A Man's World No More:
The Shifting Culture in Restaurant Kitchens

By Noah Chestnut

Submitted to the Journalism Board of Study
School of Humanities

In partial fulfillment of the requirements
For the degree of Bachelor of Arts

Purchase College -- State University of New York
May 2019

First Reader: Prof. Donna Cornachio

Second Reader: Prof. Andrew Salomon

If you find yourself walking downtown Manhattan, you may pass by Stick With Me, a chocolate shop located on Mott Street in Chinatown. When you walk in you smell some of the sweetest scents you may ever encounter. The milk chocolate differs from the dark; the caramel may sneak by. Hints of fresh fruit may dance on the tip of your nose, and as you're intoxicated by all of these beautiful aromas, your taste buds may kick into high gear as you may even begin to drool. But then you see the bonbons themselves, which will take you for another trip. The chocolates themselves look like marbles, almost similar to jewelry. It's captivating like a fresh coat of paint on a new Bugatti.

It's a small chocolate shop, out of about 60 in the city, where handcrafted chocolates are made every day but, there's one thing particular about this chocolate shop.

There is not one man on the staff. This chocolate shop was founded by Susanna Yoon in 2014 and is run by women. Coincidence but nonetheless, sexual harassment isn't an issue here.

Dayna Palmer, 25, is one of those women. She has worked at high profile places like Eleven Madison Park and Gabriel Kreuther/ Kreuther Handcrafted Chocolates, but none compare to Stick With Me Sweets. "The standard at Stick With Me is very high, and its kitchen is amazing. But, I love the team at Stick With Me because it's all women," Palmer says.

It has been nearly a year and a half since the Me Too movement started and gained a lot of steam and now is at the forefront of public discussion every day.

Men have long dominated the culinary world. According to an article in FoodandWine.com, "Put More Women in Charge of Restaurants," women own only six percent

of restaurants in the country. The Gordon Ramsay's and Bobby Flay's of the world, get way more recognition than Rachel Ray and Giada De Laurentiis. According to the statistics gathered on datausa.io, they are 95,093 female chefs in the United States, as compared to 345,711 male chefs. Not only do males dominate more than 78% of the field but, they also dominate the pay wage. Most industries do pay men more money than women but, the beginning salaries are quite startling between the two. The average male salary when working in the kitchen is around $34,000 for men to $28,000 for women, according to datausa.io.

So what is it like to be a woman in these kitchens that are almost entirely dominated by men? What is like for a female head chef to be in charge of men, what is like for a female line cook in a kitchen dominated by men. When the New York Times published an article called "The Tipping Equation," in 2018, it showed us the amount of inappropriateness that waitresses have to deal with.

In the year 2018, light has been shined on a lot of light on the systematic nature of sexual harassment from the Vatican to Hollywood but, the restaurant industry isn't anything to ignore and it's getting more attention in mainstream media. In an article **f**rom Fundera, " Economics of Running a New York City Restaurant", the author shows how powerful the industry is. " Thanks to an improved economy, new restaurants have been rapidly opening — instead of closing only a few years ago — and sales are expected to reach $35.8 billion in New York this year and a record-high of $709.2 billion nationwide, according to the National Restaurant Association.

It all began with a man by the name of Mario Batali. Back in December of 2017, the food website Eater published an article that four women had accused the Batali of sexual misconduct that spanned over 20 years. Batali, a star in the culinary industry, has been a TV personality for

years. So with this happening it finally allowed men to go oh wait, it could be happening here too? Women have known what's going on all along but, what do they have to say about it?

Dayna Palmer young woman born in Baltimore, Maryland explains just how much easier it is working in a space where there are no men. "It's a lot less competitive" says Palmer. Palmer has worked in kitchens among men like Eleven Madison Park where "it's just much more stressful, to be honest, I don't know," Palmer says. As she brushes her cedar colored hair off to the side she continues." I love being at Stick With Me Sweets". Palmer explains how the energy is much calmer, and she still gets to make high quality food. "I've been in several kitchens, and I'm content where I am now," says Palmer.

A 2014 graduate of the Culinary Institute of America, Palmer enjoyed the experience that she gained at college. "It was a wonderful experience but, at the same time they definitely could have a done better job explaining to us what might've been coming," Palmer says. She explained that she had no clue in terms of the behavior that would take place in the kitchens of restaurants. "It was quite disturbing, to be honest. It'd mainly be regular line cooks. Never head chefs or even sous chefs. The men that had no power in the kitchen were the absolute worse. If it weren't a sexist joke, it'd be inappropriate behavior towards myself or another female co-worker."

Jalarris Wallace, 22, a Johnson and Wales Culinary graduate, had a different outlook on sexual harassment in the kitchens of restaurants. Not even being in the industry for half the amount of time that Palmer has been in, he's heard a different tune. Only being the industry for about five years, the stories he's heard have even surprised him. Even though Wallace already

had an understanding that the industry isn't perfect, he wasn't expecting what he had heard. "I had two line cooks that were women tell me that the head chef would relentlessly flirt with them during dinner service," Wallace stated. This took place when Wallace worked at Mills Tavern in Providence, Rhode Island. "By the way, this was a fine dining restaurant; I feel like that's important to say because you feel like stuff like that definitely shouldn't happen there."

Growing up Palmer just wanted to be a chef; she loved cooking as a child with her mother, engulfed with scents that always brought her to a place of peace. "It just brings back fond memories, I remember cooking with my mom all the time, it could be something as simple as spaghetti and meatballs but, it was just those experiences that made me want to be a chef," Palmer says. "I know it sounds kind of corny but, that's just how it went for me."

But when you're a woman, safe environments don't come as quickly as you may think. "Stick with Me is a place where a coworker hasn't sexually harassed me. When you throw customers into the fold it changes everything, unfortunately," Palmer says. "You have customers say some snarky stuff, I remember this one guy commented on the fact that I wasn't wearing makeup. It went a little something like hey about you try a little harder and that never feels good you know." Palmer says she's never been physically assaulted, all of the harassment has been verbal. "Yeah, male coworkers have just said nasty things to me. If it's not about my appearance maybe there waiting for me to like bend over, so they can comment on my ass.A lot of it took place at Eleven Madison Park but, I really don't like speak on it publicly. I stick up for myself but, I never really told on them either. It's nerve-wracking because in most situations you're not in a place of power." Those types of chefs don't seem to make it very long in her experience. "The men that have the time to say nasty stuff like that usually don't have the focus to keep up in

such a demanding job so usually it comes back to bite them, which is always kind of funny to see," says Palmer.

Stick With Me is a safe place where chocolatiers and the staff can do what they love without having to fight a battle inside of work as well as outside of it already. Even though the staff is run entirely by women right now doesn't mean a man can't apply culture has been solidified to where Palmer feels like men could be brought on staff and it wouldn't be an issue. Palmer says Yoon who worked under Thomas Keller at Per Se decided it was time to make something of own when she opened Stick With Me. Unfortunately Yoon did not have a comment about the story.

"I feel like as a woman I deal with enough garbage just in my daily life it's nice that I don't have to deal with gross men making comments about my ass while I'm grilling a steak or something you know," Palmer says. "Like I get it to some extent and I know men can be disgusting, and for the most part I haven't gotten it that bad ya know so, in a sense I'm blessed but at the same time when is enough. Why should I have to deal with this nonsense because I'm a woman but, my male counterpart can say whatever comes to mind."

It's something that is seen in all professions; industries are starting to become more aware of these issues with the MeToo movement still going strong. "I am forever grateful for the women that speak out because they've helped shine a light on an issue that has oppressed women for way too long," Palmer says. It's something Palmer says she's struggled with every day. She can no doubt speak up for herself when issues arise in this arena but, being public about it after the situation has concluded is a different story. "It's a little start, but we gotta keep pushing because at the end of the day I took myself out of an environment with men. Not necessarily

because of harassment but, with Chef Susanna being my idol, I'm at my dream shop right now so yes sexual harassment plays a factor, but it isn't the biggest one. Maybe one day I'll find myself back at a powerhouse kitchen but, as of right now I'm in no rush to leave and be a part of the jungle again," Palmer says.

The MeToo movement has picked up steam; some accountability is finally being dished out. As recent as March 9th, 2019, Grubstreet.com, a subsidiary of New York Magazine, 13 high profile restaurateurs or chefs have been accused of sexual misconduct including the likes of Ken Friedman, Thomas Carter, Mike Isabella, and Josh Besh.

Most of these men just stepped away from their businesses unceremoniously and have moved on. But some didn't. Mike Ray owner of Normandy Farm Bakery and One Broad was charged with indecent exposure and Batali was under investigation for rape, but still, no formal charges has been made, since the case had been closed in January.

Julian Medina of Toloache had been accused by bartender Olga Ramos back in 2017 for blackmailing her with a sex tape that was recorded without her knowledge after a four-year affair, according to Grubstreet. After all, this went down Ramos a filed suit against Medina for $500,000 in damages, but that never really held up in court. Eventually the two settled in court and Medina is now opening two new restaurants one on the Upper West Side and another at LaGuardia Airport.

Batali is the one of 13 to have currently sold and cut himself away from his prior business ventures. The other 12 men accused of sexual misconduct are still making profits off their business. Stepping away from daily operations isn't the same as financially cutting ties. According to an article on FoodandWine.com Are Accused Chefs and Restaurateurs Still

Making Money from Their Restaurants? , they're still making money off of their businesses if not opening new ones.

Victoria Reyes, 26, originally from Coram, NY, now lives in San Diego, California, where she works two jobs. A young woman with long dark hair, she is ambitious, humble and smart. Her Hispanic background lays the groundwork of who she is today. A graduate of Le Cordon Bleu in Pasadena//this is not a full sentence//. Reyes has always had a passion for cooking as she would cook with her mother and abuela all the time as a young child. "I remember like it was yesterday making all that good stuff with my family. I've kept a lot with my home teachings,it's great because I can keep all if those recipes with me" Reyes says.

When she's not involved with the family business as the warehouse manager of VFR Import Export Inc, she's managing the Tropical Savor Bar and Grill in San Diego. "I'm not on the lines cooking right now but, to say I don't miss it would be a lie," Reyes says. Reyes has a young daughter and wants to be there with her as much as possible, and surprisingly the two managing jobs take up less time than a regular line cook job would. "It isn't bad you know I just do what I have to do, to make something out of myself ," Reyes says. "It's just an everyday job like every other one I had; I'm just in charge of a lot of people."

When in the restaurant as a manager, Reyes doesn't mess around with sexual harassment of any kind. It doesn't help that she has been a victim of sexual harassment in the kitchen when she was a cook about three years ago working at the Kona Kai Resort and Spa. "I had a coworker become my friend when I worked at the resort, act all friendly, nice guy you know. A little bit of time goes on and next thing you know this clown of a man decides he wants to grab my ass on

the line," Reyes says. Reyes kept it a secret because she honestly didn't know how to go about it since men run the kitchen.

"Nothing happened until a coworker stepped up for me and confronted the guy about what had taken place, which eventually resulted in his termination," says Reyes. "I was clueless and powerless, to be honest. I didn't know what to do, the men run everything, and it sucks. I'm not trying to lose my job but, at the same time I don't want to get violated at my workplace either," Reyes says. "It's something I wouldn't wish on anyone it was one of the most degrading things to happen to me, so when he was terminated, I'd be a liar if I didn't say I was happy to see him go."

Now in a position of power as a manager at Tropical Savor Bar and Grill, Reyes stands up for everyone even when she couldn't do it for herself. "I've had run-ins with male employees because of misconduct in the kitchen. I listen to any complaints about harassment from the front of the house to back. I've even had a female employee harassing a male. So even though the scale tips to one side over the other it does go both ways," Reyes says.

According to Reyes, there's a culture ingrained in the minds of young men that they can do or say whatever they like when in the kitchen or restaurant. "You don't find out anything out until it happens which is unfortunate because as of right now there are little ways to prevent the behavior since it's been happening too long. Most men believe they are above the kitchen, and it's mostly a true statement," says Reyes. "The MeToo movement was kind of crazy to me. I just feel like so many women have silenced for so long. The movement has finally given us voice and it's an incredible feeling, it's extremely empowering."

It's getting better with time but, according to Reyes, there's no quick fix lined up. "It's gotten better throughout the 8 years I've been working. I'd say we've come a long way, but there's still plenty of sexism going around," says Reyes.

The men she has come across in the kitchen just haven't been that inviting, but she isn't surprised at the experience. Reyes laughed when she claimed that "They believe they can and always will be superior in the kitchen...which is odd because women are expected to cook in the house but in a restaurant, it is a different story, but you get the point."

In The MeToo movement is just the loudspeaker, that is making everyone listen up. But Reyes had seen changes in the culture even before the campaign started.

"There's a lot more recognition given to women in the kitchen. Look up the show, Chef's Table on Netflix. It's not just a man's world anymore; women are getting the recognition for being chefs now and being on the same level as all the celebrity men chefs." The point isn't right on topic, but it gets at the fact that she's seen more women being appreciated in the industry. Chef's Table is a Netflix Original docu-series where the series takes a look at some of the best and most influential chefs in the world. There are six seasons with about 34 episodes. And out of those 34 episodes seven of them of women.

Reyes may go back to the kitchen at some point just because if that passion she will always have. "Who knows I haven't put much thought into as of late but, I could see it happening, only time will tell," Reyes says. "MeToo is doing great things, I hope it keeps going strong."

One way to possibly see an increase in women being recognized in the industry as well as seeing a decrease in sexual harassment is the simple fact that more women need to be in charge.

According to an article on FoodandWine.com, Put More Women in Charge of Restaurants, since 2018, out of 72 Michelin starred restaurants in New York, women run only six.

Now in 2019, the number of restaurants has grown to 76 restaurants that have Michelin stars, but women still seem to be underrepresented. According to Eater New York, many prominent women in the industry have been overlooked for the prestigious award or even stripped of it altogether. According to the article, " Mako Okano's Shabushabu Macron, a rare and celebrated omakase(a japanese eatery in which the customer allows the chef to choose the meal.) spot run by a female chef, was overlooked for a star, while six new male-run Japanese spots received that same honor." It's also stated that "Batali the subject of multiple reports of sexual misconduct, saw Babbo, Casa Mono, and Del Posto retain their Michelin stars."

The article Put More Women in Charge of Restaurants states, "Ultimately, to get more women promoted or make the leap into ownership, more resources must become accessible. Especially for women to take the lead in this, supporting one another to get ahead rather than having tunnel vision for their self-interests. As Susan Ungaro, former President of the James Beard Foundation and champion of women's advancement, said: " "We need a good old girls club" in the form of a network of professional women in different career paths who collectively can help each other do better. This community can make it so that it's not next to impossible for a woman to get access to capital and media coverage."

Victoria Tapia, 26, born in New York City, raised in Flushing, Queens, has seen a lot being in the industry as well, currently studying food management with a minor in business as worked at many restaurants. Presently as a line cook/ pastry chef at Misi, a chic little Italian spot

in South Williamsburg, Brooklyn. Her career also includes jobs at Hummus Market, Pinch Food Design, and Lilia, all restaurants in the NYC area.

"My experience in the industry has been overall positive," says Tapia. "Nothing is perfect. I have been in the industry for just over four years, always had a passion for food and cooking; it was a large part of my cultural upbringing." Being that of Colombian and Cuban heritage food has not only been a big part of Tapia's life but, culture. She would usually observe her mother and paternal grandmother in the kitchen. The watching soon turned into participating and that in turn, turned into a passion. " About a year ago I cooked with my grandmother when she told me her recipe, and we worked together to make a really nice seafood stew. I was always used to helping with little things and observing my mother, grandmother, and aunt," Tapia says with a joyful smile. "That's when I'm my happiest, being with those women, all the lunches, dinners, cooking with them have led me to where I am today."

Even though Tapia's experience has generally been positive, it doesn't come without grief. She's faced verbal harassment at the Hummus Market three years ago. "Yes I have, everything has just been verbal but, it's still extremely annoying," says Tapia. "It's always something, I've had a male coworker say, oh you showing your titties today or those pants fit your body right. There's a difference between your friends saying this and someone just being flat-out creepy." Tapia didn't want to go to higher-ups about the situation though; she tried to handle it her way. She didn't want to be looked at as being weak or a victim.

"I addressed him personally; I made it very clear that the line cook wasn't going to speak to me that way and he shouldn't talk to any women that way. It stopped it right then and there, and I never had any issues again."

The man never bothered Tapia again but it took a toll on her. “I was shocked, uncomfortable and embarrassed. I’d never been in a workplace situation like it before, so I just handled it the best way I could. It bothered me at first being at work with him but, I got over it with a little bit of time,” says Tapia.

Tapia for one has seen differences since differences in the industry since the MeToo movement has arisen, all for the better too. She doesn’t deny that there is work to be done, but she sees the progress that’s being made. “I will say a lot more people are aware of their boundaries, and the work environment makes it clear what is and isn’t okay. From what I’ve been around there’s been more meetings about sexual harassment. As well as there just being more open dialogue. I have been there, I am a victim of sexual assault, so it is refreshing to see restaurants taking more actions to combat these issues.”

She explains it as the lightbulb going off. Everyone is starting to wake up to the issues that citizens particularly women face in our society. Tapia believes as a society that children need to be taught subjects like this in grade school. “I think we should be taught in junior high school what is and what isn’t okay. What is a compliment and what is a vulgarity? It starts when puberty does when we begin to sexualize not only things but, each other,” says Tapia.

Tapia makes clear that MeToo and these other movements about being pro-diversity and inclusivity are great but, at the same time, there’s a lot of fake outrage due to the sensitivity of today’ youth which she believes can hurt the progressive groups are making.

“I believe progress is being made, and I’m thrilled, but that’s my personal opinion maybe I’m too hard, but we have a generation of highly intelligent, but emotionally awkward humans. I think

we need to call out our male counterparts in the kitchen instead of running to the boss, immediately. We need to speak if we want to be heard. Our time is now!"

Jalarris Wallace, Johnson & Wales graduate says, "We didn't talk about stuff like that at Johnson and Wales, most students were honestly just trying to cook and do there thing and graduate you know. But I do know a chef had a relationship with a student and that started in my class." This was as recent as last year, since he graduated last spring. Wallace explains that he never witnessed any sexual harassment for himself; in fact, he said most chefs were fairly respectful. "But that doesn't mean I didn't hear stuff. You hear like girls getting harassed by other students but, I could say if that's being in culinary school more so a societal and college thing you know." Wallace's point of view on the topic is good but what about a woman's? It's simple to see one side of story, but on a topic like this, both sides are necessary.

Gisell Paula 27, went to Johnson & Wales University, North Miami, Florida, but she isn't currently working in a kitchen. Most recently she's worked at The Shaw Bijou in Washington DC (now closed), as well as The NoMad in NYC and Blackberry Farm in Walland, Tenn.While Paula hasn't experienced any harassment in the kitchen firsthand, she is still extremely fiery about the issue.

"I think the big thing for me and what I'd like to see in kitchens (and generally in most workplaces) is for employers and leaders to create work environments where people feel comfortable setting and stating their boundaries without having to worry about repercussions or punishment," says Paula. "That wasn't always the case at some of the places I worked so that'd be a start."

According to Paula the kitchen and culinary school are extremely different and schools could do a better job at preparing incoming cooks for what's coming.

"Culinary school absolutely doesn't prepare you for the industry. From my personal experience, culinary school and actual kitchen cultures are worlds apart. I think that it's so different - a lot of culinary students aren't prepared when they go out into real kitchens. In the workforce, you're doing long hours, A LOT of heavy work and personalities and doing it all for very little money. There's a quote somewhere in the book Reach of a Chef, where the author talks about how culinary schools (in his case, the CIA) had gotten soft. Maybe this disparity is what he meant."

Paula has stuck for people at work, she isn't the person to idly stand by. "I've had to stick up for coworkers in terms of sexual harassment. I'm not comfortable discussing names but, the one instance I'll never forget is when one of the macho guys are in our kitchen ego as big as you've seen groped a female coworker. It enraged me; I instantly had to speak up, I wasn't even the one being assaulted but I was appalled. After speaking with the young lady, we decided to go to our superiors about what had happened, and he kind of just got a slap on the wrist. I stayed at the restaurant for a bit longer but, it made me sick that this happened without serious repercussions."

She feels for both parties when it comes to the college debate in terms of men and women equally not being prepared for the industry but, there's no excuse to why men should behave in such a manner.

"When it comes to leaving culinary school unprepared, both men and women are in the same boat, but women definitely aren't prepared for the harassment that comes along with the extremely laborious job."

With that, progress is being made and it's a start. The fight will continue to be fought, and the MeToo movement has done leaps and bounds for the restaurant industry in about a year and half in. "I believe that one day before I leave this earth the kitchen will be a very different place for women and I can't wait to see that day. Watch out boys, we're coming for ya spot," Tapia says.

Source list:

https://www.foodandwine.com/chefs/put-more-women-in-charge-of-restaurants

http://www.grubstreet.com/2018/10/how-chefs-and-restaurateurs-are-faring-post-metoo.html

https://www.foodandwine.com/news/chefs-divested-from-restaurants-guide

https://datausa.io/profile/soc/351011/

https://www.newyorker.com/culture/annals-of-gastronomy/one-year-of-metoo-a-modest-proposal-to-help-dismantle-the-restaurant-industrys-culture-of-sexual-harassment

Interview Log:

Dayna Palmer:

What it's like working at Stick with Me?

"The standard at Stick With Me is very high, and its kitchen is amazing. But, I love the team at Stick With Me because it's all women,"

How does it compare to previous jobs?

"It's a lot less competitive"

"it's just much more stressful, to be honest, I don't know,"

" I love being at Stick With Me Sweets"

Do you feel like you could find yourself somewhere else?

"I've been in several kitchens, and I'm content where I am now,"

"It was a wonderful experience but, at the same time they definitely could have a done better job explaining to us what might've been coming,"

How would you describe the situations you've find yourself in?

"It was quite disturbing, to be honest. It'd mainly be regular line cooks. Never head chefs or even sous chefs. The men that had no power in the kitchen were the absolute worse. If it weren't a sexist joke, it'd be inappropriate behavior towards myself or another female co-worker."

What made you want to be cook?

"It just brings back fond memories, I remember cooking with my mom all the time, it could be something as simple as spaghetti and meatballs but, it was just those experiences that made me want to be a chef," " I know it sounds kind of corny but, that's just how it went for me."

Has anything ever occured at stick with me?

"Stick with Me is a place where a coworker hasn't sexually harassed me. " You have customers say some snarky stuff, I remember this one guy commented on the fact that I wasn't wearing makeup. It went a little something like hey about you try a little harder and that never feels good you know."

What took place regarding your sexual harassment?

"Yeah, male coworkers have just said nasty things to me. If it's not about my appearance maybe there waiting for me to like bend over, so they can comment on my ass.A lot of it took place at Eleven Madison Park but, I really don't like speak on it publicly. I stick up for myself but, I never really told on them either. It's nerve-wracking because in most situations you're not in a place of power."

The men that have the time to say nasty stuff like that usually don't have the focus to keep up in such a demanding job so usually it comes back to bite them, which is always kind of funny to see,"

"I feel like as a woman I deal with enough garbage just in my daily life it's nice that I don't have to deal with gross men making comments about my ass while I'm grilling a steak or something you know,"

How did all of this make you feel?

Like I get it to some extent and I know men can be disgusting, and for the most part I haven't gotten it that bad ya know so, in a sense I'm blessed but at the same time when is enough. Why should I have to deal with this nonsense because I'm a woman but, my male counterpart can say whatever comes to mind."

What's your stance on the metoo movement?

"I am forever grateful for the women that speak out because they've helped shine a light on an issue that has oppressed women for way too long,"

Where do you want to be do you ever think you'll go back to a big restaurant kitchen?

It's a little start, but we gotta keep pushing because at the end of the day I took myself out of an environment with men. Not necessarily because of harassment but, with Chef Susanna being my idol, I'm at my dream shop right now so yes sexual harassment plays a factor, but it isn't the biggest one. Maybe one day I'll find myself back at a powerhouse kitchen but, as of right now I'm in no rush to leave and be a part of the jungle again,"

Victoria Reyes:

What mad you want to be cook?

“I remember like it was yesterday making all that good stuff with my family. I’ve kept a lot with my home teachings,it’s great because I can keep all if those recipes with me.”

Are you cooking currently?

“I’m not on the lines cooking right now but, to say I don’t miss it would be a lie,”

“It isn’t bad you know I just do what I have to do, to make something out of myself ,” “It’s just an everyday job like every other one I had; I’m just in charge of a lot of people.”

How were you sexually harrassed?

“I had a coworker become my friend when I worked at the resort, act all friendly, nice guy you know. A little bit of time goes on and next thing you know this clown of a man decides he wants to grab my ass on the line,”

“Nothing happened until a coworker stepped up for me and confronted the guy about what had taken place, which eventually resulted in his termination,” says Reyes. “I was clueless and powerless, to be honest. I didn’t know what to do, the men run everything, and it sucks. I’m not trying to lose my job but, at the same time I don’t want to get violated at my workplace either,”

“It’s something I wouldn’t wish on anyone it was one of the most degrading things to happen to me, so when he was terminated, I’d be a liar if I didn’t say I was happy to see him go.”

Have you had to deal with situations at your current restaurant?

“I’ve had run-ins with male employees because of misconduct in the kitchen. I listen to any complaints about harassment from the front of the house to back. I’ve even had a female

employee harassing a male. So even though the scale tips to one side over the other it does go both ways,"

Are people vocal enough about what goes on, do people know what's going on when it comes to harassment?

"You don't find out anything out until it happens which is unfortunate because as of right now there are little ways to prevent the behavior since it's been happening too long. Most men believe they are above the kitchen, and it's mostly a true statement,"

How do you feel about metoo?

"The MeToo movement was kind of crazy to me. I just feel like so many women have silenced for so long. The movement has finally given us voice and it's an incredible feeling, it's extremely empowering.

Have you seen changes in the industry since metoo

"It's gotten better throughout the 8 years I've been working. I'd say we've come a long way, but there's still plenty of sexism going around,"

Why do think men think the way do at work?

"They believe they can and always will be superior in the kitchen...which is odd because women are expected to cook in the house but in a restaurant, it is a different story, but you get the point."

"There's a lot more recognition given to women in the kitchen. Look up the show, Chef's Table on Netflix. It's not just a man's world anymore; women are getting the recognition for being chefs now and being on the same level as all the celebrity men chefs."

Do you believe real changes will begin to occur because of the movement?

“Who knows I haven’t put much thought into as of late but, I could see it happening, only time will tell,” “MeToo is doing great things, I hope it keeps going strong.”

Victoria Tapia:

How has the industry been?

“My experience in the industry has been overall positive,”

How long have you been working, how’d you get started and is everything you expected it to be?

“Nothing is perfect. I have been in the industry for just over four years, always had a passion for food and cooking; it was a large part of my cultural upbringing.”

What’s your fondest memory?

“ About a year ago I cooked with my grandmother when she told me her recipe, and we worked together to make a really nice seafood stew. I was always used to helping with little things and observing my mother, grandmother, and aunt,”

“That’s when I’m my happiest, being with those women, all the lunches, dinners, cooking with them have led me to where I am today.”

Have you been harassed in the kitchen?

“Yes I have, everything has just been verbal but, it’s still extremely annoying,”. “It’s always something, I’ve had a male coworker say, oh you showing your titties today or those pants fit your body right. There’s a difference between your friends saying this and someone just being flat-out creepy.”

How'd it make you feel?

"I was shocked, uncomfortable and embarrassed. I'd never been in a workplace situation like it before, so I just handled it the best way I could. It bothered me at first being at work with him but, I got over it with a little bit of time,"

Have you seen changes since Metoo started?

"I will say a lot more people are aware of their boundaries, and the work environment makes it clear what is and isn't okay. From what I've been around there's been more meetings about sexual harassment. As well as there just being more open dialogue. I have been there, I am a victim of sexual assault, so it is refreshing to see restaurants taking more actions to combat these issues."

How do you think we can solve the issue of sexual harassment?

"I think we should be taught in junior high school what is and what isn't okay. What is a compliment and what is a vulgarity? It starts when puberty does when we begin to sexualize not only things but, each other.

Do you think Progress has been made?

"I believe progress is being made, and I'm thrilled, but that's my personal opinion maybe I'm too hard, but we have a generation of highly intelligent, but emotionally awkward humans. I think we need to call out our male counterparts in the kitchen instead of running to the boss, immediately. We need to speak if we want to be heard. Our time is now!"

Do you truly believe change is on the way?

"I believe that one day before I leave this earth the kitchen will be a very different place for women and I can't wait to see that day. Watch out boys we're coming for ya spot,"

Gisell Paula:

What would you like to see changed about the industry?

"I think the big thing for me and what I'd like to see in kitchens (and generally in most workplaces) is for employers and leaders to create work environments where people feel comfortable setting and stating their boundaries without having to worry about repercussions or punishment," That wasn't always the case at some of the places I worked so that'd be a start."

Do you believe culinary school prepares students for the potential dangers of the indusrty?

Culinary school absolutely doesn't prepare you for the industry. From my personal experience, culinary school and actual kitchen cultures **are worlds apart.** I think that it's so different - a lot of culinary students aren't prepared when they go out into real kitchens. In the r very little money. There's a quote somewhere in the book Reach of a Chef, where the author talks about how culinary schools (in his case, the CIA) had gotten soft. Maybe this disparity is what he meant."

Have you ever witnessed someone being sexually assaulted at work?

"I've had to stick up for coworkers in terms of sexual harassment. I'm not comfortable discussing names but, the one instance I'll never forget is when one of the macho guys are in our kitchen ego as big as you've seen groped a female coworker. It enraged me; I instantly had to speak up, I wasn't even the one being assaulted but, I was appalled. After speaking with the young lady, we decided to go to our superiors about what had happened, and he kind of just got a

slap on the wrist. I stayed at the restaurant for a bit longer but, it made me sick that this happened without serious repercussions."

Do you believe it's just men that are unprepared?

"When it comes to leaving culinary school unprepared, both men and women are in the same boat, but women definitely aren't prepared for the harassment that comes along with the extremely laborious job."

Jalarris Wallace:

Have you heard or seen anything regarding sexual harassment at your jobs?

"I had two line cooks that were women tell me that the head chef would relentlessly flirt with them during dinner service. By the way, this was a fine dining restaurant; I feel like that's important to say because you feel like stuff like that definitely shouldn't happen there."

Did you ever talk about sexual harassment at school?

"We didn't talk about stuff like that at Johnson and Wales, most students were honestly just trying to cook and do there thing and graduate you know. But I do know a chef had a relationship with a student and that started in my class."

Do you think it's a school thing or a societal thing?

"But that doesn't mean I didn't hear stuff. You hear like girls getting harassed by other students but, I could say if that's being in culinary school more so a societal and college thing you know."