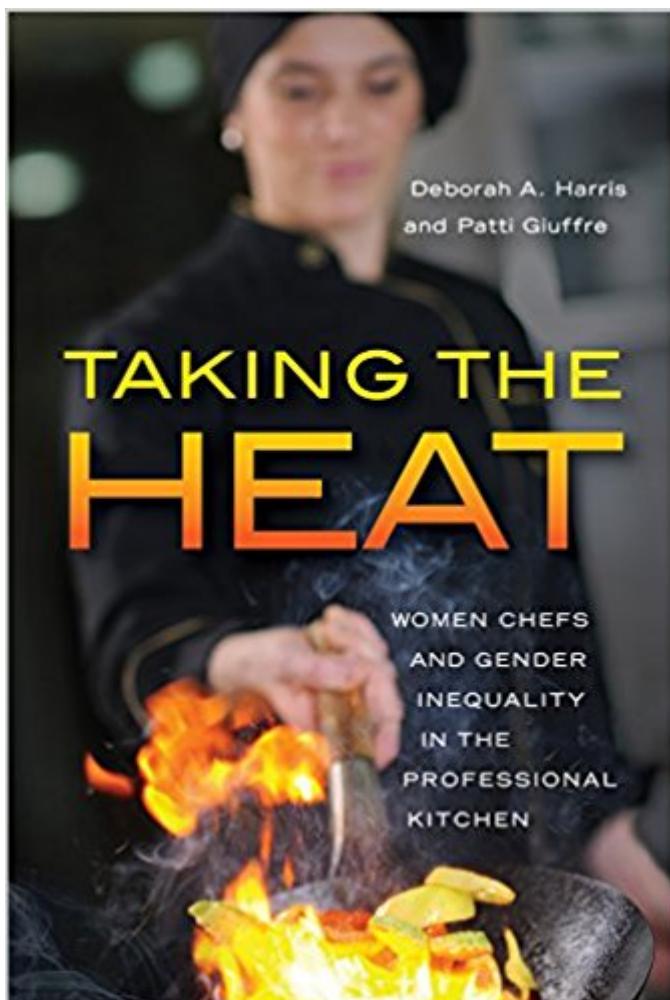


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# Taking The Heat: Women Chefs And Gender Inequality In The Professional Kitchen



## Synopsis

A number of recent books, magazines, and television programs have emerged that promise to take viewers inside the exciting world of professional chefs. While media suggest that the occupation is undergoing a transformation, one thing remains clear: being a chef is a decidedly male-dominated job. Over the past six years, the prestigious James Beard Foundation has presented 84 awards for excellence as a chef, but only 19 were given to women. Likewise, Food and Wine magazine has recognized the talent of 110 chefs on its annual “Best New Chef” list since 2000, and to date, only 16 women have been included. How is it that women, “the gender most associated with cooking,” have lagged behind men in this occupation? *Taking the Heat* examines how the world of professional chefs is gendered, what conditions have led to this gender segregation, and how women chefs feel about their work in relation to men. Tracing the historical evolution of the profession and analyzing over two thousand examples of chef profiles and restaurant reviews, as well as in-depth interviews with thirty-three women chefs, Deborah A. Harris and Patti Giuffre reveal a great irony between the present realities of the culinary profession and the traditional, cultural associations of cooking and gender. Since occupations filled with women are often culturally and economically devalued, male members exclude women to enhance the job’s legitimacy. For women chefs, these professional obstacles and other challenges, such as how to balance work and family, ultimately push some of the women out of the career. Although female chefs may be outsiders in many professional kitchens, the participants in *Taking the Heat* recount advantages that women chefs offer their workplaces and strengths that Harris and Giuffre argue can help offer women chefs, and women in other male-dominated occupations, “opportunities for greater representation within their fields.” Click here to access the *Taking the Heat* teaching guide ([http://rutgerspress.rutgers.edu/pages/teaching\\_guide\\_for\\_taking\\_the\\_heat.aspx](http://rutgerspress.rutgers.edu/pages/teaching_guide_for_taking_the_heat.aspx)).

## Book Information

Paperback: 246 pages

Publisher: Rutgers University Press (May 20, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0813571251

ISBN-13: 978-0813571256

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.6 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 12 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.9 out of 5 stars 5 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #184,409 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #126 in Books > Business & Money > Industries > Restaurant & Food #191 in Books > Business & Money > Women & Business #421 in Books > Business & Money > Industries > Hospitality, Travel & Tourism

## Customer Reviews

"A smart analysis of the ingrained gender assumptions and structural inequalities that continue to disadvantage both female chefs and women working in other male-dominated fields."

(Bitch)"Integrating Bourdieuian field analysis with the study of gendered organizations, the book's insights extend beyond the professional kitchen. This is a story of how institutional processes, cultural evaluations, and the defense of precarious masculinity combine to preserve the inequities and exclusions of gendered occupations ... Taking the Heat makes a timely contribution at a moment when chefs are the rock stars of foodie culture, and when media continue to debate whether women will ever 'have it all.' With accessible writing and incisive analysis, this book is a great resource for the sociological classroom. " (Gender & Society)"Taking the Heat is a must read for gender scholars and students trying to tackle issues of gender inequality in paid labor in the modern U.S. economy." (American Journal of Sociology)"Taking the Heat makes a timely contribution at a moment when chefs are the rock stars of foodie culture, and when media continue to debate whether women will ever 'have it all.'" (Gender & Society)"According to Harris and Giuffre, [female chefs] have three choices: they can be bitches, girly girls, or moms. The authors' interviews with chefs give voice to and deep context for how real women employ these three archetypes in the professional kitchen." (Feminist Collections)"A fine exemplar of what a sociological perspective can teach us about food." (Qualitative Sociology)"In Taking the Heat, Harris and Giuffre analyze the experiences of and reception toward women working as chefs to highlight a fascinating case study of the economic and cultural capital men can accrue through masculinizing so-called 'women's work.' (Kristen Schilt The University of Chicago)"Harris and Giuffre have written a thought-provoking, timely book that takes a sharp look at the gender dynamics shaping the professional food industry and impacting women chefs in particular." (Adia Harvey Wingfield author of No More Invisible Man: Race and Gender in Men's Work)

DEBORAH A. HARRIS is an associate professor of sociology at Texas State University.Â PATTI GIUFFRE is a professor of sociology at Texas State University.Â

Very eye opening! Loved this book!

This is a great book that gives the reader insight into the often hidden/backstage aspects of professional kitchens and how gender can impact kitchen environments.

This is a fascinating book about women chefs! What a great topic. It's hard to believe that the job of chef is 20% female; their book shows us why and how this happens.

Take the time and read this book you won't be disappointed!

If you want to waste time reading this feminist cookbook be my guest. I had to do a book report over this garbage for one of the authors and this only confirms the self victimization of the modern feminist. Enjoy.

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