

# Julia Child: Trailblazing a New Path in Culinary Exploration Within American Homes

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Individual Website

Word Count: 500

When we first learned our class would be participating in this year's National History Day, I had multiple differing ideas as to what my project could focus on. Originally, my ideas revolved around the Unified Sports programs both in Rhode Island and my own high school. Unfortunately, I had little personal connection to this program as I've never participated in one of these teams. I came to the realization that my project must focus on a topic near and dear to my heart - the culinary world. Ever since I was young, figures such as Alton Brown and Alex Gournaschelli have been my idols. Rather than watching Dora the Explorer or Spongebob Squarepants, Cutthroat Kitchen and Chopped captivated me. After some deliberation with my teacher, we came to the conclusion that Julia Child was one, if not the most influential figure in the culinary industry. Following research, the barriers that Julia Child broke became apparent - high class meals within the American kitchen are possible in the modern world thanks to Child's popularization of French cuisine.

During my research phase, I mainly used websites such as PBS and Biography.com to gain an understanding of the basics of Julia's life and accomplishments. Library databases and internet sources served as my main source of information (early life, quotes, etc). As my research deepened, primary sources such as interviews from NPR offered a way to dive into Child's life in a complex fashion through interpretation of her own words and thoughts. My interview with Lauren Salkeld of the Julia Child Foundation was particularly interesting as I was able to gain an expert opinion on Child's accomplishments throughout her life.

Following this, I obtained copies of Child's works such as *Mastering the Art of French Cooking* in order to learn Child's values concerning cooking directly. An interesting portion of

this assignment is that many photos used in my project were taken by Child's husband, Paul, who had a love for photography - which added a personal touch to the website.

I find that websites are the most effective for projects such as these, due to the ease of incorporating both images and ideas as well as the addition of the interactive factor.

Familiarizing myself with the NHD website maker certainly took getting used to. As time passed and I began to work on the website, creating my main bodies of text in addition to compiling my sources in my annotated bibliography, I was constantly making revisions and adding increasing amounts of content. As you can imagine, this took a great deal of time.

Regarding Julia Child herself, there's arguably no other culinary icon whose accomplishments have reached a greater span. Child was unafraid to appear unpolished on national television, and truly cared about the creations of her audience. This mutual care between host and viewer motivated Americans across the nation to allow the culinary world a place in their home during a time where food of high quality was viewed as unattainable within the average household.