**Abstract**

"Texts of Taste" investigates the republication history of recipes and recipe-adjacent texts within the hybrid medium of the nineteenth-century newspaper. "Texts of Taste" makes use of a dataset of nineteenth-century American recipes pulled from web reproductions of printed, nineteenth-century cookbook advertisements in Project Gutenberg and a seed corpus. The re-printing and circulation of recipes in the nineteenth-century newspaper primarily pulled from Chronicling America. In combination with this more generalized re-printing data, "Texts of Taste" makes use of a dataset of nineteenth-century American recipes pulled from web reproductions of printed, nineteenth-century cookbook advertisements available in Project Gutenberg and a seed corpus. Some of the printed texts pulled from Project Gutenberg include widely printed books such as Lydia Maria Child's *The Frugal American Housewife* as well as books more focused on international cuisine, though printed in the United States. Using text analysis methodologies such as word embedding models and text classification, the seed corpus is then compared against clusters of reprints pulled at random from Viral Texts data and the likelihood that the re-printed text is a recipe is measured. These initial experiments are the first part of a larger workflow where over time, more recipes identified in the Viral Texts data will be pulled and incorporated in the seed corpus, making it both more precise as well as reflective of any differences in style that may be apparent in newspaper-printed recipes.

**Methods**

*Texts of Taste* builds on existing reprint-detection methodologies developed by the Viral Texts project to track the re-printing of recipes in nineteenth-century newspapers. Initial experiments using text classification methods were conducted using a seed corpus of 1,000 recipes pulled from printed, nineteenth-century cookbook advertisements in Project Gutenberg and a seed corpus. These initial experiments have illustrated what makes a text "recipe-like," allowing for an exploration not only of successfully identified recipes, but also recipe-adjacent texts which take up the recipe form in non-culinary ways.

**Results**

In addition to correctly identifying a number of recipes in the random sample of *Viral Texts* data, the model also identified a number of texts that we may think of as "recipe-adjacent" – meaning that they generally take up the recipe form but in a way that is distinct from its usual application.

For example, in this article entitled "Sugar" from *The Evansville Daily Journal*, directions are provided to farmers for the cultivation of a sugar crop. The article claims to be sourced from a correspondent of the Grayville Herald who recorded an account from a sugar farmer describing how the farmer plants and grows the crop. Although not directly aimed at the domestic sphere like a recipe typically is, the directions provided by the farmer take up the recipe form. The Doc2Vec model identifies this text as a recipe with the genre "advertisement" and then "literary" following, perhaps due in part to the first-person account of the recipe.

**Identifying Recipes**

Because recipes could often be printed alongside distinctly non-recipe texts in the newspaper, identifying when and where recipes circulated in the nineteenth-century periodical press can be difficult. By turning our attention to the ways in which domestic readers were using the newspaper to circulate recipes, we might investigate how the ways in which the newspaper form of recipe circulation differs from the form a recipe may take in a more formalized, printed book. In addition to thinking through questions of form, the speed with which a newspaper could print and circulate a point might allow for more in-depth analysis of reprinting and food in the nineteenth-century as well as attention to what domestic advice seemed to be most salient to newspaper readers.

For example, turning to the "Practical Recipes" section of the *Austin Weekly Statesman*, the recipes in the section are almost exclusively dedicated to cakes and desserts with only a single recipe for oysters and macaroni written at the bottom of the section. The Doc2Vec model correctly identifies this section as a section of recipes, with the next most salient genre being "news," followed by "advertisements." The proximity of these additional genres to "recipe" draws attention to the approach that this recipe section takes up in its introduction—focusing on both timeliness and and authoring—informative tone.

**Next Steps**

Currently, the model for identifying recipes and recipe-adjacent texts has an accuracy of only about 60%. As more random samples are pulled from the Viral Texts data and more recipes are identified in the newspaper, I plan to add these recipes to the data set of 1,000 tagged recipes. In this way, the model can be re-trained on data more specific to the newspaper-form and any differences in both usage and form may be considered more thoroughly. At this moment, these initial experiments show promising results for the ability to identify recipes in nineteenth-century newspapers with the caveat that the training of the data must continue to be cyclical process.