do not just involve instances of misinterpretations across national contexts, but also, opportunities for local adaptations. For example, anthropologist Heather Paxson (2010b, 2012) argues that the adaptation of terroir by U.S. artisan cheesemakers involves a process of “reverse-engineering”. Reverse-engineering of terroir entails actively adapting Old World models of terroir using New World innovations. Terroir is used by American cheesemakers to connect to the “goodness” of a product and to the craft, terroir-based practices that contribute to making it. In this way, terroir becomes “a prescriptive category for thoughtful action” (Paxson 2010b: 445) that includes ethically and morally motivated ways of engaging with environmental, land-based agrarian projects (Paxson 2012). Although terroir’s exact definition in the U.S. remains in flux, Paxson’s work (2012) demonstrates how terroir is adapted and re-shaped in the new American context, and is not simply a case of mistranslation of French definitions and uses.

Rural sociology studies of terroir have examined geographical indications (GIs), and how the terroir concept within GIs is translated and adapted in different national settings (Barham 2003; Bowen 2010, 2015; Bowen and Zapata 2009). In her pioneering article, Barham (2003) argues that GIs “translate” the particularities of the terroir of the regions they come from, pointing towards the flexibility (and promise) of the GI model when it unfolds in different places. Sarah Bowen’s research on the tequila GI in Mexico (2010, 2015; Bowen and Zapata 2009) further shows how differences in defining and understanding terroir outside the French context can lead to less successful adaptations of terroir within DO (denomination of origin) systems, particularly in places where small-scale producers are vulnerable to larger corporate power players.

In sum, these studies of terroir have broadly embraced terroir’s flexibility and adaptability, as well as its potential for challenging conventional agriculture and supporting sound rural
development (Barham 2003; Paxson 2010b, 2012; Trubek 2004, 2008; Trubek and Bowen 2008; Trubek et al. 2010). At the same time, emerging work has underscored some of terroir’s unfulfilled promises (Bowen 2010, 2015; Bowen and Zapata 2009), and terroir’s possible incompatibility with the American wine world’s culture of individual creativity and innovation (Fourcade 2012). Thus, Fourcade (2012) and Bowen (2015) temper some of the enthusiasm around terroir’s flexibility and its ability to be successfully, if variably, adapted by emphasizing some of the potential cultural barriers to its successful adoption in North America. But how can we understand this paradoxical adaptability and tension with the translation of terroir? Previous work has highlighted the variability of terroir’s adaptations outside France, yet we know little about which elements of terroir may remain constant when this cultural concept travels. What principles of terroir are easiest to translate? What “core” of terroir is exportable when it is brought to new places? In contrast, what parts of terroir remain less malleable, and must therefore be changed when terroir is taken up in a new place?

My comparative case study advances our understanding of terroir’s supposed mutability when it is translated to new cultural places as it has been presented in most of the current work on terroir. Certain fundamental elements of terroir’s definition appear as constants across both my cases, a surprising finding considering the significant reputation, status and historic differences between the chosen wine regions. Key principles of terroir’s definition, like the presence of natural and human elements, were shared across both sites, demonstrating the importance of retaining some core of sameness when translating a cultural concept like terroir. At the same time, respondents from each site described some clear differences in their relationships to terroir, and specifically, to the natural and human elements of terroir – pointing to disparities in how informants envision terroir’s unfolding in local practice. More broadly, and following work that examines the
movement of ideas (Sahlin and Wedlin 2008) and “shared languages” (Eliasoph and Lichterman 2003), particularly in globalized contexts (Voronov et al. 2013), I show how wine actors articulate terroir’s normative principles as constant, but describe terroir’s natural and human practices in locally contingent ways, nuancing our understanding of stability and change in how cultural ideas unfold in globalized contexts.

In the next sections, I outline the methodology I used and present my findings. I conclude by discussing my findings as a case for understanding the factors that drive constancy and change when culture travels in a globalized context. In this way, I further our understanding of what tends to remain the same and what tends to be adapted in order for cultural ideas and practices to successfully travel and take hold in new places.

3.3 Methods
The aim of my study was to examine qualitatively how terroir, a term that is notoriously difficult to translate and define, is (or not) adapted when it is taken up in a newer wine region that is more self-conscious (and possibly, deliberate) in its use of terroir (Voronov et al. 2013) compared to a context where terroir is culturally embedded and taken-for-granted. To this end, I directly compared two contrasting wine appellations – Châteauneuf-du-Pape, an eminently reputable French wine region, and Niagara, a less established wine region from the “New World\textsuperscript{14}” of Canadian winemaking. I selected these sites because of their historicity and centrality within their local and national wine markets, as well as their documented uses of terroir philosophy in

\textsuperscript{14} “New World” indicates the Americas, Oceania and South Africa (e.g., newer wine regions), while “Old World” refers to Europe and the Middle East (e.g., traditional wine regions). I recognize the contested (Banks and Overton 2010) and colonialist implications of these terms, but use them here as conventional terminology in this field.
their current winemaking and appellation systems. These wine regions diverge in terms of winemaking conditions (notably, in climate), depth of winemaking history, reputation, and status within the broader global wine world. Because my aim was to compare differences and similarities across cases, these contrasts were intended and valuable.

I selected Châteauneuf-du-Pape (CDP) because it is an internationally renowned French wine appellation d’origine contrôlée (AOC\textsuperscript{15}). Situated in the southern Rhône Valley, the appellation is clustered around CDP village and neighbouring municipalities, and primarily produces its famous red wine, but also some white wine. Vineyards date back to at least the 14\textsuperscript{th} century, when the popes’ presence in nearby Avignon prompted the flourishing of winemaking in CDP and the village’s name of “des papes”. CDP is considered one of the first AOC wines decreed in France, a point of pride for local winemakers, and one that highlights the pivotal role played by this appellation in defining terroir’s foundational meaning and relationship to quality and geographic indications, both within and outside France. Local winemaker Baron Le Roy de Boiseaumarié played a central role in creating the current AOC system that serves as a model for European as well as international wine regulations organized around terroir claims. The appellation’s role in connecting terroir to French wine regulations was a primary reason for selecting CDP as my French terroir case.

As my comparative case, I chose the Niagara Peninsula appellation because it is one of the largest and oldest viticultural regions in Canada. Situated near the American border and the iconic Niagara Falls, the area is celebrated for its agriculture, and fruit production in particular.

\textsuperscript{15} “AOC” is the official French geographic indication and label of quality for terroir-based products.
Winemaking in Ontario dates back to the 1800s (Phillips 2006), yet this history is generally discounted, and the Ontario wine industry is broadly framed as coinciding with the adoption of European standards of quality, which occurred in the mid-1970s in Niagara (Voronov et al. 2013: 611). The Ontario appellation system is regulated by the Vintners Quality Alliance Ontario (VQA Ontario) and represents a conscious effort to draw on terroir claims. It is the oldest in Canada (though a similar program now exists in British Columbia as well), and this was a key motive for choosing an Ontario appellation. Grape varieties are not regulated; thus, the appellation produces an array of red, white and rosé wines of varying qualities. As for the CDP case, I operationalized winery size based on production and land size. Thus, a small winery refers to a winery with 10 acres or less, that produces less than 1,500 cases. A large winery has more than 100 acres, and produces over 15,000 cases. Finally, medium sized wineries are in between these two poles. Table 1 compares the geographic and production sizes of both appellations.

Table 1. Comparison of appellations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>No. of wineries</th>
<th>No. of grape varieties</th>
<th>Size (hectares)</th>
<th>Annual production (hectolitres)</th>
<th>Annual yield (hl/ha)</th>
<th>Average temp. in July (°C)</th>
<th>Growing Degree Days16</th>
<th>No. of interviews/site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CDP</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3 161</td>
<td>81 732 hl (2013)</td>
<td>26 hl/ha</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>1670</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niagara</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>5 504</td>
<td>155 511 hl (2013)</td>
<td>28 hl/ha</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>1590</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


16 Growing degree days measure heat accumulation during the growth season.
I spent time both in CDP and Niagara, engaging in participant observation through a variety of activities. In CDP, I lived in the village for a month in April 2014, establishing contacts and participating in wine-related activities, including a CDP wine show, tastings and a special celebration honouring the best winemakers in the area. I spent time at the *Fédération des syndicats de producteurs de Châteauneuf-du-Pape*, my main contact in the area. I toured several wineries, *caves* and museums. Having studied and worked in France and Italy in the area of food, I was familiar with the culture. This eased my entry and access to informants. In Niagara, I visited the region during four research trips, ranging in length from one to four days. I attended (and volunteered at) wine festivals and events, sat in on wine courses, workshops and tastings in Niagara and Toronto and toured several wineries. I recruited interview participants for both cases by using contacts from past professional activities. Later, I contacted certain key informants directly to ensure numbers and overall uniformity across cases. For the French case, I conducted all but one interview in French, and analyzed websites in French, translating quotes as needed. I analyzed the content of 15 winery websites that span small to larger wineries, as well as the websites for the regulatory body of each case site (total of 16 websites for each site). Tables 2 and 3 provide a list of interview participants and the websites analyzed.
Table 2. Interview participants: Châteauneuf-du-Pape and Niagara/Ontario cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Age range</th>
<th>Main sector(s) in wine world</th>
<th>Size of winery (if applicable)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nathalie Atkinson</td>
<td>Niagara</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>Winemaking</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nelly Thompson</td>
<td>Niagara</td>
<td>40s</td>
<td>Winemaking (owner)</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nate Oaks</td>
<td>Niagara</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>Winemaking (owner)</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nick Ernst</td>
<td>Niagara</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>Winemaking</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neil Robin</td>
<td>Niagara</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>Winemaking</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noel Anderson</td>
<td>Niagara</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>Winemaking</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tim Holmes</td>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>Writing, education</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tony Andrews</td>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>60s</td>
<td>Writing, education</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasha Abbott</td>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>Regulation</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norman Idleman</td>
<td>Niagara</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>Marketing, tourism</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigel Eames</td>
<td>Niagara</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>Medium-large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tara Ireland</td>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Todd Rivers</td>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>Sommelier, education</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Adriano</td>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>Sommelier</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tristan Rolland</td>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Zachary</td>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>40s</td>
<td>Sommelier, writing, education</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christophe Roux</td>
<td>CDP</td>
<td>40s</td>
<td>Winemaking (owner)</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>CDP</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Company Size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clémentine Olivier</td>
<td>40s</td>
<td>CDP</td>
<td>Tourism, sommelier</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caroline Arnaud</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>CDP</td>
<td>Exporting/Selling</td>
<td>Medium-large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claude Robert</td>
<td>60s</td>
<td>CDP</td>
<td>Winemaking (co-owner)</td>
<td>Medium-large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cédric Robert</td>
<td>40s</td>
<td>CDP</td>
<td>Winemaking (co-owner)</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Catherine Girard</td>
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<td>CDP</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colette Imbert</td>
<td>60s</td>
<td>CDP</td>
<td>Winemaking (co-owner)</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantin Odet</td>
<td>20s</td>
<td>CDP</td>
<td>Winemaking</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Tomassin</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>CDP</td>
<td>Winemaking (owner)</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Ortega</td>
<td>60s</td>
<td>CDP</td>
<td>Historian</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cécile Reynier</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>CDP</td>
<td>Regulation</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameron Adams</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>CDP</td>
<td>Tourism</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clotilde Andrieu</td>
<td>20s</td>
<td>CDP</td>
<td>Law</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chloé Aubry</td>
<td>20s</td>
<td>CDP</td>
<td>Tourism</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3. Websites**

**Châteauneuf-du-Pape, France:**

17. Château de Beaucastel  
18. Château de la Gardine  
19. Château de la Nerthe  
20. Château Fortia  
21. Château Mont-Thabor  
22. Domaine Beaurenard  
23. Domaine de Cristia  
24. Domaine de la Janasse  
25. Domaine de la Roncière
26. Domaine de la Solitude
27. Domaine de Nalys
28. Domaine du Banneret
29. Maison Brotte
30. Maison Chapoutier
31. Maison Ogier
32. AOC Châteauneuf-du-Pape website

Niagara, Canada:

17. Bachelder Wines
18. Château des Charmes
19. Clos Jordanne
20. Domaine Queylus
21. Five Rows Craft Wine of Lowrey Estates
22. Inniskillin
23. Malivoire
24. Peller Estates
25. Ravine Vineyard
26. Southbrook Vineyards
27. Stratus Vineyards
28. Sue-Ann Estate Winery
29. Tawse Winery
30. Thirty Bench Wine Makers
31. Trius Winery
32. Vintners Quality Alliance Ontario (VQA Ontario)

To develop a broad understanding of each site, I selected winemakers\textsuperscript{17} and winery employees from wineries of varying sizes\textsuperscript{18} (small to large) and key informants working in various wine sectors, including in marketing/sales, regulation, education and tourism. Interview questions aimed to: 1) uncover each person’s role within their appellation, and 2) examine how participants viewed the overall functioning of their appellation. I asked the majority of participants to

\textsuperscript{17} Winemakers in both regions often wore many hats, from managing the winery and overseeing its operations (especially if they were the owners), to selling wine, to working in the fields to grow the grapes, and of course, making wine. This made their relationship to the terroir they worked with multifaceted and interesting.

\textsuperscript{18} I determined a winery’s size based on production and land size. A small winery is 10 acres or less, and produces less than 1,500 cases. A large winery is more than 100 acres and produces over 15,000 cases. Medium sized wineries are in between. Note that the medium-to-larger wineries in CDP also produce Rhône wines, not just CDP AOC wine.
explicitly define terroir in their own terms, explain its importance to the appellation’s wines, and its role in creating value, etc. Participants also defined and discussed terroir in responses to questions about winemaking, distinctiveness, authenticity and value. Thus, my findings reflect responses to both direct questions about terroir, and discussions of terroir arising elsewhere in participants’ interviews, as well as my overall understanding of terroir’s meanings and uses gleaned from my participant observations in each site.

Interviews provided rich data, with most lasting well over an hour. I transcribed interviews in full in their original language (French or English), and coded and analyzed the transcripts using Dedoose, an online cross-platform application for analyzing qualitative and mixed methods research. I used a grounded theory approach to inductively uncover and code recurring themes in my interview data (Charmaz 2014). For the website content, I examined the definitions and uses of terroir, its absence in the websites, and the mention of natural and human elements of terroir already identified by participants in interviews, using discourse analysis (Phillips and Hardy 2002). The goal of this website analysis was to obtain an overall view of the relative meanings and uses of terroir in the public domain by examining the materials that wineries and regulatory bodies produce to publicize and market their wines and appellations. Through these analyses, I discovered an unexpected convergence around central elements of terroir’s definition (e.g., how terroir is defined) across these divergent case sites. I also observed some key variance across cases in the descriptions of terroir processes\(^\text{19}\), and of the nature-human processes of terroir.

\(^{19}\) The terroir processes/practices I discuss are inferred from respondent and website discourses. While practices and discourses about practices are not identical, we can infer practices from what people say about what they do.
specifically. In the next sections, I examine these similarities and differences across my cases in more detail.

3.4 Terroir in principle: Shared ideas

Across both cases, respondents and website data agreed on terroir’s core conceptual components, using very similar and overlapping categories and terms to define terroir both in general and detailed ways. At its most general, both French and Canadian respondents described terroir as a place, a specific “sense of place”, and a charmed place that delivers specific attributes essential to quality wine. For example, Canadians Nathalie Atkinson, Nelly Thompson and Tara Ireland, and websites Château des Charmes, Peller Estates and the VQA, portrayed terroir as a special, unique and even “magical” place. French respondents and websites also described terroir idealistically as a romantic and special place, like the Domaine de Beaurenard website’s description of their terroir as “blessed by the gods”.

Thus, “place” was a central feature of terroir, and figured prominently in respondents’ definitions of the term, yet participants’ common shared meaning of terroir expanded well beyond just this idea of place. Below, I examine these different points of convergence. First, I explore the general principles of terroir that were common across both cases. Next, I discuss the specific operating principles of terroir that were universally agreed upon.

3.4.1 General principles of terroir: Place, “everything”, complexity

As noted, terroir was understood as referencing a “place”, but it was also more broadly understood as the foundation, or cornerstone of quality winemaking. Respondents in both French
and Canadian regions alluded to this foundational quality by describing terroir in very capacious terms – the “everything” of good wine.

This portrayal of terroir as “all-embracing” was central to participants’ and websites’ common descriptions of terroir. For example, Canadian Todd Rivers defined terroir as “all of the factors, all of the influences, everything that affects what ends up being in the glass”. Tristan Rolland described terroir as “literally a fingerprint” and therefore akin to a wine’s identifying DNA. For Tom Zachary, terroir represents a framework and “the ultimate context” that helps to understand a wine by allowing for comparisons to “what a wine should be like”. French respondents like Christian Thomassin also defined terroir as “everything”. Some pushed this idea of terroir’s fundamental importance to wine even further, like when Clémentine Olivier clearly and simply stated that: “terroir is the origin of wine”, while for Cantin Odet, “terroir is the source of everything – that’s where all the meaning in our wines comes from… it’s the heart of the system…” (my emphasis). Here, terroir is not only defined as “everything” that contributes to the final product in a glass, but significantly, as the very heart of winemaking and meaning in CDP, as Cantin eloquently put it.

Terroir as the focal point of wine and winemaking in both French and Canadian cases worked alongside the portrayal of terroir as a “given” and something that is “self-evident” (Caroline Arnaud). Here, terroir emerged as a material constant that “just is” (Tom Adriano), and something winemakers in both CDP and Niagara must contend with. For instance, Canadian Nate Oaks stated that, “terroir I can’t really change, so…that’s what’s always going to be a constant”. For Neil Robin, two specific and basic parts of terroir – climate and soil – cannot be changed:
…we have all these things, but there is a basic thing that we can’t change, it’s the climate we have here… the soil we have has been brought here by nature a long time ago, and we live with it, and we can influence it a little bit, but we are not going to change it…

Nate and Neil’s French counterparts expressed similar ideas about the constant and unchangeable character of terroir. For Clotilde Andrieu, terroir has “always existed, no matter the name that it was given” and is therefore something that “[winemakers] have always had to deal with”. Cédric Robert emphatically stated, “terroir will always stay the same, you don’t have to worry about that!” Thus, terroir emerged as a large, potentially powerful force for French and Canadian respondents alike: terroir is the source and raw material of good winemaking.

Across both cases, respondents agreed that terroir is a complex, multifaceted term that is difficult to understand – especially by the average consumer. Several Canadian respondents described terroir as “being multifaceted” and “multi-tiered” (Nelly Thompson). Respondents also depicted terroir as hard to define and to explain, a common feature of terroir in popular and scholarly writing. As French winemaker Christian Thomassin put it:

Oh yes, it’s true that the world of wine is too complex. Even us…it’s complex, it’s too complex, right? And even, we’re from that world, but I can understand that for someone who walks into that [world], a word like terroir it’s already…red, white, that’s OK, but…it’s enormously complex.

Canadian Nathalie Atkinson agreed, stating that “[terroir is] pretty intangible” and “a buzzword that gets tossed around a lot”. Participants in Niagara and Toronto concurred that only the more serious wine drinkers understand terroir, something I expected to hear from Canadian respondents because of terroir’s various barriers to understanding (e.g., linguistic, cultural). Somewhat more surprisingly however, the French respondents did not overwhelmingly believe that average consumers in France grasped the term either, thus tempering the popular perception
in the wine world that terroir is commonly understood in France. Christophe Roux, Colette Imbert, Clotilde Andrieu and Cédric Robert all insisted that the average French consumer with little or no relationship to the wine or rural worlds would not readily understand terroir. Christophe Roux conceded that wine is probably more rooted in French culture, yet also added: “…no, I don’t think that the average French consumer knows more about wine and…tries to understand the terroirs, no, I don’t think so”. Clotilde Andrieu agreed, asserting that “even informed consumers – those who know about wine – know more about the varietals…they know more about the taste of wine, but beyond that, I don’t think they know much about terroir”, later emphasizing that “any French person, you ask him what is the terroir of CDP, he knows strictly nothing about it”.

Furthermore, the lack of straightforward definitions in the websites analyzed for both cases also supports this idea that terroir is not easily communicated to the public simply through abstract words on a webpage, and requires some connection to terroir’s materiality (the vineyard, the soil, or the taste of the wine).

3.4.2 Operating principles of terroir: Nature, human intervention and historical tradition

Besides describing terroir broadly as a complex but foundational source of quality winemaking, participants in both cases also provided more detailed definitions of terroir’s operating principles that included natural, human and historical facets. Most participants from both cases first mentioned the natural aspects of terroir. This was also the case in the websites analyzed. Respondents across cases included the soil, land, weather, climate, microclimates and microbiology (yeasts, soil microbes, etc) of a specific place as natural components of their terroir definitions. On occasion, participants mentioned particular aspects of weather or climate, like
rainfall, heat units and sunlight. In CDP, the “mistral”, a strong northwesterly wind that blows along the Rhône Valley, figured prominently in descriptions of terroir in both interviews and websites.

The relationship between terroir and soil emerged as particularly strong, with respondents referring to soils that are unique to their appellations in both cases. The iconic “galets roulés” – large, round stones present in certain parts of CDP – were central to French interviews, informal conversations, and several websites. Similarly, the Niagara Escarpment limestone “bench” also came up in interviews and conversations, and in some websites. The French respondents often used terroir interchangeably with “sol” (soil) or “terre” (earth/soil or land), like when Catherine Girard indicated that a specific wine from her winery “comes from three of the four “terroirs” [in CDP]”, or Caroline Arnaud said that “[the winery where she works] is situated on the borders of three of the emblematic ‘terroirs’ of CDP”. Here, both referred to “terroirs” as different soils in CDP.

Respondents in both cases also cited the human influence and relationship to nature as elements of terroir. In Niagara, Neil Robin proposed this definition of terroir: “Well, there’s many definitions of terroir, but my definition of it is…climate, soil, and…human being impact, ok?”, later reinforcing this idea by adding that, “You don’t grow a plant without acting on it. Agriculture is anything but natural”. Several other Canadian respondents agreed with this idea of human influence as part of terroir. As Todd Rivers summarized, “The person that is making the wine is terroir”. This human element was not emphasized in the Niagara website definitions, but did appear in some websites, including in the official terroir definition on the VQA website.
Likewise, the acknowledgment of a human role in terroir appeared in French interviews and websites. Caroline Arnaud spoke of the triad of soil, climate and humans, calling it a “triptyque”. Colette Imbert also emphasized this triad, saying “indeed…terroir is more than just a soil; it’s a soil, a climate and humans that work on [that soil]”. French respondents Cédric Robert, Clémentine Olivier and Christophe Roux, and about half of the websites consulted also included “know-how” (savoir-faire) – the idea of human impact as sets of practices, skills and knowledge – in their terroir definitions. This idea of “know-how” implied developing human practices and knowledge over time, as Caroline Arnaud indicated here:

> terroir is… it’s a soil, a climate and humans, right? It’s really…the notion of how to behave (savoir-être) and of know-how (savoir-faire) of humans, which is very important – it’s a triad (triptyque).…And that is a combination that is…the three, it’s not easy to bring together…it takes time, too. We didn’t start making Châteauneuf wines just yesterday, you know? All that takes time.

In Caroline’s account, knowledge and skills (savoir-faire) – like knowing what, where and when to plant – are further developed with the idea of “savoir-être”. This “savoir-être” speaks to the ability of knowing how to be human, social beings that are part of a broader ecosystem that includes nature and the environment. With this idea, Caroline evokes a very symbiotic and flexible human relationship to terroir that requires a connection to a particular place that “takes time”.

Definitions of terroir in both cases included elements of winemaking traditions elaborated over time, and to a history of practices passed along through generations. In line with Caroline’s quote above, elements of historical tradition in the French case were frequently connected to human interventions (e.g., winemaking traditions and knowledge/ savoir-faire) elaborated over time. Historical roots were an important element of the French appellation’s branding to tourists, and
were frequently used to frame the appellation’s wine and terroir. For instance, Chloé Aubry indicated that describing the appellation and its terroir to tourists implies talking about history, because “history goes with terroir”. As she later elaborated, “it’s true that the idea of terroir…you also have this ‘traditional’ idea, you have the idea of tradition”.

Although some Niagara definitions of terroir also included historical tradition, this was usually related to Old World terroirs rather than to Niagara’s own terroir and its comparatively recent winemaking culture and reputation. History therefore referred to winemaking practices fostered over time in specific places, rather than to other historic facets of place, like the geological history of a particular area. As Neil Robin pointed out, “[Ontario wineries] have as much geology and climate history than you’ll have in Europe”. The issue, as Neil Robin later remarked, “is to understand [this geology and climate history], and understand what you can grow on that particular terroir”, and this takes time. The geological history of Niagara is arguably as “old” as that of France, but winemaking practices and the ability to understand and work with the geological history of the Niagara place are much newer. Thus, Niagara winemakers like Neil showed an awareness of the ongoing need to develop this type of historical human relationship to terroir in their region. Ultimately, Canadian respondents viewed this historical human relationship to terroir as mainly relevant for Old World regions because, as Nick Ernst indicated, “we don’t possess [the historical element of terroir] like they do in the Old World, and that’s part of their terroir that they are going to try and sell”.

In sum, this analysis of terroir’s common conceptual features demonstrates continuity and consensus over several key elements across both sites – what I term the principles of terroir. At a general level, respondents described terroir as a place that was special and even magical. They
saw terroir as the “everything” that contributes to quality wines. Terroir was presented as something constant, complex and unchangeable – a “given” that was mostly understood implicitly to exist, and therefore, not easy to put into words and explain. Respondents thus acknowledged and grappled with terroir’s complexity, yet were still able to provide rather thorough definitions of terroir’s key operating principles, and specifically, the nature, human intervention and historical tradition elements of terroir. The websites analyzed confirmed what respondents described in interviews, with a particular emphasis on the natural parts of terroir. Significantly, this agreement over terroir’s principles across cases emerged from respondent and website data despite very tangible differences in the material conditions of winemaking, reputation and historical embeddedness of these two wine regions, a surprising finding that I will discuss more thoroughly in my conclusion.

While the comparison of terroir’s definitions in both cases reveals the existence of a core consensus over central principles, I will now discuss the striking differences in how participants described their relationship to terroir, and the way they framed the specific interactions between human and natural elements of terroir. Through this, I will show what parts of cultural ideas like terroir tend to change (versus what parts are prone to be stable) when they travel in a globalized context.

3.5 Terroir in process: Divergent relationships with nature

The differences between the two cases cluster around the ongoing relationship between the winemaker and the natural world. In the French case, participants and websites described terroir as a generally knowable and friendly resource that can be understood and worked with through specific “savoir-faire” (know-how). French respondents depicted a harmonious, reciprocal
relationship with nature. Overall, protecting and respecting terroir (and nature that is part of terroir/that terroir is a part of) was a key concern because terroir was portrayed here as both a natural and a cultural resource. By contrast, Niagara participants described a relationship to terroir that was less easy, and their relationship to nature as part of terroir appeared unpredictable and vulnerable. Although Niagara respondents did acknowledge human and natural components in their definitions of terroir, ultimately, they portrayed a relationship to nature that tended to downplay the human role in winemaking and present nature as a singular force. This primacy of nature in participants’ representations of terroir bears out in the analysis of Niagara websites, where the human role was rarely mentioned when terroir was discussed. Respondents and website content both referred to protecting terroir as a natural resource, but scarcely referred to terroir’s cultural or heritage value as reasons to protect terroir. In the following section, I examine these different relationships to terroir in more detail.

3.5.1 Châteauneuf-du-Pape: Nature as a friendly and knowable entity
The overarching, recurring theme in the CDP data was that the winemakers’ relationship with terroir’s natural elements rested on a deep understanding of the land and the vineyard – the terroir. In interviews and websites, this ability to understand the land was repeatedly connected to a representation of nature as a predominantly friendly and knowable entity. When Christophe Roux described the differences between the Syrah he produces within the CDP appellation (“it does not bring the same volume, the same concentration that I’m looking for, that I can have with the Grenache\textsuperscript{20}”) compared to the better quality Syrah that he produces in his vineyards

\textsuperscript{20} CDP AOC wine can be produced from any of 13 varieties, including Syrah and Grenache (the featured grape variety in CDP).
outside CDP, he is referring to the deep understanding he has of the qualities and capabilities of the different terroirs he works with.

Colette Imbert further discussed this knowledge of terroir and how it reflects a historical and symbiotic human-nature relationship, saying:

Well, long ago, terroir was in fact a piece of land that humans looked upon and tried to understand to see how they could draw out the best that the land had to offer – regardless of the product they were looking to make – and there was a true agreement between humans and the terroir they lived on.

This depiction clearly idealizes past human-terroir relationships, but it is noteworthy that Colette portrayed this emerging human-terroir connection as necessarily involving an attempt by humans to truly understand “the best that the land could offer”, as she put it. This understanding of terroir and the “true agreement” with nature it entails were not just connected to static, romanticized moments from a long ago past either: other French respondents talked about present-day viticultural techniques used by winemakers that involve a thorough understanding of terroir. For example, Catherine Girard stated how her winery’s winemaker “is very interested in terroir”, explaining that,

…basically, he studies this soil, you have to realize, he studies the soil. So, he does, what we call ‘soil pits’, he’ll dig…and he will really see all the different layers of the ground, and so, he studies these terroirs to better tend the vine [my emphasis].

Cantin Odet related the quality of his family’s biodynamic wines to the “almost goldsmith’s work” involved in making them, and to the deeper knowledge of nature that biodynamic winemaking involves: “it’s work; we go far in monitoring the vineyard…we have a lot of work in the vineyard and we go even further in the understanding of the vineyard”. Cameron Adams,
an Anglophone expatriate who worked for years in the appellation, described this particular relationship to terroir as foundational to French winemaking philosophy:

…it’s that mentality [of asking “what’s the land gonna give me?”] which drives [the French] to look for what terroir actually is, and this is why they’re so, you could say, obsessed by it; they’ve got to understand it to make the best wine they can from the land they have.

The websites also reflected this idea that the human relationship to terroir involves understanding and knowing terroir in this thorough way. “Savoir-faire” (know-how/expertise) and knowledge of terroir were discussed in half the websites I consulted. Expertise and knowledge of terroir were directly connected to the winemaker’s ability to properly express terroir and make it shine. Some wineries used the expression “agriculture raisonnée” (“sensible agriculture”) to mean sustainable farming practices in their websites. Here again, terroir was framed as knowable: one can apply “reasonable” (e.g., sound) agricultural methods in an effort to protect terroir, and this is made possible through a predominantly friendly relationship with nature. Respecting and preserving nature was mentioned on a majority of the CDP websites (12/16), often alongside an emphasis on specific land friendly production methods like “agriculture raisonnée”, organic or biodynamic farming. With this idea of preserving nature, there was also a sense that terroir and its accompanying know-how and traditions (e.g., the historical and cultural aspects of a terroir) should be protected as well. For example, the Domaine de la Solitude website asserts that, “Preserving traditions is preserving the know-how of our fathers (nos pères), and also preserving what constitute for us points of reference (des re-pères21)”. Once more, terroir and nature are presented as known and manageable for French participants, and the call to protect established

21 This is a play on “repères” which is hyphenated to emphasize the association between the prefix “re” (signalling a return to an anterior or original state) and “pères” (“forefathers”).
practices and traditions of working with the CDP terroir reflect this reciprocal relationship and agreement.

3.5.2 Harmonious and reciprocal relationships with nature
From this overarching theme of nature as a friendly force that is knowable, emerged key harmonious and reciprocal relationships with nature. As Catherine Girard indicated, nature is at the “heart of everything”, but even more so, nature appeared generous and giving in the French narratives. For Caroline Arnaud: “Nature, well, she offered us this nice gift of very good terroirs…nature allowed us to benefit of a terroir, a fabulous climate, in CDP, which allowed…the emanation of this appellation”. Consequently, one should “work in harmony with Mother Nature in such a way as to be her ally and not her master”, as the Brotte website asserts. Furthermore, in making wine, one must be “patient towards nature, who presides” and “be receptive to the environment”, as the Maison M. Chapoutier website advises.

Working with nature also means being close to nature, and several respondents were clear, at times adamantly, that wine work involves closeness to nature. As Claude Robert stated: “you don’t have to work with either organic or biodynamic methods to make wine: you have to be close to nature and close to your vineyard!” Later, Claude underscored this idea when he responded with passion to a question about using newer technologies like drones, saying, “No way, I don’t agree! If you want to see whether your vine is less strong, if the grape is not as nice, etc, you have to walk…you have to go see!”. Colette Imbert also described an intimate, amicable relationship with nature as central to her family’s winemaking process: “we have – my husband, me – our daughter also, I think – a very close relationship with nature, you know? And it’s a real joy to be outside, and, to make things grow; it’s loving what nature can produce”. 
Alongside this depiction of a close, harmonious relationship with nature, French participants described an overall symbiotic relationship with nature, where humans were portrayed as adapting to the natural parts of terroir, and working as extensions to nature, gently guiding it in the winemaking process. For instance, Cantin Odet discussed the relationship between humans and nature as “really quite connected” and as “an extension…for me, it’s really a continuum”. While respondents from both sites were very clear that humans must direct nature in winemaking, the relationship described by the French respondents was one of gentle guidance, as Caroline Arnaud offered in this vivid metaphor of the human-nature relationship:

Well, it’s a bit like a child, you know, who, when she knows how to bike with training wheels, we start to remove [them] a bit, and then we take them off completely. Well, you have to be there a bit with your hands, behind, to prevent her falling, and in case she’d need it.

As this quote illustrates, French participants did recognize and articulate that nature cannot always be predictable or counted on, suggesting an ongoing tension between human and natural elements in winemaking that all winemakers must actively work to balance. Nature has the last word, as Christian Thomassin indicated in his interview, and “human beings are there to improve, to compensate for some little climactic problems”. Colette Imbert even recognized that there could be “big problems” for winemakers when nature is fickle and does not cooperate, like when cold weather caused young Grenache berries to be shot in 2002, as she recounted. Yet, Colette also expressed the dominant theme in the French interviews and websites of a reciprocal relationship between humans and nature when she concluded that, “you have to be a philosopher [when things don’t go your way in winemaking] and tell yourself that the bad years will be compensated by years where nature is more forgiving maybe, and you have to accept that – you can’t be angry with nature”.

3.5.3 Niagara: Nature as a prevailing force

In the Niagara case, I noted a very different relationship to the natural side of terroir, as respondents overwhelmingly portrayed nature as “in charge”. Niagara participants viewed nature as something to contend with, describing a relationship with terroir that appeared to be significantly more challenging than the one presented in the French case. Niagara respondents appeared more keenly aware of the relative power and weight of terroir’s natural elements in their depictions of their relationship with nature. As Nathalie Atkinson put it, “really…we’re not necessarily driving the bus; we’re taking it where we need to…we’re being told what we need to do, essentially, by Mother Nature [laughs]…[she] kind of has her ideas, and we just work with it”. Nelly Thompson was also very clear about nature’s imposing presence in Niagara winemaking when she said: “nature trumps everything I want to do”, adding later, “she’s either your best friend, or the biggest bitch on the block”. Overall, Niagara participants’ narratives depicted a human-nature relationship where nature prevailed, strongly influencing winemakers’ possibilities.

Both French and Canadian cases defined terroir as fundamentally unchangeable, and therefore not that malleable by humans. However, in the Niagara case, this fixed part of terroir was met with some resignation, as respondents described this lack of influence on terroir as something humans just had to deal with. For example, for Neil Robin, “the human factor is important to tweak, but the basic of your soil and your climate is what you live with, you know?”. This more limited human role appeared unsatisfactory, and winemakers seemed implicitly to desire increased control over terroir and nature, like when Nate Oaks explained his role in relation to nature, saying: “I’d like to think that I was 70%, but I think it’s more the opposite”. In these
quotes, the underlying theme of nature as a dominant force that is fundamentally difficult to influence was striking.

Perhaps because Niagara is a newer winemaking region still trying to find its footing in the wine world, I frequently observed an “anything goes” attitude when it comes to winemaking practices. This was not necessarily viewed positively as Noel Anderson reflected when he commented, “Here you can do whatever you want, there’s too many grapes types…”. The idea that Ontario “just tried to be all things to all people” throughout its winemaking history, as Tony Andrews put it, was mentioned regularly, and this highlighted the ongoing difficulties of figuring out what is best suited for Niagara’s specific terroir. Winemakers often appeared to juggle multiple competing interests and demands while also grappling with understanding the winemaking place (e.g., the terroir and nature of the place) they work within. The lack of tradition and rules in Ontario gives freedom to producers to experiment, allowing them creative possibilities in winemaking. But, there are also the market demands of selling wine and making bosses happy, as well as the wine world’s own internal taste and quality norms that place “terroir” wines above market-driven “popular” wines considered to be of lower quality. These assorted considerations are ultimately balanced against the material constraints and possibilities of this particular winemaking place – what can one can actually produce in the Niagara terroir. Yet, winemakers and other wine workers are still very much wrestling over what Niagara’s terroir is best suited for when it comes to high quality winemaking, and the lack of clear winemaking traditions and rules in Niagara contributes to this overarching conceptualization of nature as still untamed and difficult to understand.
Niagara websites reinforced this idea that nature prevails in their mentions of terroir by presenting nature and the natural components of terroir most prominently, and featuring the human elements of terroir minimally when terroir was described. Thus, there were few allusions to the relationships between humans and nature. The idea of protecting nature, although mentioned in some Niagara websites, was less emphasized than in the French websites: only about half of the Niagara websites referenced sustainability practices in their winemaking (7/16, compared to 12/16 for the French websites). These practices included direct references to biodynamic and/or organic methods and certification. Moreover, these sustainable practices appeared to be connected to the idea of preserving terroir as a mostly natural resource and place. For instance, on the Domaine Queylus website, organic agriculture was linked to respecting terroir and protecting “the fragile soils of the region for generations to come”, but there was no mention of maintaining or perpetuating winemaking practices and traditions – the historic-cultural practices of terroir – like in the French websites.

3.5.4 Unpredictable and vulnerable relationships with nature

Related to the theme of nature as a prevailing force that is difficult to know and manipulate, Niagara interviews revealed a less predictable relationship with nature, which leaves winemakers vulnerable. Canadian respondents described humans as at the mercy of an inconstant and often challenging nature. For instance, Nelly Thompson expressed this sense of helplessness in the face of nature’s irregularities when she said, “I’ve got a concept of what I want to do – I have to change the palette of how I’m going to get there. And some years, I can’t get there. And so, I have to shift what my expectations are to achieve what I need to do”. As Nelly describes here, human beings can concoct big plans in winemaking, but they must ultimately be ready to change course and adapt to what nature gives them. Moreover, working with nature in winemaking was understood as risky, as Nick Ernst explained: “If you’re playing cards, you’re not going to bet a
whole bunch if you’ve got a bad hand. And so, it’s the same way in the vineyard”. Like Nelly, Nick went on to describe a relationship with nature that is variable and uncertain:

you can make decisions but ultimately…August 31st to September 15th, that’s like the deadline, at that point you’ve played all your cards and now you’re waiting, you’ve made all your decisions, and you are at the mercy of the weather at that point.

For Niagara respondents, the relationship of humans with nature was viewed as complicated because nature can be unreliable and inconstant, making it difficult to gain momentum and reputation in a highly competitive wine market. Sometimes winemakers have a good year where “it’s a lot more self-sufficient”, and “you don’t necessarily have to fight or work hard in the vineyard”, as Nathalie Atkinson mentioned. Other times, winemakers have a bad year “like the one we just had, which are challenging…I know how hard we had to work to get [to the quality we wanted]” (Nathalie Atkinson).

This unpredictable relationship with nature occurred alongside a perception of vulnerability towards nature. As Nick Ernst’s above quote shows, winemakers “are at the mercy of the weather” and of nature more broadly. Thus, the human role in winemaking emerged as less powerful and influential in relation to nature’s force in these narratives. As Nelly Thompson remarked on her role as a winemaker, “I’m a steward, I’m a glorified custodian”. The general sense in the interviews was that Niagara winemakers definitely contribute to nature, but there appeared to be some doubt about how impactful their contribution could be. Nature was therefore presented as a much more imposing force, and several Niagara respondents described the human role as one that could ultimately only minimize losses, without truly shaping winemaking situations. As Neil Robin indicated, “we try to erase [climate issues etc] as best we can; if we have a difficult climate, we try to erase it by tweaking things a little bit as human
beings in the vineyard, but we don’t make – *we are not making miracles* [my emphasis]”, later summarizing the decisive role played by a place’s natural conditions: “your influence is minimal at the end of day – it’s really to do with what, where you live”. Nelly also evoked this idea of a minimal human role vis-à-vis nature, saying, “I just take the best of what I can do with what [mother nature’s] going to ditch out to me that year”. The overall sense in these quotes is that nature is something you react to as a winemaker, rather than something you can manipulate, control or cooperate with. Human beings thus appeared as more vulnerable in their relationship to nature, and as doing the best they could with a nature they viewed as uncertain and fickle.

As noted, the Niagara websites did not often mention the human-nature relationship of terroir, focusing mainly on its natural attributes. This prominence of nature in the websites supports the interview findings where nature was presented as an overall prevailing presence in Niagara terroir and winemaking. It also reinforces the idea that Niagara winemakers are deeply aware of nature’s role and potential to influence their work, as well as the overall constraints of place on their work. Lastly, whereas all French winery websites referenced terroir in some way, for the larger Niagara winery websites consulted (*Peller Estates*, *Inniskillin* and *Trius*), terroir was not presented as a focal point of wines or winemaking practices. The more general term of “place” was mentioned with broad references to Niagara, but it was not connected to the specific characteristics of the wines produced at these larger Niagara wineries.

### 3.6 Conclusion

I have examined the parts of a cultural idea, terroir, that translate culturally when it moves in globalized contexts. By comparing two contrasting cases from the wine world, I have engaged with and unpacked an important tension between sameness and difference when cultural concepts travel. In analyzing how Châteauneuf-du-Pape and Niagara wine actors discursively
define and relate to terroir, I argue that normative principles of a cultural idea like terroir tend to remain the same, while the parts that are connected to place – like terroir’s nature-human relationships – tend to change when cultural ideas travel.

My analysis shows that in both French and Canadian cases, respondents and websites provided very similar definitions of terroir. Key elements were present across interviews, suggesting a common schematic understanding of terroir as a set of defining and normative principles. Terroir was viewed as: the cornerstone of quality winemaking, a complex term and entity, “everything”, a given, and a fundamentally unchangeable piece of good winemaking. Respondents in both cases also agreed on three categories of terroir operating principles: its foundations in the natural world, the significance of human technique, and the importance of historical tradition. These three categories correspond to the three parts of the Institut national de l’origine et de la qualité’s official terroir definition (INAO 2013), an organization responsible for the AOC system in France (Barham 2003:135). These categories are embedded in the AOC regulations and shape the everyday context of French respondents’ wine-related practices, but for Canadian participants, they are neither codified nor apparent in VQA acts or documentation. Yet, Canadian respondents also included these key categories in their detailed terroir definitions, demonstrating that certain elements of winemaking philosophies and ideas tend to persist transnationally, reappearing even in new winemaking places with distinctive governing institutions and organizations (Voronov et al. 2013).

The considerable overlap in the core principles of terroir’s definitions across these disparate cases suggests the presence of (and need for) a type of “shared language” (Eliasoph and Lichterman 2003) – a common reference point at the abstract level of “saying”. The agreement
over terroir’s defining principles found in my case study thus reflects and reinforces research on the wine world’s enduring centralized, hierarchical and conservative organization (Fourcade 2012; Karpik 2010; Rössel et al. 2016; Smith Maguire 2016; Voronov et al. 2013). As a highly charged concept, terroir continues to be a defining reference point for wine as a high quality commodity (Bohling 2014; Voronov et al. 2013). These shared understandings of terroir’s key principles underscore the high degree of compliance with global norms and standards of winemaking (including terroir-driven winemaking) that exists in the world of wine, especially for emerging wine regions still seeking legitimacy, like Niagara (Voronov et al. 2013).

At the same time, these shared definitions of terroir across cases emerge as significant and surprising for a few reasons. First, and most evidently, few in the wine world would expect Niagara and CDP to share much, if anything at all: these two regions differ noticeably in terms of climate, grape varieties, and history, amongst other elements. Yet comparing these dissimilar cases offers interesting grounds for drawing out not just differences, but also similarities, across cases. This finding of similarity also stands out because terroir is almost always constructed as a concept deeply rooted in French culture, history and language (Barham 2003; Bérard and Marchenay 1995; Demossier 2010; Trubek et al. 2010), and therefore, as an idea that de facto must be adapted and changed when it is exported to non-French places (Bowen 2010, 2015; Bowen and Zapata 2009; Paxson 2010b, 2012; Trubek 2004, 2008). As discussed, the majority of scholarly literature on the transferability of terroir to other cultural and national contexts

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22 I also recognize the limitations of my case selections, including the risk of a less nuanced analysis. Future complementary studies could include choosing sites that are more similar in style of winemaking (including grape variety choices), climate, history and overall position in the wine world hierarchy (nationally and globally) so as to further distinguish the parts of terroir that translate (and those that do not) when it travels.
emphasizes adaptability. The agreement on the principles of terroir’s definitions across both my cases suggests that scholars must also pay attention to the role of continuity (e.g., the parts of a cultural idea that stay the same), and not just look at differences and change when studying how concepts like terroir travel.

My analysis also points to differences in place-specific perceptions of relationships to terroir, and to nature within terroir specifically. The French respondents and websites portrayed nature as friendly, and terroir as generally knowable and cooperative in their winemaking. Their relationships with nature appeared largely harmonious and reciprocal. By contrast, the Canadian respondents described nature as a prevailing force, and terroir as somewhat difficult to understand or manipulate. Their relationships to nature appeared unpredictable and vulnerable overall. To be clear, my comparative analysis is not meant to idealize “Old World” French winemaking by framing French winemakers as somehow closer to their vineyards, or as having a more intimate relationship with nature and terroir than their Canadian counterparts. Actors in both wine regions face the promises, limitations and uncertainties of nature through their work in the wine world, as my findings shows. Even “favoured” appellations encounter barriers to winemaking (or to making the same quality of wine they are known for) from one year to the next, particularly when faced with global climate deregulation, as some recent conversations with CDP wine actors revealed. However, as my findings expose, the framing of this precarious relationship with nature that admittedly exists in winemaking regardless of the region, varied quite noticeably across cases. These divergent ways of discursively engaging with nature and terroir suggest deeply rooted historical, cultural and place-based ideas of nature (Cronon 1996: 35). The Canadian case’s portrayal of nature as prevailing echoes the “nature as frontier” trope associated with the North American idea of wilderness as untamed nature (Cronon 1996).
contrast, the French case’s perception of nature as friendly reflects a view of nature as “cultivated” through agriculture (e.g., not wild), and therefore “known” to humans who are the stewards of that nature (Heller 2013: 104-208).

Examining the cultural translation of terroir demonstrates that cultural ideas – even when they are symbolically powerful and connected to specific national identities – inevitably navigate a tension between sameness and difference. Moreover, by systematically interrogating this tension between the parts of cultural ideas that most easily translate (and remain constant) and those that are less translatable and more subject to change when ideas travel, I am able to argue that normative principles related to an idea like terroir are likely to be shared across different cultural settings, while parts related to (and dependent on) local place are apt to make a cultural notion like terroir change. On the one hand, the abstract meaning of an idea can be shared across groups (Eliasoph and Lichterman 2003), as is the case here, where the elements of terroir’s fundamental definition are common at the level of “saying” terroir. However, when respondents discuss using these ideas “on the ground” and in their specific local settings, the meanings of these common ideas tend to vary, pointing to differences in “doing” terroir in specific places. In my study, although the fundamental meanings of terroir are consistent across both cases, these meanings change when respondents discuss these in process for each site. These changes, I argue, are related to different local conditions related to place. Just as place matters in the reception of cultural objects and repertoires (Babon 2006; Johnston, Szabo, and Rodney 2012), place emerges here as a significant force in shaping the discursive formulations of practices involving cultural ideas.
Chapter 4
Wine nerds and pleasure-seekers: Understanding wine taste formation and practice

4

Abstract

How do people learn about good taste? How do they learn to appreciate cultural objects and practices, and become informed consumers? Using the case of wine, I examine the formation of taste, arguing that it involves not just status-driven motivations, but also the pursuit of different pleasures. I consider how 23 Canadian wine consumers describe and frame their interest in learning about wine to unpack how they engage with wine and learn to taste it. Wine-interested consumers, like foodies, display a knowledge-seeking disposition that enables their formation of a taste for wine. From this foundational disposition, my data shows that wine consumers develop and sustain their taste for wine through cognitive, sensory and status-driven pleasures. In my analysis, I bridge social constructionist approaches of taste with research that emphasizes the embodied and pleasurable practices of taste formation, and argue for further incorporation of the embodied sensorial aspects of consumption into studies of cultural consumption and taste.

4.1 Introduction

Wine, a culturally and economically valuable product, is often perceived as a complex, and potentially intimidating drink, particularly to New World wine consumers where the cultural practice of drinking and appreciating wine is culturally newer and therefore less embedded. Access to the world of wine requires acquiring knowledge or cultural capital to fill the “cognitive deficit” (Karpik 2010) – a gap in knowledge and competences experienced by many wine drinkers (Rössel, Schenk, and Eppler 2016: 4-5; Sterndorff Cisterna 2014: 100) – and allow them to better navigate the multiple complexities of this world. In this context, the question “what is good taste?” is a practical one that besets many wine consumers, from novice to seasoned, but it is also an analytical one that continues to puzzle sociologists of culture and the arts. Indeed, how do people learn to appraise and appreciate cultural objects and practices, and become informed, competent consumers? To become a competent wine consumer (e.g., a consumer who can choose wines wisely, and independently, that is, with limited or no expert
guidance), one needs to learn, to be taught (Karpik 2010; Paxson 2010b: 449). But learning about wine is not simply “bookish” – it is also experiential and involves direct and repeated sensory experiences of tasting wine. Thus, wine consumers learn about wine through both cognitive and embodied experiences of wine, and acquire knowledge that solicits both body and mind along the way.

In this paper, I take the case of wine interest and learning as a lens to examine the formation and practice of taste, and the ways that developing an interest in wine (and how to taste it) are driven not only by the desire to distinguish one’s social status, but also by the pursuit of different types of pleasures that appeal to both the mind and the body. I ask: how do wine consumers frame and give meaning to their interest in learning about wine and in pursuing different types of knowledge (sensory, cognitive, etc) on this topic? And what does this tell us about the formation of taste and what is required to mobilize and engage consumers in a cultural practice like wine appreciation?

To examine and further unpack these questions, I analyze interviews with 23 wine consumers from Ontario, Canada. Through this analysis, I show that wine consumers display a knowledge-seeking “nerdy” disposition that enables the formation of their taste for wine in a manner that simultaneously achieves distinction while also avoiding the appearance of outright snobbery. From this classed foundational disposition, I argue that wine consumers develop and sustain their interest in wine through three distinct types of pleasure: 1) cognitive, 2) sensory, and 3) status-driven. By examining these pleasurable dimensions of engaging with wine, as well as how these interact and reinforce each other, my study connects work on status that conceptualizes taste formation as socially constructed and status-driven, with research on practice that examines
embodied and pleasurable components of taste, to show that these are mutually reinforcing, rather than opposed. I argue that pleasures – at cognitive, sensory and status levels – are important hooks for taste formation and consumer engagement with cultural practices, in particular when these practices are potentially intimidating or difficult to engage with (like wine appreciation or the opera), or involve both pleasures and challenges, as with ethical or “green” consumer practices (Johnston and Cappeliez 2016; Soper 2007; 2008). Thus, my study extends emerging research on the inherently pleasurable aspects of cultural practices (Benzecry 2009, 2011; Benzecry and Collins 2014; Johnston and Cappeliez 2016; Soper 2007, 2008), but also recognizes that the very attractiveness and gratification of certain cultural practices are culturally/socially shaped and not simply physical or bodily responses.

In the next sections, I situate my study within different theorizations of taste formation and practice in cultural sociology, including Bourdieusian sociological conceptualizations of taste acquisition and practice (Bourdieu 1984), as well as literature that examines the formation of taste, and brings renewed attention to the roles of the body and the senses in cultural consumption (Arsel and Bean 2013; Benzecry 2009, 2011; Benzecry and Collins 2014; Gherardi 2009; Hennion 2001; Jarness 2015; Shapin 2012a; Teil and Hennion 2004). I then turn to research that examines the embodied and visceral pleasures of consumption and taste acquisition (Benzecry and Collins 2014; Carolan 2008, 2009, 2015; Hayes-Conroy and Hayes-Conroy 2008, 2010), with the aim of further unpacking the embodied and sensory elements that are part of cultural consumption.

4.2 Forming and practicing taste
The study of taste – how it is formed and what role it plays socially – represents a key research area in cultural sociology. Much of the literature on taste in contemporary cultural sociology
follows in the footsteps of Bourdieu’s seminal work on cultural consumption in *Distinction* (1984), with a majority of attention focusing on the social construction of taste, and its relationship to class and status. Thus, research on taste has tended to emphasize what people consume and to what ends, with the aim of uncovering how cultural consumption, taste formation and taste practices reflect and reproduce social inequality. In Bourdieu’s perspective, taste is largely the product of habitus and early family socialization, and structural factors are pivotal in the development of taste. Taste is consequently viewed as the result of internalized class-based practices, the bulk of which are acquired in early life.

Recent sociological research on the formation of taste critiques this emphasis on the function of taste and its relationship to status pursuits – a view commonly associated with Bourdieusian studies of taste (Benzecry 2009; Jarness 2015; Schwarz 2013; Shapin 2012a). These studies consider how taste is formed, and the ways people learn to become cultural practitioners in chosen cultural fields, such as music (Benzecry and Collins 2014; Hennion 2001), home decoration (Arsel and Bean 2013) and wine appreciation (Shapin 2012a; Teil and Hennion 2004). Such studies bring greater attention to how people consume and express taste for cultural practices, not only what they consume and for what purposes (Jarness 2015). It also explores how cultural experiences can be appealing “in their own right”, and not just because they are convertible into status or other forms of capital (Benzecry and Collins 2014). For example, the work of sociologists of attachment and attention on the formation of taste focuses on cultural

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23 Bourdieu’s own work *does* include an initial interest in understanding how people consume culturally (and not just what they consume culturally), as Jarness (2015) notes. However, much of the scholarship inspired from his work does not pursue this question, especially studies that use survey data to identify what forms of culture are consumed by different social groups.
practices (like listening to music), rather than cultural objects (like the types of books a person buys), and views cultural consumers as cultural practitioners (Gherardi 2009; Hennion 2001; Teil and Hennion 2004). Taste is examined as “taste-making”, that is, as “a situated activity that rests on learning and knowing how to appraise specific performances of a practice” (Gherardi 2009: 538; see also Jordan 2007). In this research stream, the emphasis is on studying the active acquisition, learning and practicing of cultural forms to understand how people form and practice their taste for different cultural pursuits, like music or wine appreciation.

The work of Claudio Benzecry (2009, 2011; see also Benzecry and Collins 2014) on how opera fans develop their passion offers a useful entry point into this renewed attention for the formation of taste. Opera is a high culture activity that, like wine, requires initiation and learning to be appreciated, especially in the current context where opera has fallen out of favour, both as a well-liked art form and a high status pursuit (Benzecry 2009, 2011). As Benzecry observes, opera fans demonstrate that a cultural practice like opera appreciation must be learned in order to be properly enjoyed, and for fans to be accepted and regarded (by themselves and by others) as true fans. Furthermore, as Benzecry and Collins (2014) argue, the cultural consumption of objects like opera music involves intense sensory and embodied experiences that are internal and individual (“feeling” the music in one’s body), as well as external and collective (experiencing crowd effervescence after a particularly beautiful passage). Benzecry’s case study uncovers some of the mechanisms through which opera fans move from their initial “passion” for opera to learning to become competent opera fans (2009, 2011). Benzecry and Collins (2014) further explore the sensory and embodied experiences of people’s engagement with cultural practices, and argue that these embodied and interactional experiences are inherently attractive aspects of cultural practices like opera.
Although Benzecry and the sociologists of attachment and attention generally contrast their work with more traditionally Bourdieusian studies of taste as status, in this paper I consider these theoretical streams as complementary, and borrow from both. I draw on Bourdieusian ideas to explain respondents’ clear overall disposition towards learning and seeking knowledge, as well as their complicated relationship with class and status elements of the wine world. At the same time, Bourdieusian-inspired scholarship can appear narrowly focused on the functions of taste, on social structural explanations of people’s tastes and taste acquisition processes, and tone-deaf to the pleasures of cultural consumption on its own terms. As a result, this work does not adequately capture the diversity of pleasures evoked in my respondents’ narratives about their development of a taste for wine. To account for these aspects of my findings, I turn to recent work on the formation and practice of taste that seeks to understand how people consume culturally (Benzecry 2009, 2011; Benzecry and Collins 2014; Hennion 2001; Shapin 2012a; Teil and Hennion 2004).

Using Benzecry and Collins’ work (2014) as a starting point, I push further their insight that cultural practices are attractive on their own in part due to key sensory and embodied aspects of these practices. Specifically, I add to their work by investigating more closely how the embodied and sensory pleasures of a cultural practice like wine appreciation also interact with cognitive elements to produce even more gratification and engagement with cultural objects and practices. In addition, I demonstrate the existence and predominance of a “nerdy”, knowledge-seeking predisposition to taste acquisition and practice, thus reintroducing a link to a classed and status-related understanding of taste formation that is largely absent from Benzecry’s (2009, 2011) and
Benzecry and Collins’ work (2014). Here, I turn to a more classic Bourdieusian explanation of taste acquisition. Indeed, this enabling knowledge-seeking disposition – a type of “fertile ground” that recalls Bourdieu’s habitus – provides the necessary mindset and context for furthering one’s interest and engagement with wine through sensory, cognitive and status-seeking pleasures. This tendency to accumulate very detailed knowledge about a broad set of cultural objects and practices is a well-documented attribute of certain cultural consumers (Cappeliez and Johnston 2013; Holt 1998; Johnston and Baumann 2015). Like these cultural consumers, the wine consumers in my study demonstrated a dominant interest for in-depth learning and knowledge beyond just the realm of wine. Significantly, this tendency was not just about bookish knowledge, like taking a course on the history of wine – it also involved some important sensory and embodied elements of wine, like knowing what to smell in a wine. Thus, this knowledge-seeking disposition – which provides a foundation for wine consumers’ interest in wine – involves different types of knowledge (e.g., knowing where a wine come from and what it should taste like), and these types of knowledge provide diverse pleasures to the body and the mind in return. To make sense of this, I suggest a middle road between a sensorial, practice-based approach that is divorced from any structural and classed considerations, and a social constructionist approach that is often too abstract and overlooks the embodied sensations needed to engage with cultural practices, and form tastes for them. I propose that taste formation and practice engage different pleasures that are culturally shaped sensory experiences. In other words, these pleasures involve the effects of social and cultural contexts, and are clearly embedded in (and reflective of) classed settings, but they also entail bodily experiences and responses that can contribute to inciting and furthering engagement with cultural practices.
Developing a taste for high status cultural objects like opera or wine occurs in a cultural landscape where outright snobbery is considered passé. I situate my respondents’ narratives about their interest in wine within the broader contemporary context of omnivorous cultural consumption. Cultural analyses have extensively documented an overall tendency towards cultural openness and eclecticism – what cultural sociologists have termed “omnivorousness” (Bennett, Emmison, and Frow 1999; Johnston and Baumann 2015; Ollivier 2008; Peterson and Kern 1996; Warde, Wright, and Gayo-Cal 2008). This turn towards omnivorous cultural consumption has been framed as a move away from outright snobbery (Bennett, et al. 1999; Johnston and Baumann 2015; Ollivier 2008; Peterson and Kern 1996; Warde, et al. 2008). More specifically, omnivorous cultural consumption implies that people who engage in highbrow cultural practices (e.g., wine appreciation or collecting art) tend to display openness by downplaying overt displays of snobbery, while also enjoying the status distinctions conferred by a given cultural practice and the specific knowledge that comes with it (Jarness and Friedman 2016). I consider wine consumers in this study as working within the parameters of what could be termed a “post-snobbery” context where snobbery persists, but entails a delicate dance between acknowledging the pleasures (and benefits) derived from a high status cultural practice like wine appreciation, without overtly enjoying and endorsing the attributes of being a “wine snob”.

4.3 The pleasures of taste

The sensations, experiences and enjoyment of consumption – from the anticipation of pre-consumption to the satisfaction (or guilt!) of post-consumption – have traditionally received little attention within sociology (Benzecry and Collins 2014; Warde and Martens 2000; Warde 2016; see also Abbots and Lavis 2013: 1-12 regarding the materiality of these sensations). As a result, there is little sociological understanding of the specific pleasures and sensations that come from
consuming, and specifically, what is “felt” in the body during different phases of consuming. In my interviews with wine consumers, key inherently pleasurable, sensory and embodied elements – not just utilitarian and status ones – were frequently and very clearly connected to the practice of learning to taste and appreciate wine. To account for these embodied pleasurable experiences and situate them more clearly, I turn to authors like Carolan (2008, 2009, 2015), and Hayes-Conroy and Hayes-Conroy (2008, 2010), who have drawn renewed attention to the body’s role in grasping and relating to the world, and to the development of taste in particular (see also Cerulo 2015, 2018).

These authors argue for the central role of the “thinking” body (Carolan 2008) in the formation of tastes for practices like sustainable or ethical eating (Carolan 2015), and for inciting change in the current food system more broadly (Hayes-Conroy and Hayes-Conroy 2008). As Carolan contends, “it is not enough to know sustainability. We have to literally be able to feel it” to create alternative and sustainable foodscapes (2015: 317). For Carolan (2015), the “retuning” of tastes and consumption towards foods and drinks that would contribute to more sustainable practices involves more than just attitude-changing; these changes in consumption also require that we attend to the visceral dimensions at play in how people consume and taste. Thus, incorporating the visceral hinges on the idea that politically and socially motivated ideas – like food movements aimed at just conditions for workers for example – can only gain traction if they also resonate at an embodied level (Carolan 2015; Hayes-Conroy and Hayes-Conroy 2008), and not just an intellectual or ethical one.

Similarly, ideas about what is “good” to taste in the wine world are equally carried along by their ability to appeal to wine consumers’ feelings and sensations in the body. Learning about wine
and forming a taste for it involve obtaining information that feeds the mind and developing expertise that can serve in social situations, but it is also about pleasurable and positive sensations in the body, and pleasing the palate. Wine consumers’ pursuit of learning to appreciate the taste of wine (and to develop “good” taste) provides an ideal starting point for analyzing the existence of different forms of pleasures – cognitive, sensory and status-driven – because it is a practice where physiological taste and status tastes intersect quite clearly. Wine tasting and appreciation, by contrast with other cultural practices that involve learning and knowledge pursuits, entails a material absorption (and digestion) of the cultural product (e.g., of wine). In the same way sociologists of food cannot completely ignore the body and consider food as an immaterial cultural object/product, and eating as only an abstract cultural practice, the study of wine requires us to consider the central role of the body in the appreciation of wine.

This makes wine a particularly interesting case for looking at the intersection of the mind and the body, and specifically, at the juncture between sensory and cognitive pleasures. Although other art forms like music, visual arts and dance are also sensory in their own right (aurally, visually, etc), and thus, involve the body as a mediating element in the appreciation of these art forms, food and wine fundamentally engage the body because the cultural product is ingested, becoming materially part of the eater and/or drinker. Thus, I make the argument here that engaging wine consumers (e.g., eliciting and maintaining their interest in wine) requires pleasurable dimensions. The formation and practice of taste among wine consumers is enabled through an initial penchant for in-depth learning and knowledge acquisition, that is further reinforced through a learning process that involves pleasures that appeal to the mind, the senses, as well as desires for social positioning, identity and status.
In the next section, I outline the methodology used to examine my central question about the formation and cultivation of a taste for wine amongst Canadian wine enthusiasts. In my analysis, I first describe the overarching knowledge-seeking disposition that emerged from wine consumers’ accounts of their interest in wine. I further parse out the three different types of pleasures participants portrayed when talking about developing their interest in wine learning: pleasures that are felt in the body (sensory/embodied), in the mind (cognitive/intellectual), and status-driven pleasures that participants expressed somewhat ambivalently. I conclude by considering how initiating and maintaining an interest and a taste for wine involves both cognitive and embodied elements, suggesting a mind-body dialectic that runs through three forms of pleasure: cognitive, sensory and status-driven.

4.4 Data and methods
To examine how wine consumers understand and frame their interest in wine and learning about it, I used interview data collected as an extension to a broader study of the translation and role of terroir in two wine regions, Niagara and Châteauneuf-du-Pape. During my fieldwork and interviews in the newer winemaking context of Niagara, Ontario, I observed an emergent central issue for wine producers (e.g., winemakers and cultural intermediaries) that involved the need to quickly assess the relative wine knowledge level of wine consumers like tourists, workshop attendees and restaurant guests, and potentially attempt to inform and educate them. More specifically, I began to notice that these Ontario wine producers have an interest in reducing what Karpik calls “the cognitive deficit” (2010: 135), or gap that exists between what consumers know about wine, and what they need to know in order to make thoughtful and considered wine choices. Some learning is a mandatory and basic element of engagement with wine appreciation (Karpik 2010; Rössel et al. 2016: 4-5; Sternsdorff Cisterna 2014: 100). In particular, consumers need some wine and taste education to appreciate the worth of certain wines, or why they should
spend more money on expensive wines. This is especially important in an emerging winemaking region like Niagara, where elements of a wine education are not necessarily part of the mainstream culinary culture, and where the region’s reputation relative to other world-class winemaking regions is still being constructed (Voronov, De Clercq and Hinings 2013). For wine producers making, selling or teaching about high quality terroir wines, having a corresponding audience that understands these wines (and buys them!) is paramount to the region’s legitimation project within the broader wine world. It is from these empirical observations that I decided to recruit and interview wine consumers about the development of their interest in wine, including what had drawn them to wine, how they had learned about wine, how they applied what they knew and why they enjoyed having some knowledge about wine. With these questions, my aim was to broadly explore how an interest in wine develops, and how that interest is further understood and given meaning by wine consumers.

I recruited and interviewed wine consumers who resided in the emerging wine market of Ontario, expressed an interest in wine, and had sought to deepen that interest in some manner (e.g., through reading blogs or books, attending workshops, visiting Ontario wine country, or other activities). Participants were all “wine-interested” (Howland 2013:333), in that they all shared a common interest in and enjoyment of wine, which was a key criterion of selection for my study since I was interested in consumers’ rapport with learning about the world of wine and how to taste it. While an interest in wine was a constant across the sample, participants varied in their level of engagement with, and knowledge of, wine, from the less experienced wine-curious, to the more advanced and skilled wine connoisseur, and everything in between. I screened out individuals who either worked or had worked in the wine industry full-time (and were thus not simply “consumers” in this context), or those who had grown up in a European context with an
existing wine culture that I hypothesized might have affected their overall interest, knowledge and engagement of wine in a way that was perhaps too different from the rest of my sample.

For this study, I analyzed interviews with 23 wine consumers (10 men and 13 women), ranging in age from 25 to 80 years (average=38 years). The participants in the sample are highly educated (22 out of 23 hold a university degree, and of these, more than half are graduate or graduate-level degrees). They also mostly work (or have worked) in white collar, professional occupations and are situated within a correspondingly comfortable income bracket. These characteristics represent what might be expected from wine-interested consumers (e.g., people who are drawn to wine appreciation and can consume wine regularly): high cultural capital, and reasonably high-to-high economic capital (Bruwer, Lesschaeve, and Campbell 2012: 48; Thach and Chang 2015). Table 4 provides the demographic information of participants included in this study.

Table 4. Interview participants – Consumers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Ethnic/Race Identity</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Job title/occupation</th>
<th>Highest level of education</th>
<th>Household Income</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charles Gamache</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Policy researcher</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carla Eades</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Course instructor, student</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>30,000-39,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlotte Carlisle</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>British, Canadian</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>40,000-59,999</td>
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</table>

Participants self-identified their ethnic and/or racial identity, which explains the different terms found in this column.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Income Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corina Ambrose</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>40,000-59,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caleb Coldwell</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Canadian</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Teaching assistant, student</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>60,000-99,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colin Ingram</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Project manager</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>60,000-99,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christopher Albert</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Teaching assistant, course instructor, student</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>20,000-29,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caitlin Alexander</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Japanese-Caucasian</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>General manager, fitness studio</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>40,000-59,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chelsea Atwood</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Lawyer</td>
<td>Professional degree</td>
<td>100,000-199,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claire Inglis</td>
<td>Female</td>
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<td>Graduate</td>
<td>60,000-99,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carson Oberst</td>
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<td>Anglosaxon</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>Retired geologist</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clément Auger</td>
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<td>Union advisor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christine Ebeling</td>
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<td>Server</td>
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<td>30,000-39,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cole O’Hara</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Anglo-Irish</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Consultant</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>60,000-99,999</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cathy Nichols</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>Homemaker</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>More than 200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleen Dermott</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Trademark agent</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>60,000-99,999</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cyrus Galo</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Lawyer</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>More than 200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Occupation / Title</td>
<td>Education Level</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameron Osborne</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Mutual funds adjustment officer</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>40,000-59,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassandra Barnes</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>WASP</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Writer</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>100,000-199,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connor Adams</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Aboriginal-Italian</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Freelance, advertising (copywriter)</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>100,000-199,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claudia Parks</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Senior producer, advertising</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>60,000-99,999</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cecily Edwards</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Senior producer, advertising</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>100,000-199,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Callie Eaton</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>British-Northern European</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Registered acupuncturist, massage therapist</td>
<td>Trade school/college</td>
<td>60,000-99,999</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I used an approach inspired by constructionist grounded theory to collect and analyze my data (Charmaz 2014; Charmaz and Belgrave 2012). In keeping with a grounded theory-inspired approach, my data collection and analyses were iterative and involved an open, circular and ongoing relationship between my fieldwork (e.g., interviews and participant observation), coding and my analyses. Interviews ranged from 35 minutes to two hours with an average of one hour. I asked wine consumers to talk about how they had developed and maintained their interest in wine, including questions about their level of wine knowledge, how they had learned about wine, how they used their knowledge of wine, why they wanted to learn more, and why they liked knowing about wine. I transcribed each interview in full so as to represent the flow of conversation, and coded and analyzed the transcripts using Dedoose, an online cross-platform application for analyzing qualitative and mixed methods research. I used inductive and open coding to draw out initial themes in wine consumers’ interviews, which I further refined and then
coded more selectively. From this coding, two prominent themes emerged: an overarching in-depth, almost academic approach to wine amongst wine consumers – what I have termed a “nerdy disposition”, as well as a central theme of pleasure. I discuss each of these further in the following findings section.

4.5 Findings: The pleasures of drinking and thinking about wine

I begin this section by discussing the “nerdy disposition” – an enabling trait that is central to understanding the interconnections between the cognitive and embodied elements of wine consumption. After outlining this disposition, I describe three distinct and prominent dimensions of pleasure that emerged from participants’ interviews: cognitive, sensory and status-driven. First, I discuss the cognitive pleasures that participants expressed, and that most clearly appealed to the mind. As predominantly self-avowed “nerds”, participants correspondingly drew much pleasure from the intellectually stimulating aspects of wine learning. Next, I outline the sensory pleasures that related more clearly to embodied sensations. As I demonstrate, learning about wine not only involves sensory pleasures, it also heightens these pleasures, making respondents enjoy wine even more. Finally, I present the status pleasures that respondents highlighted. The pleasures derived from status pursuits involved some clear ambivalence amongst wine consumers, suggesting the potentially conflicting sides of practicing a classed and potentially “snobbish” activity like wine appreciation in today’s “post-snobbery” context of cultural consumption. Throughout my analysis, I make the case that engaging in a cultural practice like wine appreciation (and learning to taste wine) involves an enabling disposition towards learning that facilitates the cognitive, sensory and status-related pleasures of the wine experience. These three sets of pleasures then work together to develop and reinforce a taste for wine.
4.5.1 The “nerdy disposition”, an enabling trait

Across participants’ descriptions of their initial interest in wine and reasons to learn more about it, I observed a common disposition towards knowledge-seeking and loving to learn new things about a host of topics. Of course, people interested in wine are likely to display a curiosity about wine itself. Yet, this generalized knowledge-seeking trait extended far beyond just a niche interest in wine. Indeed, this interest in learning more about wine fit within a wide-ranging tendency to pursue knowledge and learning in a variety of fields that was visible across my sample of wine consumers. Thus, learning about wine emerged as one element of a broader love of learning – what could be framed as a “nerdy disposition” – that many respondents, regardless of their wine interest and skills, identified as a central characteristic of their personalities (and a central reason that motivated their pursuit of wine learning in particular).

This “nerdy” trait amongst participants, which I describe in more detail below, closely resembles the knowledge acquisition tendencies demonstrated in other studies of cultural consumers, such as foodies (Johnston and Baumann 2015), cosmopolitan connoisseurs (Cappeliez and Johnston 2013) and cultural connoisseurs (Holt 1998). As participants’ remarks show, an interest in learning about wine appears to fit within a broader disposition towards detailed learning and knowledge-seeking. I view this disposition towards pursuing in-depth knowledge about a host of interests (not just wine appreciation) as an important enabler that facilitates the pursuit of cognitive, sensory and status pleasures related to the formation and practice of a taste for wine. This “nerdy disposition” demonstrates the importance of considering the relationship between the mind and the body in taste formation and practice, as well as in cultural consumption more broadly. In short, a tendency to learn and accumulate knowledge provides the foundation (and the possibility) for exploring and perceiving different pleasures in the body and the mind.
Amongst the 23 wine consumers I interviewed, 16 explicitly described themselves as “nerds”, curious, or as people who liked learning about a host of varied topics, making this a strong theme in my interviews. There were many examples of this self-identified nerdy disposition towards wine. For instance, Cecily (40s, producer in advertising), explained her interest in learning about wine by referring precisely to her overall tendencies to learn and “nerd out” on a variety of topics: “I like- because I’m a big nerd and I’m a big nerd about a lot of things, you know, everybody has something they’re nerdy about, wine is sort of one thing…” Connor (40s, copywriter) expressed a similar idea when he said:

I have kind of an academic bent to start out. I’ve moved on to other things, DIY electronics and that sort of thing, but it’s not uncommon for me to just have a point in my life where I’m interested in thing and I wanna find out as much as I can about it. And I’m not shy with school and tests and that sort of thing…

Like Cecily, Connor emphasized his penchant for in-depth learning about a variety of topics, including but not restricted just to wine. Connor also further described the meaning of an “academic bent” by referring to his comfort with the scholarly setting, stating that he is “not shy with school and tests”. Wine learning was thus associated with a studious tendency, and the capacity to be “academically” inclined, even though it was simultaneously mainly framed as a fun pastime by most participants (e.g., wine is a hobby).

More importantly, this eagerness to learn about wine was also often directly connected to the very complexity and opaqueness of the wine world. For example, Christine (20s, server) indicated, “I like [learning about wine] ‘cause it’s nerdy and you can find out weird stuff [laughs]”. Another participant, Carla (30s, graduate student) described her curiosity about wine in this way: “I just like to understand how things work, and when something’s obscure, I just
wanna get more information about it.” For these respondents, the “obscure” or “weird” parts of a topic – in this case, the world of wine – are precisely what drew them to push further their learning. Wine, because it offers multiple layers and areas of learning, fulfills the role of a “nerdy” topic for these knowledge-seeking respondents. Furthermore, participants’ self-descriptions as “nerds” appeared to be a way to tone down an interest in wine that could otherwise come across as simply a blatant pursuit of status, or even snobbery. By emphasizing their interest in pursuing knowledge more broadly, respondents recast their wine learning as a more “noble” intellectual pursuit rather than just crass social status seeking. In this way, respondents appeared to gloss over the social and class implications of their pursuit of wine appreciation by presenting their knowledge-seeking mostly as an individual, and even, naturally occurring personality trait (e.g., some people tend towards learning, some do not), and not a classed one. For example, Cecily justified her own self-admitted nerdy disposition by stating that, “everybody has something they are nerdy about”, and Corina (30s, graduate student) remarked, “I think I’m a naturally nerdy person…”. These types of statements suggest a naturalized view of knowledge pursuits, the desire to learn, and even, of the learning environment as a setting that is comfortable and accessible to all who wish to pursue a hobby or interest.

In short, respondents situated their learning about wine within a broader nerdy disposition that encompassed an overall curiosity and desire to pursue complex and “obscure” knowledge and learning on all sorts of topics. This generalized and enabling knowledge-seeking disposition underpins and enables participants’ ability to find wine both delicious and “interesting”. Furthermore, it provides the foundation for wine consumers to engage with cognitive, sensory
and status-motivated pleasures related to the formation of a taste for wine. In the next sections, I examine these different pleasure dimensions in more detail.

4.5.2 Engaging the mind with cognitive pleasures
The wine consumers I interviewed linked learning about wine to clearly “cognitive” pleasures that appealed directly to the mind and to acquiring cognitive knowledge, rather than to the senses or to developing sensory knowledge. Some of these cognitive pleasures appeared quite lofty, and even metaphysical. In contrast to the pleasures that focused more directly on the sensory appreciation of wine as a corollary of learning and taste formation (discussed in the next section), the cognitive pleasures described by participants appeared less embodied, and involved the intellectual pleasures of acquiring knowledge, of better understanding the complexity of wine as a cultural product, and of expanding one’s mind more generally. These cognitive pleasures clearly flowed from the participants’ overall disposition towards learning and knowledge acquisition. Being a “nerd” in a broad way, that is, loving to learn and to accumulate very specific knowledge on obscure topics, evidently enabled participants to experience and articulate the distinctly intellectual pleasures described in the quotes below.

In their interviews, participants often talked extensively about the enjoyment of accessing a complex and somewhat mysterious world when they spoke of learning more about wine. The immense body of knowledge on wine and its ever-expanding borders were mostly viewed not as intimidating deterrents, but as motivations to learn more and as sources of continued enjoyment. For example, Cassandra (50s, writer) described her long-standing interest in wine and its potentially endless knowledge pursuit in positive terms: “[my knowledge is] always expanding. There’s never, you know…I was writing a tasting note this morning and I learned that Zinfandel was originally a different grape name in Croatia, so. I’m always learning which is fun”.
Cassandra’s status as a perennial student of wine did not discourage her, nor did it make her feel inadequate. Rather, it appeared to spur her on towards more learning, which she framed as “fun” and thus enjoyable. The fact that learning about wine involves learning about a variety of topics was likewise portrayed by respondents as a source of pleasure, not intimidation. For example, Cathy (50s, homemaker), noted that wine is “quite complex, really, and it touches on so many different disciplines”, later concluding, “I think that makes it really fascinating”. Christine (20s, server) also explained her interest in learning about wine as related to the multiple dimensions of the wine world:

wine is… it’s an abyss [laughs] of stuff, really, all about it. Like it’s multi-faceted, is the easiest way to put it. There’s so many different levels of interest. It’s historical, it’s geographical, it’s geological…it’s culinary, it’s agricultural. Like there’s just…it’s not one thing. It’s not just wine. [my emphasis] … So, the fact that it was not just one, like vein of knowledge or interest, that there’s so many different ways to break off of it, was really what got me. That’s it’s international. And…there’s just so many…so many facets to it.

The multiple knowledge facets of wine that Christine enumerates here could appear daunting to many people, but for Christine, these facets are precisely what piqued her interest. The multiple layers of wine – the fact that “it’s not just wine”, as Christine aptly put it – makes wine “good to know”, and this is clearly a central source of pleasure for her. Thus, the very complexity of the world of wine, at times framed by participants as a barrier for some people to step into the world of wine, was simultaneously presented as the very reason for their own engagement with the world of wine and learning about wine. For Clément (30s, union advisor), the complexity of wine and the wine world were a central feature of wine consumers’ passion for learning about wine. As he put it, “…if I could describe it, people are passionate because it’s something that is complicated and that tastes good. There aren’t many things in life that are complicated and that taste good”. Carla (30s, student) similarly described her initial pull towards the world of wine as involving a fascination with the impenetrability of the world of wine:
I just wanted to try and penetrate through that…opaqueness, and you know, I peeked inside and then, I was very excited about what I saw, so, I was drawn to it because it had that kind of opaque curtain around it. So, I don’t know if that’s true for everyone, but I think that’s definitely a common element.

Participants also described drawing pleasure from pursuing knowledge on wine simply for knowledge’s sake, or for the sake of being more knowledgeable about something that interested them. For instance, Clément (30s, union advisor) described his enjoyment of wine learning as, “really for the pure pleasure of knowledge…Iof having a bit of a deeper understanding of this thing, of this area…” For Clair (30s, lecturer), learning about wine through wine tasting was certainly “for pleasure”, but as she further explained, “it’s also learning as much as you can for me about wine, and I think other people too”. Finally, Cecily (40s, producer in advertising) qualified her pursuit of wine knowledge in these terms as well, saying, “sometimes it’s knowledge for the sake of knowledge, and just enriching yourself, with possibly no need to pass it on to anyone else”. In these quotes, participants framed their learning about wine as at least partly motivated (and sustained) by their enjoyment of knowing and “enriching” themselves – a clear reference to their overall disposition towards knowledge acquisition. In other words, as individuals already predisposed to seeking knowledge and learning opportunities, respondents demonstrated very clearly that possessing a “nerdy habitus” further enabled their pursuit (and enjoyment) of detailed and specific knowledge about wine. Liking to learn in a broad way (and having the ability to pursue that learning on a host of topics, including wine), allowed respondents to find pleasure in these intellectual discoveries about wine.

Participants also drew a link between their learning of wine and the pleasure of connecting to a product (and topic of study) that ties together many different areas of interest, such as geography, history, culture and gastronomy – the multi-faceted character of wine learning that Christine
alludes to in her quote above. Pursuing wine knowledge involved connecting to culture, and to a sense of a broader “humanity” or human community, which participants found highly enjoyable. For Charlotte (50s, retired), her attraction to wine and learning about it could be related to “the interplay, the interaction and the complexity of the history of wine, and the history of humanity”, something she also viewed as representing “a more European culture”. Colleen (30s, trademark agent) also described finding pleasure in the broad interests she could explore through her interest in wine, saying, “I really enjoyed social studies in school and what not, so the more I learn, the more I’m like, wow, I need to really get up on geography, you know…”. For these respondents, learning about wine involved learning about a variety of other topics – history, geography, culture – but even more so, it could connect them as wine consumers to a broader humanity (albeit, a mostly “European” one). Indeed, Connor, who indicated that he viewed learning about wine as a “sort of a gateway to a greater understanding of…well, Western civilization, not to, not to sound too…too broad…”, also related his knowledge about wine to different forms of enjoyment that included a connection to a broader context of significance:

So…beyond saying, I like finding good wine, cheap, and I like being the clever guy in the crowd that people ask about wine, I like that there’s a greater relevance to it beyond just a drink.

In these quotes, Connor drew attention to wine’s “greater relevance” – it gave him access to “Western civilization”. Wine was not just a drink. It was something that allowed one to appear “clever” at parties – a feature discussed more below – but it also offered value, interest and pleasure to participants like Connor because of its overarching cultural and historical significance. Here again, participants’ fundamental disposition to seek out knowledge clearly enabled and reinforced finding pleasure in the broader cultural significance of a topic like wine.
Some participants framed the pleasure of being knowledgeable as a form of personal satisfaction or a sense of accomplishment, a pleasure that connected to the aforementioned pleasure of “knowledge for knowledge’s sake”. This personal satisfaction contrasted with the sense of accomplishment of “being the clever guy in the crowd”, like Connor mentioned – where one’s knowledge was displayed publicly for others to appreciate. Rather, this sense of accomplishment was enjoyed privately and did not necessarily involve direct social status benefits. Cyrus (40s, lawyer) described knowing about wine as “just a personal satisfaction” adding, “You have a glass a wine, and you know where it’s from, you know what it should taste like”. Cecily also expressed this idea when she said: “I find it really personally satisfying to be able to be in a position to properly enjoy it, to appreciate those efforts and that labour”. For both these respondents, the knowledge that allowed them to situate a given wine within its context (grape variety, type, terroir, winemaking techniques, etc) and understand it was personally gratifying, but it also appeared to work to enhance the overall sensory experience of the wine for them. In other words, there was a dialectic and mutually reinforcing relationship between cognitive elements (knowing where a wine comes from, how it was made, etc) and sensory elements (being able to compare its taste to the knowledge you have of its “typical” taste, appreciating the “efforts and labour” through the sensations you obtain when drinking wine) that was reflected in participants’ descriptions of the way wine knowledge worked for them. This mind-body dialectic ran through many of participants’ narratives, appearing sometimes more saliently in specific quotes. In the next section, I examine more closely the sensory pleasures involved with knowing about and drinking new wines, where embodied sensations appeared more prominently, and explore how these sensory pleasures also related to the “nerdy” disposition.
4.5.3 Sensory pleasures: integral to wine education

The sensory pleasures of learning about wine emerged as a dominant theme in interviews. Wine appreciation, although mostly framed as a status pursuit in the sociological literature on taste, emerged as an intensely *sensory* activity in my interviews. Predictably, several participants made the connection between the inherent enjoyment of drinking wine (e.g., wine is delicious) with learning about wine. But participants also went beyond this basic idea of wine as a tasty drink, and developed this connection between wine and sensory pleasures by describing an array of different embodied pleasures associated with wine learning. These pleasures included the overall enhancement of the sensory appreciation of wine that came with a more developed and honed knowledge of wine. In other words, the sensory enjoyment of wine for respondents (e.g., the embodied pleasure of sensing the good taste of a glass of wine) could be augmented as a sensory pleasure through an increased knowledge of wine. Thus, for participants, learning and accumulating more knowledge about wine meant more sensory enjoyment of wine, showing clearly how the predisposition towards learning and being “nerdy” enabled the development of an array of more pleasurable sensory wine experiences.

First, participants connected learning about wine with some of the pure sensory pleasures that are expected from drinking wine, for example the appeal of wine as an established pleasurable product, as well as the enhanced enjoyment of foods. Several participants mentioned the inherent pleasure of drinking wine as a reason for engaging with wine and seeking to learn more about it. In this way, wine was brought back to its purely hedonic character. Respondents described wine drinking as pleasurable, fun, enjoyable to taste, and even, as imbued with romanticism, peacefulness and tranquility. Not only was wine described as “an alcoholic beverage that’s fun” (Cassandra, 50s, writer) and a “nice simple thing to drink” (Cathy, 50s, home caregiver), but
learning about this already pleasant drink was further linked to an enhanced enjoyment of the actual taste of wine. For example, Connor (40s, copywriter) summed up this idea when he said that, “well, gaining a greater appreciation, or a greater understanding, leads to a greater appreciation. So the more I know, the more I enjoy it”. Several participants reiterated this theme, connecting their evolving sensory palate to their expanding knowledge on wine. Caitlin (20s, manager of fitness studio), one of the more novice wine consumers I interviewed, acknowledged that even her beginner knowledge about wine “makes the wine more enjoyable too, now that I actually have tasted ones that I really, really like”. Christopher (20s, student) agreed, stating that, “sometimes people’s wanting to look into wine is kind of pleasure-driven, they just want to enjoy wine more, and they think they can do more [enjoying] by learning about it”.

In discussing this relationship between an increased wine appreciation and their wine education, respondents frequently talked about how better knowledge of wines contributed to enhancing their ability to choose wines that they would enjoy. Here again, a disposition towards knowledge-driven learning about wine appeared to facilitate and heighten the sensorially enjoyable experiences of drinking wine. For Charlotte (50s, retired), her extensive learning about wine was first and foremost, “for my enjoyment”, but as she elaborated next, it was also about making choices that would please her: “I feel better armed to go in and make decisions and choose wines that are…to my liking. I’m not lost. I’m not shopping like my mother who buys ‘cause it’s got a pretty label [laughs]”. In this quote, Charlotte saw her knowledge of wines as a tool to better navigate her choices at the wine store. She did not have to rely on “pretty labels” as her knowledge of both wine and her own taste worked together to allow her to make judicious choices. Ultimately, the reason her knowledge was useful was because it fed her enjoyment of
wine drinking, which referred to the sensory enjoyment she received from drinking wine she liked.

Carla (30s, student) also explained what she drew from knowing more about wine in similar terms, saying that: “[my knowledge of wine] helps make better decisions…I’m getting better at picking things that I’m going to like, which I wasn’t doing before. And that was limiting how much I actually enjoyed wine”. For Corina (30s, student), it was a similar idea: “I think that…now that I know more about wine…I have the power to enjoy things more [my emphasis]. And I don’t just mean, pay more attention or anything like that, I mean avoid things that I don’t like.” Both these quotes demonstrate how respondents defined better choices as choices that corresponded to an enhanced enjoyment of wine. As Carla and Corina identified, making better decisions did not mean choosing critically-acclaimed wines or finding good value for money, rather it was about selecting wines that were pleasurable to their palate, while avoiding ones that tasted unpleasant to them. For these participants, knowing more about wine contributed to understanding one’s own tastes, and this better understanding was intertwined with the sensory pleasures of experiencing the taste of wine.

Lastly, some respondents related their interest in learning about wine to their love of culinary pleasures. For these participants, the experience of eating could be enriched as a result of increased knowledge about wine, and food and wine pairings in particular. For example, Corina (30s, student) indicated, “you can make meals more delicious if you know what to pair with them wine-wise” and “you can make choices that are really good, and [food and wine will] be both better”. Later, Corina further elaborated on her own increased knowledge of food and wine pairings, saying that, “I feel more often than not now, I can make both [food and wine] better.
And then that just enhances pleasure”. Cecily (40s, producer in advertising) also expressed this idea of making food better through knowledge of wine when she explained why people seek to learn about wine, saying how wine “just creates a more sort of, deeper enjoyment of anything you eat”. In these quotes, the idea that a meal was greatly improved through an astute choice of wine, demonstrated how practices involving the mind (possessing sufficient and appropriate knowledge about food and wine pairings) could intensify and improve embodied gustatory practices of consumption. In the next section, I look at pleasures that focused on status, and that lie at the intersection of the mind-body dialectic.

4.5.4 Dancing around status pleasures and cultural sophistication

A key area of enjoyment developed by respondents in their interviews was the idea that knowing about wine involved the pleasure of acquiring a cultural competence that was socially recognized, and further, being able to demonstrate and display that competence to others. These status pleasures involved both mind and body pleasures: participants expressed feeling good about being socially recognized and valued, and also engaged in important cognitive identity work when they talked about thinking of themselves as important and sophisticated. Here, participants talked openly about what sociologists label “cultural capital”, and can be understood as forms of cultural knowledge that can be used for social standing and mobility. The pleasures derived from displaying the cultural capital that comes from wine knowledge were thus presented as a corollary of participants’ wine education. For example, when Charles (30s, researcher) described what he enjoyed about his wine knowledge, he mentioned how “part of it is a, just a sense of…cultural accomplishment, for lack of a better word. Just a sense of
knowing…about something that is part of your culture\textsuperscript{25}”. This sense of cultural accomplishment differed from the personal accomplishment discussed earlier, because it involved social and cultural recognition, and not just the satisfied feeling of self-realization. Charles later connected his enjoyment of the “cultural accomplishment” that was wine learning directly to class, saying:

I think it can be seen sometimes as a representation of a certain class standing…just like people who know about opera, or people who know about classical music, you know…are seen to know about things that’s representative of a particular class, and a particular status in society. I think that’s true for—I think that’s appealing for a lot of people.

In this quote, Charles distances himself from the desire to belong to a particular, higher class position by deflecting the appeal of status to “a lot of people” and not just to himself. At the same time, his reflection and general ambivalence also demonstrate the type of nuanced moral judgments that were made by respondents about the pursuit of cultural activities like wine, opera or classical music appreciation. Respondents described morally superior and loftier reasons for pursuing “cultural competences” like wine appreciation in terms of broader cultural and intellectual interests (e.g., “to know about something that is part of your culture”). As self-identified “nerds” and knowledge-seekers, respondents appeared to find it easier to admit to intellectually and culturally motivated reasons for pursuing wine learning. By contrast, the appeal of class positions and status were framed as considerably less noble reasons for engaging in the cultural practice of wine appreciation, even though respondents were well aware of the appeal (and potential social benefits) of a wine education. Participants thus justified their pursuit of wine education using an intellectual “self-betterment” reasoning rather than emphasizing the

\textsuperscript{25} Interview participants were mostly white Canadians of European descent. Overall, the more general term of “culture” appeared to reference European or Western culture.
less admissible pleasures of pursuing a clearly classed hobby, and even, of being viewed as a snob.

The undercurrents of class distinctions were evident throughout the discussion of learning about wine for the pleasure of acquiring cultural skill and competence. For example, Cathy indicated, “I do enjoy understanding a little bit about [wine]…it’s a competence sort of thing”, further specifying that knowing about wine is part of knowing about “good – not necessarily expensive – but good [things], like good coffee, well prepared, good food…a nice bakery, fresh vegetables, nice wine”. She concluded by indicating that recognizing these products (coffee, food, wine, etc) as “good” was once again “just part of that whole competence thing for me”. The idea of competence in Cathy’s quotes reflected Charles’ discussion of cultural accomplishment: in both cases, these respondents demonstrated their awareness of hierarchies within cultural practices and products, and also that wine appreciation and knowledge, although definitely personally enjoyable for a number of reasons, was also a form of cultural capital that could be used in the game of social status.

Learning about wine also involved the pleasures of appearing knowledgeable, cultured and sophisticated in social situations (e.g., for the benefit of showing off to others, and not just to feel confident in one’s own cultural competence). This idea of sophistication came across as another way of talking about cultural capital, and several participants described people’s engagement (including their own) as motivated by the sophisticated aura of wine appreciation. Interestingly, several participants wavered between distancing themselves from pursuing this sophistication outright, and admitting to actually enjoying this aspect of the wine world; this wavering again demonstrated an ambivalence towards the perception of the sophisticated, classed side of wine
appreciation. For example, in Chelsea’s (20s, lawyer) explanation of people’s motivation for learning about wine, she indicated: “I think people like to drink it, but I think people sort of have this idea that drinking wine is sophisticated and if I learn more about it, I will be more sophisticated? I think that that would be mostly the motivation. Yeah. That’s it! Throwing it right out there”. Chelsea was tentative in her suggestion that sophistication is a primary motivator for people’s interest in learning about wine, even though she eventually admitted to “throwing it right out there”, indicating that she was aware that this points to a perhaps less honourable reason for learning about wine because it involved a deliberate social status strategy. Her ambivalence towards the sophistication of wine appreciation was later repeated in her interview when she explained her own motivations for learning about wine, saying: “I mean, I think it’s a combination for me…I like that it sort of gives you more of a sophistication, or even if it’s not, it’s obviously not…true, but maybe, I don’t know, it gives you sort of that kind of…perspective”. Here, Chelsea framed her pursuit of wine knowledge in terms of sophistication, but simultaneously discredited the element of refinement that wine knowledge might provide by declaring that it did not really provide true sophistication.

Several other participants not only recognized that wine knowledge “shows a level of refinement and sophistication” (Cameron 30s, mutual fund officer) or that “it seemed sophisticated” (Callie, 40s, RMT-acupuncturist), but also expressed their contradictory relationship with this attribute of wine learning, like Chelsea. Colin (30s, project manager) repeated several times that he enjoyed the “sophistication aspect of [wine]” and related this pleasure to his desire to learn more about wine, but he also acknowledged that this pull of the “classiness” of wine appreciation “sounds so horrible to say” – an almost apologetic response to this aspect of his engagement with wine learning. By contrast, Cole (40s, consultant) appeared much more candid about his delight in the
refinement of the wine world, and squarely situated his motivation for learning about wine in the realms of class and status. As Cole described, his initial draw to learn about wine came about because:

[wine] is one of a very few things that is, in our society, is clearly a, a mark of sophistication…for a gentleman particularly, you have to know about clothes, you have to know about wine, you have to know about golf, you have to know about bridge…It’s, so it’s sort of, it’s one of those things where, when I was a teenager, it was sort of in the back of my mind, that if I wanted to be a successful, upper middle-class person – which, when I was 15, I was interested in, I’m no longer that interested in it – but it was very much, yeah, it was sort of one of those things that marked out people who were of a certain social class, and of a certain level of refinement, right?

Cole repeatedly expressed this idea that his knowledge of wine “enables me to pass through those sorts of circles”, allowing him to feel comfortable even among the “rich poncy tools” he went to school with. He drew satisfaction and pleasure from this ability to navigate social situations where wine knowledge gave him privilege and cultural ascendency, for example when he described a family dinner at a restaurant where he ordered a less expensive, but “interesting” (e.g., more obscure, less commercial) wine:

I’d signaled to the waiter without saying anything that all of a sudden, I was savvy and I knew what I was talking about, right? And so, we got treated differently the rest of the evening because of that I think. And so there are, uh, I very much appreciate being able to do that [laughs]

In these quotes, wine knowledge emerged as a form of cultural capital that provided Cole with a pleasurable feeling of being able to mingle with elites on an equal footing, even if implicitly, he did not appear to consider himself to be a full member of “those sorts of circles”. Yet even Cole’s frank appreciation of the pleasures he derived from appearing sophisticated and cultured through his wine knowledge were not without ambivalence for him. As he recognized, “I do try to keep a lid on [expressing my wine knowledge] every now and then”, explaining that he did not want to tip over and be considered a wine snob. As he astutely pointed out, “I wanna know
which fork to use, but on another level, I’m appalled that I have to know about it
[laughing]…does that make sense?”.

4.6 Discussion and conclusion: The intersecting pleasures of mind, body, and social status
Throughout the three categories of pleasures described above, wine consumers showcased how both mind and body are connected to learning about wine and the subsequent enhancement of their experience drinking wine. At times, participants emphasized the embodied sensory pleasures associated with wine learning, and at other times, they drew out the cognitive pleasures derived from learning about wine. When describing status pleasures, participants showed clear examples of how they drew on both the mind and the body. Respondents could feel good about being socially appreciated because of their wine knowledge, and they also found pleasure in thinking of themselves as belonging to the cognitive categories of the “cultured” and “sophisticated” as a result of their wine learning. In my analysis, I separate each of the three pleasures to better show how they operate individually and associate them to the mind (cognitive pleasures), the body (sensory pleasures), or both mind-body (status pleasures). In effect, within these three categories of pleasures, there is continuous overlap and interaction between mind and body, with each reinforcing the other.

A particularly clear example of this mind-body dialectic associated with learning about wine emerged when respondents discussed discovering and developing openness to different wines. Feeding one’s intellectual curiosity (i.e., developing knowledge) of different wines – how they are produced and where they come from, for example – appeared to contribute and further develop participants’ sensory curiosity about the taste of unfamiliar wines. Being open to trying new wines clearly flowed from participants’ overall nerdy disposition, since it directly involved a
curiosity and thus, an interest in learning about what is new and unknown. Yet, this openness evidently also drew on the body as it implied expanding taste in the sensorial sense. Thus, discovering new wines could mean applying knowledge about wines to obtain even broader knowledge about things like varietals, terroir and so on, but it could also mean utilizing that knowledge to expand one’s taste experiences and palate. Knowing more about certain wines from specific regions encouraged participants to branch out and try (i.e., taste) other wines from those regions. In this respect, knowledge and taste worked in tandem to provide wine consumers with a level of confidence that allowed them to be more open to the risk of purchasing unknown wines, and to also draw pleasure from this type of discovery and risk-taking. Indeed, an open disposition towards wines and the ability to discover new and different tastes was so fused to knowledge in the interviews that by contrast, people who were viewed as less exploratory in their wine choices – those that tended to reach for the same wines out of habit for instance – were understood by participants as less knowledgeable, less open (because lacking the knowledge to explore new tastes), and less sophisticated consumers.

The case of wine provides a rich terrain for exploring how mind and body interact to provide the conditions for developing and further sustaining a cultural practice. As I argue in the introduction to this paper, wine appreciation is primarily a knowledge-driven pursuit that, because of its complexity (Woodward 2017) and multiple layers, is not readily accessible or even “likeable” to many when it is first practiced (Karpik 2010; Rössel, Schenk, and Eppler 2016: 4-5; Sternsdorff Cisterna 2014: 100). Developing an interest in wine, learning about it and drinking it also involve clear and undeniable embodied sensory elements. As scholars of embodied knowledge and visceral pleasures like Carolan (2008, 2009, 2015) and Hayes-Conroy and Hayes-Conroy (2008, 2010) emphasize, practices “take” because they are appealing to embodied sensations
(and pleasures), and resonate at that embodied level (Soper 2007, 2008). This is especially the case when examining practices that are not necessarily “easy” to adopt – like developing a taste for alternative, fairly produced food that is not obviously “delicious”, versus sugary or salty industrially-made foods that saturate one’s taste buds (Carolan 2015).

The cognitive disposition that emerges from my analysis, and that is the foundation for engagement with wine learning, demonstrates the key role played by cognition in cultivating cultural practices and tastes. One needs to be “nerdy” – that is, one needs to love learning and accumulating specific knowledge about a variety of things – to fully engage with and pursue pleasures and knowledge that relate to the mind, and to the body. What I term a “nerdy disposition” – presented here as an enabling element for the further engagement of wine consumers – is also applicable to other cultural practices that involve taste acquisition and formation. A thirst for knowing, and for accumulating at times very detailed information, tends to create suitable conditions for pursuing and finding pleasure in different forms of cognitive, sensory and status experiences, like knowing what something should taste like, recognizing the sensory characteristics of a wine, or knowing things that few would know, for example. Indeed, wine consumers, like foodies and other cultural consumers (Cappeliez and Johnston 2013; Johnston and Baumann 2015; Holt 1998), I argue, should be viewed as pursuing types of knowledge that are thought-provoking, but also sensorially captivating. Thus, the knowledge-seeking disposition of foodies (Cappeliez and Johnston 2013; Johnston and Baumann 2015) and cultural connoisseurs more broadly (Holt 1998) goes beyond just the search for bookish knowledge – cultural connoisseurs also seek out sensorial experiences, and these must therefore also be considered equally fundamental to knowledge acquisition.
Acquiring and developing taste for cultural practices like wine appreciation is thus predicated on engaging the dialectic between body and mind through a mixture of cognitive, sensory and status pleasures. As I show, these pleasures, and the forms of knowledge they imply, demonstrate that taste is neither motivated only by distinction, nor simply by physical pleasure impulses or intellectual pursuits, but by all three. In this respect, taste can be viewed as something that can be learned and acquired (i.e., it is not a “given”), but it is also sustained by different pleasures that are ultimately classed. Moreover, the disposition towards knowledge that underlies the availability and access to these pleasures must also be viewed as classed. In other words, although aspects of a cultural practice – like wine’s titillating taste, or opera’s transporting sounds – appear to make these practices inherently attractive, it is clear that the sensory and embodied experiences of a given practice are equally the result of particular cultural and social contexts.

In their narratives, participants demonstrated several clear strategies aimed at distancing themselves (and their pursuit of wine learning) from overt snobbery. In a post-snobbery context of omnivorous cultural consumption (Bennett, et al. 1999; Johnston and Baumann 2015; Ollivier 2008; Peterson and Kern 1996; Warde et al. 2008), wine consumers exhibited different ways of navigating and justifying their interest in wine, a cultural practice often associated with distinction and snobbery. Whereas the two first categories of pleasures – cognitive and embodied – appeared less fraught, emerging as relatively “honourable” reasons for enjoying learning about wine (e.g., for fun, to develop one’s intellect), the desire for status was discussed very ambivalently. Status pleasures and motivations appeared much more difficult to reconcile with participants’ identities in an omnivorous cultural age, a contradiction underscored by Jarness and Friedman (2016) in recent work. Moreover, in describing their interest in wine as part of a
broader enjoyment of learning and a “nerdy” disposition towards multiple topics, wine consumers were effectively able to mask snobbery, yet still assert distinction. In “learning” and being “curious” about many things wine consumers could gloss over the classed and snobby dimensions of their interest in wine because they were recasting this interest as a quest for expanding knowledge in a broader way, or as the result of their own inquisitiveness.

In examining the embodied aspects of learning to taste wine, my study contributes to a growing and promising field in cultural sociology that seeks to reincorporate the materiality of the body and embodied experiences into research on taste and consumption (Benzecry 2009, 2011; Benzecry and Collins 2014; Cerulo 2015, 2018; Hennion 2001; Schwarz 2013; Teil and Hennion 2004; Warde and Martens 2000). Even though my study is squarely situated in the discursive realm – participants clearly provide reflexive accounts of their wine learning in their interviews – the embodied and sensory aspects of learning to taste surfaced spontaneously and prominently in responses. Wine may be viewed as a particular case, because it requires both cognitive and sensory engagement at relatively high and obvious levels. Yet, I suggest that this relationship between mind and body, and the pleasures it entails, are important for understanding taste acquisition and development in other realms, as well as cultural consumption at a broader level. Through my analysis, I connect Bourdieu’s focus on status with recent research that emphasizes practice26 in cultural consumption (Benzecry 2009, 2011; Benzecry and Collins 2014; Gherardi 2009; Hennion 2001; Shapin 2012a; Teil and Hennion 2004; Warde 2014, 2016) – and make the

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case that status-seeking and practice are not opposed as Benzecry (2009, 2011) and Benzecry and Collins (2014) argue, but rather mutually reinforcing. In this respect, future research on taste and consumption should aim to pay attention not just to what people think or feel about consumption, but how both thinking and feeling intersect and reinforce each other, and the practices they run through.
Chapter 5
Classifying wine consumers: Towards a typology of “good” consumers for complex products

5

Abstract

In a New World wine context of emerging wine connoisseurship and nascent wine knowledge, how do wine producers evaluate and understand the ideal consumer for their product? To get at this question, this article uses interviews with wine experts and field observations at wineries, wine events and wine classes in Ontario, Canada to propose a typology that reflects three key dimensions: 1) spending, 2) tasting, and 3) knowledge. These main dimensions of producers’ ideal consumer suggest the norms and conventions of good taste that are important to producers. Through this typology, this study thus draws attention to the important role played by producers in creating norms and conventions of good taste. Further, my analysis contributes to better scholarly understanding of the contours of taste hierarchies in times of shifting cultural standards and trends of cultural democratization, alongside continued patterns of distinction and cultural hierarchy.

5.1 Introduction

Wine is a complex and challenging product that requires some taste education to appreciate and enjoy. As Karpik (2010) argues, wine is a singular product that circulates in a knowledge-based economy. This means that the hierarchies in the wine world rest on knowledge of a variety of elements that aim to differentiate wines, but also, on the ability to classify and compare these very unique products in terms of terroir\(^{27}\), taste, appellation systems/labels of quality, varietals and production techniques (barrel programs, length of ageing, additives or lack thereof, etc). Consequently, skills in many areas of competence are needed to navigate the wine world competently and confidently (Karpik 2010; Rössel, Schenk and Eppler 2016: 4-5; Sternsdorff Cisterna 2014: 100). But, which skills are considered most legitimate and convincing to wine

\(^{27}\) Often translated as “the taste of place (Trubek 2008), terroir refers to the historical, cultural and material components of place that impart tangible distinguishing features to a food or drink, like wine.
experts28? More broadly, who do wine experts consider to be the “ideal” consumer of quality wine?

In this paper, I examine winemakers and cultural intermediaries’ conceptions of the ideal wine consumer with the goal of better understanding the aesthetic principles and ideas of good taste that wine experts favour, and how these suggest the outlines of producer-oriented taste hierarchies in times of changing cultural standards and overall cultural democratization. Work in cultural sociology has amply discussed and demonstrated how taste hierarchies are an important component of cultural fields (Bourdieu 1984; Ferguson 1998; Lamont and Fournier 1992). More recently, work on omnivorousness in various artistic and cultural fields has shown that taste hierarchies are shifting, as omnivorous tastes erode the boundaries of old hierarchies, while maintaining certain forms of status hierarchies (Bennett, Emmison, and Frow 1999; Johnston and Baumann 2015; Ollivier 2008; Peterson and Kern 1996; Warde and Gayo-Cal 2009; Warde, Wright, and Gayo-Cal 2008). Within this context of cultural democratization, all participants in the world of wine are aware of the existence of taste hierarchies (e.g., there are bad, average, good, better and superior wines), but the shape and overall organization of these taste hierarchies may not always be clearly defined, especially because new knowledge and ideas of good taste frequently destabilize these taste hierarchies (Fitzmaurice 2017; Karpik 2010; Smith Maguire 2016).

28 I use the term “wine experts” to mean the different wine actors who hold positions of expertise in the field of wine, such as winemakers and cultural intermediaries like sommeliers, wine writers and wine educators. These wine experts also produce and circulate discourse and knowledge about wine.
Sociological studies of taste and cultural consumption have demonstrated the wide-ranging and fundamental impacts of taste practices, as well as their contested nature (Bourdieu 1984; Bennett et al. 2009; Holt 1998; Lamont and Fournier 1992; see also Shapin 2012b on the socio-historical dimensions of the taste of wine). Yet, as several authors note, sociologists know far less about how norms of “good taste” emerge, or how “shared understandings” around taste are produced and developed (Smith Maguire 2016; Warde 2014). In this study, I examine how wine producers evaluate and understand the ideal consumer by analyzing the main dimensions of consumer attitudes and behaviours they describe. These main dimensions of the ideal consumer suggest some of the aesthetic principles and taste standards wine experts uphold. Recent research on cultural consumption has shifted some attention back onto the role of cultural intermediaries (Childress 2017; Cronin 2004; Smith Maguire and Matthews 2012, following Bourdieu 1984, 1996) in cultivating and negotiating the norms of good consumption and taste. Along with cultural intermediaries, it is also important to consider how the producers of cultural goods construct their ideal consumer, and through this, create and reproduce their own ideas of good taste. Indeed, the notions of idealized consumption and the aesthetic preferences that emerge from the production side of markets – that is, from producers and cultural intermediaries – do not always align with consumer preferences, or their dislikes. In markets for speciality or artisanal foods and drinks, producers’ aesthetic preferences may even explicitly reject consumer tastes for likeable products like drinkable wines and sweeter chocolate, even when catering to these tastes could potentially be more lucrative overall for their businesses (Smith Maguire 2015, 2018; Terrio 2000). These conflicting tendencies suggest that interest in the production side of markets

29 See also Lamont (2012) and her call to understand the ways valuation and evaluation practices contribute to the construction of taste conventions.
– and specifically, how producers conceptualize and understand their ideal consumer – can be especially significant for understanding how conventions of taste emerge and are developed in particular markets, like the market for fine wine (Smith Maguire 2015; 2018).

Using interviews with 16 wine experts, discourse analysis of 17 wine industry websites, and field observations at wineries, wine events and wine classes in Ontario, Canada, I propose a typology that reflects three key dimensions of consumer behaviours and attitudes that involve spending, taste and knowledge. These dimensions contribute to our understanding of wine experts’ conceptions of the ideal consumer for quality wine in a context of emerging wine connoisseurship and nascent wine knowledge. This typology, and the attributes of the ideal consumer that it identifies, suggest the key norms and conventions of good taste in the world of wine that wine experts consider important for their emerging market. By examining wine experts’ views of consumers (and the ideas about good taste that they imply), we can further understand the norms and conventions that underlie, support and reproduce taste hierarchies (Smith Maguire 2016). Looking at wine experts’ perceptions of consumers also draws attention to the way ideas about good taste are formulated by producers (and not just consumers). More broadly, it contributes to better understanding the contours of these hierarchies in times of shifting cultural standards and trends in cultural democratization, alongside continued patterns of cultural distinction and hierarchy.

5.2 Shifting taste hierarchies in the wine world

In the last few decades, cultural sociologists have moved away from more classically Bourdieusian understandings of taste hierarchies as rigidly organized around highbrow and lowbrow tastes (Bourdieu 1984), and begun to consider taste in more fluid and shifting ways (Bennett et al. 1999; Johnston and Baumann 2015; Ollivier 2008; Peterson and Kern 1996;
Warde and Gayo-Cal 2009; Warde et al. 2008). Whereas good taste was once associated mostly with elite cultural objects and practices, today, the meaning of good taste also includes select popular cultural objects and practices, as the boundaries around the meanings of good taste loosen. The snobby restaurant critic à la Anton Ego from the movie *Ratatouille* is out, and the omnivorous culture vulture who enjoys edgy, intellectual modern art on the same day she brunches at an old-school diner, is in. Research on omnivorousness and the democratization of taste has thus demonstrated that status hierarchies linked to taste are being challenged through cultural practices like eating authentic and exotic foods (Cappeliez and Johnston 2013; Johnston and Baumann 2015; Oleschuk 2017), or listening to classical music and blues (Peterson and Kern 1996).

In the wine world, evidence of these shifting dynamics of taste hierarchies has also emerged (Fitzmaurice 2017; Fourcade 2012; Garcia-Parpet 2008, 2011; Howland 2013; Voronov, De Clercq, and Hinings 2013; Smith Maguire 2016). For example, the work of Jennifer Smith Maguire (2016) on logics of taste in the wine world demonstrates these changing boundaries of taste, as New World wines begin to be recognized as legitimate, high quality wines that are comparable to Old World wines. In her study of well-known wine publications *Wine Spectator* and *Decanter*, Smith Maguire shows how the “Old World/New World” distinction between wines is diminishing. In particular, Smith Maguire points to a democratization of the use of terroir, a French term that connotes the influence of place on the characteristics and overall quality of a wine. While this term was once applied precisely to distinguish Old World from New World, Smith Maguire (2016) finds that the concept of terroir has broadened so that New World wines may also lay claim to it. At the same time, differences persist in terms of the terroir elements that are applicable to and used by Old World versus New World wine regions (see also
Smith Maguire discusses how New World references to terroir consistently point to a traditional idea of terroir that is largely reliant on established notions of French terroir and winemaking. In other words, New World wines depend on “external validation” that is still deeply rooted in the legitimacy of European winemaking culture (Smith Maguire 2016). Similar dynamics are at play in Fitzmaurice’s (2017) analysis of rosé wine’s reinvention as a wine of quality and good taste. As Fitzmaurice (2017) demonstrates, wine critics have recently recast rosé as a reputable, quality wine by reinserting rosé into existing structural categories that congregate around Old World production methods and tastes (and away from New World styles and flavours). Similarly, Voronov et al. (2013) find a prevailing need amongst Ontario wineries to conform to the global norms of terroir winemaking in order to demonstrate local distinctiveness, and achieve legitimate status in the wine world in their study of the Ontario wine industry. As the authors emphasize, this apparent loosening of winemaking standards of terroir – a type of democratization and globalization of the norms of terroir to include New World winemaking regions – actually “implies adopting a philosophy and a set of practices that are rooted in a foreign [e.g., global, not domestic] socio-cultural context” (Voronov et al. 2013: 634).

Smith Maguire (2016), Fitzmaurice (2017) and Voronov et al. (2013) all offer strong examples of the coexistence of a democratization of tastes alongside continued patterns of distinction that rely on maintaining the Old World as a reference point. Because the wine world remains very stratified and conservative (Fitzmaurice 2017; Fourcade 2012; Karpik 2010; Smith Maguire 2016), it provides an interesting entry point into the study of this tension between the democratic impulses of changing taste boundaries and the continued undercurrents of distinction. As the broader case of wine shows, hierarchies and status symbols persist, but as Smith Maguire’s (2016) work demonstrates in particular, they have become harder to identify clearly and easily.
Like Smith Maguire (2013, 2015, 2016, 2018), I am interested in looking at the production side of market relations in the world of wine, and specifically, examining how wine experts (e.g., winemakers and cultural intermediaries) construct their ideal consumers using their own specific aesthetic principles. As Smith Maguire (2015, 2018) finds in her study of the natural wine market, producers do not always orient their products with their consumers/audiences’ tastes in mind. In this respect, they do not automatically seek to produce or feature products that will necessarily please the most people or produce the most sales. Wine experts sometimes pursue aesthetic goals that align first and foremost with their own and their peers’ shared values and ideals of “good” wine production, in parallel with those that support the status and legitimation they seek in the world of wine, and then proceed to locate and mobilize consumers who will appreciate their efforts (Smith Maguire 2015). Finding this audience of knowledgeable and appreciative consumers can also entail actively developing people’s palates for wines that may not be immediately pleasing to them. To contextualize this question of consumer socialization and taste education, I turn to research that examines how people learn to understand the taste hierarchies of artisanal and value-added foods and drinks and to appreciate these sometimes challenging goods.

5.3 Developing palates for “challenging” consumer goods

Scholars interested in the production and consumption of artisanal and value-added foods and drinks have raised the question of how to create an audience of consumers who can appreciate these less industrially produced goods. There are potential barriers to consumers when it comes to artisanal foods and drinks. For example, cheeses may be funkier than one is used to (Paxson 2010b), or apples may be misshapen, small or even downright “ugly” (Jordan 2015). In short, artisanal products’ tastes and appearances may be far from uniform, their cost is often prohibitive, and their moral or ethical “goodness” can be undetectable at first glance. In this
context, many scholars of artisanal and alternative food production and consumption have highlighted the need for taste education and the development of consumers’ palates for goods that are not immediately enjoyable or recognisable, in short, for what can be termed “challenging” consumer goods (Carolan 2015; Jordan 2007; Leynse 2006; Meneley 2004; Ocejo 2014; Paxson 2010b, 2012; Terrio 2000).

In her study of the artisan cheese movement in the United States, Paxson (2010b) evokes producers’ difficulties in conveying the specific (and added) value and character of their cheeses to potential customers, whose tastes may be more attuned to standardized and predictable industrial products. As Paxson (2010b) further observes, even within France, often viewed as offering a robust culture of artisanal production and consumption, cheese makers “do not expect ‘people off the street’ to taste terroir” (149). In short, French producers also recognize the need to teach consumers to taste specific characteristics in artisanal products, including the taste of terroir. Similarly, Terrio’s (2000) work on chocolate details how producers in France worked to shift French consumers’ tastes away from the well-liked, but less sophisticated milk chocolate, and towards the less popular, but more highly valued dark chocolate. Through this case, Terrio shows how a product that was not immediately perceived as delicious by consumers (e.g., a dark, bitter chocolate) eventually became recognized as the better product through an intentional process of consumer education involving chocolatiers and other tastemakers.

As these studies show, consumers must therefore be taught to become “good” tasters of complex and less standardized foods like artisanal cheeses (Paxson 2012: 154-155), different cuts and types of meat (Ocejo 2014), place-based/local foods (Leynse 2006), or sustainable, less processed foods (Carolan 2015; Hayes-Conroy and Hayes-Conroy 2008; Pietrykowski 2004:
Furthermore, and as Paxson (2012) also highlights, educating people to become “good” consumers of these foods also means creating an audience who can recognize and value differences within products like artisanal cheeses. Connoisseurship (e.g., becoming a “good” consumer) is therefore connected to “learning to isolate and identify particular flavours” and “cultivate taste preferences that signal a trained palate” (Paxson 2012: 192). In short, it has to do with taste education, and what Lahne, Trubek, and Pelchat (2014) term a “learned practice of connoisseurship” (13).

Because of their roles in producing and mediating complex products in the world of wine, producers and cultural intermediaries are confronted with questions regarding taste and the ideal, “good” consumers of their products at a very practical, everyday level (Smith Maguire 2018). As the research cited here suggests, producers and cultural intermediaries play an important role defining the principles of certain new tastes (e.g., for unpasteurized cheeses, or for dark and bitter chocolate), and attempting to shape or identify the appropriate audiences for these products that correspond to their ideas of good taste (Paxson 2010b, 2012; Terrio 2000). Given this, what attributes of the “good” consumer do wine producers and cultural intermediaries recognize and uphold? What do they use as a foil to the “good” consumer in order to identify less valued consumer characteristics? And what do these overall perceptions of the ideal consumer tell us about wine experts’ own ideas of good taste (e.g., the aesthetic principles they favour), and the shapes of taste hierarchies they suggest?

5.4 Data and methods
This paper draws on 16 semi-structured interviews with wine experts from Niagara and Toronto, Canada, participant observation in wine producing and consuming contexts (wineries, events, festivals, tastings and courses in Niagara and Toronto), as well as discourse analysis of 17 wine
industry websites. As part of a larger project that compared the uses of terroir in a French and a Canadian wine region, I examined the Niagara Peninsula winemaking region in Ontario as my Canadian case. I chose the Niagara Peninsula because it is one of the most established winemaking regions and the “largest and most diverse Viticultural Area” (VQA 2017) in Canada. I visited the Niagara area to observe and interview key players in the Niagara wine world during four research trips that lasted between one to four days each. Along with six winemakers in Niagara, I interviewed ten participants I categorize as “cultural intermediaries”. These included wine marketers/sellers, writers, educators and regulators, as well as sommeliers. I chose to interview cultural intermediaries because of their role in classification and legitimation in the world of wine, as well as their position at the interface of the production and consumption spheres (Fitzmaurice 2017; Smith Maguire and Lim 2015). Like Smith Maguire (2015: 2-3), I consider winemakers and cultural intermediaries to be part of the production sphere in the wine world. Details on the individuals included in my study and the websites analyzed can be found in Tables 2 (only Niagara and Toronto participants) and 3 (only Ontario websites) in Chapters 2 and 3.

I recruited participants through a variety of means for my initial study on terroir. I initially contacted specific informants from the Ontario wine world in order to obtain suggestions as well as initial introductions to wine experts. In parallel, I drew up a list of Niagara wineries to get a sense of the types and sizes of wineries in the region. I then chose a number of wineries that explicitly use terroir in their winemaking and marketing, and sent letters of introduction via e-mail to these, as well as to the contacts given to me by my informants. Most of the people I contacted responded favourably to my requests for interviews and visits of wineries (where applicable). I selected respondents who covered a variety of roles in the world of wine, from
winemakers, to wine educators, writers, marketers and regulators, in order to obtain an overall sense of the Niagara wine world and its inner workings.

Interviews ran on average an hour each, and covered a range of topics, including production methods, value, marketing, and of course, terroir, the initial focus of my study. Wine experts’ perception of consumers was not something I intended to explore, but, as respondents discussed their wine-related activities (e.g., selling, tasting, producing, teaching) in Ontario, they also provided details about the types of consumers they encountered through their wine work. Mentions of particular wines and their relative quality frequently involved discussions of the specific markets for these products (e.g., who would enjoy these wines, who would not like them). More specifically, wine experts evoked the competencies of the wine consumers they encountered – whether in wineries, at workshops, in restaurants, or elsewhere – and how these competencies mapped onto particular types of consumers. It became clear to me that wine experts are faced with a broad spectrum of wine consumers in Ontario, and that identifying the “good” consumers (e.g., those with sufficient wine knowledge and skills to appreciate higher quality wines) was a central preoccupation for wine experts working in Niagara and Toronto, whether they made wine, or sold, taught or wrote about it. With this in mind, I began inductively coding instances in interviews where wine experts described the consumers they encountered in their work. I also analyzed wine industry websites as representations of public discourse in the Ontario wine industry on wine, similarly coding descriptions of consumers, in particular in reference to specific wines or wine characteristics. In both these sources of data, I observed recurring references to attributes of the “good” wine consumer, as well as allusions to the foil of the less knowledgeable, or unskilled consumer. By examining these mentions more closely in interviews and subsequently on websites, I documented three prominent themes related to
producers’ perceptions of consumers: 1) spending, 2) tasting and 3) knowing. In the next section, I detail how wine experts constructed the “good” consumer as a person who spends wisely, appreciates the taste of complexity and terroir in wine, and is knowledgeable of technical aspects of wine and expert sources of wine knowledge.

5.5 Findings: Wine experts’ understanding of the “good” wine consumer – and what this reveals about bad consumers and bad wine

Wine experts defined the ideal “good” consumer of high quality wine by describing desirable attitudes and behaviours that signalled an ability to appreciate, understand and recognize the taste of good wine, as well as by detailing the contrasting features of the less educated, unpolished and novice wine consumer. Wine experts’ perceptions of consumers focused on three main qualities of the ideal consumer. First, the ideal consumer of quality wine was able to demonstrate educated spending behaviours (by comparison to spending for status reasons only) (spending). Next, the “good” wine connoisseur could taste specific characteristics in a quality wine, and further recognize and appreciate the importance of terroir in the taste of a wine (tasting). Lastly, a good wine consumer was knowledgeable and appreciative of the details of winemaking production techniques and of wine expertise (knowing).

5.5.1 Spending: Recognizing quality, not just showing off

In interviews, wine experts framed the spending behaviours of wine consumers (e.g., the act of spending more money on wine) in two contrasting ways. On the one hand, the ability (and inclination) to purchase more expensive wines was viewed as a sign that consumers were more “engaged” with wine, indicating that they might be more experienced and knowledgeable overall. On the other hand, simply spending more on wine could reflect that somebody was a know-nothing show-off.
Looking first at the quality of “spending sufficiently”, Nathalie Atkinson [winemaker] described her wines as comparable in quality across different tiers overall, but at the same, clearly differentiated her better wines by associating them to more engaged wine drinkers who are willing to spend more on higher quality wines. Even though, as she noted, “we make [our wines] pretty much all in the same fashion…they’re all handpicked, hand sorted…. there’s a lot of attention to detail throughout the entire process…”, she described the upper tier, small lot Rieslings as intended “for the people that are a) willing to invest $30 in a bottle of wine, and b) they’re the ones that are just a little more specific (my emphasis)”. By comparison, Nathalie depicted the more general “winemaker’s Riesling” – a blended wine from different parts of her winery’s vineyard – as “a little more approachable, just in respect to…the pure volume of it – it’s in more [retail] places, so more people can see it. Accessibility is a lot higher”. In these quotes, Nathalie draws clear lines between two levels of wines produced at her winery. Both wines are made by hand, but the wine from a “small lot” (e.g., made from grapes that are harvested from a delineated, small section of the vineyard, determined by winemakers to produce the highest quality of grapes in that particular vineyard) emerges as higher in quality compared to the wine that is blended from different parts of the vineyard. The “approachability” and “accessibility” of the blended wine, here defined as the quantity of wine produced, also serves to differentiate it from the small lot Riesling. Because less small lot Riesling is produced, it is therefore rarer than the blended “winemaker’s Riesling”, which Nathalie indicates is made in higher volumes and sold in more retail outlets. In defining these two wines, Nathalie also clearly demarcates the types of consumers who can appreciate and buy them. The higher priced, more exclusive small lot Riesling appeals to those who can afford it, and demonstrate they are competent spenders by
showing that they are “just a little more specific”, as Nathalie puts it. Being “more specific” refers here to a more discriminating palate and taste that are bolstered by sufficient wine knowledge to recognize the distinguishing features of this specific, small lot Riesling.

Wine experts further connected consumers’ understanding of the price-quality value of premium Ontario wines with a higher knowledge of wine. Premium Ontario wine can appear expensive to consumers, especially when compared to the cheaper wines from the New World (e.g., from Chile and Argentina mostly), or to renowned Old World wines whose value is recognized. Respondents acknowledged that Ontario wine’s higher prices, and the overall value of Ontario wines, was sometimes difficult to explain to consumers, especially to those that did not have sufficient wine knowledge to understand where Ontario, and Niagara more specifically, fit in the broader wine world. Less educated consumers might not realize that Niagara’s shorter growing season and uneven climate affect wine pricing. The shorter growing season, the unpredictability of weather (like spring cold snaps or early fall frosts, for example), as well as the types of grapes grown, all add to winemaking expenses in the region, and cause wines to appear relatively expensive when compared to wines produced in bulk, or in warm winemaking climates that are more consistently clement for winemaking. As well, respondents indicated that Niagara’s cool climate winemaking (and its higher success with grape varieties that suit that climate, like Riesling or Gamay noir) did not always match the perceived “popular” tastes of more casual drinkers, said to prefer the juicier, bolder and less acidic wines that are associated with warmer climates. These more popular wines were portrayed as easier to enjoy, especially if drunk on

\[30\] For example, respondents told me that Pinot Noir is a challenging grape to grow, and tends to produce lower yields than other grape varieties.
their own (e.g., without food). These wines do not fit the style of wine that most suits Niagara or Ontario growing conditions more broadly. For example, Norman Idleman [marketing] declared that, “You don’t hear a lot of more experienced, more…educated wine drinkers saying that…the price-quality for Ontario is no good, or Ontario wine is too expensive. Those comments are coming from the casual drinker”. He later reasserted this idea, stating that “the more you get educated about wine…the more you’re going to appreciate that – what the niche of Ontario’s wines is, just like the niche of New Zealand wines, or whatever…”. This idea was corroborated by Neil Robin [winemaker] who also connected the willingness to pay more with a more in-depth understanding of quality and of the specific style (or “niche”, as Norman calls it) of Ontario wines: “But, when we come to people who are ready to pay 30, 40 or more dollar a bottle, they are interested in understanding, they are curious about new ways, they are not trying to get an imitation of Bordeaux here, they are trying to get Canadian wines that taste great”.

At the same time that spending sufficiently was viewed as a sign of good taste, buying expensive wine alone did not always constitute a favourable attribute of wine consumers, nor did it emerge as an immediate sign of their sophistication in interviews. In her earlier statements, Nathalie connects spending more with a potentially higher ability to express specific tastes, but later in her interview, she indicated that spending more could also mean that “maybe [wine consumers] just have more money too” and “30 bucks for them on a bottle of wine is just – they’re not even thinking about it…”. Here, buying expensive wine does not appear linked to an educated palate, but rather, to a healthy bank account and the financial comfort to thoughtlessly consume. Nathalie’s colleague, Nick Ernst [winemaker] referred to the top “5% or 10% [of wine consumers] that are actual international tasters” and that have “their own wine cellar in Toronto…they’re …big into wine” in his interview. He later indicated that: “in that 10%, some
probably just buy on price, to be quite honest…they’re driving the BMW, and this is our Reserve bottle [points to it on table] and it looks a lot different than our non-Reserve bottle and so they’ll just come in and buy that”. Nick, like Nathalie, first distinguished types of product in order to then differentiate different types of consumers. The Reserve bottle he references is broader and looks heavier and more substantial when compared to the more common style of wine bottle with a long, narrow body that is used for non-Reserve. As Nick later noted, this choice of bottle is intended “for people who know about wine, but actually probably don’t know that much about it, but they wanna feel [emphasized by Nick] like they do. So they’re with their friends, so they’re gonna buy the $55 bottle and not the $25 bottle because they know about wine. And so there’s those people as well…”. In these quotes, Nick distinguishes consumers that purchase more expensive wine because they know more and can recognize quality, from consumers who gravitate towards expensive bottles to show off, and because their wine purchases are part of a broader assertion of wealth and status (like driving fancy cars and visiting wineries with their friends). Nick also clearly critiques winery visitors who display economic capital in ostentatious ways, but visibly lack some cultural capital. These consumers, in Nick’s words, know that wine is viewed as fancy and high class, but they are easily “duped” by superficial symbols of quality and value, like price and bottle shape or size. Nick’s winery obviously caters to these consumers’ desire to buy expensive, nicer looking bottles, but he also appears to scorn this style of wine consumption and consumer. Buying just based on price thus emerges as a less refined or knowledgeable way of consuming wine.

5.5.2 Tasting: Moving beyond “yummy” to appreciate complexity and terroir
Consumers’ ability to appreciate and especially, taste key aspects of wine, like complexity and terroir, also appeared as a central way for wine experts to classify consumers and their involvement with wine in general. There was a clear understanding that unsophisticated
consumers prioritize things that are “yummy” and taste good whereas “good” consumers move beyond the obvious sensory pleasures of “simple wines” to appreciate complexity and terroir. Put simply, a complex product requires a consumer who can taste and appreciate complexity.

Beginning with the issue of “complexity”, I found that wine experts strongly associated sophisticated consumers with a taste for more complex wines. There were clear distinctions made between “easy to drink” wines, considered less interesting and more suited to novice wine consumers, compared to the “complex” wines enjoyed by knowledgeable and expert drinkers. As Tim Holmes [writer and educator] summed up, “complexity puts some people off. They don’t want complexity”. Yet, as evidenced by several respondents’ descriptions and my own observations, complexity was precisely the type of taste that winemakers aspired to produce and that cultural intermediaries tended to view as higher in quality. Thus, a tension existed between wines that were potentially trendier, more widely appealing and readily “delicious” – usually understood as sweeter, less tannic, “easy” wines – but that were not reputation-building for a winery, and wines that wine experts considered higher in quality and that they described as “mineral”, “complex”, “elegant” and “small-batch”. For instance, the Bachelder website, one of the few winery websites that explicitly describes a specific, ideal consumer for their wines, clearly distinguishes between the “oaky, sweet Chardonnays from hotter climates” that “many wine drinkers have tired of”, and the “more mineral, more chic and more suave” Chardonnay wines that come “with texture, with ‘tension’, complexity and minerality” aimed at “wine lovers’ hearts” that Bachelder itself produces. Another website that associates particular consumer

31 Taste and its overall appreciation refer primarily to the sensory dimensions of wine here. The knowledge dimension of producers’ conceptualization of the ideal consumer is discussed more thoroughly in the third section of my findings.
attitudes with certain wines, the Château des Charmes site, explains that whereas “low tannin” white wines are classified as “for ‘beginners’” (in contrast to tannic red wines), “many experienced wine lovers” actually see white wine as “an exploration of a wide range of flavours”. Later in the paragraph, the winery categorizes white wines, from the “relatively simple” Aligoté and “easy drinking now” Sauvignon Blanc, to the “more complex” ‘Old Vines’ Riesling and the “age-worthy” Chardonnay. Here again, different tastes and their accompanying descriptors are associated with different levels of consumer approachability: some wines are “simple” and “easy/can be drunk now”, others are “complex” and “age-worthy” and must be preserved for later enjoyment, which requires knowledge of ageing times and conditions.

In addition to associating the ability to taste complexity with the ideal “good” consumer, a majority of wine experts made clear connections between wine sophistication and an understanding and appreciation for the taste of terroir. Terroir was framed as a complex and somewhat slippery term, that many respondents agreed could put people off because of language and knowledge barriers. To wine experts, tasting and appreciating terroir in wines generally referred to preference for a taste “from somewhere”, and not just enjoyment of non-origin blends. It also referred to a taste of “specificity”, and appreciating wines that showcased specific taste characteristics, and were not just blandly “yummy”. Lastly, the ability to taste terroir meant a willingness to seek out pricier wines with a dimension of “terroir”, by contrast to cheaper blended wines that are more generic and not linked to a specific place-based appellation or sub-appellation. At the broadest level, respondents associated a more sophisticated wine consumer with a taste for terroir. For example, Norman put it quite plainly when he said, “Well, I do think [terroir] applies to more educated, more serious wine drinkers”, later adding that “‘certainly the average [wine drinker] doesn’t…have the interest to that extent, sort of thing”. Nelly Thomson
[winemaker] agreed when she indicated that “[terroir is] something that would engage, like really, that top 2%… the top 2% of wine buyers let’s say that are really super keen and are big buyers… they’re super engaged in [wine]”. Wine educator Tara Ireland also brought up this connection between broader wine education and a specific taste for terroir when she described her experience teaching novice wine consumers in Toronto: “No, people don’t understand terroir unless you teach them to understand terroir, the majority of people”. As she later pursued emphatically, “If I’m teaching…the majority of people in my club how to swirl, terroir is the last thing…I’m not teaching them ‘til like a year later about terroir! [laughs]”.

Beyond this broad association between heightened wine appreciation for the taste of terroir and sophistication, wine experts perceived the good, educated consumer as capable of understanding and enjoying the “taste from somewhere” imparted by terroir. An example of this appreciation for a “taste from somewhere” transpired in wine writer Tom’s interview. As he described, “anyone who’s sort’ve educated themselves about wine will have a better understanding of terroir…and understand how it affects wine… whereas again, someone who doesn’t really drink wine… might not know how, let’s say cool climate will relate to high acid… or that sort of thing”. Similarly, Neil demonstrated this relationship between consumers’ overall wine expertise and their appreciation for how terroir imparts a specific place-based taste when he described the range of consumers that visit his winery:

The next level is understanding, ‘Oh, ok, Niagara within Niagara, there is that area, and that area, and that tastes different than that area’. There are people who are getting more and more into that. We have all, the entire level…of consumers. Some, for them to be aware that Niagara grow grapes, that’s already an achievement, and for some others, they are trying to figure out, ‘When I have wine from St. David’s or from Lakeshore, what’s the difference?”’.
In this quote, Neil refers to different levels of consumers, and emphasizes that higher consumer appreciation is associated precisely with tasting the terroir differences that exist within the various viticultural areas of Niagara; the lower tier of consumer engagement is simply realizing that the Niagara region produces wine.

Appreciating the “taste from somewhere” of terroir also came with the capacity for connoisseur consumers to understand and enjoy terroir’s influence on the specificities of taste in wines. Being able to detect the “taste from somewhere” allowed the “good” consumer to appreciate taste in a more cosmopolitan sense, and situate the taste of Ontario wines within a global palate of wine tastes. For example, the Vintner’s Quality Alliance (VQA) website made this point, stating that, “Wine lovers are following these developments and beginning to identify the nuances of Ontario wine, and the subtle distinctions between apppellations and the influence of their terroir”. As well, this interest and grasp of a terroir’s specific taste came up when respondents talked about the cosmopolitanism of more educated consumers. This worldliness gave “good” wine consumers an edge when it came to situating the Niagara terroir taste within the context of global terroir tastes. For example, in describing the types of consumers who visit his small, artisanal winery, Nate Oaks [winemaker] indicated that these consumers “are looking to source premium wines” and “have travelled all over the world…and even within the Niagara region”. To Nate, consumers with travel experience to various wine regions (both within and outside Canada) demonstrate sophistication by showcasing a taste for specificity that underscores their

32 The VQA regulates quality and origin in wines produced in Ontario.
33 The “developments” mentioned here refer to “creating a profile of taste and character, distinct for each appellation, and building a strong connection between the soil and terroir” (VQA Ontario website) within Ontario’s VQA wineries.
understanding of where the Niagara terroir fits within the global wine context. Nate further
defined these consumers as “very cognizant” and “quite interested in [terroir]”, adding that,
“they know a lot about [terroir]”. As he further elaborated, “they put a lot of stock into the terroir
and really learn about what kind of styles [distinguish] each individual area...and, it’s a relatively
new thing that we have these viticultural areas designated, so they want to learn as much as they
can about it”. In these quotes, Nate relates specific, premium tastes and travel experience to an
interest in and appreciation for terroir, which together demonstrate to him a higher degree of
wine expertise. As he indicates, greater appreciation for the taste of terroir produces even more
appreciation when it comes to wine: the discerning, “good” consumers he describes already have
a foundation in wine, and this foundation serves as a platform for their continued appreciation of
wine, including the particularities of the taste of terroir.

Like Nate, Tristan Rolland [wine writer] and Nelly both discussed how consumers’ increasing
appreciation of wine, and of terroir specifically, produced a ripple effect in terms of further
engaging with the specificities of wine tastes. Tristan observed that appreciation of terroir
“becomes...more important” to educated consumers. As he summed up, “When you get serious
about [wine], all these things are more important”. Nelly indicated that, “a consumer that really
gets [terroir] and is engaged with a sense of place, the more terroir, the more...identifying
aspects you can give [wine], can only give it a better reputation, better value, better authenticity
to it as a whole ...”. In this quote, she refers to terroir’s capacity to both convey “identifying
aspects” (specificity of taste) and “sense of place” (taste of somewhere) to wines, and clearly
sees these as attributes of the more engaged and educated consumers she encounters.
Lastly, it is worth noting that an appreciation of specific, terroir-based tastes has price and class implications. An appreciation for the complexity of terroir tastes found in higher priced wines was contrasted with a less sophisticated interested in less complex, immediately likeable wines that were generally cheaper in price as well. For Nick, discussing terroir in the tasting rooms of Niagara wineries was mainly confined to “the 20 wineries…that are on the premium end”, whereas “as a whole, people are coming in a lot of the other wineries and saying, you know, ‘How much is that Merlot?’, as opposed to asking about our soil structure, and asking about vintage...”. In his interview, Nick also made a clear connection between awareness and appreciation of the taste of terroir and interest in higher priced, indicating that “because [our winery is] in that 20% where our wines are 55 dollars a bottle, yeah…we are definitely getting those questions [about terroir]”. Nigel [marketing at a winery] agreed when he described the potential appeal of terroir to wine consumers in Ontario:

> I think [terroir] means something to the…20% of wine drinkers - which is what? 10% of the population, maybe? – who have spent more than 20 dollars on a bottle of wine [laughing] at some point in their life…because if you’re drinking Maria Christina, or you’re drinking Yellow Tail, or you’re drinking Wolf Blass from South Eastern Australia – you know, it’s a thousand kilometres across – then probably terroir is not something you’re thinking of. You’re thinking of pleasure – is it yummy? is it not yummy? – and not thinking too much about where it comes from, or how it was produced…”.

Nigel’s association here of a consumer’s appreciation of the specificities of terroir taste to a willingness to spend more on wine is quite clear. As he indicates, interest in savouring a wine that tastes “from somewhere” and shows specific characteristics is linked to appreciating higher priced wines, and is attributable to a select group of wine consumers only. Nigel contrasts these consumers who seek the complexities of terroir taste to more novice wine consumers who prefer blended wines where the origin and specific taste characteristics of terroir are largely absent (e.g., Maria Christina, Yellow Tail and Wolf Blass). These wines are made from grapes that come from vastly different vineyards within a country, or even, across the world, and are non-
vintage, in addition to being priced much lower than 20 dollars (usually around $10-$12). These less discerning wine consumers are framed as prioritizing the “yumminess” over the “placeness” and production methods of a given wine, which are implicitly more valued in his quote. Tristan Rolland [wine writer] made a similar assessment when he indicated that the “average consumer does not give a crap where their wine is coming from, as long as it tastes good and it doesn’t cost a lot of money – we’re talking the baseline, average consumer with minimal wine knowledge”.

Here, Tristan distinguishes wine consumers who care about where their wine comes from (and presumably, understand what a specific terroir might mean in the larger wine world), from those who do not care about this and instead focus more on basic taste (good versus not good) and price. In addition, he connects minimal wine knowledge to this interest in cheaper, purely “tasty” wine.

Both Nigel and Tristan showcase all three dimensions of terroir taste: the taste of somewhere, the taste of specificity and the taste for expensive wines that taste of terroir. While these taste elements connect to sensory-based aesthetic preferences, these aspects of the taste for terroir are strongly associated with wine consumers who are understood to be more knowledgeable about wine; they know how to taste complexity, and they know what tastes to prioritize (e.g., complex, connected to place) and what tastes to discount (e.g., simple, non-specific). By contrast, wine consumers who gravitate towards cheaper, non-origin blends that are more generic in taste are deemed much less sophisticated wine consumers. Thus, the “good”, consumer displays a taste for the complexity and terroir (in terms of placeness, specificity and price) of wines, whereas the “bad”, less sophisticated consumer’s taste revolves around simpler, easier to drink, less specific, cheaper blends.
5.5.3 Knowing: Appreciation for the details of wine production, classification and expertise

Besides associating an appreciation for terroir tastes (e.g., taste for somewhere, for specificity and for more expensive wines) with more sophisticated consumers, wine experts also discussed how the “good” wine consumer is an accomplished consumer who demonstrates extensive knowledge of, and interest in, the details and technicalities of wine. To illustrate this, respondents described consumers’ knowledge and appreciation of very detailed aspects of wine such as production methods, appellation systems and sources of expert advice. Wine experts depicted consumers who were not only interested in these sometimes very detailed factoids or sources of information, but were also keen to learn more about these technicalities of wine (see Chapter 4 on how consumers also view knowledge acquisition as part of embodying the “good” wine consumer).

How did wine experts determine essential wine knowledge for sophisticated wine consumers in their interviews? Put differently, what elements of wine emerged as most important to being a “good” wine consumer? To begin, consumers’ interest in and understanding of production methods was a sign of an admirable, high degree of wine education overall. For example, Nate drew parallels between the select group of consumers who visited his small but reputable winery and an interest in production techniques:

…it has been a bit surprising that people who’ve sourced us out generally are very knowledgeable about the wines that they want. So, they want to know about things like what kind of yeast you’re using, or what fermentation techniques you like, warmer fermentation, so…I can get pretty detailed about the process without boring them too much, and actually, they find it fairly interesting.

Nate connects an existing and precise knowledge of wines to an interest in learning even more about the technical aspects of a wine’s production. Nate’s implied reasoning is that a
sophisticated and educated consumer will be able to decipher a wine’s taste (and palatability to his/her tastes) through information on how a wine is produced (e.g., fermentation techniques in this case). Curiosity in a wine’s production methods thus signals to the winemaker that the good consumer can connect how a wine is made to a taste he/she might enjoy or desire. More broadly, this interest in wine production specifics is clearly related by Nate to higher-level consumers who are more sophisticated and wine-savvy. As Nate later indicated in terms of explaining how a wine is made to customers, with “some people…who’ve never even tried certain varieties of wine before…you don’t have to be as specific [in explaining how a wine is made]”.

Consequently, for consumers who do not possess a broad knowledge of different wines, there is less need to expand on specific production methods or other aspects of how a wine is made. This link between an interest (and openness) to production methods and overall wine sophistication was also clearly exemplified in Nick’s interview:

…when someone comes in and goes ‘wow, that Chardonnay really has a Burgundian style!’ . As soon as you hear, click, ‘Ok, they know that a Burgundian style is; I can talk about malolactic fermentation, I can talk about grams of acid per litre, I can talk about all of these other things, you know, how long it’s been in barrel…’ Whereas, you can’t talk to other people about malolactic fermentation because they don’t, they don’t…(I: they’re not there?) the minute that happens, you’ve lost them.

In this quote, Nick draws a distinction between the “lost” consumer, and the consumer who can categorize a wine by a recognizable style (e.g., a Chardonnay that has a “Burgundian style”). This high level of wine knowledge can signal a familiarity with fairly technical information about a wine’s production, including details about fermentation, grams of acid and time in the barrel. Nick, like Nate, is also quite clear about the line demarcating a savvy consumer who grasps this more technical information about a wine’s production from a consumer who will be confused by discussing these aspects. A consumer who has the sensory knowledge to detect a style of wine thus demonstrates that he/she is familiar with (or open to learning) more detailed
information about how a wine is produced; for the less sophisticated, less knowledgeable consumer, these technical elements of wine production are viewed as far too complex.

Nick pursued this idea that an interest in production methods signals higher sophistication later in his interview by outlining the type of information his winery delivers to customers deemed “knowledgeable”:

Yeah, so for the slightly more educated…we would be talking about the organics, the cropping level in the vineyard…we would be talking about the barrel program that we have downstairs, and that being – generally our Estate level is in barrel for 10 months, a 100% French oak. Our Reserves are held for 18 months. So, longer time in barrel speaks to generally a higher class wine.

Here, Nick describes several technical aspects of a wine’s production that would appeal to consumers considered “more educated”. In doing so, he also associates knowledge, understanding of production methods and the overall quality of the wine produced (“higher class wine”). Higher quality wine requires more attentive and elaborate production techniques, and a “good”, sophisticated wine consumer will be able to appreciate these techniques, and therefore understand the higher quality of the wine produced. As well, the line between the quality of a product and the “quality” of the person who enjoys (or can understand) that product is blurred: the two seem to be interchangeable, as was apparent in some earlier quotes about higher priced bottles, which respondents consistently framed as meant for the “good” wine consumer.
Besides knowledge of wine production techniques, knowledge and understanding of the appellation system mapped out by the Vintner’s Quality Alliance (VQA) in Ontario (see Figures 1 and 2 below) also appeared related to the “good” consumer who possesses and pursues greater knowledge of wine. The appellation system in Ontario was legislated in 1999. My interviews with wine experts revealed that the legislation was motivated by producers’ desire to increase consumer confidence in the quality of wines made in Ontario, and to legitimate the burgeoning Ontario wine industry on the worldwide stage. Today, the VQA markets the appellation system as a badge of authenticity and origin in Ontario wines, as the VQA website stipulates. The VQA has mapped out appellations and sub-appellations within Ontario using a European model that is terroir inspired. The Niagara Peninsula appellation is the most defined within Ontario. It is divided into two regional appellations – Niagara Escarpment and Niagara-on-the-Lake – and these are further subdivided into 10 sub-appellations.

**Figure 1. VQA Ontario Appellations of Origin**

Despite these efforts by the VQA to increase Ontario wine’s legitimacy through the appellation system, wine experts themselves frequently expressed reservations about the ability of the general public to understand the complexity of the VQA appellation system. Even though this uncertainty about the broader public’s awareness of the appellation system clearly represented a potential hurdle to using the appellation system fully to market and sell the terroir and typical characteristics of Niagara (and other Ontario) wines, wine experts did view some of the more sophisticated wine consumers as interested and knowledgeable about the appellation system. For example, Norman [wine marketing/promotion] described some of the difficulties of explaining the VQA and the appellation system in Ontario: “people who are either more educated or more interested in wine, will know it [the appellation system], and the, you know, the casual consumer… won’t”. As he further elaborated: “it’s an ongoing education process to get the consumer to understand what VQA means. On the sub-app\textsuperscript{34} side, now, just think of it, you

\textsuperscript{34} Sub-appellation, which refers to an even more precise area within an appellation
know, it’s 10 times as difficult. The consumers who do care, do care, but it’s…8% of the population, and who knows…it’s not very much…it’ll take time”.

This tendency to associate knowledge of the appellation system and its intricacies (like the differences between sub-appellations, for example) to a limited, discerning group of sophisticated wine tasters was a recurring theme in my interviews, and frequently juxtaposed against the less sophisticated wine consumer who does not understand Niagara (sub)appellations. Tristan spoke of the appellation system in glowing terms as “incredible, extensive”. For him, “the average consumer doesn’t give a crap about it, but once you get very serious, serious about wine, you do start to notice things, and you do have preferences”. In a section that accompanied the map of the Niagara sub-appellations, a past version of the Wine Council website supported this idea as well, indicating that “discerning consumers are becoming more knowledgeable and interested in the origin of the grapes in the wines they love”. Here, a connection is made between knowledge of the detailed sub-appellation map (and the information it can give consumers about the origin of grapes), and “discerning consumers”, who are pinpointed as consumers who can appropriately take in and understand this information (and who may seek it out as well). Thus, sophisticated consumers (described in this quote as “discerning consumers”) are those that are capable of understanding the appellation system and appreciating what it brings to wine in terms of wine styles, tastes, authenticity and origin.

Besides possessing knowledge about production techniques and the appellation system, wine experts also understand the “good” consumer as one with a tendency to seek out expert advice and knowledge on wine. Appreciation for the technicalities of wine production and appellation systems thus came with an interest in expert advice when buying or choosing wine. As Norman
summarized, “a lot of wine purchases are done by consumers, especially the more interested…consumers, based on reviews; ‘if Beppi Crosariol\textsuperscript{35} and the Globe like something, then I’m going to try it; if Wine Spectator says they like it, then I’m going to try it’”. Tony, a wine writer, agreed as he described the imagined audience for his wine reviews: “I’ve just kind of come to the opinion that people who aren’t interested in wine are probably not going to read wine writers. So, I’m assuming that there’s a level of curiosity and interest right off the bat. So…that kind of dictates what kinds of wines I’ll write about, you know?”. Here, Tony makes a connection between the perceived typical readers of his wine reviews, whom he describes as “interested” and demonstrating a certain “level of curiosity” in wine, and his capacity to write about certain “kinds of wines” by describing the counterpoint of the less sophisticated wine consumer who does not read wine writers. Tony appears to imply that his readership is sufficiently knowledgeable to gravitate towards his type of wine reviews, and appreciate the types of wines he writes about, understood here to be distinctive or uncommon wines (e.g., not run-of-the-mill). Tristan also expressed a similar idea by describing with disapproval the contrasting example of an “average consumer” and his/her reliance on “new to watch” Liquor Control Board Ontario (LCBO\textsuperscript{36}) stickers [including select wine ratings], “stuff on sale” or with “Air Miles tags”, and who generally would “[trust] the LCBO to educate them on what’s gonna be a good product to choose”. By contrast, Tristan indicated that with the next tier of consumers, implied to be more knowledgeable, “they’re going to their friends who are the wine connoisseurs; everybody has a wine connoisseur on speed dial…”.

\textsuperscript{35} A wine critic for a major newspaper in English-speaking Canada, the Globe and Mail.
\textsuperscript{36} The LCBO is the state-owned organization that retails and distributes alcohol in the province of Ontario.
Seeking out knowledge from wine experts was therefore viewed as an important characteristic of sophisticated wine consumers, but the best wine consumers were described as possessing sufficient knowledge to appreciate the subtleties of wine expertise and thus avoid simply emulating wine experts without discernment. For example, as wine writer and educator Tim Holmes explained, some people use well-known wine publications like Wine Spectator and Wine Advocate “for status reasons, not for something that pleases their palate”. As he goes on, “I’ve known many people who buy a bottle because it got a great score, and they bring it out, and they don’t say what it tastes like, they say ‘this is a 97’, meaning it got a Parker 97 points, and everyone is supposed to go ‘woo’”. In this quote, Tim echoes Nick’s and Tristan’s earlier disapprovals of wine choices or purchases that are guided either by overt class markers, like the size, shape or price of a bottle, or by marketing, sales, wine scores and awards. In this case, purchasing a wine that a renowned wine critic like Robert Parker liked, without care or attention to one’s own tastes, does not reflect knowledge or wine education, but rather status motivations inflected with “Nouveau Riche” undertones. Relying solely on the choices and rankings of the world’s most famous wine critics appears here as the “easy” and non-descript way of choosing wine.

5.6 Discussion and conclusion

Examining how wine experts in the emerging Ontario wine market perceive their domestic consumers sheds light on several aspects of the construction of taste and the ideal consumer, and it does so from the often ignored point of view of producers (Smith Maguire 2015, 2016, 2018). Drawing attention to the tastes expressed by producers in their descriptions and classifications of consumers further illuminates the process of what Smith Maguire terms “the conventionalization of tastes” (e.g., how conventions of taste emerge and take hold) (2016: 5). The aesthetic
principles that wine experts express and reproduce through their descriptions and evaluations of consumers demonstrate both the economic and the cultural interests that they pursue.

Winemakers and cultural intermediaries’ concern is not just in selling large quantities of the most expensive wines; it is also about producing and promoting wines that they themselves consider valuable, and then identifying and mobilizing consumers who can appreciate these wines. Consumers who can identify specifics of Ontario wines demonstrate that they recognize the “goodness” of these wines, thereby providing legitimacy to the broader project of producing quality wine in the emerging wine market of Ontario, Canada. More specifically, as my study shows, wine experts view their ideal consumer as recognizing and responding favourably to certain qualities found in the best products they make, sell, speak, and teach about. In this way, wine experts’ perceptions of consumers can help to understand the specific consumer skills that wine experts consider most “desirable” and necessary to support their valuation practice of quality wine production and promotion in the emerging market of Ontario fine wines.

My analysis of wine producers’ evaluations of consumers (and the aesthetic principles these evaluations are built upon) demonstrates the complex and varied motivations – aesthetic, status-related, financial – that are at play within the market of fine wines, especially when this market is attempting to establish itself as is the case with the Ontario wine market. In particular, the tension between the consumer-friendly tastes of commercial wines and the complex flavours of higher valued bottles illustrates and further strengthens the idea that producers do not always fall into line with what consumers prefer, even when it appears that their livelihoods hang in the balance (Smith Maguire 2015, 2018). My analysis supports the idea of taste as a type of “shared understanding” (Smith Maguire 2015, 2016, 2018; Paxson 2010a, 2010b; Warde 2014) that wine experts formulate in relation to their own taste, as well as in dialogue with the tastes their peers
(e.g., other wine experts) approve of. Like Smith Maguire’s (2015, 2018) natural winemakers who accept the risks of producing wine that corresponds to their values and tastes, or Paxson’s (2010b) artisanal cheese makers who are prepared to “reverse-engineer” an appropriate audience for their terroir cheeses, the wine experts I interviewed demonstrate in their descriptions of their ideal consumer that they value shared tastes and skills that do not tend to coalesce around producing pure consumer satisfaction and financial gain. Rather, these specific, shared ideal tastes (as displayed by their consumers), indicate a need for wine experts to consider their own tastes along with those of their peers, and how these relate to the products they seek to create, promote and sell. By taking into account the production sphere of a market, my study contributes to the call to understand and specify how culture works to shape ideas of good taste through producers’ expression of certain tastes, and the promotion of particular desirable consumer skills that these tastes imply (Smith Maguire 2015, 2018). Moreover, it furthers our understanding of the “autonomy” of the production sphere highlighted by Smith Maguire (2015: 3). Producers’ motivations involve more than just short-term economic gains, or more long-term symbolic rewards. Indeed, producers’ motivations include production-based social understandings of what is “good” about producing and selling certain goods, like wines that reflect a terroir, are complex in taste, or are produced in artisanal and sustainable ways (Smith Maguire 2015, 2018).

The typology developed here also contributes to the study of taste by emphasizing some of the key characteristics of taste hierarchies in today’s context of omnivorousness, where apparent cultural democratization exists in tension with moments of distinction. Because overt displays of status are less frequent and less accepted (Bennett et al. 1999; Johnston and Baumann 2015; Ollivier 2008; Peterson and Kern 1996; Warde and Gayo-Cal 2009; Warde et al. 2008), how people express taste has become just as important (if not more) than what people like (Cappeliez
and Johnston 2013; Friedman 2012; Holt 1998; Warde et al. 2008: 149-150). My study of wine experts’ descriptions of consumers showcases and reinforces this idea that new taste hierarchies are organized along more nuanced ways of asserting taste. Wine – once considered to be a high culture object, particularly in a North American context – no longer embodies sophistication so plainly or straightforwardly. Rather, and as my analysis supports, distinction is achieved through much subtler displays of knowledge and connoisseurship. In a time of loosening cultural standards, figuring out the yardsticks of good taste is not an obvious or simple task (Smith Maguire 2015: 2). Yet, specific standards of taste do persist, as is patent in the wine experts’ descriptions of consumers shown here.

My analysis of wine experts’ accounts outlines some of the key contours of these new standards of contemporary taste hierarchies. Good taste is associated with three logics, and these logics can also be extended to other complex cultural goods like small-batch ciders or artisanal, single origin chocolate, for example. First, good taste is associated with informed spending, and an understanding of higher price points in relation to better quality, premium and distinctive goods, while avoiding just spending money on expensive cultural goods. In wine terms, this means a willingness to pay more for higher quality wine because one understands its value, and not just showing off by reaching for the most expensive bottle at a winery. Second, good taste is also related to the capacity to sensorially appreciate complex cultural goods that are from somewhere (e.g., are more authentic, traditional, artisanal, etc), and to shun easier-to-like and more generic goods. In the world of wine, this complexity in taste comes mainly by way of the “taste of somewhere” that terroir imparts, and that reflects many of the broader ideas of authenticity, transparency and craftsmanship associated with good taste today (Johnston and Baumann 2015; Ocejo 2014; Paxson 2010b; Smith Maguire 2016; 2018: 80). By contrast, purely “yummy”
wines, that are generally understood to be sweeter, blended and generic (and therefore, of inferior quality), are viewed less favourably. Lastly, good taste involves displaying knowledge and interest in the details of production and classification of cultural goods. For wine, this means possessing knowledge of and interest in the specificities of a wine’s production, and also being keen to expand one’s wine education by seeking out appropriate expert sources of knowledge, like well-known wine critics or writers. By contrast, buying wines on promotion or to impress friends because they are “Robert Parker approved”, is regarded as pedestrian (Smith Maguire 2018:80).

Lastly, examining wine experts’ conceptualizations of the ideal consumer illuminates the attributes of wine experts’ preferred audience in terms of desirable consumer skills for the complex “good” products they make, sell and promote. As a number of studies on complex tastes in food and drink have shown, products like artisanal cheeses, chocolate or wine require some form of socialization and taste education to appreciate (Carolan 2015; Hayes-Conroy and Hayes-Conroy 2008; Lahne et al. 2014; Paxson 2010b, 2012; Terrio 2000). The ability to identify and nurture desirable consumer skills thus emerges as a key practical concern for producers and cultural intermediaries. While this research on taste education for complex foods and drinks has pointed out the central role played by producers and cultural intermediaries in defining and promoting particular tastes (Paxson 2010b, 2012; Terrio 2000), as well as the need for closing the knowledge gap when it comes to appreciating complex products like wine (Karpik 2010; Rössel, Schenk and Eppler 2016: 4-5; Sterndorff Cisterna 2014: 100), artisanal cheese (Paxson 2010b, 2012) or chocolate (Terrio 2000), these do not generally specify the particular consumer competences that producers and cultural intermediaries associate with their ideal consumer.
The shared definitions of the ideal consumer provided by wine experts in my study present some of the key areas of competency that are necessary to cultivate and encourage in consumers. In a winemaking context where emerging wine regions like Niagara still look to outside, usually European reference points in terms of winemaking practices and philosophies (Voronov et al. 2013; and also Fitzmaurice 2017; Smith Maguire 2016 more broadly), this need to both identify an ideal audience, and nurture skills that correspond to one’s aesthetic goals (and the production choices it entails), is particularly important. Why? Because developed, mature markets require developed, mature consumers who can taste, pay for, and appreciate quality products. Wine experts’ valuation of the ideal consumer’s ability to taste terroir and complexity in Ontario wines demonstrates a key area of skills and knowledge that requires further development amongst consumers. These skills are vital to cultivate moving forward if Ontario wine experts’ long-term project of producing and selling quality wine is to be successful.
Chapter 6
Discussion and Conclusion

At its broadest level, this dissertation examines how ideas, tastes and consumption practices travel and are adopted in new places through the lens of wine. Through my examination of wine discourse and practices in Châteauneuf-du-Pape, France and Ontario, Canada I contribute to sociological literatures on cultural processes of cultural translation, taste and ideal consumption in a context of global cultural flows.

I begin this dissertation with an investigation into the process of cultural translation in Chapter 3, and an analysis of how the culturally powerful idea of terroir is taken up in two contrasting winemaking regions, Châteauneuf-du-Pape in France and Niagara in Canada. In this chapter, I use interviews with producers and cultural intermediaries, along with field observations and discourse analysis of winery and wine industry websites to examine and unpack how terroir is defined and related to in each case site. Through the comparison of these two cases, I shed light on an important tension between sameness and difference when cultural concepts travel. On the one hand, my analysis shows that some of the core principles of terroir’s meaning are shared across both cases. These similar definitions of terroir across my cases suggest the prevalence of a common reference point at the conceptual level of “saying” a cultural idea, and point to a need for a type of “shared language” (Eliasoph and Lichterman 2003) when an idea like terroir travels. These core shared principles of terroir also highlight the strength and enduring importance of European winemaking standards, as the centre of norms and standards in the global world of wine (Fourcade 2012; Karpik 2010; Rössel et al. 2016; Smith Maguire 2016; Voronov et al. 2013). As a key vector of European winemaking standards, terroir informed winemaking in
particular continues to be a defining reference point for wine as a high quality commodity (Bohling 2014; Voronov et al. 2013), especially for emerging, “periphery” winemaking regions like Niagara. Moreover, finding this degree of agreement and overlap on terroir’s core principles underscores the importance of considering continuity, and not just adaptability and change, when examining how cultural ideas like terroir travel and are taken up in new places. This finding is particularly underscored because these two winemaking regions differ so clearly in terms of depth of winemaking history, culture and reputation. On the other hand, comparing these two distinct cases reveals certain clear differences in place-specific relationships to terroir, and to nature as an element of terroir specifically. In the French case, nature emerges as a friendly force, and terroir as something that can be understood and cooperative when producing wine. French respondents and websites generally describe their relationships with nature as harmonious and reciprocal – they nurture nature, and nature gives back to them in kind. By contrast, Canadian respondents portray nature as a prevailing dynamic, and terroir as more difficult to comprehend and manipulate. As a result, their relationships to nature seem less predictable and more vulnerable overall.

My examination of the cultural translation of terroir in Chapter 3 demonstrates that cultural ideas – including those that are symbolically powerful and connected to specific national identities – navigate a tension between sameness and difference. Moreover, by systematically interrogating this tension between the parts of cultural ideas that most easily translate (and remain constant), and those that are less translatable and more subject to change when ideas travel, I further argue that the normative principles related to an idea like terroir are likely to be shared across different cultural settings, while the parts related to (and dependent on) local place are apt to make a cultural notion like terroir change. The sharing of elements of terroir’s fundamental definition
demonstrates that the abstract meaning of an idea – the “saying” of an idea – is shared across groups (Eliasoph and Lichterman 2003). At the same time, respondents’ descriptions of their relationship to terroir “on the ground” in their specific local settings point to variable meanings of these common ideas and to differences in “doing” terroir in specific places. This first analytical chapter contributes to our understanding of what translates and what must be adapted when a cultural idea travels in a context of globalized culture, by arguing that, just as place matters in the reception of cultural objects and the formation of cultural repertoires (Babon 2006; Johnston, Szabo, and Rodney 2012), place emerges here as a significant force in shaping the discursive formulations of practices involving cultural ideas.

In Chapter 4, I pursue this examination of the process of cultural translation by considering the formation of a taste for wine in an emerging winemaking region. Through field observations and interviews with wine consumers of varying levels of engagement, interest and education in wine, I explore how wine consumers frame and describe their interest and engagement with wine. I show that wine consumers give meaning to their interest in learning about wine by referencing a central theme of pleasure – and more specifically, by framing this interest in terms of distinct types of cognitive, sensory and status-oriented pleasures. To begin, a majority of wine consumers in my study demonstrate a cognitive disposition – a tendency to be “nerdy” about a broad range of topics and interests beyond just wine. Wine consumers present this tendency as the basis for their initial interest in wine, and a platform for their further engagement with it. As I argue, this knowledge-seeking disposition demonstrates the key role played by cognition in cultivating cultural practices and tastes: being “nerdy” and loving to learn provide fertile conditions for pursuing and finding pleasure in different forms of cognitive, sensory and status experiences of wine. As my analysis of wine consumers’ narratives further shows, wine consumers develop and
sustain their interest in and taste for wine through cognitive, sensory and status-driven pleasures. In my analysis, I distinguish these pleasures to show how they operate individually and are associated with the mind (cognitive pleasures), the body (sensory pleasures), or both the mind and the body (status pleasures), but these should be viewed as a dialectic of mind and body that intersect and work together to reinforce each other. Thus, I argue that the acquisition and development of a taste for complex cultural practices like wine involves the engagement of the mind-body dialectic through a combination of cognitive, sensory and status pleasures.

As I show in Chapter 4, these different pleasures, and the forms of knowledge they imply, demonstrate that taste is neither motivated only by distinction, nor simply by physical pleasure impulses or intellectual pursuits, but by all three. In this respect, taste can be viewed as something that can be learned and acquired (i.e., it is not a “given”), but it is also sustained by different pleasures that are ultimately classed. As well, the knowledge-seeking, “nerdy” disposition that underlies the availability and access to these pleasures should also be viewed as classed. As I discuss, wine consumers in my study navigate the classed dimensions of wine through subtle strategies of distinction aimed at distancing their interest in wine from overt snobbery. Wine consumers’ overall emphasis on the sensory and cognitive pleasures derived from wine, as well as their ambivalence towards some of the more status-related sides of wine appreciation, emerge as strategies that allowed participants to bypass explicit distinction in their wine practices. In particular, respondents’ dominant tendency to frame their interest in wine as part of their broader enjoyment of learning and being “nerdy” about multiple topics, allows wine consumers to effectively mask snobbery while also asserting distinction. In short, by emphasizing “learning” and being “curious” about many things, wine consumers are able to gloss over the classed and snobby dimensions of their interest in wine, and effectively recast this
interest as a quest for expanding knowledge in a broader way, or as simply the result of their own personal inquisitiveness.

My investigation in Chapter 4 of how sensory pleasures interact with cognitive elements to produce gratification and engagement with cultural objects and practices like wine builds on emerging research that examines the inherently pleasurable and embodied aspects of cultural practices. In investigating the embodied aspects of learning to taste wine, this chapter therefore contributes to a growing area within cultural sociology that seeks to reincorporate the materiality of the body and embodied experiences into research on taste and consumption (Benzecry 2009, 2011; Benzecry and Collins 2014; Cerulo 2015, 2018; Hennion 2001; Schwarz 2013; Teil and Hennion 2004; Warde and Martens 2000). Furthermore, and as I argue, unpacking the mind-body dialectic, and the specific pleasures it entails, are important for understanding taste acquisition and development beyond the realm of wine, and can thus be extended to understanding cultural consumption in general. In my analysis, I draw on and connect Bourdieu’s focus on status with recent research that emphasizes practice in cultural consumption (Benzecry 2009, 2011; Benzecry and Collins 2014; Gherardi 2009; Hennion 2001; Shapin 2012a; Teil and Hennion 2004; Warde 2014, 2016) to argue that status-seeking and practice are not as opposed as Benzecry (2009, 2011) and Benzecry and Collins (2014) argue, but rather mutually reinforcing. Moreover, my study contributes to work on knowledge acquisition amongst foodies and cultural consumers by highlighting that the knowledge-seeking

disposition displayed by foodies (Cappeliez and Johnston 2013; Johnston and Baumann 2015) and cultural consumers more broadly (Holt 1998) goes beyond just a quest for bookish knowledge. As Chapter 4 discusses, wine consumers, like foodies and other cultural consumers (Cappeliez and Johnston 2013; Johnston and Baumann 2015; Holt 1998), pursue types of knowledge that engage the mind, but also the senses and the body. Thus, cultural consumers also seek out sensorial experiences, and these experiences involving the body and emotions must also be considered as fundamental to knowledge acquisition. In sum, future research on taste and consumption should aim to pay attention not just to what people think or feel about consumption, but how both thinking and feeling intersect and reinforce each other, and the practices they run through.

In Chapter 5, I take up another facet of cultural translation by examining how producers (e.g., winemakers and cultural intermediaries) conceptualize and understand their ideal consumer in the emerging wine market of Ontario. Through my analysis of interviews with wine producers and industry websites, I propose a typology that reflects three key dimensions of consumer behaviours and attitudes that wine producers uphold: 1) spending, 2) tasting and, 3) knowledge. By looking at how wine producers describe their ideal, “good” consumer for high quality wine in a developing wine culture and market, Chapter 5 brings attention back to the role of producers in formulating aesthetic preferences that reflect their own interests and those of their peers (e.g., other wine makers and cultural intermediaries), rather than those of consumers only. As I argue in Chapter 5, this typology, and the attributes of the ideal consumer that it identifies, suggest the key norms and conventions of good taste in the world of wine that wine experts consider important for their emerging market. More broadly, through this typology, Chapter 5 further illuminates the contours of taste hierarchies within today’s context of shifting cultural standards.
and trends in omnivorousness, where cultural democratization occurs alongside continued patterns of cultural distinction and hierarchy.

By taking into account the production sphere of a market, my study contributes to the call to understand and specify how culture works to shape ideas of good taste through producers’ expression of their own aesthetic preferences, and the specific desirable consumer skills that these tastes imply and promote (Smith Maguire 2015, 2018). Moreover, it furthers our understanding of the “autonomy” of the production sphere highlighted by Smith Maguire (2015: 3), and the way in which producers’ motivations involve more than just short-term economic gains, or long-term symbolic rewards: these motivations also include social understandings within spheres of production about what is “good” about making and selling certain goods, like wines that reflect Niagara’s terroir, that are complex in taste, or that are produced in small-scale, artisanal and sustainable ways (Smith Maguire 2015, 2018).

The typology I propose also contributes to the study of taste by clarifying some of the key characteristics of taste hierarchies in today’s context of omnivorousness, where cultural democratization seemingly has taken over, but moments of distinction still persist. Although wine brings forth strong associations with class and high culture, it too no longer embodies sophistication so clearly, as it becomes more broadly consumed and produced (Fitzmaurice 2017; Fourcâde 2012; Garcia-Parpet 2008, 2011; Howland 2013; Voronov, De Clercq, and Hinings 2013; Smith Maguire 2016). In this context, distinction is achieved through more subtle displays of knowledge and connoisseurship that are sometimes hard to pin down (Smith Maguire 2015: 2). My analysis of wine experts’ accounts in Chapter 5 outlines some of the key contours of these new standards of contemporary taste hierarchies. As I show, producers’ understandings
of the “good” consumers suggest three logics of good taste that can also be extended to other complex cultural goods like small-batch ciders, or artisanal, single origin chocolate, for example. First, good taste is associated with informed spending that involves an understanding of higher price points in relation to better quality, premium and distinctive goods, while also avoiding simply spending money on expensive cultural goods. Next, good taste is related to the capacity to sensorially appreciate complex cultural goods that come from somewhere (e.g., that are more authentic, traditional, artisanal, etc), and to shun easier-to-like and more generic goods. In this way, complexity of taste comes to reflect the “taste of somewhere” that terroir imparts, and that refers to many of the broader ideas of authenticity, transparency and craftsmanship that are associated with good taste today (Johnston and Baumann 2015; Ocejo 2014; Paxson 2010b; Smith Maguire 2016; 2018: 80). Lastly, good taste involves displaying knowledge of, and interest in, the details of production and classification of cultural goods.

Together, these logics of good taste that form part of today’s taste hierarchies point to some of the desirable consumer skills that wine experts seek in the ideal audiences for the complex, “good” products they make, sell and promote. The shared definitions of the ideal consumer provided by wine experts in Chapter 5 present the key areas of competency that are necessary to cultivate and encourage amongst consumers in the emerging wine culture of Ontario. As studies on complex tastes in food and drink have shown, products like artisanal cheeses, chocolate or wine require some form of socialization and taste education to appreciate (Carolan 2015; Hayes-Conroy and Hayes-Conroy 2008; Lahne et al. 2014; Paxson 2010b, 2012; Terrio 2000). As these studies show, this socializing role of defining and promoting particular tastes is usually played by producers and cultural intermediaries (Paxson 2010b, 2012; Terrio 2000), yet these studies do not generally specify the consumer competences that producers and cultural intermediaries
associate with their ideal consumer. With my study, I identify and outline some of these key areas of competency that emerge as necessary to cultivate and encourage amongst consumers, especially in a developing winemaking context like Niagara. In particular, as I argue, wine experts’ insistence on their ideal consumer’s ability to taste terroir and complexity in Ontario wines demonstrates a key area of skills and knowledge that requires further development amongst consumers if Ontario wine experts’ long-term project of producing and selling quality wine is to be successful.
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Appendices

APPENDIX A - Interview guides for winemakers
Châteauneuf-du-Pape and Niagara cases

Questionnaire – vin

Introduction

Bonjour, mon nom est Sarah Cappeliez et je suis doctorante à l’Université de Toronto. Je travaille sur un projet de thèse qui examine le rôle du lieu et de l’origine (ce qu’on appelle le « terroir ») en terme de la production et de la consommation du vin dans la région de Châteauneuf-du-Pape.

J’aimerais vous poser quelques questions au sujet de votre entreprise viticole et des vins que vous produisez à ___________ (nom de l’entreprise).

J’espère utiliser les renseignements obtenus lors de mes entrevues pour mieux comprendre le rôle du terroir dans la production et la consommation du vin dans la région.

Cette entrevue durera entre 60 et 90 minutes.

(Transition: Commençons avec quelques questions générales sur votre entreprise.)

Questions principales

Thème: Questions générales sur l’entreprise viticole

1. Quand a été fondé (nom de l’entreprise)?

2. Combien de vin est produit par année par cette entreprise (unité de mesure – caisse ou hectolitres)?

3. Quelle est la taille du vignoble (nombre d’hectares)?

4. Utilisez-vous seulement des raisins de votre vignoble pour la production de votre vin?
   a. Sinon, d’où viennent ces raisins?

5. Combien de différents vins produizez-vous?

6. Sont-ils tous des vins d’appellation CDP?

(Transition: Poursuivons avec quelques questions sur les vins que vous produisez ici.)

Thème: Questions sur le produit
1. Pouvez-vous décrire les types de vins que vous produisez ici?

2. Quelles méthodes de production utilisez-vous ici?
   a. Est-ce que ce sont des méthodes dites « traditionnelles » pour le secteur du vin?

3. Quels sont les aspects « traditionnels » de votre vin et de sa production?
   a. D’où viennent ces traditions?
   b. Pourquoi pensez-vous que ces traditions sont importantes pour la production de vos vins?

4. Qu’est-ce qui rend votre vin unique ou spécial? Qu’est-ce qui le distingue des autres vins?

5. Quels sont certains des aspects plus nouveaux ou innovateurs de votre vin et de sa production?
   a. D’où viennent ces innovations?
   b. Pourquoi pensez-vous qu’elles sont importantes pour la production de vos vins?

6. Pouvez-vous décrire comment votre vin est unique à ce lieu/cet endroit?
   a. Comment votre vin présente-t-il des caractéristiques régionales du Vaucluse ou de CDP?
   b. Comment votre vin présente-t-il des caractéristiques nationales/françaises?

7. Comment vos vins sont-ils influencés par des idées d’ailleurs?
   a. Pouvez-vous élaborer sur les types d’influences que vous entrouvoyez?
   b. D’où viennent ces influences?

8. Sur quels marchés aimeriez-vous vendre vos vins? Dans quels pays?

9. Fabriquez-vous avant tout des vins pour des Français (ou pour le marché français)? Ou, pensez-vous à son attrait pour des gens à l’extérieur de la France?

(Transition: J’aimerais poursuivre avec des questions sur la manière dont vous vendez vos vins.)

**Thème: Questions sur la valeur**

1. Comment vendez-vous vos vins? Quels arguments de vente utilisez-vous?
   a. Pouvez-vous me parler des caractéristiques que vous accentuez quand vous parlez de vos vins aux consommateurs?
b. Quelles méthodes de production sont présentées ou décrites dans le marketing/la vente de vos vins?

c. Quels liens faites-vous avec le lieu/CDP lors de la vente de vos vins? (Comment présentez-vous CDP lors de la vente de vos vins?)

2. Quel est votre rôle en tant que ____________ (viticulteur, négociant, etc) dans la production et la vente du vin?

3. Comment entrevoyez-vous la composante humaine vs l’élément « nature » dans la production du vin?
   a. Est-ce qu’un facteur (humain/nature) ressort plus que l’autre?

[Transition : parlons un peu de la qualité maintenant.]

4. Que veut dire le mot « qualité » en lien avec vos vins?
   a. Comment produisez-vous des vins de qualité? Qu’est-ce que cela implique?
   b. Qu’est-ce qui donne de la valeur à vos vins?
   c. Comment fabriquez-vous des vins de valeur? Qu’est-ce que cela implique?
   d. Comment reconnaîssez-vous que vos vins ont de la valeur ou de la qualité? Quels éléments vous signalent qu’ils ont de la valeur ou de la qualité?

5. Quelles personnes ou quelles institutions vous aident à déterminer ou à juger de la qualité de vos vins?
   a. Avez-vous confiance en ces jugements sur la qualité de vos vins?

(Transition: Je suis également intéressée par ce que vous pensez de l’authenticité et comment cela joue un rôle dans le vin.)

Thème: Questions authenticité

1. Quand je vous dis, « authenticité », à quoi pensez-vous?

2. Que signifie « authenticité » pour vos vins en particulier?

3. Quel serait un exemple d’un vin authentique à votre avis?

4. Par contraste, quel serait un exemple d’un vin inauthentique ou moins authentique?
   a. Pouvez-vous expliquer et décrire comment ce vin est moins authentique ou inauthentique par rapport à votre premier exemple?

5. Qu’est-ce qui garantit l’authenticité d’un produit comme le vin d’appellation CDP?
(Transition: Finalement, j’aimerais terminer avec quelques questions sur l’origine et le terroir.)

1. Que veut dire « terroir » pour vous? Comment définissez-vous ce terme?

2. Pourquoi le terroir est-il important pour les vins que vous produisez ici à (nom de l’exploitation)?

3. Comment et dans quel contexte avez-vous appris ou entendu parler de l’idée du terroir pour la première fois?
   a. Où avez-vous appris ou entendu parler de l’idée du terroir pour la première fois?

4. À votre avis, d’où vient l’idée de terroir?

5. Parlez-vous du terroir et comment cela est lié aux vins que vous produisez avec d’autres viticulteurs?

6. Est-ce que votre patron vous parle du terroir et comment cela est lié aux vins que vous produisez?

7. Et les consommateurs? Est-ce qu’ils vous parlent du terroir et comment cela est lié aux vins qu’ils goûtent et achètent?
   a. Est-ce que le terroir les intéresse?
   b. Est-ce que vous pensez que le terroir est compris et valorisé par les consommateurs français?

8. Comment le terroir se transforme-t-il? Est-ce qu’on en discute toujours de la même manière, ou avez-vous remarqué des changements dans la manière dont on en parle depuis que vous travaillez dans ce secteur?

9. Comment utilisez-vous le terroir pour décrire ou caractériser vos vins?

10. Est-ce que le terroir joue un rôle dans la création de valeur autour des vins?

11. Est-ce que le terroir rend un vin plus authentique selon vous?

12. Et la qualité du vin, est-ce que cela est lié au terroir, à votre avis?

13. Selon vous, est-ce qu’il existe des produits du terroir en dehors de la France?

14. Comment entrevoyez-vous le terroir à l’extérieur de la France? Croyez-vous que le terroir existe ailleurs de la même manière qu’en France?

15. Pensez-vous que tout Français comprend l’idée de terroir?

16. Pensez-vous que tout Français se sent concerné par l’idée de terroir?
17. Pensez-vous que le terroir revêt des aspects négatifs?
   a. Lesquels?

18. Pensez-vous que le terroir revêt des connotations nationalistes?

Questions additionnelles??

1. Avez-vous déjà entendu le terme «somewhereness» pour décrire le terroir? Trouvez-vous que ce soit une bonne traduction du terme «terroir»?

2. Que pensez-vous des recherches qui tentent d’isoler de manière scientifique et très précise la cause de l’effet de terroir, en point vers la flore bactérienne, par exemple?

Conclusion

Merci d’avoir répondu à mes questions aujourd’hui. Ce fût un plaisir de discuter avec vous et d’apprendre à connaître vos vins. Avez-vous des questions pour moi avant que nous terminions?

Je devrais avoir recueilli tous les renseignements qu’il me faut. Par contre, est-ce que ce serait possible de vous recontacter si jamais j’ai d’autres questions?

Merci encore pour votre participation à cette entrevue!
English version

**Introduction**

Hello, my name is Sarah Cappeliez and I am a doctoral candidate at the University of Toronto. I am working on a project that looks at the role of place and origin (what can be termed as “terroir”) in the production and consumption of wine in Niagara.

I would like to ask you some questions about the winery, the wine you produce here at ___________(name of winery) and how the wines you produce relate to place and origin (or terroir).

I hope to use this information to better understand how place and origin (terroir) contribute and affect wine production and consumption in Niagara.

The interview should take about XX minutes.

(Transition: Let me begin by asking you some general questions about the winery)

**Main questions/Body of interview**

**Topic: General winery questions**

1. When was (name of winery) established?
2. How many cases of wine do you produce per year here?
3. How many acres of land are used to grow grapes for the winery?
4. Do you use only your own grapes for wine production?
   a. If not, where do those other grapes come from?
5. How many different types of wines do you produce?
6. Are all of these VQA wines?

(Transition to the next topic: Let’s continue with some questions about the wines you produce specifically at (name of winery))

**Topic: Product questions**

10. Can you describe the types of wine you produce here?
11. What types of production methods do you use?
   a. Are these considered traditional in your “industry”?
12. What do you think contributes to your product? What “makes” your product the way it is?

13. What do you consider are some of the traditional aspects of your wine and its production?
   a. Where do these traditions come from?
   b. Why do you think they are they important to the production of your wines?

14. What do you consider are some of the new or innovative aspects of your wine and its production?
   a. Where do these innovations come from?
   b. Why do you think they are important to the production of your wines?

15. Can you describe how your product is unique to your location/to this place?

16. How do you think your wine showcases regional characteristics?

17. How do you think your wine showcases national characteristics?

18. How do you think your wines have been influenced by ideas from elsewhere?
   a. What kinds of influences would these be?
   b. Where would these influences come from?

19. Where in the world do you want your wines to go or to be sold? On what markets would you like to see your wines sold?

20. Do you make your wines mainly for Canadians, or do you think about its appeal to people outside Canada?

(Transition to next topic: So, I want to continue with some questions about quality and value when it comes to your wines)

**Topic: Value questions**

21. How do you market or sell your wines?
   b. Maybe you can talk to me about some of the characteristics you tend to emphasize in your wines to your consumers?
   c. What production methods are presented or described in the marketing of your wines?
   d. What connections do you make to place/to Niagara in selling your wines?
e. How do you see the role of nature in making your wine?

f. How do you view the role of humans in making your wine?

g. Which is more important to you in crafting a wine: the role of nature or the role of humans?

22. What does “quality” mean to you in terms of your wines?

h. How do you achieve quality in your wines? What is involved in making a quality wine?

23. What do you think makes your wines valuable?

24. How do you know your wines are valuable or of high quality? What kinds of things do you look for to tell you that they are valuable or of high quality?

25. Who do you turn to to determine or judge quality for wine?

i. Do you have faith in these people’s judgments on quality?

(Transition to next topic: I’m curious about what you think of authenticity and how it plays a part in wine production, and have a few questions about that as well.)

**Topic: Authenticity questions**

26. When you think of authenticity, what does it mean to you?

27. What does authenticity mean to your wine in particular?

28. What would be an example of an authentic wine in your view?

29. In contrast, what would be an example of an inauthentic wine?

b. Can you describe how this wine is inauthentic, or less authentic when compared to your first example?

(Transition to next topic: Finally, I’d like to wrap up with a few questions about place and origin, and specifically about terroir.)

30. What does terroir mean to you? How do you define it?

31. Why is terroir important to the wines you make here at (name of winery)?

32. How did you first hear or learn about the idea of terroir?

a. Where did you first hear or learn about the idea of terroir?
33. In your mind, where do you think the idea of terroir comes from?

34. Do you talk to other wine producers about terroir and how it relates to the wines you make?

35. Does your boss talk to you about terroir and how it relates to the wines you make?

36. What about consumers? Do they talk to you about terroir and how it relates to the wines they are tasting? Is this something they’re interested in?

37. How has terroir changed? Is it always talked about in the same ways, or have you noticed a change in how it’s discussed in the years since you’ve been involved in wine?

38. How do you use terroir to describe or characterize your product?

39. Does terroir play a role in the value of wine?

40. Does terroir make a wine more authentic in your view?

41. What about the quality of wine, does terroir play a role there in your view?

42. Do you think that terroir has any sort of negative implications? 
   b. What might these be?

43. Do you consider that terroir has nationalist connotations?

**Conclusion**

Well, it has been a pleasure to speak with you today and to find out more about your winery and the wines you produce. Do you have any questions you’d like to ask me before we wrap up?

I should have all the information I need. Would it be alright if I contacted you if I have any more questions?

Thank you again for your time and participation in this interview!
APPENDIX B – Example of interview schedule for cultural intermediary/wine expert

**General questions**

1. When did you begin writing about wines?
2. When did you start writing specifically on the wines made in Niagara, Ontario?
3. How would you describe the wine critic’s role in the wine world?
4. How do you see your role in the Ontario wine scene?
5. What do you consider are some of the traditional aspects of Niagara wines and winemaking?
6. What are some of the newer or more innovative aspects of Niagara wines and winemaking?
7. What do you think contributes to the distinctiveness of Niagara as a wine region? What makes Niagara wines special or distinctive?
8. How do you think that Niagara wines have been influenced by ideas from elsewhere?
9. What does quality mean to you as a wine writer?
10. What makes wines valuable?
11. Who determines quality or value in wines? How are these elements established?
12. What does “authenticity” mean to you?
13. What would be an example of an authentic wine in your view?
14. In contrast, what would be an example of an inauthentic wine?
15. What does terroir mean to you? How do you define it?
16. Why is terroir important to wines? Why is it important to Niagara wines?
17. Do you think terroir has any negative implications? If so, what are they?
18. Do you think that the term “somewhereness” is better suited for the North American/Canadian audience than “terroir”? If so, why? If not, why not?
APPENDIX C – Interview schedule for consumers

Wine education/knowledge questions

1) How would you describe your level of wine knowledge?

2) What are some of the ways you’ve learned more about wine? What types of activities, tools or resources have you used to help you learn more about wine?

3) What initially drew you to wine/the world of wine? What got you interested in wine?

4) What motivated you to dive deeper into the world of wine or learn more about this interest?

5) In what context(s)/settings do you use your knowledge on wine? (in a work setting? With friends? At a fancy restaurant? At the LCBO?)

6) What do you like about being knowledgeable about wine?

   a) What does it bring to you personally (and professionally for those that use it in that context)?

7) Why do you think people are drawn to learn more about wine? Why do you think people would like to study or learn more about wine?

   a) Why do some people care about wine, and other people just drink ‘whatever’? (or phrase another way)

8) In contrast, what do you think would put people off the idea of learning about wine? What would turn some people off from the world of wine?

9) In your experience, how do people generally show that they know about wine? What types of things would they know? How would they demonstrate that they know these things?

Wine culture questions

10) How does the wine culture in Canada compare to that of Europe, or of France more specifically? Why is that you think?

11) How would you describe the wine culture here in Ontario?

   a) Who seems to enjoy Ontario wine? Who seems to favour Old world wines and maybe look down on Ontario wines? Why do you think this is the case?

12) Where do you go to drink/taste/purchase wines? (wine bars, restaurants, wineries, LCBO, other?) What draws you to these places?
**Terroir questions**

13) What does terroir mean to you? How do you define it?
   
   a) How did you first hear or learn about the idea of terroir?
   
   b) Where did you first hear or learn about the idea of terroir?

14) How do you use terroir to describe or characterize the wines you taste?

15) In your mind, where do you think the idea of terroir comes from?

16) Why is terroir important to wine? What does terroir bring to wine?

17) Do you talk to wine amateurs about terroir and how it relates to the wines you are tasting?

18) [for those who work with wine in restaurant, etc] Does your boss talk to you about terroir and how it relates to the wines you sell?

19) In your experience, what does terroir mean to consumers in Ontario? Which consumers understand it? Which consumers don’t?

20) How has terroir changed? Is it always talked about in the same ways, or have you noticed a change in how it’s discussed in the years since you’ve been involved in wine?

21) Do you think that terroir has any sort of negative implications?
   
   c. What might these be?

Do you consider that terroir has nationalist connotations?
APPENDIX D – Consent forms

Consent for Participation in “Diffusing terroir: A comparative study of the role of terroir in food and wine in France and Canada”

I volunteer to participate in the research project conducted by Sarah Cappeliez from the University of Toronto. I understand that the project is designed to gather information about the role of place and origin in winemaking and cheese making practices in France and Canada. I will be one of approximately 20 to 30 people being interviewed for this research study.

1. My participation in this project is voluntary. I understand that I will not be paid for my participation. I may withdraw and discontinue participation at any time without penalty, up until the completion of the study and the publication of results.

2. I understand that most interviewees will find the discussion interesting and thought-provoking. If, however, I feel uncomfortable in any way during the interview session, I have the right to decline to answer any questions or to end the interview.

3. Participation involves being interviewed by Sarah Cappeliez from the University of Toronto. The interview will last approximately 45-60 minutes. The interview will be digitally recorded by voice recorder and later transcribed. Notes may be taken during the interview.

4. I understand that the researcher will not identify me by name in any reports using information obtained from this interview, and that my confidentiality as a participant in this study will remain secure. Subsequent uses of records and data will be subject to standard data use policies, which protect anonymity of individuals and institutions. I understand that there are no foreseeable risks associated with my participation in this research study.

5. I understand that this research study has been reviewed and approved by the University of Toronto Research Ethics Board (REB) for studies involving Human Subjects. If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about this project and/or your rights as a research participant, you may contact the researcher, her supervisor (contacts below), or the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Toronto (ethics.review@utoronto.ca, 416-946-3273).

6. I have read and understand the explanation provided to me. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

7. I have been given a copy of this consent form.

_________________________  ______________________
My Signature                  Date

_________________________  ______________________
My Printed Name               Signature of the Investigator

For owners / managers:
I voluntarily agree that my business be part of this study:

_________________________
My Signature

For further information, please contact:

**Principal Investigator:** Sarah Cappeliez, PhD Student

**Supervisor:** Dr. Josée Johnston, Associate Professor
Consentement pour participation au projet « Diffusing terroir : A comparative study of the role of terroir in food and wine in France and Canada »


1. Ma participation à ce projet est complètement libre. Je comprends que je ne serai pas compensé pour ma participation. Je peux mettre fin à ma participation à ce projet de recherche à tout moment sans avoir à motiver ma décision, ni à subir de préjudice de quelque nature que ce soit, et ce, jusqu’à l’achèvement du projet et la publication des résultats.

2. Je comprends que la plupart des participants trouveront les entrevues intéressantes et stimulantes. Cependant, si je me sens inconfortable lors de l’entrevue, je peux refuser de répondre à toute question, ou même mettre fin à l’entrevue.


4. Je comprends que la chercheuse ne m’identifiera pas par nom dans les rapports qui utilisent les données de mon entrevue, et que mes renseignements demeureront strictement confidentiels, si désiré. Les données du projet de recherche pourront être publiées dans des revues scientifiques ou partagées avec d’autres personnes lors de discussions scientifiques. Je comprends que ma participation à la recherche ne devrait pas comporter d’inconvénients significatifs, si ce n’est le fait de donner de mon temps.

5. Je comprends que ce projet de recherche a été revu et approuvé par le Comité d’éthique de la recherche de l’Université de Toronto (University of Toronto Research Ethics Board (REB) for studies involving Human Subjects). Pour toute question ou plainte au sujet de ce projet et/ou de mes droits en tant que participant à cette recherche, je peux m’adresser à la chercheure, sa superviseure (renseignements ci-dessous), ou le Bureau de l’éthique en recherche à l’Université de Toronto (ethics.review@utoronto.ca, 416-946-3273).

6. J’ai lu et je comprends les renseignements sur le projet qui m’ont été donnés. Toutes mes questions ont été adressées de manière satisfaisante, et j’accepte librement de participer à cette étude.

7. J’ai reçu une copie de ce formulaire de consentement.

Pour tous les participants, veuillez initialiser l’une des deux options :

Je désire participer de manière anonyme. _____________

OU

Je ne désire pas participer de manière anonyme. _____________

Pour les propriétaires / gérants, veuillez initialiser l’une des deux options :
Je désire maintenir l’anonymat de mon entreprise et de mes employés. _____________

OU

Je désire que mon entreprise / que mes employés soient nommés dans cette étude. _____________

________________________  ______________________
Ma signature              Nom en lettres moulées

________________________  ______________________
Date                      Signature de la chercheure

Pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez contacter:

Chercheure principale:    Sarah Cappeliez, Doctorante

Superviseure:             Dr. Josée Johnston, Professeure adjointe
APPENDIX E – Invitations to participate for Châteauneuf-du-Pape and Niagara cases

Sarah Cappeliez  
Département de sociologie  
University of Toronto

Nom du domaine/vigneron  
Adresse du domaine/vigneron

DATE

Objet : Projet de recherche : Diffusing terroir: A comparative case-study of the role of terroir in food and wine in Canada and France

Madame, Monsieur,


Je prévois que les entretiens prendront entre 60 et 90 minutes, et ceux-ci auront normalement lieu au vignoble même à une date et une heure qui vous conviendra. En plus des entretiens, j’aimerais aussi participer et observer le fonctionnement du vignoble. Ceci impliquerait de passer du temps au vignoble lors de visites sur une période de quelques semaines en avril 2014 afin de pouvoir observer et participer de manière non-intrusive ou gênante aux activités journalières du vignoble. Je propose également de prêter main-forte et de vous aider avec les tâches quotidiennes au vignoble lors de ces visites.

J’aimerais vous inviter à participer à mon projet. J’entrevois que mon étude sur le rôle du terroir dans la production et la consommation des vins en France et au Canada aidera à mieux comprendre comment le terroir accroît la valeur et positionne les produits artisanaux sur le marché international. Je prévois aussi que cette étude aidera à mieux comprendre comment les
consommateurs en France et au Canada réagissent face à l’élément du terroir en ce qui a trait aux vins. Si vous acceptez de participer à cette étude, vous et votre vignoble pourrez participer de manière anonyme, ou, si vous le désirez, je peux inclure votre nom et celui de votre vignoble lors de la publication de mes résultats.

J’espère que vous accepterez de prendre part à ce projet. Veuillez m’envoyer un courriel à ... si vous êtes intéressés à participer à l’étude. Je prendrai contact avec vous pour discuter de dates possibles pour ma période de recherche sur le terrain dans votre vignoble qui aura lieu en avril. Je prévois être en France du 2 avril jusqu’au 2 mai.


Si vous désirez des renseignements supplémentaires ou vous avez des questions, n’hésitez pas à me contacter à ... ou par téléphone au ... Vous pouvez également prendre contact avec ma superviseure, Professeur Josée Johnston à l’adresse suivante: ...

Merci d’avance pour votre temps et considération. Au plaisir d’avoir de vos nouvelles!

Cordialement,

Sarah Cappeliez
Dear Sir/Madam,

I am currently undertaking a doctorate in sociology at the University of Toronto. As part of the degree programme I am required to complete a dissertation research project. I have chosen to undertake a qualitative study exploring the role of place and origin in the production and consumption of wine and cheese in France and Canada.

I am seeking to study between 3 and 5 wineries in Ontario regarding the role of place and origin in the production and consumption of wine. I am looking to interview winemakers and producers at these wineries regarding their experiences surrounding this topic. The interview schedule is anticipated to take between 60 and 90 minutes and will normally take place on location at the winery at a date and time that is convenient to participants.

I am also hoping to engage in participant-observation at wineries. This will involve making regular visits to the wineries in order to observe and participate unobtrusively in the winery’s daily operations involving production (care of vineyards, bottling, etc) and consumption (tastings, wine tours, etc).

I am inviting your winery to participate in this study. I hope that by exploring the role of place and origin in the production and consumption of wines in Ontario, this will lead to increased knowledge and insight into how place and origin are used to give value and position a product on the global marketplace, as well as how consumers respond to this element of place and origin in these products. I hope that you and your winery will agree to participate in this study.

Should you wish to take part in the study, please let me know by responding to this letter. I will then contact you to discuss suitable times for interviews and for participant-observation at the winery. If I do not hear from you I will assume that you do not want to participate, and I will not contact you again.

All participants who are interviewed will be required to give consent. I will provide consent forms at the time of the interview. The interview will be audio taped. All information will be confidential, and no identifiable data will be included in the study. All data from the interview
will be managed, stored and disposed of securely. Also, your right to withdraw from the study at any stage is guaranteed.

If you require any additional information or have any questions for me, please contact me at … or by telephone at …. 

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Sarah Cappeliez
APPENDIX F – Example of recruitment material for consumer study

Seeking Wine Enthusiasts in the GTA to Interview!

NOVEMBER 28, 2014 | SARAHCAPPELIEZ

Are you a Toronto wine enthusiast who has sought to deepen your knowledge of wine? Do you love talking about your passion for wine? If so, I’d like to speak with you! As part of my dissertation project, I am researching wine education in Ontario and looking at the role it plays in the wine drinking culture in Ontario. I am seeking interview participants who’ve sought to deepen their knowledge of wine (through books, wine workshops/courses, winery tours, etc) so that I can better understand why people are drawn to wine and why they might seek to pursue that interest in a deeper manner. By speaking with wine lovers like you, I hope to further understand what draws consumers to engage with learning about wine, as well as how they view their knowledge about wine. If you would like to participate, I would be happy to arrange an interview at a date, time and location that are convenient for you. Please email Sarah Cappeliez at ... to set up an interview, or if you have any questions about the study. **This research has received ethics approval from the University of Toronto.