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Celebrity Chefs as Influencers of Food Well-Being

An Honors College Project Presented to
the Faculty of the Undergraduate
College of Business
James Madison University

by Briana Cifelli

May 2018

Accepted by the faculty of the Department of Marketing, James Madison University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Honors College.

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PUBLIC PRESENTATION

This work is accepted for presentation, in part or in full, at the Association of Collegiate Marketing Educators Conference on March 9, 2017.

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Abstract

The concept of being a “celebrity chef” has changed throughout the years. Using Block et al’s (2011) Food Well-Being pinwheel and Lane and Fisher’s (2015) research about celebrity chef influence on a UK student population, this study investigates celebrity chef culture as viewed by Millennials in the U.S. The research explores the potential influence of celebrity chefs as influencers of food culture and food habits, the modern chef’s role as celebrity endorsers for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) campaigns, and whether perceptions of celebrity chef culture differ between the UK and the U.S. Data collection was through an online survey using Qualtrics sent to the target population of Millennials. Findings indicate higher involvement in a chef’s CSR-based organization was associated with higher ratings of influence. A theoretical contribution was the development of a Celebrity CSR Involvement Classification Scheme.