

Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution: A Comparison of Campaigns in Great Britain and the United States

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Bachelor Thesis
2016



Tomas Bata University in Zlín
Faculty of Humanities

Univerzita Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně
Fakulta humanitních studií
Ústav moderních jazyků a literatur
akademický rok: 2015/2016

ZADÁNÍ BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE

(PROJEKTU, UMĚLECKÉHO DÍLA, UMĚLECKÉHO VÝKONU)

Jméno a příjmení: **Karolína Belancová**
Osobní číslo: **H13351**
Studijní program: **B7310 Filologie**
Studijní obor: **Anglický jazyk pro manažerskou praxi**
Forma studia: **prezenční**

Téma práce: **Revolúcia jedla Jamieho Olivera: Porovnanie kampaní vo Veľkej Británii a Spojených štátoch**

Zásady pro vypracování:

Vyhľadanie a preštudovanie odbornej literatúry k danej téme
Stanovenie cieľa práce
Výber a spracovanie relevantných materiálov
Analýza získaných informácií
Porovnanie rozdielov kampaní Jamieho Olivera vo Veľkej Británii a Spojených štátoch
Vypracovanie a formulácia záveru

Rozsah bakalářské práce:

Rozsah příloh:

Forma zpracování bakalářské práce: **tištěná/elektronická**

Seznam odborné literatury:

Gupta, Arun. "How TV Superchef Jamie Oliver's 'Food Revolution' Flunked Out." *AlterNet*, April 7, 2010. Accessed November 10, 2015. http://www.alternet.org/story/146354/how_tv_superchef_jamie_oliver's_'food_revolution'_flunked_c

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Smith, Gilly. *Jamie Oliver: Turning up the Heat : A Biography*. Updated ed. London: Andre Deutsch, 2008.

Smith, Gilly. *The Jamie Oliver Effect: The Man: The Food: The Revolution*. Updated ed. London: Andre Deutsch, 2008.

Vedoucí bakalářské práce: **Gregory Jason Bell, B.A., M.B.A., M.A., Ph.D.**
Ústav moderních jazyků a literatur

Datum zadání bakalářské práce: **13. listopadu 2015**

Termín odevzdání bakalářské práce: **6. května 2016**

Ve Zlíně dne 7. ledna 2016


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ABSTRAKT

Táto bakalárska práca je zameraná na kampane Jamieho Olivera o revolúcií jedla vo Veľkej Británii a v Spojených štátoch amerických v rokoch 2004 až 2011. Práca porovnáva tieto dve kampane, identifikuje úspechy a neúspechy a dokumentuje dôvody. Taktiež sa detailne zaoberá vývojom Oliverovej filozofie jedla ako zbrani proti obezite. V konečnom dôsledku, práca dokazuje, že Oliverove stratégie viedli k zmene životného štýlu a zlepšeniu zdravia mnohých ľudí nie len vo Veľkej Británii a Spojených štátoch amerických, ale po celom svete.

Kľúčové slová: Jamie Oliver, jedlo, revolúcia jedla, Veľká Británia, Spojené štáty americké, obezita, zdravý životný štýl, filozofia jedla, školské menu

ABSTRACT

This bachelor's thesis is focused on Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution campaigns in Great Britain and in the United States from 2004 to 2011. It compares these two campaigns, identifies their successes and failures and documents the reasons. It also details the development of Oliver's food philosophy as a weapon against obesity. Ultimately, the thesis proves that Oliver's strategies led to a change of lifestyle and health improvement for many people, not just in Great Britain and the United States, but worldwide.

Keywords: Jamie Oliver, food, food revolution, Great Britain, United States, obesity, healthy lifestyle, food philosophy, school menu

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Gregory Jason Bell, for the opportunity to write my bachelor thesis with him. I would also like to thank him for his support, help, patience, professional advice and guidance.

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INTRODUCTION

Modern life is often fast-paced and stressful, reflecting negatively on our health. People simply lack the time to prepare meals, increasingly relying instead on fast food and junk food. But healthy food is key to a healthy lifestyle and can influence quality of life. Often because of poor food choices, the number of overweight and obese people is on the rise. Obesity does not necessarily hurt, but it causes limitations, which can decrease quality of life. Nowadays, through the Internet and other forms of mass media, people have easy access to information about healthy lifestyles. They can use technology to find out how to eat healthy and simply. Chefs, who use the media to demonstrate how to cook healthy foods, have become popular. One such chef, Jamie Oliver, has a passion for healthy food that he wants to share with the world. His culinary ideas have become a kind of philosophy that have positively influenced millions. This thesis will detail Oliver's food philosophy and describe his healthy eating campaigns in Great Britain and the United States. It will identify differences in these campaigns, and in doing so identify the reasons why the U.S. campaign failed. The Food Revolution in Los Angeles failed totally, in large part because Oliver did not receive the support of community leaders and parents. The Food Revolution in Huntington failed from a statistical point of view, because the obesity and other disease rates did not drastically change. However, the Food Revolution in Huntington did raise awareness about the local obesity problem. Several years later, with the help of the local hospital and university, lifestyle changes are still in progress, and it should not be forgotten that Jamie Oliver served as the catalyst for these changes. It is still too early to know if Oliver saved lives in Huntington, but he certainly improved the quality of some lives. For this, he deserves credit.

1 JAMIE OLIVER

Jamie Oliver is a talented British chef who found his life's "focus and meaning" in food.¹ Oliver has published 26 books, which have been translated into 29 languages and have sold over 37 million copies. In terms of book sales, he is the second most successful British author after J. K. Rowling. But Oliver is not just a chef and author; he is also an activist.²

1.1 Jamie Oliver's Revolutionary Journey

Jamie Oliver's career began quite inconspicuously. When he was 16, he left school, passed a cooking course at Westminster Catering College, and then started working at the River Café.³ His talent for the culinary arts and his ability to engage people's attention were noticed during a coincidental shooting at the cafe by a BBC TV crew. In 1997, BBC offered Oliver his own show, "The Naked Chef," and he became famous overnight.⁴ This was the beginning of Oliver's career. "The Naked Chef" became the most viewed television show in the world. Oliver also published a cook book called *The Naked Chef*, which became the best-selling cook book worldwide. Oliver became an acclaimed celebrity and chef thanks to the success of his TV show.⁵ "The Naked Chef" revealed mysteries of the culinary arts. The main idea of the show, and the reason for its success, was affordable and manageable cooking.⁶ The intention of "The Naked Chef" was to give people self-confidence in the kitchen. Oliver's recipes were simple to prepare at home, resulting in the same appearance.⁷ The series were broadcasted from 1999 to 2001 by BBC. When it ended, Oliver was 23 years old.⁸

His popularity also brought him a variety of offers, including one from the supermarket Sainsbury's. He accepted, and they cooperated together for almost eleven years.⁹ The main reason why he agreed to the offer was that he wanted to be closer to ordinary people. Oliver

¹ Jamie Oliver, *Jamie Oliver, The Naked Chef* (London: Penguin, 1999), Preface.

² Pál Szombor, "Kámo, všetko je o jedle!," *Forbes*, March 2016, 90-98.

³ Oliver, *Jamie Oliver*, Preface.

⁴ Szombor, "Kámo, všetko je o jedle!," 90-98.

⁵ "Jamie Oliver: Making a Positive Difference," Natural Health, accessed March 15, 2016, <http://www.wellbeing.com.au/adDetail/Jamie-Oliver:-Making-a-positive-difference-ad-106>.

Gilly Smith, *The Jamie Oliver Effect: The Man: The Food: The Revolution* (London: Andre Deutsch, 2008), 71-83.

⁶ Alex Witchel, "Putting America's Diet on a Diet," *New York Times*, October 6, 2009, accessed March 22, 2016, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/11/magazine/11Oliver-t.html>.

⁷ Oliver, *Jamie Oliver*, Preface.

⁸ Witchel, "Putting America's Diet on a Diet."

⁹ "Jamie Oliver and Sainsbury's End Their Partnership," BBC News, July 12, 2011, accessed April 10, 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/business-14126242>.

saw an opportunity to make fresh food accessible to the general public. He bought all ingredients for his television show at farmer's markets, and he was criticised for his cooperation with Sainsbury's supermarket. The contract with Sainsbury's was tempting from a financial point of view. He did not want to stop working with them, leading BBC to cancel his show.¹⁰ Simple recipes targeted to ordinary people were available in the supermarkets and also on leaflets. Oliver made the decision that he would change the eating habits of the British with the help of Sainsbury's.

At that time, there were many popular TV chefs, among them Gordon Ramsay and John Burton-Race. Jamie Oliver managed to succeed because he won favour with the general public thanks to his image as a clean-cut and ordinary boy who dispensed good advice on how to change eating habits.¹¹ Thanks to this, his successful media products, and his successful cooperation with Sainsbury's, he was able to start a food revolution. He launched further projects, "Fifteen" and "Jamie's Dinners," which demonstrated his desire and determination to change things. It was this desire that made Oliver different from other television chefs and caused him stand out from the crowd. Beyond popularity and promotion, he wanted change, and he attempted to use his popularity for the good of people.¹²

Oliver had a remarkable impact. He influenced how people did the shopping and what they cooked and ate. In general, supermarkets in Great Britain were offering enormous amounts of precooked and processed food. Oliver found out that people in Great Britain were not used to cooking; they just reheated precooked meals. He took advantage of his influence on people in order to limit junk food and processed food in British diets. He urged Brits to buy fresh and a high-quality food products.¹³ Together with Sainsbury's, he was trying to make healthy and fresh food more accessible to commoners. His intention was to get people interested in cooking and spending more time in the kitchen. He was trying to increase people's interest in seasonal foods and to make them aware of the origins of the food they were consuming.¹⁴

In 2002, Oliver opened his own restaurant, Fifteen, with financial capital provided by Sainsbury's.¹⁵ This London restaurant had a charitable character. Oliver hired young people

¹⁰ Szombor, "Kámo, všetko je o jedle!," 90-98.

¹¹ Smith, *The Jamie Oliver Effect*, 111-113.

¹² Smith, *The Jamie Oliver Effect*, 111-116.

¹³ Smith, *The Jamie Oliver Effect*, 130-131.

¹⁴ Smith, *The Jamie Oliver Effect*, 134.

¹⁵ Smith, *The Jamie Oliver Effect*, 184-192.

from poor social backgrounds and gave them a chance of a better life. This instilled in people the impression that Oliver was not only interested in fame, but was sincerely trying to give back to society.¹⁶ The restaurant was immediately successful. Daily, around 3,000 people called there in search of reservations. Soon, the restaurant was franchised internationally. Consistently in these restaurants, Oliver personally trained and employed young chefs from disadvantaged backgrounds. The end of his BBC contract and the success of Fifteen then prompted him to start his own production company.¹⁷

In 2004, Jamie Oliver started to realize his true power and impact. As a father of two, he decided to take a close look at the eating habits of British children. He was greatly disappointed and vowed to do what he could to improve childhood diets.¹⁸ He visited Kidbrooke School in Greenwich, London. He discovered, to his dismay, that the school regularly fed its pupils a main course of fast food low in nutritional value. Children were eating processed meat and vegetable nuggets made from instant powder. This visit gave him a sense of purpose, and he launched The Food Revolution in Great Britain.¹⁹

As part of this revolution, he launched a campaign called “Jamie’s School Dinners” in the hope that improved diets would positively influence children’s behaviour and study results.²⁰ Thanks in part to the popularity of an online petition called “Feed Me Better,” Oliver managed to persuade the British government to invest more than one billion pounds in his campaign to improve school lunches.²¹

Next, he launched a campaign and television series in Great Britain called “Jamie’s Ministry of Food.” The project was centred in the north of England in Rotterdam, where statistics showed a high rate of obese people and related diseases. The television show presented the idea that healthy cooking and eating is not just for rich families, but was also affordable for poor families. He taught locals how to cook simple recipes and how to implement them into their daily lives. Such campaigns generally met with success and positive reactions, prompting Oliver to attempt to spread his food revolution to the United States.²²

¹⁶ Witchel, “Putting America’s Diet on a Diet.”

¹⁷ Szombor, “Kámo, všetko je o jedle!” 90-98.

¹⁸ Smith, *The Jamie Oliver Effect*, 199-200.

¹⁹ Smith, *The Jamie Oliver Effect*, 200-201.

²⁰ Witchel, “Putting America’s Diet on a Diet.”

²¹ Witchel, “Putting America’s Diet on a Diet.”

²² Witchel, “Putting America’s Diet on a Diet.”

Oliver's American campaign was modelled after his British one. He took the Food Revolution to Huntington, West Virginia, statistically the most obese city in America, as well as to Los Angeles, California, which had statistically high numbers of obesity and related diseases. He wanted to help Americans in these locations appropriate a healthier lifestyle. He failed.²³

1.2 Jamie Oliver's Philosophy

Diet serves as a foundation of a healthy lifestyle. Jamie Oliver's philosophy of food is based on a balanced diet. According to Oliver, food is both enjoyable and essential. He recommends that everyone eat various and healthy foods prepared from fresh ingredients.²⁴ Oliver, an experienced chef, claims that anyone can prepare food from fresh ingredients and also from scratch, an idea the chef propagates via media. Under these conditions, you can eat anything. His long-term experiences with food proved that you can have a meal in all kinds of varieties, but the meal has to be sensible and well-balanced.²⁵

Today's society offers lots of semi-products, pre-cooked products and fast foods, which are prepared mostly from poor-quality ingredients. Improper preparation, such as frying, is common. Society got to the point where food became the enemy. According to Oliver, people suffer from serious diseases as a result of bad eating habits.²⁶

Jamie Oliver's philosophy is based on proper food preparation, but he also contends that people should consume seasonal fruits and vegetables and local products. This approach is also reflected in the price of food. Oliver contends that it is cheaper and obviously much healthier to eat well in comparison with consuming semi-products from supermarkets or fast-food. He attempts to inspire people to make better choices regarding their meals. By better choices, he means the usage of fresh, seasonal, local products.²⁷ When Oliver speaks about this approach to eating, he means to create a balance between what is good and healthy for us and also locally available and affordable.²⁸

Jamie wanted to transfer his theories into practice. He tried to explain to people that they have to eat fresh, balanced and varied food in adequate quantities. People often do not think

²³ Witchel, "Putting America's Diet on a Diet."

²⁴ "Food Philosophy," Jamie Oliver, accessed March 13, 2016, <http://www.jamieoliver.com/philosophy/>.

²⁵ "Food Philosophy."

²⁶ "Food Philosophy."

²⁷ "Food Philosophy."

²⁸ "Food Philosophy."

about what they eat. Food consumption involves choices. They can eat grilled chicken breast with vegetables instead of fried chicken nuggets with french fries. They should start making smart choices about what to eat for breakfast, lunch and dinner, as such choices will reflect on their future health.²⁹

1.3 Obesity: A common problem

A huge number of people worldwide suffer from obesity. In the twenty-first century in the United States, obesity has affected all ages, including children. Obesity is still increasing.³⁰ Factors, which can cause obesity are poverty, a sedentary lifestyle, junk food advertisements and an excessive amount of processed food, which is full of additives.³¹ Obesity and being overweight come hand in hand with a large number of health problems that might reduce life expectancy. Even children under age 2 are overweight, which reduces their options.³²

Oliver looked at various studies. One, published by *The New York Times*, shows that children who are overweight are twice more likely to die before the age of 55 than their peers.³³ Reasons for a reduced life expectancy include such obesity-related health problems as high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease or high cholesterol. The study also noted that every third American child is obese.³⁴

Corporations such as McDonald's and KFC encourage unhealthy eating through their advertisements and promotions. People often allow the advertisements to influence their choices, despite the warnings of experts.³⁵ And once they establish poor eating habits, they are difficult to change. The poorly educated and the lower class are more susceptible to

²⁹ "Food Philosophy."

³⁰ "The Proof: Why We Need a Food Revolution," Jamie Oliver, Accessed March 22, 2016, <http://www.jamieoliverfoodfoundation.org/usa/pdf/proof.pdf>.

³¹ Arun Gupta, "How TV Superchef Jamie Oliver's 'Food Revolution' Flunked Out," AlterNet, April 7, 2010, accessed November 10, 2015, http://www.alternet.org/story/146354/how_tv_superchef_jamie_oliver's_'food_revolution'_flunked_out.

³² "The Proof: Why We Need a Food Revolution."

³³ Roni Rabin, "Child Obesity Risks Death at Early Age, Study Finds," *New York Times*, February 10, 2010, accessed March 11, 2016, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/11/health/11fat.html?_r=1&.

³⁴ Joanna Walters, "Huntington, West Virginia Named Fattest US Town as Obesity Rate Rises," *Telegraph*, April 7, 2014, accessed March 9, 2016, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/northamerica/usa/10751039/Huntington-West-Virginia-named-fattest-US-town-as-obesity-rate-rises.html>.

³⁵ Nicole Barcan, "The Food Revolution of Huntington, West Virginia," February 17, 2016, accessed April 17, 2016, <https://nicolebarcan.myefolio.com/Uploads/The Food Revolution of Huntington, West Virginia.docx>.

obesity.³⁶ Obesity is not a problem that emerged overnight, and that is why it cannot be solved overnight. It is a long term process.³⁷

³⁶ R. Slocum et al., "Properly, with Love, from Scratch': Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution," *Radical History Review* (2011): 110, accessed November 10, 2015, doi:10.1215/01636545-2010-033.

³⁷ "Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution: One Year Later," *Vegan*, accessed April 11, 2016, <http://www.vegan.com/blog/jamie-olivers-food-revolution-one-year-later/>.

2 THE FOOD REVOLUTION IN GREAT BRITAIN

Eating habits in Great Britain were influenced by the industrial revolution and two world wars. Moreover, industrially-processed food started to become popular. Fresh and fine foods were available only to the rich. The food revolution was intended to provide healthy and affordable foods to middle and lower-class Brits. Oliver being a father himself inspired him to focus his attention especially on children. As a chef in a multicultural country, he was interested in various types of cuisines. As a citizen of the United Kingdom, he fretted over the unhealthy food rules in his country. He saw teaching British children to eat healthy as a way to improve the future of his country.³⁸

2.1 Reasons for the Food Revolution in the Great Britain

What truly alarmed Oliver was that, on a percentage basis, Great Britain was leading Europe in obese or overweight people. Every third child is obese, and there is also a growing tendency of people to have type 2 diabetes. If this trend continues, by 2020 half of all British children will be obese. In 2006, 15 % of children under age 10 were obese and they had problems with concentration and behaviour in school.³⁹ In addition, junk food contains fat, sugar, salt and minimal amounts of essential vitamins and minerals. An excessive consumption of this type of food might lead to health problems and goes hand in hand with mood fluctuations. Poor nutrition can lead to children lacking concentration and behaving poorly, which in turn negatively influences grades. Oliver pointed all of this out during his campaign to improve the diets of Brits.⁴⁰

2.2 Campaign: Jamie's School Dinners

Jamie Oliver revealed shocking facts about school canteens. His campaign in Great Britain in 2005 was called Jamie's School Dinners. This campaign focused on the improvement of the eating habits of British school children. At school, children had unbalanced diets with low nutritional values, heavy in sugar, salt and fat. Children often snacked, and most of them could not use a fork and a knife.⁴¹ Oliver pointed out the

³⁸ Jamie, Oliver, *Jamie's Great Britain* (London: Penguin, 2011), Preface.

³⁹ Michèle Belot and Jonathan James, "Healthy School Meals and Educational Outcomes," *Journal of Health Economics* 30 (2009): 489-504, accessed February 09, 2016, doi:10.1016/j.jhealeco.2011.02.003.

⁴⁰ "Why Fresh And Healthy School Meals?" School Food Matters, May 03, 2015, accessed April 22, 2016, <http://www.schoolfoodmatters.com/why-fresh-and-healthy-school-meals.html>.

⁴¹ "Starting a Revolution in Your School Dining Hall," Feed Me Better, accessed March 25, 2016, <http://www.feedmebetter.com/>.

disturbing facts:⁴² the government and corporations were in cahoots to make money at children's expense, and parents were ignorant or indifferent. Children were eating trash that was poisoning their bodies, but no one was advocating for them. To right the wrong, he made *Jamie's School Dinners*, a television show which portrayed Oliver's efforts to improve the food at a school in Greenwich. This show led to the campaign Feed Me better, which had a larger format.⁴³

2.3 Campaign: Feed Me Better

Jamie Oliver understood, that if he wanted to achieve real change, legislative changes were required. He asked for support from the government and media attention in order to help him change the eating habits of British children. In 2004, the chef organised an online petition called "Feed Me Better," and he appealed to parents to sign it and spread it around. His argument was that 10% of children arrive at primary school already obese, and 20% of children leave primary school obese. Childhood obesity is a huge challenge. Thanks to the campaign, the government admitted that a healthy diet is key to a healthy population. A good diet, exercise and a healthy lifestyle are the prerequisites of lower healthcare expenses.⁴⁴ The online petition "Feed Me Better" was signed by 271,677 individuals, and it could not be ignored by government. The results were given to Prime Minister Tony Blair. Accordingly, the government invested 280,000,000 pounds into British school canteens. The government grant improved not only the quality of food but also the kitchens that prepared it. Oliver stood behind the idea that every single school needed their own kitchen, and he claimed that kitchens are as important as gyms.⁴⁵ Furthermore, part of the grant was used to retrain cooks in school canteens.⁴⁶ From the legislative point of view, new food standards were implemented. Since 2005, these food standards have been gradually modified.⁴⁷

⁴² Smith, *The Jamie Oliver Effect*, 236.

⁴³ Smith, *The Jamie Oliver Effect*, 230-233.

⁴⁴ Matthew Holehouse and Ben Riley Smith, "Jamie Oliver Helping Government with Child Obesity Strategy, David Cameron Reveals," *Telegraph*, accessed April 2, 2016, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/11777077/Jamie-Oliver-helping-government-with-child-obesity-strategy-David-Cameron-reveals.html>.

⁴⁵ Smith, *The Jamie Oliver Effect*, 230-231.

⁴⁶ Jessica Shepherd, "School Children Shun Healthy School Meals," *The Guardian*, July 09, 2009, accessed March 27, 2016, <http://www.theguardian.com/education/2009/jul/09/failure-school-meals-revolution>.

⁴⁷ Laura Clark, "Jamie Oliver's School Meal Revolution Shunned by 400,000 Pupils," *Daily Mail*, accessed January 27, 2016, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1198566/Jamies-school-meal-revolution-shunned-400-000-pupils.html>.

2.4 Campaign: Jamie's Ministry of Food

Jamie's Ministry of Food is considered one of the most revolutionary food projects in Great Britain. This project was supposed to support cooking education. The main goal was to improve the cooking skills of common people, because learning how to cook from fresh ingredients means to eat a balanced diet. These benefits might have an impact on long-term health. Nowadays, people are slowly losing cooking skills and are increasingly relying on restaurants and fast food. Jamie's Ministry of Food wanted to teach people how to cook from scratch, because then they could turn fresh ingredients into a healthy and delicious meal. Jamie's Ministry of Food was inspired by a project from the Second World War, during which the British government hired chefs who taught the public to prepare the food from available ingredients, allowing them to adequately feed their families in times of rationing.⁴⁸

Jamie's Ministry of Food started in 2008 in Rotherham and gradually became a global project. Nowadays, this project operates in Great Britain, the United States and Australia. According to World Health Organisation research, the following facts were proved: eating habits are highly influenced by social class. In fact, there is a clearly positive correlation between obesity and being of the lower class. The social class has an impact on the eating habits of an individual. Many times, people do not have a choice. For example, someone born in a Glasgow suburb has a higher probability of living a shorter life than someone born just 13 kilometres away, in a richer area. People from lower social classes pick food that is cheap and filling. For example, 100 calories of high-quality meat costs 22 pounds, while 100 calories of poor quality and fatty sausage costs 4 pounds. Their deeply-rooted eating habits could not be changed overnight. The campaign Jamie's Ministry of Food was focused especially on lower social classes. Concrete families were engaged in the project too. They allowed television crews into their lives. For instance, Natasha and her two children, ages 5 and 2, took part in the project. Natasha never cooked at home from scratch and she did not have cooking skills. Her kids ate takeaway junk food, without cutlery and on the floor. Their fridge was full of the frozen and sugary products. The kids were overweight and had problems with their teeth. Oliver taught Natasha how to improve the lives of her children through healthy eating. Yet, after the campaign, Natasha and her children returned to their previous unhealthy ways. As the saying goes, you can lead a horse to water but you can't

⁴⁸ "Jamie's Ministry of Food," Jamie Oliver Website, accessed March 14, 2016, <http://www.jamieoliver.com/jamies-ministry-of-food/about.php>.

make it drink. True change is a difficult and long-term process. Although not always successful, Jamie's Ministry of Food realizes this and remains undaunted in its efforts to promote long-term lifestyle changes.⁴⁹

2.5 Campaign: Food for Life

The era of the unhealthy school lunches needed to end. The campaign Food for Life became a national campaign, which dealt with the question of child's nutrition. Parents decided to do something for the health of their offspring, and they did not want to tolerate the current situation anymore. The campaign was not just about promotion of a healthy lifestyle but also dealt with other serious issues.⁵⁰ The campaign focused on the understanding of basic questions connected with the health, such as where the food comes from, how it is grown, and how the food is prepared. The campaign tried to involve the youngest generation and increase their interest in food and health. Food for Life wanted to connect and engage whole communities of people, because that would be the only way to achieve long-term changes.⁵¹

Oliver knew that if he wanted actual change, he needed to attract politicians. He succeeded and received conservative politician Michael Howard's endorsement. His main argument was that the diseases related to obesity might be more expensive for the government than investments into the healthy school meals.⁵²

2.6 The Benefits of the Food Revolution in Great Britain

On the one hand, the campaign was successful, because changes in eating habits really happened. On the other hand, Jamie Oliver's campaign also dealt with incomprehension by parents, who did not understand his intentions and did not support a change in their children's dietary habits. Some withdrew their kids from the school lunch program and gave them food from home. The main issue was that the nutritional value of the lunches from home was often not any better than the old version of the diet at the school canteens.⁵³

The vision of Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution in Great Britain was to achieve changes for everyone regardless of social class or status. High quality and healthy food was not

⁴⁹ Felicity Lawrence, "Jamie Oliver's TV Series Jamie's Ministry of Food," *The Guardian*, October 1, 2008, accessed March 15, 2016, <http://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2008/oct/01/foodanddrink.oliver>.

⁵⁰ Smith, *The Jamie Oliver Effect*, 244.

⁵¹ "Food for Life," Food for Life, accessed March 27, 2016, <http://www.foodforlife.org.uk/>.

⁵² Smith. *The Jamie Oliver Effect*, 246-247.

⁵³ Smith. *The Jamie Oliver Effect*, 247.

available for the poorest families. A significant change was more obvious among children from the middle and upper classes after the banning of junk food at school canteens.⁵⁴ In Great Britain, high-quality and healthy food was considered to be a privilege of the upper and middle classes. Jamie Oliver made a reference to the paradox that the best quality food comes from the poorest communities, because the food is self-produced and is not treated with chemicals.⁵⁵

According to Gilly Smith, “Jamie Oliver has exploded an interest in food that transcends age, class and culture.”⁵⁶ Oliver targeted his shows at young people; moreover, he used the media to catch their attention. He did focused campaigns on school-age children. The media started to write about food more, and that led to an increased interest in the topic, questions about healthy food and how nutrition is related to physical condition and health in general.⁵⁷

To sum it up, the campaign was successful because changes actually happened, but on the other hand, the message of Jamie Oliver’s Food Revolution did not reach enough people. From this point of view, the goals were not accomplished. The quality and healthy food was still not available for the poorest families, which was considered a failure.

One journalist aptly noted about Oliver’s campaign that it changed opinions on obesity in people’s minds. Oliver truly believed that changes could happen, and his belief inspired others. He named the problem, created a team with sufficient energy and motivation, identified a solution to the problem and guided people towards that solution. Oliver had to face a number of problems during the campaign: “insufficient government funding for nutritional lunches, lack of cooking skills among the lunch staff, the children’s usual eating habits that included an abundance of high fat, high sugar, nutrient poor food lacking variety, overcoming objections of the staff, students and parents.”⁵⁸ But he met these problems head on and overcame them. The success of Jamie Oliver was that he did not just identify the problems, he took action and offered specific and simple solutions, which attracted masses of people.

⁵⁴ Rachel Williams, “Jamie Oliver's School Dinners Shown to Have Improved Academic Results,” *The Guardian*, March 29, 2010, accessed March 11, 2016, <http://www.theguardian.com/education/2010/mar/29/jamie-oliver-school-dinners-meals>.

⁵⁵ Adam Sherwin, “Jamie Oliver: I Failed on School Dinners Because Eating Well Is a 'Posh and Middle Class' Concern,” *The Independent*, August 25, 2015, accessed March 26, 2016, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/education-news/jamie-oliver-i-failed-on-school-dinners-because-eating-well-is-a-posh-and-middle-class-concern-10469424.html>.

⁵⁶ Gilly Smith, *Jamie Oliver: Turning up the Heat: A Biography*. (London: André Deutsch, 2006), 224.

⁵⁷ Gilly Smith, *Fenoméni Jamie Oliver*, trans. Olga Neumanová (Praha: XYZ, 2011), 250.

⁵⁸ Holly Muggleston, “Is Food Nutrition Knowledge the Proof in the Pudding?: The Jamie Oliver Effect,” *Southern Cross University*: 6, accessed March 27, 2016, <http://www.textjournal.com.au/speciss/issue9/Muggleston.pdf>.

3 THE FOOD REVOLUTION IN THE UNITED STATES

Oliver elevated cooking and stressed the importance of culinary arts all over the world. The Food Revolution, he noted, carries the idea of choice.⁵⁹ His main idea was to involve people in a new lifestyle and give them a chance to live a healthy fulfilling life. Oliver analysed the situation in British society, and he suggested that their eating habits had to change. In America, it is popular to eat in various fast food restaurants, even though this could have negative consequences on health. Some people stopped cooking healthy meals at home, and as a result they lost their cooking skills. Moreover, American meals are often large. Restaurants even offer all-you-can-eat options. The consumers take it as a good bargain, but it causes uncontrollable overeating by entire families. Oliver was alarmed by this unhealthy trend,⁶⁰ and he became determined to use his influence to solve this problem.⁶¹ After limited success in Britain, he was determined to promote his Food Revolution in America. Despite his best efforts, the Food Revolution in America failed.

3.1 Huntington

Oliver took his Food Revolution to Huntington, West Virginia. The town had 50,000 citizens, many of whom were classified as obese or overweight. By percentage, Huntington had the largest amount of obese people in the United States, which led the U.S. Center for Disease Control to label it “the unhealthiest city in America.”⁶² This report was released in August 2008.⁶³ Oliver became interested in this problem and decided to try to change the eating habits of Huntingtonians. Huntington’s statistics were startling: 46% of adults were obese and there was a high probability of losing all natural teeth before age 65. The city also led the country in diseases such as heart disease, high cholesterol, high blood pressure and type B diabetes. Reportedly, there were more pizza places in Huntington than there were gyms and health clubs in the entire state of West Virginia.⁶⁴ Since heart disease, stroke, and

⁵⁹ Arun Gupta, “How TV Superchef Jamie Oliver's 'Food Revolution' Flunked Out.”

⁶⁰ “Why We Need a Food Revolution,” Jamie Oliver, accessed November 22, 2014, <http://www.jamieoliver.com/us/foundation/jamies-food-revolution/why>.

⁶¹ “Biography, in Brief,” Jamie Oliver, accessed March 23, 2016, <http://www.jamieoliver.com/about/jamie-oliver-biog/>.

⁶² Slocum et al., “Properly, with Love, from Scratch,” 180.

⁶³ “Continuing the Food Revolution in Huntington, West Virginia,” *The Huffington Post*, December 04, 2012, accessed April 02, 2016, http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/food-revolution/continuing-the-food-revol_b_1938811.html.

⁶⁴ Barcan, “The Food Revolution of Huntington, West Virginia,” 2.

diabetes are leading causes of death in the United States,⁶⁵ Huntington needed to make a radical change.⁶⁶ When Oliver and his team visited one of the school canteens in Huntington, they were shocked by what he saw: children ate pizzas for breakfast and fried chicken nuggets with chips for lunch. In response, Oliver told a reporter, “I’m here to show America just a little effort can make a massive difference.”⁶⁷ This is how The Food Revolution in America started.⁶⁸

Attempting to keep American culture and tastes in mind, Oliver set out to show American families how to make good food and how to prepare it from scratch in their homes. They wanted to teach them to avoid semi-prepared products at home, in restaurants or in school cafeterias.⁶⁹ Cafeterias were central to their effort, because twice a day, 31 million American children ate there. Oliver was not scared to point out the weaknesses of the American food industry, claiming that the industry lacked knowledge concerning the ill effects of the additives and E numbers in its products. In school cafeterias, french fries were classified as vegetables, pizzas were served for breakfast, and most of the food could be eaten by hand. Oliver and his team set out to create a “strong, sustainable movement to educate every child about food.”⁷⁰ In doing so, they assumed that if children demanded healthy food, parents and the food industry would respond to their demands. It was a bottom-up approach.

Despite his best intentions, the Food Revolution was met with resistance by Huntington school officials. The campaign had to change its strategy. It was necessary to find out what Huntington children were eating at school, so Oliver and his team had local children collect menus for him. On offer were fried meals served in plastic bowls heated in a microwave. With this knowledge, Oliver approached several school officials individually about his Food Revolution, and some agreed to participate in his program.⁷¹ Under his guidance, a few schools changed their lunch menus. Hamburgers and fries were replaced by fresh vegetables,

⁶⁵ Barcan, “The Food Revolution of Huntington, West Virginia,” 2.

⁶⁶ Barcan, “The Food Revolution of Huntington, West Virginia.” 1-3.

⁶⁷ “Jamie Oliver’s Food Revolution,” Oprah, accessed March 22, 2016, <http://www.oprah.com/oprahshow/Jamie-Olivers-American-Food-Revolution>.

⁶⁸ “Jamie’s Food Revolution: Huntington Schools 2 Years Later - Gilt Taste,” The Kitchen, accessed February 20, 2016, <http://www.thekitchn.com/jamies-food-rev-157925>.

⁶⁹ “Why We Need a Food Revolution.”

⁷⁰ Jamie Oliver, “Transcript of ‘Teach Every Child about Food’” Ted Talks, February 1, 2010, accessed January 18, 2016, https://www.ted.com/talks/jamie_oliver/transcript?language=en.

⁷¹ “A Food Revolution Destined to Fail? Jamie Oliver’s Second Trip into America’s Schools Doesn’t Start Off So Well,” CalorieLab Health RSS, accessed February 23, 2016, <http://calorielab.com/news/2011/04/19/jamie-olivers-second-trip-into-americas-schools/>.

pasta and fish. The children overwhelmingly rejected Oliver's menus. Over half of the children stopped eating lunch, and only one-third continued to visit the cafeterias. Much to Oliver's dismay, the children simply refused to eat his healthy meals. His project was failing.⁷²

Trying a new approach, Oliver and his television crew visited families who allowed them to look into their kitchens. Oliver met single-mother Stacy Edwards and her four children. One daughter was 4 years old at that time and already obese. Her 12-year-old son weighed 350 pounds. Due to his obesity, being bullied was a common experience for him.⁷³ The Edwards' fridge contained frozen pizzas and semi-prepared products. They had no fresh vegetables or fresh products. Oliver warned Ms. Edwards that the food in her fridge would kill her kids.⁷⁴ It was a powerful message.⁷⁵

The campaign made us of the media too. The project team believed that publicity could have a positive impact on changes in eating habits, not only at a local level but also worldwide. It could gradually inspire the general public. The whole concept of the Food Revolution in Huntington revolved around obesity, which was damaging the health of the majority of Huntington's citizens. The campaign focused only on the one community, which would then serve as a case study for what could be accomplished elsewhere.⁷⁶

Oliver cooperated with the ABC Television Network, which documented the whole food revolution in Huntington through a mini-series. The show was broadcasted in prime time, guaranteeing high ratings and increased negative publicity for the food industry. The effort to change the thinking of people required multiple approaches, which Oliver implemented. People needed to realize that obesity is an epidemic that cannot easily be cured. Oliver used his media experience to his campaign's benefit, taught Huntingtonians how to cook healthy and fresh foods, visited people's homes and analysed what they were consuming and gave them individual advice, and even changed school menus.⁷⁷

⁷² Laura Clark, "Jamie Oliver's School Meal Revolution Shunned by 400,000 Pupils."

⁷³ Oliver, "Transcript of 'Teach Every Child about Food'."

⁷⁴ "British Celebrity Chef Jamie Oliver in Tears over Failed US Food Revolution," *News*, March 24, 2010, accessed March 23, 2016, <http://www.news.com.au/entertainment/tv/british-celebrity-chef-jamie-oliver-in-tears-over-failed-us-food-revolution/story-e6frfmyi-1225844947395>.

⁷⁵ "Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution," Jamie Oliver, accessed November 25, 2014, http://www.jamieoliver.com/us/foundation/jamies-food-revolution/about_jamie_oliver.

⁷⁶ Barcan, "The Food Revolution of Huntington, West Virginia." 2-4.

⁷⁷ Barcan, "The Food Revolution of Huntington, West Virginia." 2-3.

The Huntington project was focused on the community, because Oliver believed that the community could help its individual members. The chosen community faced one particular problem.⁷⁸ It was “an extreme example.”⁷⁹ But, it was assumed that if his program worked in Huntington, then it would certainly work elsewhere. Oliver was able to find two individual, Pastor Steve Wills and Alice Gue, who were willing to assist him. One of the strategies was opening a public kitchen. Huntington’s kitchen was a “community food centre.”⁸⁰ People from the community met there and learned to cook simple and healthy foods, which Oliver told them was key to a healthy lifestyle. The main aim was to make information readily available. After the show ended and Oliver and his team left town, Huntington’s kitchen, taken over by the Marshall University School of Dietetics, continued to offer seminars, workshops and cooking courses.⁸¹

While in Huntington, Oliver taught thousands of locals how to cook simple and quick recipes. The biggest problem was to persuade people to visit the public kitchen and participate in the courses, but he succeeded with the help of Wills and Gue, community leaders who convinced locals to participate. Pastor Wills even gave sermons in his church about the body being a church, which is important to take care of through the adoption of a healthy lifestyle.⁸²

Oliver tried to persuade local politicians to support his cause. He wanted them to make changes in legislation, targeting the food industry. This strategy was successful in the United Kingdom, but it failed in Huntington.⁸³

The campaign in Huntington also had to overcome financial problems. The schools did not have money to provide new lunch menus. Furthermore, they did not have money for the re-training of school cooks. Oliver helped raise the necessary funds by lobbying Cabell Huntington Hospital, which agreed to provide funding for new school menus and the re-training of cooks at the school cafeterias.⁸⁴ Concretely, Cabell Huntington Hospital allocated the funds to all 28 Cabell County public schools. The grant was used for 12,500 students.⁸⁵

⁷⁸ Barcan, “The Food Revolution of Huntington, West Virginia.” 9.

⁷⁹ Barcan, “The Food Revolution of Huntington, West Virginia.” 6.

⁸⁰ “Welcome to the Kitchen - Huntington's Kitchen,” Huntington's Kitchen, accessed February 12, 2016, <http://huntingtons-kitchen.org/welcome/>.

⁸¹ “Welcome to the Kitchen - Huntington's Kitchen.”

⁸² Barcan, “The Food Revolution of Huntington, West Virginia.” 10.

⁸³ Barcan, “The Food Revolution of Huntington, West Virginia.” 10-12.

⁸⁴ Barcan, “The Food Revolution of Huntington, West Virginia.” 12-13.

⁸⁵ “Cabell Huntington Hospital’s Food Revolution,” Cabell Huntington Hospital, April 26, 2011, accessed October 7, 2015, <http://cabellhuntington.org/features/cabell-huntington-hospital-s-food-revolution/>.

Moreover, the hospital provided more than 250,000 dollars for Huntington's kitchen.⁸⁶ The hospital was aware that obesity was a threat to the community, because obesity among local children had doubled in the last 30 years. The hospital's financial support was key for Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution in Huntington. The hospital CEO approved of Oliver's program because he believed it would contribute to better health among Huntington's youngest generation.⁸⁷

3.2 Los Angeles

Jamie Oliver focused on children. He wanted to change their eating habits and give them a chance to live a healthy life. He also chose Los Angeles schools for his project, because more than a half of Los Angeles children were overweight or obese. Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution focused on the 75 school districts in Los Angeles, which is home to one of the largest school systems in the country. Oliver tried to change the nutritional values of the school lunches. He found out that their school lunches consisted of semi-products and junk food. The schools served the junk food because of budgetary constraints.⁸⁸ Oliver's vision was clear, but turning his theories into practice faced several hurdles. One of the biggest problems was a misunderstanding with Ramon Cortines, the superintendent of the Los Angeles United School District. Oliver needed his support, as well as the support of parents, to make the project happen, but he did not get either.

First, Los Angeles rejected the conditions required for Jamie Oliver's television show. Oliver used the media and made reality shows out of his campaign, but the Los Angeles Unified School District was not interested in publicizing their schools through reality television, which often looks for drama and conflict to increase ratings. Second, although children may have had an interest in Oliver's changes, adults did not. For example, most of the schools would not allow him on campus. Nor did parents back his efforts. Disappointed but undaunted, Oliver set up a kitchen for the Los Angeles community, where he wanted to organise seminars, courses and workshops concerning healthy food. This approach had been successful in Huntington, but was not in Los Angeles. Another kitchen was built in

⁸⁶ "Welcome to the Kitchen - Huntington's Kitchen."

⁸⁷ "Cabell Huntington Hospital's Food Revolution."

⁸⁸ David Gardner, "U.S. Loses Appetite for Jamie Oliver as 75 LA School Districts Turn Away His Food Revolution Show," Mail Online, January 18, 2011, accessed February 24, 2016, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1348158/U-S-loses-appetite-Jamie-Oliver-75-LA-school-districts-turn-away-Food-Revolution-show.html>.

Westwood, but it proved to be a bad location in terms of proximity to students.⁸⁹ Trying shock media, Oliver then had a school bus filled with white sand, which illustrated the amount of sugar consumed by children of the Los Angeles Unified School District per week. People were not impressed.⁹⁰

Jamie Oliver did not give up. It took over half a year, but he convinced one school, West Adams Preparatory High School, to allow him to transform the school lunches. Oliver's team supplied the school with vegetables and fruits. He changed the lunch menu, promoted healthy food, cooked for children and explained why they have to change their lifestyle. The children dumped the healthy food in the trash, and the school refused to discipline them. Oliver did not blame the children, realizing that their lack of knowledge about food and poor eating habits were acquired at home. Children would not change without the support of family members, and they were not getting that support.⁹¹ Oliver needed to find people who could help him realize his vision. He tried to persuade community leaders to join him, without success. This might be the reason for the failure of Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution in Los Angeles.⁹²

3.3 The Benefits of the Food Revolution in the United States

The Food Revolution in the United States brought the following positives. At the beginning, Americans were sceptical towards Oliver's campaign, but it turned out that publicizing the obesity problem via media was a good idea. Jamie Oliver considered television to be the necessary means of communication and promotion, because today's world receives the majority of information via the television. This was the reason why he cooperated with TV channels and made reality TV shows. People considered his information reliable. The other advantage was the progress in the field of education. The children learned to distinguish the basic types of vegetables and fruit. Despite many setbacks, the demand for fresh vegetables and fruit increased. In the Huntington town centre, there was a grocery store

⁸⁹ Hadley Tomicky, "Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution Off to a Rough Start in L.A.," *Grub Street*, January 12, 2011, accessed February 12, 2016, http://www.grubstreet.com/2011/01/jamie_oliver.html#.

⁹⁰ Lauren Schuker Blum, "Inside Jamie Oliver's Food Fight with L.A.," *The Wall Street Journal*, April 12, 2011, accessed January 24, 2016, <http://blogs.wsj.com/speakeasy/2011/04/12/inside-jamie-olivers-food-fight-with-l-a-schools/>.

⁹¹ Nick Owens, "American School Kids Trash Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution," *Mirror*, January 29, 2012, accessed March 22, 2016, <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/american-school-kids-trash-jamie-658131>; Schuker Blum, "Inside Jamie Oliver's Food Fight with L.A."

⁹² Schuker Blum, "Inside Jamie Oliver's Food Fight with L.A."

established in connection with this higher demand for fresh ingredients.⁹³ The adult obesity rate was 46% in 2008. After 2 years, the adult obesity rate had decreased from 46% to 36% in Huntington.⁹⁴ However, it has increased from 36% to 39.5% since 2011.⁹⁵ There is a possibility that the decline in adult obesity from 46% to 36% was partly caused by the deaths of obese people, resulting in a lowering of the rate. However, the fact that the adult obesity rate in Huntington did not increase and is quite stable could be viewed as a positive. The campaign raised the awareness about the local obesity problem, and maybe because of this, the youngest generation will be encouraged to live a healthier lifestyle and obesity will decline over time. Huntington's kitchen continued in its mission and organised seminars, lectures, and courses on healthy food. Over one thousand locals acquired cooking skills, including learning to cook from scratch. Huntington's kitchen was available to everyone. The healthy new lunch menus which were introduced by Jamie Oliver expanded into 28 Cabell County Schools. The farmer's markets became popular among locals, where they could buy and sell seasonal and fresh vegetables and fruits.⁹⁶ Another advantage is that Oliver has teamed up with the American Heart Association and the California Endowment to open another five community kitchens in cities such as Los Angeles and New York.⁹⁷

Before the Food Revolution, children were stuffed with unhealthy and unbalanced food. The food revolution eliminated the usage of semi-products and processed food in the Huntington school food system. Now, the schools are using better and fresh ingredients and the majority of the food is made from scratch. The importance of re-training the cooks became clear. The Food Revolution in Huntington was not successful from statistical point of view, because the obesity rates did not change since 2008. Huntingtonians still suffer from obesity-related diseases. The advantage of the Food Revolution is its idea, and people are willing to improve their health after the end of the show. Rhonda McCoy, the food service director for Cabell County Schools, gradually transformed school menus to be healthier. Now, school food is prepared from scratch, and the nutrition norms are adjusted to the age

⁹³ Jane Black, "Jamie Oliver Improves Huntington, W.Va.'s Eating Habits," *Washington Post*, March 21, 2010, accessed March 21, 2016, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/04/20/AR2010042001181.html>.

⁹⁴ "Continuing the Food Revolution in Huntington, West Virginia," *The Huffington Post*, December 4, 2012, accessed May 03, 2016, http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/food-revolution/continuing-the-food-revol_b_1938811.html.

⁹⁵ Rebecca Riffkin, "Boulder, Colo., Residents Still Least Likely to Be Obese," Gallup, April 4, 2014, accessed May 03, 2016, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/168230/boulder-colo-residents-least-likely-obese.aspx>.

⁹⁶ Barcan, "The Food Revolution of Huntington, West Virginia," 11-12.

⁹⁷ Schuker Blum, "Inside Jamie Oliver's Food Fight with L.A."

of the children, McCoy also favours suppliers from local farms. Since she implemented her Oliver-inspired changes, she has noted an increase in the number of students eating school meals. The schools also introduced physical activity into the school curriculum, and they are planning to start small fruit and vegetable gardens on campuses, to get the children excited about the possibility of growing and then consuming their own produce. These steps might be beneficial for the health of young Huntingtonians. The habits that children acquire in childhood can reflect on their future health.⁹⁸

The big advantage was that the Food Revolution pointed out the obesity problem and showed the consequences of it. People started to talk about the issue more. Huntington inspired many other communities and set an example for them. If people talked about the problem, then solutions might be found.⁹⁹

People are curious whether the project had any further meaning in a broader sense. Well, it depends on the point of view. Ultimately, the project was designed to eliminate obesity in several communities, but obesity still exists in those communities and is still an important part of many people's lives. In this regard, the project failed. But on the other hand, it changed the way of thinking of some families, which started eating healthier. In this sense, the project was not pointless. The project introduced a healthier lifestyle to some, giving them a chance to live longer and healthier lives.¹⁰⁰ Oliver also helped raise funding for his program in Huntington, which improved the quality of food there. Apart from the fact that some schools refused Oliver's help, many people realized the importance of being fit and rebuilt their lifestyles.

Oliver created a new school menu, but children did not like it. It was a problem. After the end of the Food Revolution show, the U.S. Department of Agriculture visited the schools and inspected the nutrition guidelines, which were fixed. They found out that the new school menu was made of fresh ingredients but did not meet the guidelines. McCoy had no choice but to reintroduce the standard school menus. However, this did not last long. She gradually transformed the school menu into a healthier version. She adjusted Oliver's recipes

⁹⁸ Tarbett Jean Hardiman, "Five Years after the 'Food Revolution,' Stats Remain the Same; Still, Experts Optimistic," *The Herald-Dispatch*, March 8, 2015, accessed May 03, 2016, http://www.herald-dispatch.com/news/five-years-after-the-food-revolution-stats-remain-the-same/article_76972335-a8bc-581d-a4aa-0a04a8f0c49d.html.

⁹⁹ Barcan, "The Food Revolution of Huntington, West Virginia." 13.

¹⁰⁰ "Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution: One Year Later;" Daniel Maurer, "Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution: Success or Failure?" *Grub Street*, April 9, 2010, accessed December 11, 2015, http://www.grubstreet.com/2010/04/jamie_olivers_food_revolution.html#.

according to the tastes of the children. Nowadays, she employs ten cooks, who cook from scratch in the school cafeterias. Her initiative has now spread to 52 out of 55 West Virginia counties.¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ Rossetto Lynne Casper, "To Change Food Culture in the U.S., Does the Messenger Matter?," *The Splendid Table*, October 31, 2014, accessed May 03, 2016, <http://www.splendidtable.org/story/to-change-food-culture-in-the-us-does-the-messenger-matter>.

4 A COMPARISON OF CAMPAIGNS IN GREAT BRITAIN AND THE UNITED STATES

The vision and the idea of the Food Revolution came from Great Britain, the homeland of Jamie Oliver. The Food Revolution worked there, so Oliver took it abroad, to the United States, where he tried to implement similar principles and strategies that worked in his homeland. A comparison of these campaigns reveals the cultural, lifestyle, and attitude differences between these two countries.

4.1 Great Britain

The big success was that the British government implemented changes to the nutrition standards of the school lunches. Moreover, the British government allocated 1.2 million pounds to re-training school cooks, new equipment and to healthier ingredients.¹⁰² Research done by Oxford and Essex University showed that students who were assigned to the campaign Feed Me Better had better educational results. A school in Greenwich, London replaced its unhealthy menu with a new one. The staff was re-trained and the standards of lunch menus were also changed. Such changes positively influenced study results: English scores increased 4.5%, while science scores went up by 6%. School attendance also improved by 15%.¹⁰³

On the other hand, the respondents knew about the study and were on TV, which also might have influenced the results and needs to be taken into consideration. The respondents also knew that they were a part of the big and prestigious campaign, which was led by Jamie Oliver. This might have influenced their behaviour and it might have caused a placebo effect. In many cases, people behave differently if they know they are part of something important like research. Once the cameras are off, they tend to return to their natural behaviour.¹⁰⁴

In comparison with the United States, Great Britain reacted more favourably to Oliver's efforts. In Great Britain, Jamie Oliver approached 88 schools, and 81 of them participated in the project. The implementation of the new changes was not easy, but it had a positive impact. The children did not eat as much junk food. They behaved less hyperactively and they talked positively about the changes and spread Oliver's ideas.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² Jane Black, "Jamie Oliver Improves Huntington, W.Va.'s Eating Habits."

¹⁰³ "Oliver Campaign 'Raised Results'," BBC News, March 29, 2010, accessed February 10, 2016, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/education/8593443.stm.

¹⁰⁴ Belot and James, "Healthy School Meals and Educational Outcomes," 489-504.

¹⁰⁵ Belot and James, "Healthy School Meals and Educational Outcomes," 489-504.

4.2 The United States

Jamie Oliver came to the United States with expectations and big visions. He wanted to change people's lives in a similar way like in Great Britain. His Food Revolution met with repeated misunderstandings and rejections. He also had to deal with the negative reactions resulting from the implementation of changes in the school food system. The children were not used to the new food, and many refused to eat the new menu. Participation in the school lunch programs dropped from 77% to 66%, and consumption of milk decreased from 632 to 472 bottles per day, a 25% drop. The school cooks had to stay at work longer because the preparation of the food was more complicated and time-consuming. The prices of factors like labour, ingredients and new equipment increased too.¹⁰⁶ The costs of one school lunch increased from 1.75 dollars to 2.85 dollars.¹⁰⁷ The schools solved these problems by returning to their old ways. They added sweetened milk and other non-healthy ingredients to the menu. The children could choose from two options for lunch. There was the Jamie Oliver's healthier option and the old menu. Most of the children chose the junk food. Those, who chose Oliver's food were dissatisfied with the taste and after a few bites, the food ended up in the trash. The healthier food was not only more expensive and less tasty, but it did not meet American nutritional standards. Not meeting such standards put government funding in jeopardy.¹⁰⁸ The American nutritional standards have remained the same since the 1980s and are outdated, with an excessive amount of calories, but they have to be followed. Furthermore, some doctors did not see the problem of obesity in the school diet but as a result of a "sedentary lifestyle, consumption of fast food, family meal patterns and junk food advertising aimed at children."¹⁰⁹

Obesity is not just a social problem; it is big business. Many companies profit from selling cheap fast food. Moreover, the health industry profits from treating obesity and related diseases. Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution faced criticism concerning his statements about unhealthy school menus. According to a doctor at the West Virginia University's Health Research Centre, the school lunches are completely fine, as the pizza is made from low-fat cheese and whole grain ingredients, while the "fries" are baked. Furthermore, notes

¹⁰⁶ "Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution in West Virginia: Initial Evaluation of School-based Meal Changes," West Virginia University, Health Research Centre, accessed February 5, 2016, <http://www.foodpolitics.com/wp-content/uploads/Oliver-Report-final.pdf>.

¹⁰⁷ Black, "Jamie Oliver Improves Huntington, W.Va.'s Eating Habits."

¹⁰⁸ Maurer, "Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution: Success or Failure?"

¹⁰⁹ Gupta, "How TV Superchef Jamie Oliver's 'Food Revolution' Flunked Out."

the doctor, breakfast is the most important meal of the day, not lunch.¹¹⁰ Oliver's approach was to portray extremely negative examples. This approach was criticized. For example, Harry Tweel, the director of the Cambell Huntington Health Department complained that the campaign emphasized negative extremes instead of the positive efforts of locals to change their eating habits. So whereas the British accepted Oliver's criticisms, Americans became defensive about their standards and lifestyles.¹¹¹ After all, though many Americans, who was this British guy invading our country and telling us how to eat? Moreover, noted many Americans, British cuisine is not known as good cuisine. In short, Oliver's shaming, frightening and portentous speech did not work in the United States as it did in Great Britain. It angered Americans instead of inspiring them to change, thus making it counter-productive.¹¹²

Oliver had a vision that Huntington had a potential to be an example for the whole America. However, in 2014 the percentage of obese people in the United States increased in 27.7% in comparison with the last year. Only 35% of Americans were classified as normal weighted.¹¹³ Despite the fact, that in years 2009-2011 The Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution took place in the United States, the obesity rates and surveys still shows the alarming and raising numbers. These facts indicate, that Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution in the United States did not bring the assumed changes and results.¹¹⁴

Jamie Oliver built up his campaign in the United States on a similar approach like in Great Britain. The differences between the television campaigns held in England and television campaigns in the United States were radical. In England, his campaigns Jamie's School Dinners and Jamie's Ministry of Food were shown in a form of documentary series. The documentary series were interesting for the British viewers and they received the high ratings. If Oliver wanted to catch people's attention and raise the awareness about the obesity problem in the United States, he needed to choose a more pretentious form of television show.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁰ Gupta, "How TV Superchef Jamie Oliver's 'Food Revolution' Flunked Out."

¹¹¹ Tom Breen, "Fat City: W.Va. Town Braces for TV Show Depiction," Cleveland.com, October 9, 2009, accessed April 15, 2016, http://www.cleveland.com/nation/index.ssf/2009/10/fat_city_wva_town_braces_for_t.html.

¹¹² Slocum et al., "Properly, with Love, from Scratch," 182.

¹¹³ Jenna Levy, "U.S. Obesity Rate Inches Up to 27.7% in 2014," Gallup, January 26, 2015, accessed January 5, 2016, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/181271/obesity-rate-inches-2014.aspx>.

¹¹⁴ Walters, "Huntington, West Virginia Named Fattest US Town as Obesity Rate Rises."

¹¹⁵ Sarah Henry, "Jamie Oliver: School Food Revolution or Reality TV Rubbish?" Lettuce Eat Kale, March 29, 2010, accessed February 5, 2016, <http://lettuceeatkale.com/2010/jamie-oliver-school-food-revolution-or-reality-tv-rubbish/>.

Oliver did some experiments in his campaigns. For example, he illustrated the production of semi-products such as chicken nuggets. He chose extremes to shock people. By doing so, he wanted to change their thinking about the food and diet. One of his extreme experiments was to reveal of what are the favourite fried chicken nuggets made of. Oliver showed a refrigerated chicken to children. He removed the best parts like chicken breasts and meat. The skin and bones remained and only this was mixed in a blender. He created nuggets from the mass, nuggets coated with breadcrumbs and then he fried them. The whole process was repulsive and children felt disgusted. Jamie Oliver made this experiment many times in Great Britain and was successful. The intention was to reveal the ugly truth so the children can learn from it and find out what was their favourite nuggets made of. After this experiment, they knew that the nuggets did not contain the fresh and healthy chicken meat, but trash in form of bones, skin and additives. Jamie Oliver also tried this experiment in the United States, but the result was shocking. At the end, he asked children, if they were still able to eat these chicken nuggets and the American children said yes. This is probably one of the reasons why the experiment in the United States failed.¹¹⁶

4.3 The Food Revolution is Going Global

It is generally known that not all the ideas and plans were accomplished during and after the Food Revolution. Jamie Oliver believed that the Food Revolution was the right way to change the lives of millions of obese people for the better. The continuation of the campaigns in Great Britain and the United States resulted in the establishment of the “Food Revolution Day.” “The Food Revolution Day” is on 15th May. This day is oriented on food education. Jamie Oliver’s campaigns showed that food education had a positive impact on kids, and it brought real results. Oliver believed that an adequate food knowledge might change people’s lives, because they could be able to make a right choice and to live a healthy life. Oliver tried to transfer his message to his upcoming and biggest campaign so far, which should have a global reach. The campaign, “a global petition to get practical food education on the school curriculum,”¹¹⁷ launched on 29 March 2016. The petition was signed by 685,000 respondents. Up to now, Jamie focused only on the individual countries, but now he wants

¹¹⁶ Jillian Madison, “Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution Hits America,” *Serious Eats*, March 27, 2010, accessed February 10, 2016, <http://www.serious-eats.com/2010/03/jamie-olivers-food-revolution-hits-america.html>; Slocum et al., “‘Properly, with Love, from Scratch’,” 185.

¹¹⁷ Jamie Oliver, “Jamie's Food Revolution: The News so Far,” *Jamie Oliver*, April 20, 2015, accessed February 8, 2016, <http://www.jamieoliver.com/news-and-features/news/jamies-food-revolution-the-news-so-far/#FXO3bTGL2PLzhcHe.97>.

to spread his Food Revolution to the whole world. Oliver's petition is global, because obesity is not just a problem of one community or country, but the whole world. According to statistics of the "World Health Organisation," 42 million children ages 1 to 5 are obese. Since 1980, the obesity rates have doubled, and by 2030, 41% of population might be classified as obese or overweight. Food education might influence or even stop the growth of obesity. The countries such as England, Mexico, Brazil, Japan and Finland implemented food education into their study programmes. Oliver engaged 1,300 ambassadors from 100 countries into this Food Revolutionary Day.¹¹⁸

The next positive step which should help to reduce the obesity is a sugar tax on sweetened soft drinks in Great Britain. It is assumed that the price for 1 litre will be increased by 20%, which represents a 1 billion pound revenue increase for the nation. This revenue should be invested into obesity prevention.¹¹⁹ The brands, such as Coca-Cola, Pepsi, Dr. Pepper, Fanta, Sprite, Schweppes and many others will be affected by this sugar tax.¹²⁰ Jamie Oliver introduced the sugar tax on soft drinks in his restaurants. In the United States, the tax on soda was firstly proposed in Berkley, California.¹²¹ In Great Britain, the sugar tax should be implemented within 2 years.¹²²

The poor labelling of food and drinks is another problem. People buy products without knowing basic information such as how many calories, sugar and fat it consists of. Jamie Oliver fights for visible labelling and visible signs of sugar in form of tea spoons on every product. However, this change is meeting resistance from the British parliament, which is being lobbied by the food industry.¹²³

¹¹⁸ Jamie Oliver, "Jamie's Food Revolution: The News so Far."

¹¹⁹ Jamie Oliver, "Jamie's Plan to Help Combat Childhood Obesity in the UK," Jamie Oliver, November 29, 2015 accessed February 9, 2016, <http://www.jamieoliver.com/news-and-features/features/jamies-plan-to-combat-childhood-obesity/>.

¹²⁰ Nick Trigg, "Sugar Tax: How It Will Work?," BBC News, March 16, 2016, accessed April 4, 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/health-35824071>.

¹²¹ Robert Wood, "Jamie Oliver Wins, UK Adds Soda Tax," *Forbes*, March 17, 2016, accessed April 4, 2016, <http://www.forbes.com/sites/robertwood/2016/03/17/jamie-oliver-wins-uk-adds-soda-tax/#1ed2a0b61db0>.

¹²² Ben Glaze, "Sugar Tax Introduced with Levy on Soft Drinks Firms in Major Budget Announcement by George Osborne," *Mirror*, March 16, 2016, accessed April 4, 2016, <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/sugar-tax-introduced-levy-soft-7567471>.

¹²³ Oliver, "Jamie's Plan to Help Combat Childhood Obesity in the UK."

CONCLUSION

Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution changed lives. The campaign showed that obesity is a global problem requiring a global coordinated response. British chef Jamie Oliver became a phenomenon in the food industry, and he managed to use his popularity to fight against obesity and its related diseases. The Food Revolution started successfully in Great Britain and then crossed the ocean to the United States, with Oliver choosing Huntington, West Virginia and Los Angeles, California as test sites. The thesis describes and compares the campaigns, documenting the reasons for their successes and failures.

In 2004, Great Britain had the highest obesity rates in Europe. Radical changes in the food industry and in eating habits were needed, and Oliver tried to make them through several projects. One of the first campaigns was Jamie's School Dinners. This campaign cooperated with the television and it raised awareness about the eating habits of children. Jamie's School Dinners continued with the project Feed Me Better, which had a bigger format. The campaign Feed Me Better was an online petition, which was supported by thousands of people and that could not be ignored by the government. The government allocated the funds into the school canteens, what improved the quality of the meals. The next campaign Jamie's Ministry of Food was considered one of the most revolutionary food projects in Great Britain. In this campaign, the food education was supported. The project focused on concrete families. The campaign Food for Life concentrated on the understanding where the food comes from. The campaign used the different strategies to attract the youngest generation. Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution in Great Britain was successful. The set goals were accomplished and the changes were also made from the legislative point of view. The British government introduced the nutritional standards on the school meals. The next positive step of the British government will be the implementation of sugary tax on the soft drinks by the year 2018.

After the success in Great Britain, Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution launched in the United States. The Food Revolution spread to Huntington, West Virginia, which was classified as the unhealthiest city in the country, with most of its residents suffering from obesity. The food revolution in Huntington revealed the drawbacks in the school food system. Oliver and his team used the media and the extreme examples to make things visible. The whole concept was focused on the elimination of the increasing obesity rates and the related diseases. Oliver transformed the school menus into the healthier version. His menu was refused and did not meet the U.S. Department of Agriculture guidelines. They managed

to open the Huntington's Kitchen, where people could learn how to cook from scratch. They also organised seminars, lectures and courses, which were oriented on the healthy diet. The Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution in Huntington failed from the statistical point of view. The statistics still show the similar numbers like in the year 2009, when the food revolution in the US started. However, the campaign raised awareness about the obesity problem and its related diseases, the demand for the fresh ingredients increased, Huntington's Kitchen continues in its mission, the schools use the better and fresher ingredients and they cook from the scratch, what has the good impact on children's health.

Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution continued in Los Angeles. This area has the one of the biggest school systems in the US. Oliver also tried to transform the school meals. He used the same strategies as in Great Britain and in Huntington, but in Los Angeles, the Revolution was rejected not only by residents but by school officials and community leaders.

The strategies and principles, which worked in Great Britain, did not work in the United States. The reason is the different cultures of these two nations. Yet, the campaign is clearly a way to improve health, so despite its American failures, the Food Revolution still continues and is going global. Oliver and his team are convinced that it is a good thing, so they are determined to fight for it and not give up. In Oliver's mind, the health of future generations depends on it.

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