

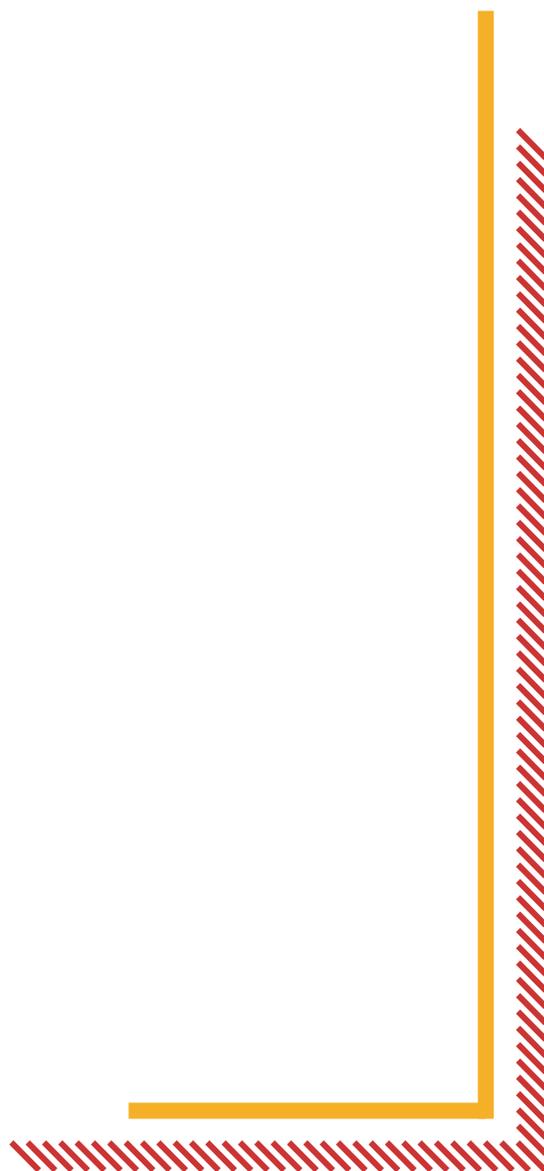
Food Network 2020: The Crisis of Culinary Democracy



March 6-8, 2020

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Letter from the Dais

HEY THERE!

WE'RE JOURDAN AND SHANE, AND WE'RE ROLLING OUT LOOKING FOR AMERICA'S GREATEST FLAVORTOWN HEROES! This BUCS, we're kicking into high gear with a ridiculous, full-throttle weekend of committee. From real-deal rivalries at the Ratty to delicious discussions of democracy, delegates are gonna wild out as they work to save the Food Network—and America.

Jourdan and Shane are old-school seniors, concentrating in Public Policy and History (respectively). This will be our last BUCS after four years of tackling a boatload of way less important issues, like the Clinton Impeachment or the geopolitics of Arctic oil, so we look forward to seeing what you cook up this year. Feel free to reach out to us with any questions, concerns, or funkalicious memes at food_network@browncrisis.org.

That's all right here, right now, in Food Network 2020!

With love from Flavortown,

Jourdan Smithwick | *Crisis Manager*
Food Network Enthusiast and *Guy Ferry* (alias: *Guy Fieri*) Impersonator
Brown University Class of 2020

Shane Niesen | *Chair*
Jourdan's Friend and Political Theorist
Brown University Class of 2020

Committee Email:
food_network@browncrisis.org



Background Information

The year is 2020, and America is falling apart.

Fights break out between political factions in America's cities; militias storm the capitol buildings of key U.S. states; and Congress is paralyzed in the face of an impending climate disaster. All while the last institution holding America together—the Food Network—continues to decline.

Americans still need to eat (especially with all the partisan fistfights they're getting into). But they no longer look to the wisdom of Bobby Flay or Rachael Ray to prepare their meals. Many are too exhausted by politics (and late-stage capitalism) to experience the joys of cooking, instead relying on fast food slop to fill their bellies. Liberals limit themselves to chains that reflect their values, like Shake Shack or Panera Bread, while conservatives indulge themselves with Chick-fil-A and Papa John's.

The Food Network has even lost influence among those still fortunate enough to cook for themselves. Having already killed off retail outlets and video rental stores, millennials have set their carnivorous gaze upon Paula Deen and her beloved Network. They get their food news and tips from YouTube channels like *Bon Appetit*, while their reality TV consists of shows like "Are You the One," which only promote jealousy and deceit. Younger audiences no longer remember the joys of combining culinary education with reality-based entertainment, and each has suffered as a result.

Yet Network executives have been suspiciously absent in light of all this. Just last year, the Food Network was bought by a shadowy capital firm called the Dais Group, and no one knows who its true owners are. Individual hosts, no longer confident that they can just rely on the Network to save them, have since decided to act on their own. These various Food Network TV personalities have thus come together at the behest of their leader, Guy Ferry (alias: Guy Fieri), to address the Crisis of Culinary Democracy.

It is now up to you to save the future of the Food Network. And if you're lucky, you might just save America too.



What to Expect

This committee will start on January 23, 2020 (after the previous day's celebrations). The Food Network is in a dismal state, with only 145.3 million viewers per month — compared to its peak of 293 million per month in 2009, back when there was still hope to be found in the world.

Delegates will need to determine what approach they want to take to solve this crisis. Should you focus on improving the Food Network's programming? Promote home cooking? Or will you be even more ambitious, challenging the very heart of capitalism itself?

To aid you in your decisions, each of you will have full discretion over your shows and personas as celebrity TV chefs. You can start new programs, improve on existing ones, or even leave television to new fields where your cult of personality might be better utilized. You can also find new ways to expand and exploit your brands, such as starting new restaurants or cookware lines.

We do not expect your actions to be limited to these examples; rather, we expect you to find unique and creative ways to use your powers as captains of the culinary industry. Overall, this committee will function as a standard crisis, but make sure you prep up on your Food Network knowledge — your skills very well might be put to the test.

Ready...

Set...

Cook!



Recommended Viewings

Cutthroat Kitchen

Host: Alton Brown

Premiere Date: August 11, 2013

No. of Episodes: 189

In *Cutthroat Kitchen*, four chefs compete in a three-round, elimination-style cooking competition. Each chef is given a case of \$25,000 with which to bid on featured items that can be used to sabotage their opponents through setbacks including ingredient confiscation, unorthodox tools and equipment, and loss of cooking time. Each round begins with Mr. Brown announcing the assigned dish—often relatively straightforward like macaroni and cheese, burritos, or French toast—followed by a one-minute dash for the chefs to frantically collect their ingredients from a crowded pantry in one trip using a metal hand-held shopping basket. During the subsequent 30-minute cooking period, Mr. Brown periodically auctions off sabotage items. Three chefs are eliminated one by one, and the winner keeps his or her unspent money as their prize. *Cutthroat Kitchen* is filled with a great deal of maniacal laughter, suspenseful cuts, and disastrous cooking mishaps.

Suggested episode: Season 7, Episode 14—“Evilicious: Finale”

Runtime: 43 minutes

Diners, Drive-ins, and Dives (AKA Triple D)

Host: Guy Fieri (alias Guy Fieri)

Premiere Date: April 23, 2007

No. of Episodes: 384

Triple D features a “road trip” concept where Fieri travels around the United States (and occasionally the world) exploring various diners, drive-in restaurants, and dive bars. Each episode generally features a unifying food item as its theme—for example, burgers, ribs, or seafood. Fieri visits multiple eateries within the same city to sample food items that correspond to the central theme. *Triple D* focuses on small, family-run comfort establishments that are often known for regional styles or ethnic specialties. Throughout each episode, Fieri interacts with both customers, who provide opinions on the food, and kitchen staff, who demonstrate how to prepare one or more of the featured dishes in the episode. (Note: Fieri rarely follows conventional table etiquette, including chewing with one’s mouth closed and refraining from speaking while eating).

Suggested episode: Season 12, Episode 12—“Pizza, Pancakes, and Pork”

Runtime: 22 minutes



Recommended Viewings

Kids Baking Championship

Hosts: Duff Goldman and Valerie Bertinelli

Premiere Date: February 2, 2015

No. of Episodes: 66

Kids Baking Championship is a competitive reality baking program that involves children competing to make the best baked goods, as indicated by the title of the series. Bakers are judged by Goldman and Bertinelli on the presentation, taste, and creativity of their final desserts. Each episode features both a thematic and a timed component. For example, a fan-favorite challenge is to create a “dessert imposter”—a dessert that looks savory at first glance, but is actually sweet—in just 30 minutes. Each baker is assigned a different theme that they must adhere to, or a different key ingredient to incorporate. For example, in the “dessert imposter challenge,” one baker must create a sweet “hamburger,” while another must create a sweet version of spaghetti. Content warning: there are a lot of tears and high-stakes emotions in this PG-rated program.

Suggested episode: Season 1, Episode 2—“Dessert Imposters”

Runtime: 43 minutes

Restaurant: Impossible

Host: Robert Irvine

Premiere Date: January 19, 2011

No. of Episodes: 180

In *Restaurant: Impossible*, chef Robert Irvine renovates a failing American restaurant within 48 hours on a budget of \$10,000. Here, his final goal is to restore the featured restaurant to profitability and prominence. Irvine is often assisted by a team of HGTV designers, general contractors, and construction laborers (a rare and long-sought-after overlap between the two popular channels). In each episode, Irvine harshly confronts the owner of the featured restaurant with a laundry list of the problems he identifies with its current operations, creates a detailed plan for the remodel—including huge menu revamps, decor updates and management shifts—and oversees the planned changes. Each episode ends with a reveal of the new-look restaurant to a line of eager customers.

Suggested episode: Season 4, Episode 5—“Stella’s Italian Restaurant”

Runtime: 42 minutes



Recommended Viewings

Chopped

Host: Ted Allen

Premiere Date: January 13, 2009

No. of Episodes: 543

Chopped is perhaps the most quintessential Food Network show. It features four chefs who compete in a three-round, timed contest to win \$10,000. In each round, the contestants receive a mystery basket of four ingredients that they are expected to incorporate into their final plating. These ingredients are often rather unusual or not commonly prepared together—for example, watermelon, pepper jack cheese, canned sardines, and zucchini. Each chef has their own cooking tools, preparation station, and unlimited access to a wide variety of other ingredients and specialized equipment, including a deep fryer and a notoriously-difficult ice cream machine. At the end of each round, chefs present their final platings to a panel of judges using unnecessarily-flowery culinary language. These judges then critique each dish based on presentation, creativity, and taste. After a period of deliberation, and often a suspenseful commercial break, Mr. Allen lifts a white cloth to reveal a dish, and thus a chef, to be “chopped” from the competition.

Suggested Episode: Season 24, Episode 6—“Tendon Intentions”

Runtime: 43 minutes

Man v. Food

Host: Adam Richman

Premiere Date: December 3, 2008

No. of Episodes: 143

In each episode of *Man v. Food*, everyday food enthusiast Adam Richman explores the “big food” offerings of a different American city before facing off against time in a pre-set eating challenge at a local restaurant. These challenges generally feature either extreme spice or large quantities of food—for example, a five-pound deli sandwich. However, the show does also emphasize quality, with occasional insights into communities and local landmarks through conversation with the patrons of each establishment. Like other Food Network personalities, notably Guy Fieri (alias: Guy Fieri), Mr. Richman interacts with local restaurateurs as they demonstrate how to prepare house specialties. Be prepared to gawk as he orders a side of fries during a 2-gallon ice cream challenge.

Suggested Episode: Season 2, Episode 4—“Kitchen Sink Challenge”

Runtime: 22 minutes



Additional Resources

If any delegates are interested in further developing their Food Network knowledge in advance of this committee, the dais would recommend the following programs:

- ***Guy's Grocery Games (aka Triple G)***

Suggested episode: Season 4, Episode 14—“Triple G À La No Cart”

Runtime: 43 minutes

- ***Worst Cooks in America***

Suggested episode: Season 2, Episode 1—“Worst Food Forward”

Runtime: 42 minutes

- ***Cupcake Wars***

Suggested episode: Season 7, Episode 12—“San Diego Zoo”

Runtime: 43 minutes

- ***The Great Food Truck Race***

Suggested episode: Season 6, Episode 3—“Spicy Showdown in Santa Fe”

Runtime: 43 minutes

- ***Iron Chef America***

Suggested episode: Season 3, Episode 20—“Batali vs. Blais”

Runtime: 43 minutes

- ***Beat Bobby Flay***

Suggested episode: Season 11, Episode 12—“I Thought We Were Friends”

Runtime: 30 minutes

- ***Barefoot Contessa***

Suggested episode: Season 23, Episode 4—“Cook Like a Pro: Fearless Food”

Runtime: 21 minutes



Food Network Personalities

Alton Crawford Brown Jr. is the creator and host of *Good Eats*, an off-beat food show inspired by the combination of Julia Child and Monty Python. Here, Mr. Brown, who has been called “the food equivalent of Bill Nye,” explores the science and technique behind cooking, the history of different foods, and the relative advantages of different cooking equipment. Mr. Brown is also the host and main commentator of popular shows like *Iron Chef* and *Cutthroat Kitchen*. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, after studying cinematography at the University of Georgia, Mr. Brown produced several well-known music videos, including “The One I Love” by R.E.M. He is outspoken about his disdain for single-purpose cooking devices, including garlic presses and margarita machines.

Robert Paul Irvine is an English celebrity chef who has appeared on and hosted a wide variety of famous Food Network programs including *Restaurant: Impossible*, *Operation Restaurant*, *Worst Cooks in America*, and *Guy’s Grocery Games*. He began his cooking career upon enlisting in the United Kingdom Royal Navy at the age of fifteen. After his ten-year tour of duty in the English Navy, Mr. Irvine performed undisclosed consultant work in Bali, Jakarta, and Ho Chi Minh City before becoming the Executive Chef aboard a few cruise ships. Unrelated to the Food Network, Mr. Irvine was selected as one of the “25 Fittest Guys in America” by *Men’s Fitness* magazine in 2007. In 2015, he published *Fit Fuel: A Chef’s Guide to Eating Well, Getting Fit, and Living Your Best Life*.

Robert William Flay is one of the Food Network greats. He is an American restaurateur, reality television personality, and celebrity chef — well-known in part for his restaurant chain Bobby’s Burger Palace in 19 locations across 11 states. He has hosted several Food Network programs, notably his namesake shows *Beat Bobby Flay*, *BBQ with Bobby Flay*, *Brunch @ Bobby’s*, and *Throwdown! With Bobby Flay*, among others. At age eight, young Bobby asked for an Easy Bake oven for Christmas. He later dropped out of high school and became a member of the first graduating class of the French Culinary Institute in 1984. After a short stint as a stock-floor trader at the American Stock Exchange, Mr. Flay returned to his rightful place in the kitchen as the Executive Chef at Miracle Grill in the East Village of Manhattan, where his southwestern and Cajun dishes caught the attention of an industry executive, who later boosted his career. He is currently ranked as the sixth highest-earning chef in the world, with a net worth of almost \$30 million.

Paula Ann Hiers Deen learned the hand-me-down art of Southern cooking from her grandmother and began a home catering business after a series of tragic childhood and marital events. Her original business, The Bag Lady, soon outgrew her home kitchen and the delivery service her sons provided, so she moved into a brick-and-mortar Southern buffet-style restaurant. Three years later, in 1999, *USA Today* named *The Lady & Sons* the



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“International Meal of the Year.” She has published fifteen cookbooks, including her 1997 self-published Southern-style cookbook claim to fame, *The Lady & Sons Savannah Country Cookbook*. Ms. Deen has appeared on QVC and *The Oprah Winfrey Show* multiple times, and in 2005, she launched a lifestyle magazine called *Cooking With Paula Deen* — it reached a circulation of 7.5 million copies in March 2009. Her best-known show, *Paula’s Home Cooking*, won a Daytime Emmy for Outstanding Lifestyle Host in June 2007.

Tyler Florence graduated from the College of Culinary Arts at the Charleston, South Carolina campus of Johnson & Wales University in 1991. His tenure with the Food Network has been fairly straightforward, including a co-host position with Anne Burrell on *Worst Cooks in America*, where he now serves as a panel judge. He currently hosts his namesake program *Tyler’s Ultimate*, as well as *The Great Food Truck Race*. Mr. Florence serves on the board of the national non-profit Afterschool Alliance, an organization that works to promote and support high-quality youth after-school programming. He is the owner and Executive Chef of Wayfare Tavern in San Francisco and recently created a podcast called “Wolf it Down,” where he interviews influential figures in food and tech. His published books include *Tyler Makes Spaghetti* and *Tyler Makes Pancakes*.

Rachael Domenica Ray was born into a foodie family; her mother managed restaurants in the Lake George, New York area. Ms. Ray soon followed in these footsteps, and while working as a buyer at a gourmet market in Albany, began teaching cooking classes where she showed people how to make delicious meals in less than 30 minutes. This concept, which was discovered by the local CBS-TV affiliate, later became her Food Network classic *30-Minute Meals*. Ms. Ray is famous for her “quick-and-easy” cooking style and disdain for official measurements — instead, favoring rough approximations like “half a palmful,” which she says adds to the creative, hands-on process of cooking. She helped popularize catchphrases like EVOO, short for extra-virgin olive oil, and “entréetizer,” an entrée-sized appetizer. She has been a spokesperson for Nabisco Crackers, an endorser for Dunkin’ Donuts, and she has a line of pet food, *Nutrish*, developed for her pit bull. Her shows have won three Daytime Emmy awards and her net worth is \$80 million.

Ina Rosenberg Garten, better known as the Barefoot Contessa, began her culinary fame with a specialty food store that expanded to several best-selling cookbooks, magazine columns, self-branded convenience products, and a popular television show of the same name. She began to amass her extensive Barefoot Contess-empire after spontaneously purchasing a store called *Barefoot Contessa* — which she claims matches her idea of an “elegant but earthy” lifestyle — in Westhampton Beach, New York. Many of the famed Barefoot Contessa recipes are based on the Time life cookbook series, with changes based on her own intuition and



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cooking experience, as well as feedback from friends. She has been known to quip that “store-bought is fine,” but also to express distaste with common ingredients like cilantro and pre-grated cheese. She is, surprisingly enough, a former staff member of the White House Office of Management and Budget.

Geoffrey Zakarian is a traditional Food Network chef with formal culinary training. He graduated with an Associates degree from the Culinary Institute of America and has since been named Executive Chef at several restaurants in New York City, Atlantic City, and Miami throughout his career. In 1998, Mr. Zakarian became the Executive Chef at three-Michelin star rated restaurant *Arpège* in Paris, and one of his own restaurants, *Country*, earned its own Michelin star. His personal style is often described as “modern,” or as he calls it, “dynamic American,” with roots in French cuisine. Mr. Zakarian has been a competitor on Food Network shows like *Iron Chef America* and *Cutthroat Kitchen*, and he regularly appears as a judge on *Chopped*. In 2016, he began hosting *Cooks vs. Cons*, where judges guess if a winning dish was created by a professional chef or a home cook.

Alexandra Maria Guarnaschelli found her love for cooking at home, as the daughter of a cookbook editor, where she would watch her mother test recipes. Her first cookbook, *Old-School Comfort Food: The Way I Learned to Cook*, mixes autobiographical details with recipes from her professional life that she adapted for home cooking. On the Food Network, Ms. Guarnaschelli regularly appears as a panelist judge, and occasionally as a contestant, on a number of shows, including *Chopped*, *Iron Chef America*, *Guy’s Grocery Games*, and *The Best Thing I Ever Ate*. In March 2016, she competed as a contestant on *Beat Bobby Flay*, where she challenged Bobby with her signature lobster dish — and won. She currently serves as Executive Chef at *Butter* restaurant in midtown Manhattan.

Chris Santos is a culinary arts alum of Johnson & Wales University in Providence, Rhode Island, although he began his career in the kitchen at the age of 13 washing dishes in a small local restaurant in his hometown of Bristol, Rhode Island. In 1999, he spent a few months traveling across Europe — visiting 14 countries and over 40 cities — to refine his skills and passion for cooking. Even though Mr. Santos is appreciative of his culinary arts training, he has always considered himself more of a “self-taught” chef because he never studied under esteemed master chefs like some other Food Network personalities. His restaurants are known for their out-there character, like the now-closed *Stanton Social* in Manhattan, which featured an experiential, communal dining style and received praise from many publications, including *Time Out New York*, *New York Magazine*, and *The New York Times*. He hopes to soon launch a long-rumored line of tattoo-inspired chef apparel.



Food Network Personalities

Jeffrey Adam “Duff” Goldman is a pastry and television personality most well-known for the Baltimore-based Charm City Cakes shop featured in the Food Network reality show *Ace of Cakes*. His family moved around a lot when he was young, but he graduated from Sandwich High School in Sandwich, Massachusetts. His first job in the food industry was in a bagel store at a mall. As a college sophomore, Mr. Goldman applied to work as a cook at an upscale restaurant in Baltimore with a resume of entirely-irrelevant experience. Somehow, he was offered a job making cornbread and biscuits — and he now cites it as a turning point in his career. Flash forward to 2020 and Charm City Cakes is famed for hiring unconventional employees like architects, sculptors, and painters to make unusual cakes, including an anatomically-correct ear and a 3D German Shepherd. Mr. Goldman set the Guinness World Record for largest cupcake (61.4 pounds) in March 2008, although he was later stripped of the official title because the cake itself was baked in two parts.

Jeff Mauro, perhaps better known as “The Sandwich King,” was the winner of the 7th season of the *Food Network Star* — where fifteen contestants compete for the chance to have their own show on the Network. Mr. Mauro impressed the judges with his strict focus exclusively on sandwiches throughout the competition. Many claimed that there would not be enough types of sandwiches to fill out the entire season, but he rejected this criticism, explaining that any handheld “meal” could be classified as a sandwich. In 2012, Mr. Mauro was nominated for a Daytime Emmy for *Sandwich King*, the show that he later chose to create, but ultimately lost to *Bobby Flay’s Barbecue Addiction*. He is one of five current co-hosts of *The Kitchen* and he continues to host both *Sandwich King* and *\$24 in 24*. He has occasionally appeared in commercials for Subway since 2017.

Anne W. Burrell is a veteran Food Network all-star chef and former instructor at the Institute of Culinary Education. She trained in Italy for several years while studying at the Italian Culinary Institute for Foreigners. After returning to the United States, she worked as a sous chef at Felidia in Manhattan under celebrity chef Lidia Bastianich, and in 2005, she began training under famed Iron Chef Mario Batali as a sous chef for a pilot taping of *Iron Chef America*. Ms. Burrell briefly had her own show on the Food Network, *Chef Wanted with Anne Burrell*, which ran for three seasons between June 2012 and October 2013. In 2015, she won the fourth *Chopped All-Stars* tournament — winning \$75,000 to support juvenile diabetes research. Ms. Burrell currently hosts *Secrets of a Restaurant Chef* and co-hosts *Worst Cooks in America*, where average Americans join a “culinary boot camp” to become better cooks, alongside diabolical chef Alton Brown.

