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Cooking up a Nation: Food, Culture, and Identity in the Early American Republic

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**COOKING UP A NATION: FOOD, CULTURE, AND IDENTITY
IN THE EARLY AMERICAN REPUBLIC**

A Thesis^o

Presented to

The Graduate Faculty

Central Washington University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
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by

Karen Bailor

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ABSTRACT

COOKING UP A NATION: FOOD, CULTURE, AND
IDENTITY IN THE EARLY AMERICAN REPUBLIC

by

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June 2011

Post-Revolutionary American food, common and genteel, acted as both a construct of and contributor to the development of an American national identity as well as a national culinary identity. From 1796 and into the early nineteenth century, Americans actively strove to distinguish themselves from their British backgrounds. As a result, the public discourse of American food shifted to reflect new values of simplicity and equality. Additionally, a new American cuisine began to take shape which embraced native crops, linking those who consumed them to the American soil, and ultimately, the new nation. Through the presence of particular dishes at politically oriented gatherings, “American” foods, and the values attached to them, became part of a public, democratic discourse, which shaped how Americans understood themselves and their nation.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION:

IMAGINED COOKERIES

The American historical past is often glorified by modern media. Hollywood productions often overstate elements of the past for dramatic effect, understating the truth in the process. Still, each American typically has his or her own preconceived notions about the formation of the United States of America. The most noted aspects of the American Revolution—the Founding Fathers, the Declaration of Independence, etc.—are key elements in a popular memory of the American past that has been intimately tied to understandings of the nation as a whole throughout its history. During the Civil War, for example, both Northerners and Southerners attempted to justify their stances on secession by looking back to the Founding Fathers for ideological support, interpreting virtually the same documents in drastically different ways. Thus, the formative years of the nation are a popular focus in the collection American memory. As such, many Americans remember the past in a particular light, whether or not the memories have any historical grounding.

It would be unsurprising for most Americans to imagine the existence of a characteristically “Revolutionary” food. Americans tend to expect the ideals of the Revolution to play out in every aspect of late eighteenth-century society, even in foodways. Nonetheless, there was no unique Revolutionary cuisine. No uniquely American cookery existed during the Revolutionary Period. It was not until twenty years after the Declaration of Independence that the first attempt was made by Amelia Simmons, an American orphan, to define American cuisine in contrast to that of the

British. During the Revolution itself, the only cookbooks that were published in America were British cookbooks incorporating British ingredients with a few minor changes to adapt to varied availability.

Contemporary historians, such as Julianne Belote, have attempted to reconcile the lack of American cookbooks from the Revolutionary period by reimagining an American Revolutionary cuisine. In *The Compleat American Housewife, 1776*, published in 1974, Julianne Belote attempts to recreate and redefine American culinary tradition during the Revolutionary period through the recipes of a fictional eighteenth-century woman referred to only as “a Lady.”¹ Belote’s book, written from the perspective of a fictional housewife who has recorded her recipes and anecdotes for publication just after her wedding on the Fourth of July, 1776, illustrates Belote’s desire to present her readers with a truly “American” and Revolutionary cuisine.² The brief narratives and recipes within the book are historically fraudulent, but they are based on Belote’s research of cookery books before and after the period as well as personal papers and popular anecdotes. Belote merely filled in the blanks with assumptions about American cooking practices and eating habits, solidifying these assumptions by grounding them in the musings of her fictional character and in popular quotations from the Revolutionary era. For the section of the book titled, “Of The Housewife’s Duty,” Belote copied the entire section from the preface of Amelia Simmons’ 1796 cookbook. Additionally, the fictional author of the cookbook frequently references a Mrs. Mary Randolph, a cookbook author

1. Julianne Belote, *The Compleat American Housewife, 1776* (Benicia, CA: Nitty Gritty Productions, 1974), Cover Page.

2. Belote, *Compleat American Housewife*, 1.

who did not publish her book until 1825. Despite the fact that most of her information originated long after the watershed year of 1776, Belote uses those sources to make assumptions about the foods that were popular during the Revolution.

One assertion that Belote makes is about the popularity of the Johny Cake, a common corn meal cake that increased in popularity in the eighteenth century. Writing from the perspective of her fictional housewife, Belote states, “Our citizens both high and low, mean and genteel love Johnny Cakes. The recipes have bounced around until no one can agree on the authentic ingredients.”³ Belote’s assertion seems plausible when considering the communal nature of recipes both before and after the Revolution as well as the common mention of the Johny Cake in numerous American cookbooks of the nineteenth century; however, due to the scarcity of cookbooks during this period, historians can only speculate, as Belote has done, on the characteristics of Revolutionary cookery. The wide availability of cookery publications and manuscripts from the mid-eighteenth and early nineteenth century provide a strong context for Revolutionary cooking, yet they more powerfully illustrate the slow evolution of American foodways, and in turn, a culinary national identity following the Revolution.

Foodways is a term that was coined in the 1970s by Jay Anderson in his dissertation, “*A Solid Sufficiency: An Ethnography of Yeoman Foodways in Stuart England*.” Anderson used the term historically (though it has reached a much broader and general application since its inception over four decades ago) to refer to “the whole interrelated system of food conceptualization, procurement, distribution, preservation,

3. Belote, *Compleat American Housewife*, 53.

preparation, and consumption shared by all members of a particular group.”⁴ Foodways offers a unique, ethnographic lens through which to view and understand American culture in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This study focuses on how American food conceptualization, preparation, and consumption gradually departed from traditional British foodways.

While foodways history provides an intimate viewpoint through the kitchens and kitchen culture of America, there are several complications to foodways research that must be taken into account.⁵ One difficulty is that most cookery sources do not cite particular days, or even years, when a recipe may have been composed. Most cookbooks are manuscript collections of recipes, the majority of which have been passed matrilineally through families, generation after generation.⁶ This makes it difficult to confirm a single, specific author as families are constantly adding more recipes and making corrections to the old recipes. Additionally, what is now referred to as plagiarism

4. Jay Anderson, quoted in James Deetz, *In Small Things Forgotten: An Archaeology of Early American Life*, 2nd ed. (New York: Anchor Books, 1996), 73.

5. As most cookery sources remain unpublished, the greatest difficulty facing foodways historians is locating primary documents. While several institutions currently hold manuscript cookbooks in archives or special collections, many or more are yet undiscovered or remain in the possession of the families who first compiled them. Additionally, as most archivists will not hesitate to inform, if not properly cared for, handwritten works from Early America can fade to the point where many recipes are lost. Thankfully, many of these earlier cookery books and several others are preserved in archives, such as the Jay Anderson Foodways Collection in Utah State University’s Special Collections and Archives, from which many of the sources for this study were obtained with funding from Central Washington University’s College of Arts and Humanities Graduate Research Grant.

6. Janet Theophano, *Eat My Words: Reading Women’s Lives Through the Cookbooks They Wrote* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 104.

is rampant among many early cookery sources, published and manuscript. Many later cookbooks take recipes directly from earlier collections, copying them word for word. Few authors cited the origins of their recipes; more often than not, they published collections of popular recipes as opposed to their own original recipes. In 1791, British cookbook author Mary Cole wrote, “if all the writers upon Cookery had acknowledged from whence they took their receipts, as I do, they would have acted with more candour by the public.”⁷ By contrast, Cole asserted that most cookbook authors should be considered more “Compilers” than actual authors.⁸ As a result of the tendency to “borrow” recipes, it is difficult to distinguish the compiler from the original author of a recipe.

Another difficulty is that cookery became a communal activity. Social groups—as well as publications—tended to share recipes. As a result, argues Janet Theophano, cookbooks are not collections of recipes but also “maps of the social and cultural worlds” in which the author lived.⁹ It is clear from the sources that cookery in Early America belonged not just to a one person but to entire communities. Each cookbook, manuscript

7. Mary Cole, *The Lady's Complete Guide: or, Cookery in all its Branches. Containing The Most Approved Receipts, Confirmed by Observation and Practice, in Every Reputable English Book of Cookery Now Extant; Besides a Great Variety of Others Which Have Never Before Been Offered To The Public*, 3rd ed. (London: Printed for G. Kearsley, 1791), quoted in Judith Herman and Marguerite Shalett Herman, *The Cornucopia: Being a Kitchen Entertainment and Cookbook, Containing Good Reading and Good Cookery from more than 500 Years of Recipes, Food Lore, Etc., As Conceived and Expounded by the Great Chefs and Gourmets of the Old and New Worlds Between the Years 1390 and 1899* (San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, 1973), 263.

8. Mary Cole quoted in Herman and Herman, *Cornucopia*, 263.

9. Theophano, *Eat My Words*, 13.

and published, drew influence from the social surroundings of the author. Theophano argues, “Nearly all individuals a woman met, from passing guests to servants, could inscribe themselves in her book, leaving a threadlike trail of women’s interpersonal relationships.”¹⁰ This is both a blessing and a curse for foodways historians. While the community treatment of recipes makes it difficult to study individuals in depth, it can be beneficial in illustrating how a population as a whole thought about food, particularly when analyzing the discourse of food and cookery within a particular community. Theophano identifies one late nineteenth-century manuscript recipe book by Mrs. Fred Patterson that served as “a visual and textual montage of the community and the region, its economy, its divisions, and its unity.”¹¹ Intermixed with her recipes, Patterson included anecdotes, current events, religious advice, and elements of the folk culture of her hometown, Pottsville, Pennsylvania.¹² In this way, cookbooks provide a unique perspective into the inner-workings of entire communities, though often little is known about the lives of the individual authors, even their full names.

Additionally, in characterizing the cookery of a nation, it is important to consider the environmental and ethnic diversity of the United States. Although regional and ethnic differences did exist in American foodways, in the context of this study, political and print culture was centered in New England Bay states and was dominated by Anglo-Americans. Cookbook culture and the political food culture tended to center there as

10. Theophano, *Eat My Words*, 13.

11. Theophano, *Eat My Words*, 26.

12. Theophano, *Eat My Words*, 26-27.

well. As Trish Loughran explains, most studies about American print culture assume an “urban metonymy” or a “uniformity of reception” throughout a “coherently linked” nation. Loughran states that “print did not have the same meanings on the Kentucky frontier or in the Georgia backcountry that it had in the densely literate and more economically integrated villages of Massachusetts, nor could it mean the same thing for the Philadelphia merchant and the Pittsburgh farmer.”¹³ She suggests that although the cultural landscape of the United States is varied, the point in studying print ideology in the Early National Period is to understand “the paradigm itself, the basic structure of an ideology that is understood to operate nationally, constitutionally—in short, foundationally.”¹⁴ Similarly, despite regional variations, culinary print culture illustrates the cultural, nationalist paradigm that developed in American cookery during and after the American Revolution.

Foodways is still a relatively underdeveloped field, and there are few prominent foodways historians, particularly with regards to Early America. One notable foodways historian is James E. McWilliams. In his book, *A Revolution in Eating*, McWilliams studies American foodways from the early settlement of the New World up to the American Revolution, stressing regional foodways distinctions as well as the contributions from and conflicts with other cultures, such as the convergence of Native American and colonial foodways. As McWilliams writes, “at no time in modern history

13. Trish Loughran, *The Republic in Print: Print Culture in the Age of U.S. Nation Building, 1770-1870* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 115.

14. Loughran, *Republic in Print*, 115.

. . . have so many cultures with so many culinary possibilities at their disposal found themselves vying for space in the same geographical region as they were in colonial British America.”¹⁵ McWilliams argues that American foodways played a determining role in the escalation of conflict with Britain and the ultimate declaration of independence. “If there was one single customary right that white colonists throughout the colonies universally and passionately valued,” McWilliams asserts, “it was their ability to produce and consume their own food and gain access to those foods that they didn’t produce. In a very real sense, food was freedom.”¹⁶ McWilliams suggests that the laws passed by Parliament in the 1760s and 1770s infringed upon the colonists’ desire to maintain control over their own food production and distribution, resulting in the violence of the Revolution. His specific argument aside, however, McWilliams’s book contributes to the limited scholarship on American foodways by tracing the British roots and the development of British-American cookery through the end of eighteenth century.

Karen Hess is another prominent foodways historian, most known for her analysis of the degradation of American tastes as well as editing an edition of Amelia Simmons’ *American Cookery*.¹⁷ She and her husband, John Hess, a New York Times food critic, published *The Taste of America* asserting that American culinary taste has degraded in the twentieth century. They argue that “corruption and pollution, rural decline and urban

15. James E. McWilliams, *A Revolution in Eating: How the Quest for Food Shaped America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 9.

16. McWilliams, *Revolution in Eating*, 284.

17. Karen Hess and John Hess, *The Taste of America* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 14-15.

decay, alienation and cynicism, malnutrition and phony food” led to a crisis in American cuisine as modern American cooks, particularly from the 1970s on, have lost any expertise.¹⁸ Instead, Hess and her husband argue that the advent of the microwave as well as neurotic health trends have destroyed Americans’ taste for good food. Additionally, in analyzing American food trends throughout history, the authors assert that many works on culinary history suffer from a lack of rigorous scholarship. Indeed, Hess and her husband argue that culinary histories often rely too heavily on popular anecdotes, neglecting to seriously research the material and search out the truth behind the tales. She criticizes modern food historians, stating, “the truth is more interesting though less tidy than the anecdote, but to find it requires tedious and meticulous research.”¹⁹ The serious flaw to this approach, as the authors assert, is that it relegates culinary history and foodways to simple antiquarianism and removes them from scholarly discussions, ignoring the valuable contributions foodways have made in shaping American culture.

Additionally, *Eat My Words* by Janet Theophano examines the connection between women and public food culture, suggesting that food and cookery provided a medium through which women were able to break into the public sphere.²⁰ Theophano argues that cookbooks provide a unique perspective into the intimate thoughts of women. She writes, “Because cooking is so basic to and so entangled in daily life, cookbooks have thus served women as meditations, memoirs, diaries, journals, scrapbooks, and

18. Hess and Hess, *Taste of America*, 336.

19. Hess and Hess, *Taste of America*, 14-15

20. Theophano, *Eat My Words*, 10.

guides.”²¹ Through these sources, Theophano suggests, historians can gain a better understanding of the world in which these women lived, more specifically their social, cultural, economic, and even political surroundings. Cookbooks performed several roles for women throughout history, acting as expressions of the community, symbols of collective memory and identity, autobiographies of the authors, and a medium through which to leave a family legacy.²² Using examples of both published and manuscript cookbooks from the seventeenth century to the twentieth century, Theophano illustrates the direct impact of culinary print culture on American society as a whole in addition to demonstrating the value of culinary literature as source material.

Keith Stavely and Kathleen Fitzgerald address the role of food in New England in their book, *America’s Founding Food: The Story of New England Cooking*. As the title suggests, *America’s Founding Food* is a narrative history of eating in early New England, and the authors make few arguments about culinary identity beyond, perhaps, that of the independent New England farmer. The book explains popular New England recipes such as baked beans and pumpkin pie, explaining the regional appeal of particular dishes. Stavely and Fitzgerald assert that New England exists on a historical pedestal in American collective memory, and, as a result, Americans feel a strong desire to learn about the eating habits of early New Englanders. The authors explain that “patriotic sentiment flavors” the foods of the past, resulting in a tendency to glorify “the plain

21. Theophano, *Eat My Words*, 6.

22. Theophano, *Eat My Words*, 8-10.

dishes that typify New England Cooking.”²³ Some historians attempt to overcorrect this tendency, the authors assert, depicting the people of New England as sinners instead of saints. By contrast, Stavelly and Fitzgerald direct their study at the ordinary, human aspects of New England history, hoping “to set a plentiful table on the theme of New England’s foods and cooking styles, not one groaning under the burden of self-congratulatory lore and sanctimoniously lauded dishes, but rather one full of more varied, and ultimately more tasty, historical fare.”²⁴ Overall, Stavelly and Fitzgerald illustrate a common trend in current foodways historiography. Many foodways scholars write popular histories of American food, particularly American regional cuisine, catering to culinary enthusiasts rather than an academic audience. These works, therefore, often lack an overarching argument about the nature of American food and serve more of a narrative purpose.

Additional scholarship on foodways can be found in a well-known work by David Hackett Fischer. Fischer identifies foodways as one of the major folkways that played a role in the development of American culture. In *Albion’s Seed*, Fischer studies the British roots of American culture, beginning in the colonial period and ending with the late twentieth century. Fischer argues that four distinct migrations from Britain “carried across the Atlantic four different sets of British folkways which became the basis of

23. Keith Stavelly and Kathleen Fitzgerald, *America’s Founding Food: The Story of New England Cooking* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 1.

24. Stavelly and Fitzgerald, *America’s Founding Food*, 3.

regional cultures in the New World.”²⁵ These migrations occurred in waves, originating in different locations within Britain and arriving in different locations in America. The first wave of British immigration, from 1629-1640, arrived in Massachusetts; the second wave, between 1642-75, was composed primarily of elite classes and indentured servants and arrived in Virginia; the third arrived in Delaware; and the fourth, consisting of immigrants from Northern England and Ireland, arrived in the Appalachian backcountry.

Fischer focuses his study on the transference of several folkways during the migrations that played a significant role in the disparate development of the four major regions. These folkways are speech ways, building ways, family ways, marriage ways, gender ways, sex ways, child-rearing ways, naming ways, age ways, death ways, religious ways, magic ways, learning ways, dress ways, sport ways, work ways, time ways, wealth ways, rank ways, social ways, order ways, power ways, freedom ways, and lastly, food ways.²⁶ While his study of foodways is relatively limited, Fischer’s argument about the four major regional identities helps us understand the development of the American nation and the concept of American nationhood. While there were regional variations in foodways in nineteenth-century America, the citizens who actively participated in the discourse of American nationhood adopted and seemingly promoted and adhered to a national discourse of food. As Fischer has suggested, regional distinctions in technique and recipes persisted through the nineteenth century; however, some recipes contributed to a new understanding of food on a national level. These

25. David Hackett Fischer, *Albion’s Seed: Four British Folkways in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 6.

26. Fischer, *Albion’s Seed*, 8-9.

recipes provided a commonality between disparate regions and united them under a national culinary identity that formed in stark contrast to the cookery of colonial British America.

Additionally, while Richard L. Bushman does not directly tackle the topic of food in early America, he offers a prominent study of the development of American culture that is useful in understanding the evolution of foodways. Bushman's *The Refinement of America* analyzes two larger chronological periods: the first, a period of gentility from 1700-1790, and the second, a period of respectability from 1790-1850. In the late eighteenth century, Bushman argues, genteel culture spread to the middle classes. As Bushman writes, "the life that at midcentury was conceived as proper only for the gentry became, in less than a century, the standard of respectable living for the entire middle class . . . the genteel style, as borrowed and adapted, enabled people of lesser rank to elevate themselves and . . . to blur and dilute social distinctions."²⁷ The middle class adopted aspects of genteel mental and physical culture, such as literature, religious beliefs, and even middle names that had previously been reserved for the higher classes. The middle class also purchased items like carpets, curtains, and furniture in an attempt to assimilate themselves into polite culture. While this shift was occurring in parlors all over the United States, traditional genteel food culture was dissipating, making way for a new democratic culinary tradition. In this analysis, Bushman illustrates the interdependence of culture and economics, linking middle-class culture with the rise

27. Richard L. Bushman, *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), 29.

American of consumerism and examining material, visible changes in the landscape and print sources. With regards to culture, Bushman suggests that a peculiar cultural tool kit shaped the way the North American colonists perceived themselves, as either refined or vulgar, in the eighteenth century. Bushman writes, “As rapidly as distinctions were drawn between refined and vulgar, people strove to overcome the invidious comparison, and to secure, if they could, a foothold in the ranks of polite society.”²⁸ People strove to refine themselves through changes in their homes and their behaviors. Bushman suggests that the actions of these people differed depending on the region. The Chesapeake, he argues, had a different culture than the South.

It is also important to consider theories of national development in understanding how a national cuisine took shape in nineteenth-century America. Benedict Anderson offers one such theory that could explain the development of American food. Anderson defines a nation as “an imagined political community,” asserting that this imagination originates within the cultural aspects of a society and culminates in a strong conception of fraternity to which many people devote their lives.²⁹ Anderson asserts that nationalism began to develop as three major ideologies in Western Europe declined. First, written language lost its privileged association. Second, rulers lost their divine nature. Human loyalties to monarchs, or dynastic ties, then declined, and, finally, a shift occurred in the concept of a “temporality” that identified history and cosmology as synonymous.³⁰

28. Bushman, *Refinement of America*, 29.

29. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Rev. ed. (New York: Verso, 2006), 6.

30. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 36.

Following the decline of these ideals, new ideals began to spread across Europe and into the eighteenth century colonies. Overall, Anderson argues that these shifts were facilitated by the development of print-capitalism, which allowed rapid sharing of ideas and allowed people to think in entirely new ways, culminating in nationalistic thought. Anderson states that “print-languages laid the bases for national consciousnesses.”³¹ In the cases of Latin America and Southeast Asia, European languages and print culture were imposed on indigenous peoples; however, in the case of America, the colonists already used the English language and may have seen themselves as part of a larger imagined community within the English-speaking British Empire.

Both Belote and Anderson offer unique insights into American memory. Popular culture tends to depict the Revolution as a radical watershed in American history, while many historians have suggested that the Revolution itself was largely conservative. As many might expect, the American Revolution did not represent a fundamental break in cultural traditions. In *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*, Gordon Wood argues that the American Revolution was radical in the sense that it caused a change in American thought. As he explains, the Revolution led to a shift in how Americans understood their society. “Far from remaining monarchical, hierarchy-ridden subjects on the margin of civilization,” Wood asserts, “Americans had become, almost overnight, the most liberal, the most democratic, the most commercially minded, and the most modern

31. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 44.

people in the world.”³² This new way of thinking, though not immediately apparent in American society, ultimately led to new concepts of social hierarchy and behavior. Similarly, although American colonists participated in British print culture, in the eighteenth century, they had begun to develop their own culture as well. After the Revolution, a shift occurred in the way American colonists thought of themselves. The Revolution spawned new ideals that took shape as a distinctly American culture began to develop throughout the early nineteenth century. This development was further aided by a distinctively American print culture.

The nature of American identity, and, in turn, American culinary identity, is ambiguous. In addition to debating the nature of American national identity, historians also debate the existence of a true national cuisine in America. Sidney Mintz argues that a national cuisine cannot exist at all. According to Mintz, “A ‘national cuisine’ is a contradiction in terms; there can be regional cuisines, but not national cuisines. I think that for the most part,” he argues, “a national cuisine is simply a holistic artifice based on the foods of the people who live inside some political system, such as France or Spain.”³³ According to Mintz, a national cuisine assumes that a group of regions share an artificial cultural tie that binds their foodways together, largely ignoring the role of the physical environment in determining what a people eat. In this view, no truly national cuisine can exist because it is purely a human construction. In effect, nations merely will their

32. Gordon Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1991), 6-7.

33. Sydney W. Mintz, *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom: Excursions into Eating, Culture, and the Past* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996), 104.

cuisines into being. National cuisines, then, only exist insofar as the national discourses of food create them.

Mintz asserts that a national cuisine, and theoretically a national identity, is signified only by language, also a human construction, with no logical grounding in reality. Benedict Anderson similarly suggests that language plays a decisive role in the creation of national identities; however, he argues that national identities do exist in locations that meet his linguistic criteria. In *Imagined Communities*, Anderson suggests that national identity originates out of a standardized language and even more importantly, a shared, nationally appealing print culture. The origins of nationalism, according to Anderson, were in Europe, from which the concept spread outwards through imperialism and capitalism.³⁴ The concept of nationalism was a cultural artifact, which was easily transplanted to colonial possessions. From there, common linguistic background bound a particular people together as they formulated their concepts of nationhood.

Similarly, in his article, "Anthropological Aspects of Language," Edmund Leach treats language as an active force in constructing an individual's understanding of themselves, their environment, their society, and possibly even their nation. Leach's article focuses on the way particular cultures construct concepts of taboo. According to Leach, languages create discourses, in this case of taboo, within each society that

34. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 139-140.

determine the cultural value of the signified objects or creatures.³⁵ Most importantly, Leach's article illustrates the direct impact of language upon the ideologies and cultures of their respective societies. "Language then does more than provide us with a classification of things," Leach argues. Instead, "it actually molds our environment; it places each individual at the center of a social space which is ordered in a logical and reassuring way."³⁶ Like Anderson, Leach asserts that there is a direct link between language and ideologies of identity, seemingly supporting Anderson's claim about the role of print-culture and standardized language in the development of nationalistic thought.

By this logic, the discourse of food in the first half of the nineteenth century played an active role in forming the culture through the language of taboo and classifications of particular foodstuffs as genteel versus vulgar. American national foodways developed out of American language. Leach's theory suggests that American national cuisine may have developed in the same way as cultural taboos. Discourses of egalitarianism, democracy, and republicanism established an American cuisine, which classified its foods not as edible and non-edible, but as American and British.

In addition, although Anderson's study neglects North America, focusing predominately on the development of nationalism in Latin America, Southeast Asia, and Europe, his theory can be applied to the United States as well. Anderson argues that

35. Edmund Leach, "Anthropological Aspects of Language: Animal Categories and Verbal Abuse" in *New Directions in the Study of Language*, ed. by Eric H. Lenneberg (Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1964), 26.

36. Leach, "Anthropological Aspects," 36.

“nationality, or . . . nation-ness, as well as nationalism, are cultural artefacts of a particular kind.”³⁷ As an artifact, nationality became something that could be transplanted to different cultural landscapes, carrying with it political and ideological implications. In America, the notion of nationality and nationalism came with European settlers. Anderson asserts that a separate American national identity does exist, though the reason that Americans rejected British, French or Spanish nationalism and instead adopted their own concept is unclear. Likewise, as Benedict argues that each concept of nationhood formed around single linguistic groups, he admits that within the parameters of his theory, it is not clear how separate nationalist identities built around the same language could exist separately from one another, such as Britain and America.³⁸ In the case of America, Anderson writes, “any excessive emphasis on the linguistic lineages threatened to blur precisely that ‘memory of independence’ which it was essential to retain.”³⁹ In order to develop a national identity, Americans had to reconcile their linguistic background and their newfound independence.

One possible answer to this dilemma is that although the American colonies and the British shared a common linguistic background, the radical ideals that emerged from the Revolution translated into a unique cultural dialect. Americans established their own concepts of taboos, which often ostracized British elements of society. In this way, it could be argued that Americans established their own language based on their own

37. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 4.

38. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 197.

39. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 197.

cultural “toolkit.”⁴⁰ As a result, two separate concepts of nationalism would have been able to coexist within a single language as each country maintained its own culturally distinct dialect and its own nationalistic discourse.

David Waldstreicher proposes another theory in his analysis of the formation of American national identity from popular American politics in the mid- to late-nineteenth century. Waldstreicher examines the role of public celebrations and holidays in shaping the political climate of the early American Republic and promoting nationalism.

Waldstreicher argues that language played an essential role in the appeal and influence of these public events. As Waldstreicher writes, the sense of nationhood that existed during the American Revolution and immediately afterward can be observed “in the toasts and declarations given meaning by assent, in the reproduction of rhetoric and ritual in print” that surrounded these public, political celebrations.⁴¹ Beyond the public ceremonies themselves, Waldstreicher suggests that the print culture surrounding the celebrations played a significant role in the development of concepts of national unity and American identity.

Print representations of these celebrations offered their own meanings of America and their own versions of the nation, each influenced heavily by different editors’ personal biases. As Waldstreicher points out, “the invention of a national political culture

40. Ann Swidler, “Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies,” *American Sociological Review* 51, No. 2 (1986): 277.

41. David Waldstreicher, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fêtes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776-1820* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 51.

opened up a contest over what was being represented and who should represent it. This contest . . . was part of a larger cultural crisis of representation, as wealth, personal identity, and even language itself appeared to have broken away from their moorings in reality.”⁴² The newspapers and pamphlets created a political discourse surrounding public celebrations which only reinforced the contests that were taking place within popular politics. Waldstreicher argues that it was this amalgamation of political contests that firmly established a national public and political sphere, culminating in the development of nationhood.

Although there was no characteristically “revolutionary” cuisine, many Americans might assume that one existed. This is because, as Belote has illustrated, Americans have created an imagined community based on foods associated with revolutionary ideals. Print culture plays a role insofar as cookbooks, travel narratives, and newspaper articles provide a major basis for reconstructing the American culinary past. Since no revolutionary cuisine existed within the print culture of the late eighteenth century, Belote re-imagined it from her knowledge about the time period, illustrating the strong collective impulse to remember the Revolution as a crucial element of the nation’s development. Popular history tends to look at the Revolution as a singular, cohesive moment in the nation’s development, and thus, many would expect cookery during the time to represent the same distinct, revolutionary, national cohesion. Many modern nations are characterized by their cuisines; however, America is characterized by its lack of homogenous cuisine. Into this gap, Belote inserts her own imagined cookery, drawing

42. Waldstreicher, *Midst of Perpetual Fêtes*, 54.

on contextual print culture to guide her assumptions. The reality is that no revolutionary cookery appeared in print until 1796, twenty years after independence.

Indeed, the ideals of the Revolution had no immediate parallel in American culinary culture; however, eating habits in the early nineteenth century reflect a shift in American mentality. Following the publication of Amelia Simmons' *American Cookery* in 1796, numerous American cookbook authors sought to distinguish the new, developing American cuisine from the British tradition which had flourished in the colonies until independence. During this period of early national development, these cookbooks emphasized simple and practical recipes, reaching out to the American public as a whole instead of targeting a specific audience. American cookbooks, thus, promoted an egalitarian discourse of food in contrast to the more aristocratic food culture that continued in Britain throughout the nineteenth century. This discourse reached its peak in the 1830s as Jacksonian Democrats further promoted the appreciation of the common, self-made man.

Meanwhile, both prior to and during the Revolutionary Period, food took on a new political significance as Americans struggled to maintain control over food production and sale in the face of Parliamentary regulations and, later, war shortages. Whereas politics often centered on food in the Revolutionary Period, this evolved into a unique politicization of food in the 1820s. Particular foods adopted political meaning through their presence at popular political gatherings, symbolizing the democratic values of the new nation and promoting. The popular political culture that developed during the Age of Jackson brought a new significance these politically themed dishes. During the

Jeffersonian Republic, characteristically American recipes in the nineteenth century began to incorporate native-grown crops, such as corn and squash. Alongside this homegrown movement, many Americans stressed the importance of growing one's own produce as a method for shedding dangerous dependencies. Thomas Jefferson's concept of the republic, emphasizing the virtue of the yeoman farmer, permeated American concepts of food.

This study intends to fill a gap in contemporary historiography. While Fischer briefly addresses British foodways in America, more must be explained about how American cookery came to differ so drastically from its British origins by the 1830s. In analyzing this point, this study aims to simultaneously ally itself with Bushman, Wood, and Waldstreicher while addressing the often neglected topic of American cookery as cultural expression. The study of foodways is above all a cultural approach, and, as such, it requires a large time frame for analysis in order to view change over time. This study examines the origins of American cookery in eighteenth century British tradition as well as the culmination of American culinary identity in the mid-nineteenth century.

Cultural histories are often difficult to periodize. Broad cultural trends and ideas do not always fit into the typical, discrete, political periods. Instead, cultural histories often develop along their own trajectories. While politics and culture frequently intersect, cultural histories like this one are not an extension of political history; they are their own entity. For periodizing the cultural development of the United States, Bushman's categories are particularly useful. With the exception of the background information, this study focuses predominately on the culinary shift that took place between 1790 and 1830,

within the range that Bushman refers to as the Period of Respectability from 1790 to 1850.⁴³ During this period, Bushman suggests that concepts of gentility were cast aside in favor of respectability, which middle-class Americans could strive to achieve via material and intellectual representations of refinement. Similarly, I argue this period marked the abandonment of genteel British recipes in favor of America recipes intended for a wider audience.

In agreement with Wood's argument, this study suggests that the culinary shift that took place in between 1790 and 1830 was a result of new ideologies that most likely originated in the American Revolution. By the 1830s, Americans had adopted new concepts about society as a whole, which permeated American foodways. American national and culinary identity attempted to span the entirety of a diverse cultural, environmental and political landscape and accommodating separate regional and ethnic identities. In short, then, American culinary identity was eclectic. The most notable distinction from the Old World was the significant lack of homogeneity in American cookery. Following Waldstreicher's theory of nationalism, this study argues that nineteenth-century American nationalism formed not out of a unified concept of the nation, but from the competition of several uniquely American values—be it egalitarianism, democracy, or refinement—that intermingled with each other to create a national identity that allowed for disunity in a diverse national landscape, existing beneath a larger, shared American quality. In the first half of the nineteenth century, then,

43. Bushman, *Refinement of America*, 29.

Americans attempted to define a quintessentially American culinary tradition, and, in the process, they cooked up their own concepts of the American nation.

CHAPTER II

EGALITARIAN EATS

Prior to and following the Revolution, British culture and tradition held a powerful influence in America, specifically with regards to cookery. While revolutionary American political values began to take shape in 1776, a revolutionary culture was slower to develop, particularly a revolutionary cookery. Until 1796, the only cookery books that were published in America were British in origin, and traditional notions of food and food culture were slow to change. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, however, new characteristically American cookbooks emerged which demonstrated new techniques as well as new recipes reflecting the democratic overtones of the newly formed Republic. These new recipes were directed toward new audiences and, as many authors professed, were intended for new egalitarian purposes.

From 1796 and into the early nineteenth century, the public discourse of food shifted to reflect changing values among the upper- and middle-class citizenry of the country. By the Jacksonian Era, Americans had come to conceive of themselves and their food as distinct from Britain predominately in that American cuisine represented new values of democracy and stressed universal appeal and application. While American hearth, home, and table generally became more refined as the American people struggled for more “respectable” lives, the food that was served on those tables took on an egalitarian significance to the American public, reflecting the development of an American national identity as well as a national culinary identity.

In the eighteenth century and earlier, British cookbooks tended to focus on educating readers in the proper and fashionable ways to prepare foods. These cookbooks

promoted a concept of food as artistic expression, focusing more on the aesthetic appeal of the recipes than the preparation time or the availability of ingredients. Additionally, the cookery books often focused more on the overall presentation of the meal than the meal itself. One of the earliest British cookbooks to be popular in Colonial America was *The Compleat Housewife* by Eliza Smith, published in London in 1727. Her recipes were relatively simple; however, Smith did include numerous diagrams of the proper table presentation, including multiple diagrams for every season and every course. She included the layout of dishes as well as descriptions of what types of foods should be found on each dish and how those foods should be displayed. On one such diagram, Smith asserted that a “Pyramid of dry’d Sweet meats” should be placed in the center of the table for the second course of a supper.¹ Overall, Smith’s cookbook illustrates the tendency of British cookery to view food in an artistic manner, setting the dinner table as if setting the stage for a drama.

This point is more dramatically apparent in another popular British cookbook of the eighteenth century, *The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy* by Hannah Glasse, published in 1747. In her note to the reader, Glasse asserted that her cookbook was intended for “the lower sort” and not those of polite society; however, it was not an attempt to educate the masses on preparing meals for their families.² Instead, Glasse’s

1. Eliza Smith, *The Compleat Housewife: Or, Accomplish’d Gentlewoman’s Companion*, 15th ed.(London: R. Ware, S. Birt, T. Longman, C. Hitch, J. Hodges, J. and J. Rivington, J. Ward, W. Jonston, and M. Cooper, 1753), 202-203.

2. Hannah Glasse, *The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy: Which Far Exceeds Any Thing of the Kind Yet Published*, New ed. (1784), i.

cookbook was intended to teach servants how to better prepare meals for those that they served. As she informed the reader, “I have both seen, and found by experience that the generality of servants are greatly wanting in [cookery], therefore I have taken upon me to instruct them in the best manner I am capable; and I dare say, that every Servant who can but read, will be capable of making a tolerable good cook, and those who have the least notion of Cookery cannot miss of being very good ones.”³ In this way, Glasse perpetuated the class divide in eighteenth-century Britain, writing her recipes not for the betterment of cookery in society as a whole but for the betterment of the elite whose servants would learn from her tips.

Although, as Glasse confessed, she used simpler language in her recipes and directions in order to make them more readable for the lower classes, the majority of the recipes themselves were extravagant. They were, after all, intended for the tables of the upper class. Many of the recipes were named for their appearances instead of their ingredients, such as “A pretty Made-Dish” and “A Pretty Cake,” illustrating the artistic significance of a meal.⁴ Additionally, Glasse’s cookbook includes the recipe for a popular “Hedge-Hog” dish. The Hedge-Hog is made primarily of almonds, cream, butter, and eggs. Although the ingredients are relatively simple, the appeal of the “Hedge-Hog” is not in its flavor; instead, it is the presentation of the dish that deserves mention. The directions call for the cook to arrange the paste-like substance derived from the aforementioned ingredients into the shape of a hedge-hog, using almonds for the bristles

3. Glasse, *Art of Cookery*, i.

4. Glasse, *Art of Cookery*, 168 and 283.

and plumping currants for the eyes.⁵ This recipe was reprinted in several other popular cookbooks in Britain, including *The London Cook* by William Gelleroy, published in 1762.

Another of Glasse's recipes calls for even more cumbersome preparation. Her recipe "To make a grand dish of eggs" takes up nearly an entire page of her cookbook. The dish requires "as many eggs as the yolks will fill a pint bason," some to be boiled in bladders and others to be boiled in two bowls clasped together. The directions read as follows, "have a wooden bowl . . . made like butter-dishes, but in the shape of an egg, with a hole through one at the top When the yolk is boiled hard, put it into the bowl-dish; but be careful to hang it so as to be in the middle . . . then clap the two bowls together and tie them tight, and with a funnel pour in the whites through the hole."⁶ The resulting dish was intended to be shaped like giant eggs. The whites and the yolks were boiled separately to recreate the separate parts of the egg for display once each had been cooked. Glasse suggests that the reader allow at least one hour for each bowl of eggs to boil completely, meaning the recipe would require a great deal of time for preparation. This recipe, in addition to the Hedge-Hog, illustrates the role of aesthetics in British cookery in the mid-eighteenth century. The recipes largely seem to disregard the flavor of the dish and focus more upon the presentation.

By contrast, Susannah Carter's *The Frugal Housewife: or, Experienced Cook*, published in 1765, was another popular British cookbook that contained far less of the

5. Glasse, *Art of Cookery*, 169.

6. Glasse, *Art of Cookery*, 207.

pomp than was present in Glasse's collection of recipes. Carter's recipes were relatively plain and simple in comparison to the "Hedge-Hog." In her brief introduction, Carter wrote that she hoped only to improve upon the follies of previous cookery books, though she did not specify which follies she hoped to correct or how she hoped to correct them.⁷ Additionally, Carter did not identify an intended audience for her recipes, nor did she profess a goal of educating any particular class in the ways of experienced cookery as Glasse did in *The Art of Cookery*.

It is clear that whatever the motivations behind the publication of *The Frugal Housewife*, Carter did not overtly aspire to promote the class structure of England through her recipes. In her cookbook, Carter appears uninterested in either perpetuating or reforming the class order vis-à-vis food preparation and consumption. It appears that she intended her recipes for a general audience. In America, these recipes were widely received and recycled, notably by Amelia Simmons, an American orphan, whose cookbook some historians have characterized as a second declaration of American independence.⁸ Many of Simmons' recipes in her famous 1796 publication, *American Cookery*, are now known to be almost directly copied from Susannah Carter. As John and Karen Hess have noted, Simmons copied her entire syllabus recipe collection "virtually

7. Susannah Carter, *The Frugal Housewife, or Complete Woman Cook: Wherein the Art of Dressing All Sorts of Viands, with Cleanliness, Decency, and Elegance, is Explained in Five Hundred Approved Receipts to which are Prefixed Various Bills of Fare, for Dinners and Suppers in Every Month of the Year; and a Copious Index to the Whole* (Boston: Edes and Gill, 1772), 3.

8. Mary T. Wilson, "Amelia Simmons Fills A Need: *American Cookery*, 1796," *William and Mary Quarterly* 14, no. 1 (1957): 19.

word for word” from the first American edition of Carter’s book, published in 1772.⁹ Perhaps it was the seemingly unbiased nature of Carter’s recipes that caused them to appeal so greatly to Simmons. The almost generic quality of Carter’s recipes may have appealed to Simmons’ desire to promote more democratic and egalitarian cookery in America in the late eighteenth century.

In colonial America, British cookery books were extremely popular, although none of them were published on American soil until 1742. Eliza Smith’s *The Compleat Housewife* was the first British cookbook to be published in America. Even more significantly, it was the first British cookbook to be altered by its American publisher to better appeal to the American audience. In 1742, William Parks republished the cookbook in Williamsburg, Virginia with a new preface, reading,

The Printer now begs Leave to inform the Reader, that he hath Collected the following Volume from a much larger, printed in England, which contained many Recipes, the Ingredients or Materials for which, are not to be had in this Country: he hath therefore collected only such as are useful and practicable here, and left out such as are not so, which would have only have serv’d to swell out the Book, and increase its Price.¹⁰

For the most part, Parks made his alterations based on the availability of ingredients within the American environment; nonetheless, Parks’ attempt to

9. Karen Hess and John L. Hess, *The Taste of America* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 83.

10. William Parks, Preface to Eliza Smith, *The Compleat Housewife: Or, Accomplish’d Gentlewoman’s Companion* (Williamsburg: William Parks, 1742), quoted in Steven M. Tobias, “Early American Cookbooks as Cultural Artifacts,” *Papers on Language & Literature* 34 (Winter 1998): 10.

Americanize Smith's British recipes is the first printed attempt to distinguish between British and American concepts of food.

In altering Smith's cookbook for publication in America, Parks publicly declared that his conceptions of colonial foodways differed from foodways in the motherland. He unwittingly began the development of a colonial culinary identity by simultaneously deeming recipes British, and then removing them from the text. Most importantly, Parks stated that he removed the recipes not only because they were impractical in the United States, but also because the removal of these recipes would make the cookbook cheaper. The American edition of the cookbook, then, was practical and affordable, characteristics that distinguished this more American edition from the original. Through his editing, Parks illustrates a concept that came to be instrumental in the development of American cookery—necessity is a virtue.

Few cookbooks of any sort were published in America during the Revolutionary period. Instead, the culinary history of the period must be observed through the histories of public figures whose words and actions demonstrated a shift in the way people thought about food on the local and national level. Americans of all types participated in a unique war-time food culture. During the Revolution, food became more of a necessity than an art, especially when it came to feeding the newly united Continental Army through the efforts of Baker-General Christopher Ludwig. After the surrender of Lord Cornwallis, General George Washington personally ordered Ludwig to bake six thousand pounds of bread for the army, stating, "Let it be good, old gentleman, and let there be enough of it,

if I should want myself.”¹¹ Washington himself was willing to partake of the common soldier’s rations, which, while an immense compliment to Ludwig’s baking, also illustrates a significant moment in Revolutionary history. This gathering of both soldiers and their generals to feast upon simple bread in celebration of the victory of the Revolution arguably illustrates the beginning of an egalitarian understanding of American cookery. This event suggests a growing equality between all Americans, despite military or social rank, following the Revolution. Although Ludwig did not participate in the public cookbook culture, his story became part of the public culture after his death in 1801, when Benjamin Rush published an article in the public papers of Pennsylvania to celebrate Ludwig’s life and his accomplishments as the Baker-General to the United States Army.

Continuing this theme in the Revolutionary Period, Benjamin Rush, a prominent physician and writer in Pennsylvania, wrote *Sermons to the Rich and Studious* in 1772 in which he preached for temperance in eating. Rush began his sermon on food with a quote from Proverbs 23, “When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee. And put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite. Be not desirous of his dainties, for they are deceitful meat.”¹² Rush claimed that King Solomon’s

11. Benjamin Rush, “Life and Character of Christopher Ludwick: An Account of the Life and Character of Christopher Ludwick, late citizen of Philadelphia, and Baker-General of the Army of the United States during the Revolutionary War, by Benjamin Rush, M.D. First Published in the Year 1801,” *Hazard’s Register of Pennsylvania*, ed. by Samuel Hazard (1832), 9:162.

12. Proverbs 23:1, quoted in Benjamin Rush, *Sermons to the Rich and Studious, on Temperance and Exercise with a Dedication to Dr. Cadogan* (Lichfield, CT: T. Collier, 1791), Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans (1639-1800); no. 23758, 7.

words illustrated wisdom that should be implemented in the diets of all human beings. He argued that all food should be simple. Rush asserted that too many people overindulged in their food, consuming more than was necessary to survive only because of the way in which meals were presented. As Rush wrote, “The chief incentive to [overeating] is the variety of our dishes, which excites us to eat after the appetite is satisfied. Few men, I believe, ever eat to excess more than once of one plain dish.”¹³ In order to remedy this, Rush suggested that his readers eat only one dish per meal and, preferably, only one “hearty” meal a day.¹⁴ Using examples from Ancient Greece and Rome, Rush argued for a simplification of American and British diets. Included with his publication was a dedication to a fellow of the College of Physicians in London, Dr. Cadogen, in which he asked Cadogen to join him in the cause of saving the lives of his Majesty’s subjects.¹⁵ By publishing this sermon, Rush hoped to influence the cookery of both American and British readers, urging simplicity for purposes of health as well as to avoid the sin of gluttony. In contrast to British cookery books of the time, Rush preached the virtues eating as opposed to the dangers of dining.

British cookery books were still being published in America during and after the Revolution. One cookbook that appeared in Britain during this period was never published in America; however, it did adorn the personal libraries of Americans. *The*

13. Rush, *Sermons to the Rich and Studious*, 11.

14. Rush, *Sermons to the Rich and Studious*, 13.

15. Rush, *Sermons to the Rich and Studious*, iii.

Farmer's Wife: or, The Complete Country Housewife was written by Sarah Sanders and published in London in 1780. This cookbook stood in stark contrast to the popular British cookbooks of the time, which most likely explains its lack of popularity in the Motherland. Sanders' cookbook contained simple recipes for preparing meats and vegetables by roasting, potting, and pickling, or, as Sanders described them, "such articles as are most likely to be dressed in the farmer's house; and . . . others which may be occasionally useful for the entertainment of company."¹⁶ There was only one publication of Sanders' cookbook, suggesting that it was not well received in London. Although never published in America, the cookbook was at least mildly popular among the American colonists. A copy of the cookbook appeared alongside Milton's *Paradise Lost* in the estate of Israel Thompson, a prominent, wealthy Virginian.¹⁷ One must speculate that despite the fact that these recipes were intended for British farmers, they somehow inspired him to obtain and hold onto the text for his entire life. Whereas the recipes were not accepted by British readers, their simple nature may have made them more appealing to readers in the American colonies.

While some books approached cookery without reference to the class connotations of British cuisine—including Susannah Carter's book which was published in Boston in 1772—others continued the themes presented by Hannah Glasse. Richard

16. Sarah Sanders, *The Farmer's Wife: Or, The Complete Country Housewife* (1780), 119.

17. Roberto V. Constantino, *The Quaker of the Olden Time: The Life and Times of Israel Thompson (d. 1795): His Land, Plantation, Mills, Tanyard and Mansion House and the Rise of Wheatland, Loudoun County, Virginia* (Westminster, MD: Heritage Books, 2006), 21.

Briggs' *The English Art of Cookery*, first published in London in 1788, was printed in Philadelphia in 1792, just after the end of the Revolution. Briggs' cookbook was similar to that of Glasse. Briggs intentionally used simple language to explain his recipes in order "to render them easily practicable, and adapted to the Capacities of those who may be ordered to use them."¹⁸ Like Glasse, Briggs' published his cookbook to educate the servile class on the proper methods of cooking. More specifically, he wrote his cookbook to direct servants in how to more appropriately respond to the orders of their employers. In continuing this theme, Briggs wrote "to waste Language and high Terms on such Subjects, appears to me to render the Art of Cookery embarrassing."¹⁹ Decades after Glasse's first publication, Briggs' cookbook continued to perpetuate the class distinction in England, focusing on educating servants in proper technique, not for their own families, but in order to improve their quality of service to their upper-class employers. In admitting to his use of simple language as opposed to "high Terms," Briggs identified his own conceptions of the lower class as uneducated and unrefined.

Although 1776 marked a drastic turning point for American political thought, American cookery was slower to take shape after the Revolution. There were no characteristic cookbooks of the American Revolution; instead, alternate forms of literature can offer a glimpse into the shifting cultural trends at the end of the eighteenth century. In 1793, Joel Barlow wrote a three-canto poem that directly confronted the

18. Richard Briggs, *The English Art of Cookery, According to the Present Practice; Being a Complete Guide to all Housekeepers, on a Plan Entirely New; Consisting of Thirty-Eight Chapters* (1788), iii.

19. Briggs, *English Art of Cookery*, iii.

changes that were beginning to take place in American cookery. Barlow explained the major distinctions between British and American cookery, citing the artistic nature of British cookery in contrast to a simple Yankee feast. Barlow's analysis of the two cookery styles is notably significant because this poem was written three years prior to the publication of Amelia Simmons' *American Cookery*, the first print attempt to define American foodways. In Canto II of the poem, Barlow wrote about the British cookery tradition,

To mix the food by vicious rules of art,
 To kill the stomach and to sink the heart,
 To make mankind to social virtue sour,
 Cram o'er each dish, and be what they devour;
 For this the kitchen muse first framed her book,
 Commanding sweat to stream from every cook;
 Children no more their antic gambols tried,
 And friends to physic wonder'd why they died.²⁰

By contrast, Barlow asserted that American cookery differed in that it was less concerned with the artistic elements of the meal. Instead, American cookery tended toward simplicity. Barlow continued to contrast the styles, writing:

Not so the Yankee: his abundant feast,
 With simples furnish'd and with plainness dress'd,
 A numerous offspring gathers round the board,
 And cheers alike the servant and the lord;
 Whose well-bought hunger prompts the joyous taste,
 And health attends them from the short repast.²¹

20. Joel Barlow, "The Hasty Pudding" in *The Poets and Poetry of America: with an Historical Introduction*, ed. by Rufus Wilmot Griswold (Philadelphia: Corey and Hart, 1847), 56.

21. Barlow, "The Hasty Pudding," 56.

Not only did Barlow suggest that American foods lacked the pomp of the British recipes, he also asserted that American cookery bridged the social gap, appealing to all classes of society. Both lords and servants shared in the Yankee feast, whereas British cookery books actually tended to reinforce the social divide.

The real turning point for American cuisine, however, was the publication of Amelia Simmons' *American Cookery* in 1796. After the American Revolution, the first American cookbooks began to be published. Amelia Simmons was the first of many cookery authors in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries who purposefully distinguished themselves and their recipes from the authors and recipes of the popular British cookbooks. There is little known of Simmons' background beyond the information that she provided in her book. Simmons identified herself as an American orphan, suggesting that she was of the lower class. Simmons' intended audience for *American Cookery* was not the upper-class readers and servant cooks who purchased popular British cookbooks. Nor did Simmons aim to educate servants on preparing more fashionable cuisine for their employers. Instead, as Simmons announced, her recipes were aimed toward "the rising generation of Females in America."²² *American Cookery* was meant to educate all women, those in service positions as well as those serving their own families. Even in the subtitle of the book, Simmons asserted that her cookbook was both *Adapted to this Country, And All Grades of Life*.

22. Amelia Simmons, *American Cookery: Or, the Art of Dressing Viands, Fish, Poultry, and Vegetables, and the Best Modes of Making Pastes, Puffs, Pies, Tarts, Puddings, Custards, and Preserves, and All Kinds of Cakes, from the Imperial Plum to Plain Cake. Adapted to this Country, and All Grades of Life* (Hartford: Simeon Butler, 1798), 3.

As Simmons asserted in her preface, many of her recipes were “suggested for the more general and universal knowledge of those females in this country, who . . . are reduced to the necessity of going into families in the line of domestics, or taking refuge with their friends or relations, and . . . perfecting them as good wives, and useful members of society.”²³ Additionally, Simmons imparted more general recipes and tips than most earlier cookbooks. Simmons choice of recipes and audience may have been a result of her personal background. Simmons differed from other popular cookery authors of the time insofar as she was an orphan. Simmons was actually relatively uneducated and was forced to hire assistants to transcribe her cookbook, which, as she later said, resulted in errors “which were highly injurious . . . without her consent.”²⁴ Despite Simmons’ unique situation, her cookbook set the foundation for American cookery and served, as some historians have argued, as a second declaration of independence. In *American Cookery*, Simmons identified American foodways as separate, distinct, yet in many ways similar, to traditional British foodways. In copying a large section of Susannah Carter’s cookbook, a section that emphasized simple recipes, Simmons demonstrated the persistent role of British tradition within a new, developing American style.

It is also important to note the political context of Simmons’ publication. The 1790s was not only a culinary watershed for Americans; it also marked the development

23. Simmons, *American Cookery*, 3.

24. Hess and Hess, *Taste of America*, 83. Quote is attributed to Amelia Simmons, but the source is not clearly cited. The quote most likely comes from a later edition of *American Cookery*.

of the first party system in American politics. In fact, by 1796, the entire country was mobilized into one of two camps: the Federalists, under Alexander Hamilton, or the Republicans, under Thomas Jefferson.²⁵ The election of 1796 was a significant event in the formation of the nation. Perhaps Simmons chose 1796 for the release of her cookbook as commentary on the election. Certainly, her recipe collection implies that Simmons leaned more toward the Republicans than the Federalists, though it would be presumptuous, to say the least, to suggest that Simmons wrote her cookbook with the intention of promoting the partisan debate. While culture and politics intertwine with one another, they often develop along their own trajectories, occasionally crossing paths. In this case, Simmons may have had personal preference with regards to the partisan debate, and this preference may have influenced what she wrote in her cookbook; however, it would be incorrect to assume that the cookbook was only Republican propaganda, ignoring its more significant role as a culturally revolutionary artifact.

British cookbooks continued to be popular in the new republic. While the works of Carter and Glasse had become outdated, newer British cookbooks continued to be published and distributed within the United States. One such cookbook was Maria Eliza Rundell's *A New System of Domestic Cookery, Formed Upon Principles of Economy, and Adapted to the Use of Private Families*.²⁶ Born in 1745, Rundell was the wife of a

25. James Roger Sharp, *American Politics in the Early Republic: The New Nation in Crisis* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 138.

26. Some editions failed to credit Rundell as the author, instead attributing authorship of the cookbook to "A Lady." This has generally been assumed to be a result of differences between English and American publishing houses.

wealthy silversmith and jeweler, Thomas Rundell. In her title, Rundell asserted that her recipes were intended for the use of private families as opposed to cooks and house servants. Similarly to the British cookbooks of the eighteenth century, Rundell's cookbook directly addressed the existing social order within Britain. Instead of aiming to break down this social order as many American authors did, Rundell sought to reinforce and regulate it. While sharing "miscellaneous observations" with the reader, Rundell asserted, "Every one is to live as he can afford, and the meal of the tradesman ought not to emulate the entertainments of the higher classes."²⁷ If the lower classes were to serve only a few, decent dishes on clean table-linens, she contended, they would become accustomed to less extravagant meals. She argued that this must be done so that "no irregularity of domestic arrangement will disturb the social intercourse."²⁸ While Rundell's receipts were intended for a wide audience—as were American cookbooks of the nineteenth century—she wrote with the desire to uphold aristocratic society and eating habits.

At the same time, a uniquely American cookery was beginning to take shape. Margaret Bayard Smith was a high society woman living in the newly constructed Washington D.C. She was born in Pennsylvania, and her father had been a prominent colonel in the revolution. In an 1805 letter, Smith identified her typical dinner as "one dish of meat, two of vegetables, and soup" because, as she explained, "the stove exactly

27. Maria Eliza Rundell, *A New System of Domestic Cookery, Formed Upon Principles of Economy, and Adapted to the Use of Private Families* (Boston: W. Andrews, 1807), v.

28. Rundell, *New System of Domestic Cookery*, vi.

holds these.” For breakfast, Smith wrote that her family ate hot rolls, biscuits, or little cakes with tea. According to Smith, these meals were quite satisfying: “everything is as it should be and my only wish is that no change may occur.”²⁹ Daily family meals were simple and lacked the showiness of many of the older British recipes.

In addition, the public culture of food had shifted to reflect new values. Publication of American cookery books dramatically increased in the first half of the nineteenth century. One author, Eliza Leslie, published over ten cookbooks between 1828 and 1857. Born in Philadelphia in 1793, Leslie was the daughter of an American watchmaker. She spent the first seven years of her life abroad in England; however, she spent the majority of her life in Pennsylvania. Her first cookbook appeared in 1832. In this book, Leslie writes, “many of the European receipts are so complicated and laborious, that our female cooks are afraid to undertake the arduous task of making any thing from them,” continuing to assert that “the receipts in this little book are, in every sense of the word, American.”³⁰ She does not elaborate on what aspects of her cookbook are specifically American; however, it is clear that Leslie viewed the complicated nature of European recipes to be un-American. Like many American cookbook authors, Leslie contrasted American foodways to those of the British.

29. Margaret Bayard Smith, Letter to Mrs. Kirkpatrick, December 6, 1805, in *The First Forty Years of Washington Society: Portrayed by the Family Letters of Mrs. Samuel Harrison Smith (Margaret Bayard) from the Collection of Her Grandson, J. Henley Smith*, ed. by Gaillard Hunt (New York: C. Scriber’s Sons, 1906), 48.

30. Eliza Leslie, *Seventy-five Receipts For Pastry, Cakes, and Sweetmeats* (Boston: Munroe and Francis, 1832), iii-iv.

The dinner parties of nineteenth-century America were drastically different than those held in Britain in the previous centuries. As an 1835 dinner between D.C. socialite Margaret Bayard Smith and British lady Harriet Martineau indicates, American dinners differed from those in nineteenth-century Britain. The role of food in nineteenth-century American society is visible in the letters of Margaret Bayard Smith. In Smith's letters, she recounts a visit from a prominent British author, Harriet Martineau, in 1835 and the difficulties that she encountered in planning a genteel dinner for her guest. Harriet Martineau was a famous British author, and Smith's home was just one of many of her stops on a journey across North America, as she conducted research for a book on the United States. In planning the menu for her "small, genteel dinner," Smith quickly learned that she had no concept of what foods were fashionable, or even appropriate, to serve to an upper-middle class British woman.³¹ As a result, Smith hired a professional waiter, Henry Orr, to help orchestrate the dinner. Little else is known about Orr aside from his brief appearance in Smith's letters. Smith writes that Orr pressured her to host the best dinner of her ability, offering his assistance in this task because he thought that Martineau might recount the meal in her next book.³² Orr's concern suggests that Smith's dinner party, though private, had the potential to become part of the public culture of American food—as did numerous others once Martineau published the notes on her

31. Margaret Bayard Smith, Letter to Mrs. Kirkpatrick, February 4, 1835, in *The First Forty Years of Washington Society: Portrayed by the Family Letters of Mrs. Samuel Harrison Smith (Margaret Bayard) from the Collection of Her Grandson, J. Henley Smith*, ed. by Gaillard Hunt (New York: C. Scriber's Sons, 1906), 359.

32. Smith to Kirkpatrick, February 4, 1835, 360.

travels in America. Smith's efforts likely reflect not only a desire to impress her guest but also the audience of the potential book.

As a budding author, Smith had a strong interest in presenting the British lady with an especially fine dinner. Smith writes that she asked Orr to plan the best menu for "a small dinner party," which she wished to be "peculiarly nice" with "every thing of the best and most fashionable."³³ In response to Orr's many suggestions, Smith repeatedly reemphasized her desire for a small, genteel dinner, seemingly taken aback by his recommendations. Her dinner suggestions consisted of several styles of fish, pheasant, ham, turkey, mutton chops, and partridges. According to Orr, none of these meats constituted a genteel dinner. When he informed Smith that Mrs. Woodbury had thrown a dinner for Martineau the day before that consisted of thirty different dishes of meat for only eighteen guests, Smith protested and insisted that eight dishes of meat were more than enough.³⁴ When it came time for Orr to suggest vegetable dishes, "stew'd celery, spinage, salsify, [and] cauliflower," Smith interjected that she was convinced that potatoes and beets should be included in the meal. Despite Orr's pronouncement that potatoes and beets were not genteel, Smith insisted. Smith, however, took pride at presenting only eight meat dishes, though she mentioned that Orr refused to be convinced that eight was a suitable number of meat dishes for a dinner of that kind.³⁵ Overall, this dinner debacle illustrates the increasing divide between British and American foodways

33. Smith to Kirkpatrick, February 4, 1835, 360.

34. Smith to Kirkpatrick, February 4, 1835, 360.

35. Smith to Kirkpatrick, February 4, 1835, 360.

in the nineteenth century. Regardless of the advice that she received, Smith was stubborn about the composition of her dinner menu. She demanded that the meats be limited and that certain, more home-grown dishes be served in spite of the fact that they were no longer considered to be fashionable fare in Britain. She scoffed at the rejection of figs from a genteel dinner, obviously still considering them to be a special or expensive dessert. Clearly, Smith had lost familiarity with British culinary tradition and had embraced a new, homegrown American cookery and cuisine that differed significantly from that which had continued to develop in England.

Even more significant to understanding the disparate development of foodways in Britain and America are Harriet Martineau's reactions to dinners such as that at the home of Margaret Bayard Smith. Martineau criticized many of the American dinners on which she feasted, citing a shortage of proper provisions from the country. In her book, *Society in America*, published in 1837, Martineau asserted that "while, as we have seen, fowls, butter, and eggs, are still sent from Vermont into Boston, there is no such thing to be had there as a joint of tender meat."³⁶ She added on that at many of the dinner parties, specifically within Boston, there was no real meat with the exception of ham: "the table was covered with birds, in great variety, and well-cooked; but all winged creatures." Martineau was convinced that shortages were the logical explanation for the dinners that she had experienced. She attributed this shortage to an overall lack of national development that left people in even the most prosperous cities without proper

36. Harriet Martineau, *Society in America* (London: Saunders and Otley, 1837), 2:24.

provisions. On the contrary, however, in her much earlier letter of 1805, Smith had stated that she did not feel as though she was suffering in any way. In fact, she suggested instead that she had everything that she could need, stating that she hoped that nothing would change.

Clearly the two women had vastly different conceptions about food. Between 1796 and 1835, the date of the Smith-Martineau dinner, a major shift occurred in the way Americans thought about their food. During this time, new American values caused American cuisine to branch off from its British counterpart, culminating in the two entirely distinct attitudes toward food evidenced by Smith and Martineau. At Smith's dinner, three of the eight meat dishes consisted of the "winged creatures" that Martineau referred to with such disdain.³⁷ In her book, Martineau referenced the many dinners she was served in America, noting that although they were different in many ways, they were ultimately unsatisfying. Regardless of the regional variations of cookery in the early nineteenth century, characteristics of a universally American cookery were present in each dinner that Martineau attended. It was exactly these American characteristics that most displeased Martineau, despite the valiant efforts of her hosts.

Although not without its own flaws, culinary history is an important cultural lens through which to view major social shifts, and more specifically, the intertwined development of an American culinary and national identity. Following the revolutionary period and leading into the Era of Good Feelings, American foodways and recipes adopted an ethic of simplicity, aimed at appealing equally to all Americans, and lacking

37. Smith to Mrs. Kirkpatrick, Feb. 4, 1835, 360

the class-based connotations that they continued to hold in Britain. Margaret Bayard Smith attempted to identify the meaning of gentility in America, concluding, “ignorance, though united with wealth, is vulgar: Knowledge, though enchained to poverty, is respectable.”³⁸ Smith’s statement reflects a common sentiment among Americans in the nineteenth century that resonated within their developing food culture.

Cookery in America was aimed at sharing culinary knowledge with anyone who was willing to learn. While many of the cookbooks contained sophisticated recipes, the majority of the recipes in each collection were those that could easily be prepared with the most commonly available ingredients. This explains the surge in popularity of the common Hoe Cake, or Johnny Cake which will be further discussed in the following chapter. Perhaps it may be argued that unlike British cookery, which seemed to aspire upwards, educating the lower classes only to bring them to a higher standard of service for the upper class, American cookery in the nineteenth century aspired outwards, raising all Americans to the same ability.

38. Margaret Bayard Smith, *What is Gentility?: A Moral Tale* (Washington DC: Pishey Thompson, 1828), 4.

CHAPTER III

THE POLITICS AND POLITICAL CULTURE OF FOOD

Food and who controlled it were major points of contention between the British and their subjects. In the mid-eighteenth century, the British government attempted to regulate the assize of bread in the American colonies. British colonial governments passed laws within several colonies to restrict the production and sale of bread products. One such law passed in the colony of Georgia in 1759 limited the types of bread that were allowed to be made for sale, sold, or exposed to sale. It also set restrictions for the weight and price of bread. The Act asserted that “evil-disposed persons have taken advantage, for their own gain and lucre, to deceive and oppress his Majesty’s subjects,” by monopolizing the sale of bread, “and more especially the poorer sort of people are thereby greatly distressed.”¹ As this act suggests, colonial merchants were manipulating the market for bread, particularly exploiting the lower class into paying inflated prices for basic foodstuffs. This had been a problem in England for centuries, so it was not surprising that parliament instated similar assize laws in the colonies as at home in Britain. In doing so, however, parliament may not have acknowledged that the problems themselves were not identical in both locations.

In medieval England, there was popular skepticism toward bakers, who, many claimed, deceitfully baked bread to be lighter than the standard in weight, charging inflated prices for less substance. These “unfaithful bakers” were often punished by being put in the pillory or being dragged through the streets with the false bread hung

1. *An Act for regulating the assize of bread*, Savannah, Georgia, Dec. 12, 1758, Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans (1639-1800), no. 41356.

their necks.² Eventually, it was suspected that these bakers were “bribing the authorities to allow them to bake deficient loaves at their pleasure, a third or a quarter lighter in weight.”³ From the fourteenth century, England had experienced a great necessity to regulate the production and prices of bread. In fact, according to historian H.E. Jacob, “breaches of the assize . . . were the commonest of medieval offenses.”⁴ The acts in Britain were implemented in an attempt to curb this illegal activity as well as to ease suspicions toward English merchants.

Despite the seemingly good intentions of bread regulations, by the early 1770s, Boston colonists had begun to protest the assize law in the colony of Massachusetts Bay, which followed much the same form and purpose as the law in Georgia. These protestors argued that the Royal colonial governments that formulated the laws to regulate the assize of bread in the 1750s had “hastily adopted this from a familiar law of the Parliament of Britain, without considering that the evil which called for such a remedy did not exist in America.”⁵ By this point in time, these colonists had become aware of the many disparities that existed between the colonies and the motherland. The class divide was not nearly as drastic in the American colonies as at home, and there was little need

2. H.E. Jacob, *Six Thousand Years of Bread: Its Holy and Unholy History* (New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2007), 140.

3. Jacob, *Six Thousand Years*, 140.

4. Jacob, *Six Thousand Years*, 140

5. To the Honourable Senate, and House of Representatives, of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, in General Court assembled. The Petition of John White, Baker and Other Subscribers Hereto, Inhabitants of Said Commonwealth, to Repeal the Act to Regulate the Price and Assize of Bread. Boston, Massachusetts, 1771, Early American Imprints, Series I, Evans (1639-1800); no. 42303.

for laws to regulate wealthy merchants. Indeed, the British North American colonies differed from the motherland in several ways: environmentally, economically, and most importantly, culturally. The attempt to regulate colonial production and sale of bread infringed upon American merchants, but, more importantly, it challenged the ability of Americans to control their own means of survival.⁶

The disagreement over the assize of bread illustrates the politics wrapped up in American food. After independence, Americans struggled to establish a new political identity. Breaking free of the monarchical system, Americans were now faced with the task of forming a new government to protect the freedom and liberty that they had fought so hard to secure. Thus began a new American political discourse of what the American nation meant, what it meant to be American, and what it meant to eat American. American foodways became enveloped in the midst of this discourse as, by the 1830s, political expression found new outlets in the kitchens, parlors, and ballrooms of America.

Food itself also became central in the development of political ideologies in the early nineteenth century. In the early years of national development, political decisions were often bound up with consideration regarding how best to meet the gastronomical needs of the people. Ultimately, as politics centered on food in the Early National Period, food itself became politicized by the 1820s and 1830s. Through the titles of particular dishes, food came to hold political significance, especially at public gatherings, such as those celebrating Election Day and the triumph of the democratic process. The Era of

6. James E. McWilliams, *A Revolution in Eating: How the Quest for Food Shaped America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 283-284.

Jacksonian Democracy only encouraged this process as a new populist campaign culture developed and—paired with the Democratic platform for universal white manhood suffrage—led to a dramatically larger voter turnout.⁷ As voters gathered at the election grounds, they became a part of a culinary celebration of democracy centered on politically themed desserts. Still other desserts emerged at this time, celebrating historical American heroes, such as Washington and Madison. All in all, food became a medium through which Americans expressed their political ideals for the burgeoning nation as well as a motivator for congressional decision-making and individual protests.

Food was and still is an important element of any society, and, as James L. Watson and Melissa L. Caldwell argue, food can act “as a window on the political.”⁸ According to Watson and Caldwell, “food practices are implicated in a complex field of relationships, expectations, and choices that are contested, negotiated, and often unequal. Food everywhere is not just about eating, and eating (at least among humans) is never simply a biological process.”⁹ Similarly, food in America was certainly not always about eating. In fact, in the Early Republic, Americans considered food production to be a guaranteed right and, unlike the British, made efforts to keep control of it at the individual level and out of the hands of the few in the government. As historian James E. McWilliams asserts, Americans felt a strong cultural need to have complete authority

7. Mark R. Cheatham, ed., *Jacksonian and Antebellum Age: People and Perspectives* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2008), 199.

8. James L. Watson and Melissa L. Caldwell, eds., *The Cultural Politics of Food and Eating* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005), xiii.

9. Watson and Caldwell, *Cultural Politics of Food*, xiii.

over their food production. “If there was one single customary right that white colonists throughout the colonies universally and passionately valued,” McWilliams states, “it was their ability to produce and consume their own food.”¹⁰ Briefly, McWilliams argues “food was freedom.”¹¹ The bread laws, therefore, were one of the first of many British challenges to American freedom. When Parliament attempted to regulate the production and sale of American foodstuffs, it was infringing on what Americans viewed as their basic rights to survival, a sentiment that was further emphasized in the later decades, finally culminating in the establishment of a notable bond between Americans and their American food.

In both popular culture and historical analyses, many have tended to stress the roles of such products as tea as well as American tavern culture in fomenting and contributing to the Revolution; however, the role of food itself is largely ignored. The control and distribution of tea played an obvious role in the Revolution as seen in the Boston Tea Party and the resulting “Intolerable” Acts. Additionally, taverns served as centers of Revolutionary thought. As Peter Thompson argues, taverns “gave voice to an uncommonly broad spectrum of political opinion, including some of the most radical propositions uttered in the American Revolution.”¹² Most historians seem to agree that tavern culture played a significant role in the American Revolution, particularly insofar

10. McWilliams, *Revolution in Eating*, 283-284.

11. McWilliams, *Revolution in Eating*, 284.

12. Peter Thompson, *Rum, Punch, and Revolution: Taverngoing and Public Life in Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 7.

as taverns provided a public forum for a heterogeneous clientele of both gentlemen and laborers.¹³ Similarly, before and after the Revolution, public dinners and celebrations provided a forum for political thought, whether through actual discussion of politics or through the presence of symbolic foods that reinforced democratic ideals. Food took on a more subtle role than the taverns in the fight against British oppression; nonetheless, it deserves considerable analysis as a major contributor to American nationalism.

Food was often at the heart of American politics and political culture in the Revolutionary period. The struggle to maintain control of food production and consumption provided an important drive for the American colonists, and they continued to reject policies of regulation with regards to the production and sale of foodstuffs, even those that originated within American legislatures. In 1776 and 1777, many states were forced to adopt regulatory policies toward particular foods, such as bread and meat, in the face of war shortages. Despite the fact that many states did establish regulations, historian Gary B. Nash suggests that they did so “reluctantly.”¹⁴ Nash states, “controlling prices in the name of the community’s need troubled many moderate patriots and infuriated conservative ones,” and within one or two years “merchants, retailers, and some farmers began pressuring state governments to repeal price control laws, seeing them,” in the words of Boston merchants, “as directly opposite to the idea of liberty.”¹⁵ By the late

13. Thompson, *Rum, Punch, and Revolution*, 93.

14. Gary B. Nash, *The Unknown American Revolution: The Unruly Birth of Democracy and the Struggle to Create America* (New York: Penguin Group, 2005), 237.

15. Nash, *Unknown American Revolution*, 237.

1770s, these laws were repealed in both New Hampshire and Massachusetts.¹⁶ Nash argues that some merchants did manipulate prices; however, government intervention was not always necessary in those situations. Instead, the American public launched their own food riots against dishonest merchants, and both men and women participated in these protests.

Thus, in 1771, when Boston colonists protested the British assize of bread law in Massachusetts, they were not necessarily incorrect in asserting that the American colonies lacked the problems that inspired the regulations in Britain. Although merchants often attempted to charge unfair prices for bread, coffee, and sugar, the American people took the problem into their own hands. Massachusetts consumers launched seven separate food riots in the spring and summer of 1777 alone.¹⁷ In this way, the American people took it upon themselves to maintain what Nash refers to as a “moral economy,” again illustrating the significance of food to individual Americans, particularly when it came to who controlled it.

Although American state governments attempted to regulate food production and sale during the Revolutionary war, the federal government took more of a laissez-faire approach in acquiring foodstuffs for the Continental Army, particularly bread. With the war for independence raging, both the British and the Americans needed access to provisions for their armies. The British handled the demand for bread by reinstating their original regulations. With the goal of establishing financial and military order, British

16. Nash, *Unknown American Revolution*, 237-238.

17. Nash, *Unknown American Revolution*, 237.

administrations in the colonies “renewed the prewar custom of making a bread assize,” ensuring that the baker could not overcharge for the product “nor could the baker safely give short weight or bad bread, for he had to put his initials on the loaves.”¹⁸ The British practiced a policy of centralization and standardization to obtain the necessary supplies from the American countryside to sustain their army.

The Second Continental Congress took a different and novel American approach to managing bread rations. Legislators consciously decided to avoid infringing upon the individual rights of American farmers and merchants. In the face of shortages in 1779, Congress requested that the states gather flour and maize from their inhabitants in order to feed the army. This policy was soon abandoned, however, because it required that states located far from the front pay local farmers low rates for flour and maize in order for the state to cover the transportation costs. Additionally, this policy required the states to take action in standardizing the prices of these particular crops. Instead, Congress provided the army with money with which to purchase goods from individual suppliers.¹⁹ This action demonstrated just one of the many cultural differences that existed between Britain and the colonies. Some men, such as Christopher Ludwig, became independent suppliers for the American army, able to set the terms of their individual contracts and maintain complete authority over the production and sale of their goods.²⁰

18. Jacob, *Six Thousand Years*, 232

19. Jacob, *Six Thousand Years*, 233

20. Benjamin Rush, “Life and Character of Christopher Ludwick: An Account of the Life and Character of Christopher Ludwick, late citizen of Philadelphia, and Baker-General of the Army of the United States during the Revolutionary War, by Benjamin

Christopher Ludwig was a German immigrant who had studied baking gingerbread and other confections in London for nine months before travelling to Philadelphia in 1754. When the war broke out, he offered his services to the army, and in 1777, he was appointed the first “Superintendent of Bakers and Director of Baking in the army of the United States,” or Baker-General.²¹ Ludwig’s bread-making illustrates the role of immigrants and seemingly insignificant figures in the overall development of a national food culture. Despite having been raised abroad and having trained for his craft in England, Ludwig seemingly understood what it meant to be American and actively strove to protect and promote that concept.

More significantly, Ludwig’s bread not only assisted the American military effort, but it also contributed to the revolution in cookery that would begin to surface in later decades. According to Julianne Belote, Ludwig’s bread recipe for the soldiers called for wheat flour to be replaced by corn meal and for sugar to be replaced by molasses, both of which were cheaper, and arguably more American, products.²² It was not Ludwig’s use of these crops that was significant. These crops were more affordable, and during the war shortages, they were most likely more easily available than wheat and sugar. According to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Ludwig was asked to produce one pound of

Rush, M.D. First Published in the Year 1801,” in *Hazard’s Register of Pennsylvania*, edited by Samuel Hazard (1832), 9:162.

21. Historical Society of Pennsylvania, “Christopher Ludwig, Baker-General in the Army of the United States during the Revolutionary War,” in *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 16, no. 3 (1892): 344.

22. Julianne Belote, *The Compleat American Housewife, 1776* (Benicia, CA: Nitty Gritty Productions, 1974), 51.

bread for the army for every pound of flour that he was given. Notably, this arrangement would have left Ludwig with some profit for his services. Ludwig, however, declined the arrangement, supposedly stating, “I do not wish to grow rich by the war: I have money enough. I will furnish one hundred and thirty-five pounds of bread for every hundred pounds of flour you put into my hands.”²³ Ludwig had gone from a professional confectioner to a bread baker, yet his simple bread had more cultural significance than any of his previous confections. Faced with the opportunity to profit at the cost of the army, Ludwig invented a more affordable alternative in order to promote Revolutionary cause. Ludwig did incorporate more American crops into his bread recipe; however, that is far less significant than his personal contribution through food to the survival of revolutionary ideals.

Ludwig was personally commended for his baking by General Washington.²⁴ His bread no longer resembled his previous, British inspired confections, yet it was still considered to be suitable for a man of General Washington’s stature. Ludwig’s contributions to the American war effort were commemorated with a granite tomb at St. Michael’s Churchyard in Philadelphia. The end of the epitaph advises, “Reader, such was Ludwig. Art thou poor? Venerate his character. Art though rich? Imitate his example.”²⁵ Despite the fact that Ludwig was a German immigrant with training from Britain, he was

23. Historical Society of Pennsylvania, “Christopher Ludwig,” 345.

24. Rush, “Life and Character of Christopher Ludwick,” 162.

25. Samuel F. Hotchkin, “Christopher Ludwig,” in *Ancient and Modern Germantown: Mount Airy and Chestnut Hill* (Philadelphia: W. Ziegler & Co., 1889), 288.

remembered as a hero for his efforts in creating an American style of bread for the army. As this example illustrates, the formation of a national cuisine bridged the gap between the various ethnicities that composed the nation. In 1876, recounting the efforts of German-Americans during the Revolution, C. Z. Weiser wrote, “Christopher Ludwig should be canonized and made the Patron Saint of the bakers of the land.”²⁶ The political discourse of American food relied upon a united effort to promote the nation, largely ignoring the social standing or ethnic backgrounds of those who participated in that effort.

Other efforts to promote the nation are evident in the popularity of politically themed desserts in the first half of the nineteenth century. Served as baked embodiments of political ideals, these desserts became part of an American democratic discourse. Most often, these desserts celebrated notable political figures as well as larger political concepts. Variations of Lafayette Cake, Lafayette Gingerbread, and Lafayette Pudding, often called Fayette Pudding, appeared in cookbooks from 1825 on, celebrating the achievements of the Marquis de Lafayette in the American Revolution. At nineteen years old, Lafayette served as a major general in the Revolutionary War and played a significant role in convincing France to side with the American colonies against Britain, effectively ending the war. Most importantly, although Lafayette was not an American, he provided “heart and inspiration” to a cause that he made his own.²⁷ As Gregory Payan

26. C. Z. Weiser, *The Life of (John) Conrad Weiser: The German Pioneer, Patriot, and Patron of Two Races* (Reading, PA: Daniel Miller, 1876), 430.

27. Gregory Payan, *Marquis de Lafayette: French Hero of the American Revolution* (New York: Rosen Publishing Group, 2002), 6.

asserts, Lafayette was “French by birth, but with an American heart.”²⁸ Americans chose to commemorate him for what he represented as a foreigner who passionately embraced the ideals of the Revolution.

Similarly, *Domestic Cookery* by Elizabeth E. Lea, a Quaker woman in Maryland, popularized Washington Cake, Madison Cake, and Jackson Jumbles in the 1840s, though they were widely prepared much earlier than they appeared in print.²⁹ A private recipe collection of Mrs. Dorothea Green, given to her by her “affectionate cousin,” F.R. Green, dates the origins of recipes such as Fayette Pudding and Jackson Jumbles to the 1820s or even earlier.³⁰ It is important to note the early origins of Jackson Jumbles. A New England farmer’s almanac dates the public appearance of the recipe to at least 1825.³¹ Considering this date of origin, it is unclear exactly what Jacksonian characteristic or action the cake was intended to commemorate. It is possible that the cake celebrated Andrew Jackson’s military victory at New Orleans in 1815, a dramatic triumph over British invaders. The cake may also have been intended to honor the concept of Jacksonian democracy and the celebration of the common man, which began to take

28. Payan, *Marquis de Lafayette*, 5.

29. Elizabeth E. Lea, *Domestic Cookery, Useful Receipts, and Hints to Young Housekeepers*, 13th ed. (Baltimore: Cushings and Bailey, 1869), 115 and 119.

30. F.R. Green, Handwritten Recipes, Mrs. Dorothea Green from her Affectionate Cousin F. R. Green, 1823-8, Jay Anderson Foodways Research Collection, Merrill-Cazier Library Special Collections, Utah State University, Logan, UT.

31. Thomas Greene Fessenden, ed. “Cookery for Women,” in *The New England Farmer, Containing Essays, Original and Selected, Relating to Agriculture and Domestic Economy: With Engravings, and the Prices of Country Produce* (Boston: John B. Russell, 1825), 3:13.

shape in Jackson's presidential campaign of 1824. Although it is unclear what specific events generated the impulse to commemorate men such as Jackson and Washington with confections, it is apparent that these politically themed cakes came to represent certain cultural and political values that were ultimately deemed American. Therefore, while analysis of these desserts necessitates the examination of the political contexts in which they were consumed, it is unnecessary to pinpoint the exact triggers. Instead, these cakes should be analyzed within the context of larger cultural and political periods. The Jackson Jumbles, for example, could potentially bridge two separate political periods, celebrating either the Battle of New Orleans in the spirit of the Era of Good Feelings or the era of Jacksonian Democracy, promoting Jackson's campaign as a common and self-made man.

Other cakes were more obviously named after democratic concepts, some of which included Federal Cake, Ratification Cake, and the ever-popular Election Cake, though these recipes rarely corresponded with their names. In fact, one 1835 recipe for Federal Cake states that the cake was also referred to as Bachelor's Loaf, suggesting that neither name had much to do with the composition of the cake itself. Dr. Daniel H. Whitney's Federal Cake, or Bachelor's Loaf was made of butter, eggs, yeast, and milk or water.³² These simple ingredients provide no link to the name. Similarly, an 1833 recipe for Federal Cake by Charles Egelmann calls for "one pound of sifted flour, half a pound of butter, half a pound of powdered sugar, two eggs, well beaten, half a glass of rose-

32. Daniel H. Whitney, *The Family Physician, or Every Man His Own Doctor* (New York: N. and J. White, 1835), 301.

water; and a tea spoonful of mixed spice.”³³ Another unique aspect of Egelmann’s recipe is that the mixture was to be “cut it into cakes, with diamonds or heart-shaped tins.”³⁴ Each recipe is entirely distinct, incorporating different ingredients as well as different preparations, yet they both shared the name of “Federal Cake.”

More interestingly, recipes for Fayette pudding varied drastically, demonstrating the completely arbitrary nature of the name. Mary Randolph’s 1825 recipe for Fayette Pudding calls for the cook to lay bread in the bottom of a dish, sprinkle it with nutmeg and sugar, and pour boiled custard over the top. The mixture would then be chilled before serving.³⁵ Another recipe for Fayette Pudding from F.R. Green in the mid-1820s is entirely different. Instead of bread, Green’s recipe calls for 3 pounds of ground turnips. Instead of custard and nutmeg, the recipe calls for eggs and butter. Instead of serving the pudding cold, this recipe calls for the entire mixture to be baked and served hot. Green notes at the end of the recipe that this is the original Fayette Pudding.³⁶ The two recipes are almost incomparable, yet they were both associated with the same name commemorating Lafayette.

33. Charles F. Egelmann, *The Citizen’s and Farmer’s Almanac, for the Year of Our Lord, 1833; Being the First After Bissextile or Leap Year, Containing 365 days, and After the Fourth of July, the 57th of American Independence* (Baltimore: Plaskitt & Co., 1833), 3:39.

34. Egelmann, *Citizen’s and Farmer’s Almanac*, 39.

35. Mary Randolph, *The Virginia Housewife: Or, Methodical Cook* (Baltimore: Plaskitt & Cugle, 1838), 127.

36. Green, *Handwritten Recipes*.

Similarly, in 1853, Mrs. J. Chadwick's Ratification Cake incorporated the same basic ingredients with the addition of raisins, currants, cider, and nutmeg. The reason for the name is not evident in the ingredients of the cake. The only notable aspect of Chadwick's recipe that may nod to the name is that the cake was "said to keep for ten months."³⁷ Whether or not the cake actually kept for that duration, Chadwick included that information in the recipe, perhaps suggesting that it was the long-lasting nature of the cake that aligned it in some way with the political concept of Ratification, a term implying the long-lasting nature of particular laws or statutes.

Overall, simple pound cakes and gingerbread cakes were given democratic names and with them a significant role in the development of American political culture and society. The cakes varied based on extra additions such as molasses, raisins, or currants. The most significant difference between these cakes and the standard cakes in popular cookbooks is the portion sizes. While most pound cake recipes called for between one and three pounds of flour, many of the "patriotic" cakes called for up to ten pounds of flour, yielding much larger portions and demonstrating the large numbers of people who were expected to feast upon these desserts.³⁸ They were not necessarily intended for private dinners; instead, these cakes were part of a public culture, served at large gatherings. In summarizing an argument by George Herbert Mead, Julie L. Locher and

37. J. Chadwick, *Home Cookery: A Collection of Tried Receipts, Both Foreign and Domestic* (Boston: Crosby, Nichols, and Company, 1853), 19.

38. A Practical Chemist, *The United States Practical Receipt Book: Or, Complete Book of Reference, for the Manufacturer, Tradesman, Agriculturist or Housekeeper; Containing Many Thousand Valuable Receipts in All the Useful and Domestic Arts* (Philadelphia: Lindsay & Blakiston, 1844), 175.

others write, “the meanings we attach to food objects derive from our interaction with others in food-related activities.”³⁹ Therefore, the meanings attached to these particular cakes originated with their incorporation into public activities.

Through the presence of these dishes at public gatherings, they came to represent larger values of freedom, individuality, and eventually, the joys of being American. In 1839, Francis Joseph Grund noted that “public dinners in a free country . . . are the most powerful stimulus to patriotism and virtue.”⁴⁰ He explains that this is due to the fact that “it is only after dinner that gentlemen can be supposed to listen patiently to a long political argument Calumny and eulogy are the necessary dessert of a public meal, -- a sort of *confiture* taken after the appetite for solid food has been appeased.” Grund offers an interesting understanding of the uses of public dinners and gatherings in a political context; however, he largely ignores the significance of the food, aside from mentioning its gastronomic influences. Public gatherings provided an excellent forum for politics and the foods that were served at those gatherings often played a part in the discussion, actively promoting a discourse of democracy.

The politicization of food is most clear in the celebrations of Election Day and the corresponding consumption of Election Cake. Election Cake was a prominent recipe in both published and manuscript cookbooks in the first half of the nineteenth century. Americans prepared Election Cakes throughout the year to be served in celebration of the

39. Julie L. Locher et al, “Comfort Foods: An Exploratory Journey into the Social and Emotional Significance of Food,” *Food and Foodways* 13 (2005): 276.

40. Francis J. Grund, *Aristocracy in Americas*, Vol. 1 (London: Richard Bentley, 1839), 235-236.

state and local elections. For this reason, recipes for Election Cake were not standardized as cooking times and portions often varied depending on time of year. Lydia Maria Child wrote that Election Cakes must be “set to rise over night in the winter; in warm weather, three hours is usually enough for it to rise,” illustrating different preparations for different seasons.⁴¹ In New Haven, Connecticut, elections took place in March, April, August, and September.⁴² Meanwhile, East Jersey always elected assemblymen on March 26.

Initially, elections in Pennsylvania were held on December 20; however, this was later changed to January 10. Pennsylvanian sheriffs and coroners were elected on March 13, and county officers were elected on October 1.⁴³

Typically Election Cake was a large cake, similar to pound cake, and often served with raisins or currants. In *The Frugal American Housewife*, Lydia Maria Child’s recipe for “Old-Fashioned” Election Cake combined “four pounds of flour; three quarters of a pound of butter; four eggs; one pound of sugar; one pound of currants, or raisins if you choose; have a pint of good yeast; wet it with milk as soft as it can be and be moulded on a board.”⁴⁴ By contrast, a recipe published in 1844 by “A Practical Chemist” called for “Flour, 10 pounds; sugar, 4 pounds; butter, 2 pounds; milk, 1 quart; eggs, 10;

41. Lydia Maria Child, *The American Frugal Housewife, Dedicated to Those Who Are Not Ashamed of Economy*, 16th ed. (Boston: Carter, Hendee, & Co., 1835), 71.

42. Cortlandt Field Bishop, “History of Elections in the American Colonies,” in *Studies in History, Economics and Public Law*, ed. by The University Faculty of Political Science of Columbia College (New York: Columbia College, 1893), 3:104.

43. Bishop, *History of Elections*, 105.

44. Child, *American Frugal Housewife*, 71.

yeast and spice.”⁴⁵ Although these two recipes both claim to produce Election Cakes, they vary in ingredients as well as in portion size. Although Election Cakes appear to be more standardized than Fayette Puddings, these recipes still illustrate the lack of correlation between the recipe itself and the name of the dessert. Instead, the cakes received their names from their intended purposes.

As these cakes were originally served at Election Day festivities, they came to hold a particular significance, to some representing the very essence of democracy. Edward Augustus Kendall provides a look at Election Day festivities from 1807 and 1808. Kendall notes that Election Day was typically celebrated by families intermingling with each other, sharing pieces of Election Cake.⁴⁶ In 1838, Edward R. Lambert wrote a history of the Colony of New Haven in which he discussed the origins of the Election Cake:

“Election, in old times, was a great day, when it was customary to make a large quantity of cake, which was called *election cake*. The freemen of the colony mostly went to the seat of government to vote, and took with them a large supply of the cake for provision. This was probably the object for which it was at first made, and it being found very convenient, it soon became an established custom.”⁴⁷

45. A Practical Chemist, *United States Practical Receipt Book*, 175.

46. John Warner Barber, *Connecticut Historical Collections: Containing a General Collection of Interesting Facts, Traditions, Biographical Sketches, Anecdotes, &c. Relating to the History and Antiquities of Every Town in Connecticut, with Geographical Descriptions* (New Haven: John W. Barber, 1836), 54.

47. Edward R. Lambert, *History of the Colony of New Haven, Before and After the Union with Connecticut* (New Haven: Hitchcock & Stafford, 1838), 191.

Lambert suggests that Election Cakes were popular at local elections before the Revolution; however, at that time, individual voters carried their own portions of Election Cake with them from home to the election grounds as it was convenient for travel. After the Revolution, these cakes became an essential aspect of the Election Day celebrations, baked in huge quantities intended to feed the large gatherings on the election grounds as opposed to the single servings that were sent from home.

The presence of Election Cake on Election Day was important to the festivities of the day. In Rhode Island in 1821, two opposing sides in a local election made a “Yankee Bet” for the loser to bake an exceptionally large Election Cake measuring “ten feet long, two feet two inches wide, and two inches thick” and “containing forty-three feet four inches, board measure.”⁴⁸ As the article in the *Providence Patriot* reported, “The losers being pretty well satisfied of the election of General Gibbs, the cake was baked by William Barstow, of this town, and was exhibited at the junction of Pawtuxet and High-streets, opposite the store of James Snow, jr. on Saturday evening, the 21st instant.”⁴⁹ The paper described its appearance as “elegant, being handsomely figured, and dressed with box.”⁵⁰ Not only was the cake displayed for the public at a popular junction, but it was eventually served to the townspeople. It was “cut into pieces, and when about to be eaten, it was agreed by all the yankee host which attended, that there was no party now,”

48. “Yankee Bet,” in *Providence Patriot*, 28 April 1821, quoted in *The Ladies’ Literary Cabinet*, ed. by Samuel Woodworth, Vol. 3, No. 35 (New York: Broderick & Ritter, 1821): 199.

49. “Yankee Bet,” 199.

50. “Yankee Bet,” 199.

indicating that party divisions were put aside for feasting on the cake.⁵¹ Voters on opposing sides came together to share in the consumption of the oversized Election Cake, and “each one, with a slice under his arm, exclaimed, “better gingerbread was never eaten” despite the outcome of the election.⁵²

In the theme of Jacksonian Democracy, election celebrations lost a great deal of pomp in the 1830s, becoming less like ceremonies and more like community festivals. In the 1836 Connecticut Historical Collections, John Warner Barber noted that much of the ceremony surrounding Election Day from before the Revolution had begun to fade, at least in Connecticut, by the 1830s. He explained, “First, the clergy were not allowed to dine at the public expense; next, the Governor’s Guards were restricted in the same manner. The Legislature next dispensed with the Election sermon, and lately, for two or three years past the members of the Assembly formed no procession.”⁵³ Instead, the new celebrations of Election Day centered more on the gathering of the community, often over food and drink.

By the 1830s, Election Cake was prominent enough in American culture that it began to appear in American literature. The cultural significance of Election Cakes is most vividly apparent in a poem titled “The Boy’s Lament for Election.” The poem, written by Hannah F. Gould in 1832, was written from the perspective of a young boy, not yet old enough for the right to vote on Election Day. The boy states that lawmakers in

51. “Yankee Bet,” 199.

52. “Yankee Bet,” 199.

53. Barber, *Connecticut Historical Collections*, 53.

his county banned the festivities of Election Day, holding the vote but not allowing the usual celebrations. He questions why the lawmakers would prohibit young boys from participating in the Election and why they would take away the joys of Election Day. As the poem begins,

They've spoiled us of the dearest play
We had in all the year, —
They've robbed us of Election Day,
And all its merry cheer.

I guess the men, who made the laws,
Forgot the little boys,
To thus deprive us of the cause
Of half our summer joys.⁵⁴

The boy suggests that other young children awaited Election Day, which in this case took place in the summer, so that they could join in the festivities if not the act of voting. For several stanzas, the boy continues to lament the experiences that he and fellow young boys will be denied if the lawmakers continue their ban on Election Day celebrations. He mentions the marching of the soldiers and the waving of the flag as a few of the joys of Election Day; however, the final stanza suggests that the greatest lament is over the loss of Election Cake and, more specifically, what Election Cake had come to represent. The last few stanzas read,

They tell me I must patient wait,
And learn to let alone
The weighty matters of the state,
Till I am older grown.

But this I know, that I must be

54. Hannah F. Gould, "The Boy's Lament for Election," in *The Juvenile Miscellany, or, Friend of Youth*, by D.L. Child (Boston: Carter & Hender, 1832), 293.

A great deal older yet,
 Before my dear, lost jubilee,
 I ever can forget!”

I hope before another year,
 They’ll this new law unmake,
 That boys may have their usual cheer,
 And eat election-cake.⁵⁵

The poem details the many happenings of Election Day; however, Gould sums up the meaning of the entire day with the eating of Election Cake. Throughout the poem, Gould suggests that it is more than the excitement of a band playing that drew young boys to the Election Day festivities. Instead, the poem focuses on the democratic overtones of Election Day, stressing the joy that men and boys experienced in being a part of the American democratic process. Even though young boys could not vote, they were able to celebrate the tradition of Election Day by consuming the Election Cake. In doing so, they learned to celebrate democratic tradition. Thus, as this poem suggests, Election Cake, and the atmosphere that surrounded it, became a key symbol of American political thought.

Often, the literary references to Election Cake were brief and far more subtle than in Gould’s poem. In an 1841 short story, “The Cabin Boy’s Locker,” the author wrote that as the main character dressed for church, his brand new hat “shone under the bright sun of a May-day morning like an election cake.”⁵⁶ The author used Election Cake as a positive simile, incorporating it in the story in order to invoke a happy and familiar response from the reader. Additionally, in her 1869 novel, *Oldtown Folks*, Harriet

55. Gould, “The Boy’s Lament for Election,” 294.

56. The American Seamen’s Friend Society, “Fritz Hazell: A Temperance Tale,” in *The Sailor’s Magazine* (1841): 13:252.

Beecher Stowe wrote about New England during the first half of the nineteenth century, referring to Election Day as one of few “national fêtes” of America. Her reference to the holiday as well as the serving of Election Cake is particularly significant because of the professed intention of the novel. Though written in the second half of the nineteenth century, Stowe’s novel was not merely intended to tell a story; instead, as Stowe explained, the book was intended to show the reader an image of New England before it “sprouted” into the region that her contemporary readers knew.⁵⁷ Her preface identifies the fictional town in the story to be a representation of Boston, with many of the same landmarks under different names.⁵⁸ *Oldtown Folks* was a tribute to the historical past of New England. Although the account of Election Day is fictional in her story, Stowe’s desire to include it as an important aspect of early New England makes her story worthy of study.

Describing the festivities of Election Day, Stowe wrote, “all the housewives outdid themselves in election cake . . . all the children were refreshed and our military ardor quickened by the roll of drums . . . [the day] sometimes ending in that sublimest of military operations, a sham fight, in which nobody was killed.”⁵⁹ Although this recounting of the annual event is imagined, most likely based on Stowe’s personal experience as a child, it demonstrates the way Americans in the 1860s recalled traditions

57. Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Oldtown Folks* (Boston: Fields, Osgood, & Co., 1869), iii.

58. Stowe, *Oldtown Folks*, iv.

59. Stowe, *Oldtown Folks*, 337.

such as Election Day and Election Cake. Considering the context of the Civil War, it is not hard to imagine why Stowe would have wanted the novel to take the reader on a journey to a glorified past. Stowe's novel suggests that she had positive memories of these traditions. Her inclusion of them within the novel suggests her desire to share these memories with those who did not live to experience them. The description of the day as well as the reference to a non-violent military operation on Election Day suggests Stowe's desire to paint a picture of peace and liberty, a picture seemingly in contrast to the violence of later decades.

By the 1860s, Election Day celebrations typically lasted between one and four days.⁶⁰ As recounted by Robert Rantoul in 1864, Election Day festivities in Massachusetts during his youth "were usually continued for two days in succession, and in some places, for four successive days."⁶¹ According to Rantoul, "Gaming and drinking to excess of various intoxicating drinks" were the usual activities, which Rantoul considered contaminations of society.⁶² In describing the celebrations from a deeply religious standpoint, Rantoul stated that the only aspects of Election Day that he wished to remember from his boyhood were "the new clothes, the bunch of flowers, the cake and the promenade."⁶³ Similarly, in 1870, one Bostonian recalled of his childhood, most

60. Robert Rantoul, "Mr. Rantoul's Connexion with Town and Parochial Affairs—His Views of Religion," in *Historical Collections of the Essex Institute* (1864), 6:85.

61. Rantoul, "Mr. Rantoul's Connexion," 85.

62. Rantoul, "Mr. Rantoul's Connexion," 85.

63. Rantoul, "Mr. Rantoul's Connexion," 85.

likely during the 1830s or 1840s, that Election Day had become almost entirely centered upon all classes of society gathering to partake of Election Cake and alcoholic punch, “as closely knit together as Siamese twins.”⁶⁴ The role of Election Cake at the festivities gained more significance as Americans slowly rejected the old, colonial traditions.

The importance of Election Cake was the context in which it was served. The cakes became a part of a public political culture. David Waldstreicher analyzes this political culture and its role in the formation of an American national identity in the nineteenth century. In his book, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fêtes*, Waldstreicher argues that through public celebrations, such as parades, Americans were able to form their own concepts of the nation, what they wanted it to be, and what it meant to them. As Waldstreicher explains, “Patriotic celebration became a cultural imperative in the 1780s, every bit as much as it had been a political imperative in the 1760s and 1770s.”⁶⁵ Waldstreicher argues that the formation of an American national identity was intimately linked with the emergence of a popular political culture. His study “views ballads, broadsides, orations, and newspaper reportage as nationalist practices, every bit as much as the processions they announced, punctuated, and described.”⁶⁶ Celebratory rituals and, as this study illustrates, the food served at such public events, established a popular

64. E. H. Sears and James W. Thompson, eds., “Leaves from an Autobiography,” In *The Religious Magazine and Monthly Review* (Boston: Leonard C. Bowles, 1870), 44:461.

65. David Waldstreicher, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fêtes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776-1820* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 76.

66. Waldstreicher, *Midst of Perpetual Fêtes*, 11-12.

political culture that stressed the uniqueness of American political thought. Election Cake, Federal Cake, and Fayette Pudding each contributed to a public culture of democracy that continued into the mid-nineteenth century. Although only some foods served as symbols of democratic ideals, several other uniquely American values permeated food preparation and consumption after the Revolution, yielding a new American cuisine deeply intertwined with an American national identity.

CHAPTER IV

REPUBLICAN RECIPES

Egalitarianism and democracy were not the only values to permeate American food in the nineteenth century. More than illustrating a trend toward moderation in American cuisine in the 1830s, the dinner hosted by Margaret Bayard Smith demonstrates the connection that many Americans formed between themselves and what they considered to be American crops and recipes. Although Smith experienced great difficulty in planning the menu for her dinner party to welcome Harriet Martineau, her waiter, Henry Orr, struggled far more with Smith's stubbornness.

Orr was a professionally-trained waiter, hired by wealthy elites to organize important social functions. In fact, Orr had already coordinated an event for Martineau at another Washington D.C. home earlier that month. Still, Smith argued with Orr about the use of particular ingredients in the dinner, not just the variety of meat dishes, but the use of particular vegetables as well. Despite Orr's recommendations, Smith asserted that she simply could not host a dinner party without serving potatoes and beets as vegetable dishes. When Orr suggested stewed celery, spinach, salsify, and cauliflower for the vegetable side dishes, Smith interrupted: "Indeed, Henry, you must substitute potatoes, beets, &c."¹ Orr protested that potatoes and beets were not genteel and, therefore, not suitable to serve to a lady of Martineau's stature.

1. Margaret Bayard Smith, "Letter to Mrs. Kirkpatrick, Feb. 4, 1835" in *The First Forty Years of Washington Society: Portrayed by the Family Letters of Mrs. Samuel Harrison Smith (Margaret Bayard) from the Collection of Her Grandson, J. Henley Smith*, edited by Gaillard Hunt (New York: C. Scriber's Sons, 1906), 360.

The Orr-Smith debate illustrates a tension between refinement and egalitarianism. Smith continued to discover that several other dishes that she favored had fallen out of fashion, such as plum-pudding, nuts, raisins, and figs—the last three of which Orr referred to as “quite vulgar.”² Although shocked by this news, Smith insisted on their inclusion. These dishes had become embedded in Smith’s cultural understanding of food. Smith’s preference for potatoes and beets illustrates a unique, personal attachment to these vegetables and serves as an example of the cultural value that Americans attached to particular crops in the first half of the nineteenth century. Potatoes, in particular, had been a popular crop since early colonization, and Americans had a natural attachment to them.³ Indigenous crops, as well as those brought to America in the early years of colonization, had come to represent a special bond between Americans and their land. These crops appealed to a popular homegrown spirit in the Early Republic and beyond as Americans attempted to align themselves with an “American-ness.” Like many Americans, Smith had at once become a part of and contributed to a new culinary culture in America that had begun its development in the Early Republic and persisted into the Jacksonian Era.

In the post-revolutionary period, the cultural differences between America and Britain acquired more attention as newly independent Americans actively strove to distinguish themselves from mere colonists. One aspect of American culture that witnessed dramatic change in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century was

2. Smith to Mrs. Kirkpatrick, Feb. 4, 1835, 360.

3. Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia with an Appendix*, 8th ed. (Boston: David Carlisle, 1801), 59.

foodways, both common and genteel. Beginning in the Early National Period, unique cultural values became deeply embedded in the foodways of many Americans. While these changes took place over the course of the Early Republic, the result is most evident in the 1830s. These values became so entrenched in American concepts of food that Smith was seemingly unaware of the significance of her meal choices. By the time of the Smith-Martineau dinner in 1835, then, these culinary values had become customary. Through their food, Americans attempted to establish a deeper connection between themselves and the land that they inhabited, and, in this way, they strove to distinguish themselves from their European origins, often more closely allying themselves to American Indians. One way in which Americans attempted this was through the development of an American hunting culture.

In contrast to traditional hunting culture in Britain, hunting in America was not merely a recreational activity reserved for the elite.⁴ Colonists hunted game animals as a food source, including birds, beavers, pigeons, and rabbits as well as larger game such as “wolves, cougars, bobcats, foxes, and bears.”⁵ Hunting had been popular in America since colonization; however, it wasn’t until the nineteenth century that hunting emerged as a cultural symbol of what it meant to be American. As Daniel Justin Herman writes, farming and hunting “brought men closer to the land; both seemed traditional.”⁶ Hunting,

4. Daniel J. Herman, *Hunting and the American Imagination* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001), 18

5. Herman, *Hunting*, 23.

6. Herman, *Hunting*, 45.

which in colonial America meant little more than supplying for the table, acquired new cultural significance.

By the end of the nineteenth century, game meat became a culinary specialty in the kitchens of middle- and upper-class Americans. Herman asserts that by late nineteenth century “To dine on American wildlife was a gesture of patriotism, a celebration of manly identity and the conquest of the continent.”⁷ This point is further enforced by John Leacock’s 1776 comedy, *The Fall of British Tyranny; or, American Liberty Triumphant*. Philip J. Deloria explains, this comedy demonstrated “the significant differences in food between the Old and New World.”⁸ According to Deloria, “Leacock praises quintessentially American culinary alternatives . . . and links them to freedom, kingship, and patriarchal control.” These foods, according to the comedy, were game meats such as venison and squirrel.⁹ As early as the 1770s, then, Americans recognized that their uses of game meat set them apart from their British counterparts.

The significance of the land as well as homegrown produce in early American culture permeated American culinary tradition. Thomas Jefferson’s concept of the Republic embraced the value of independence and simplicity, represented best by white yeoman farmers. Jefferson saw yeoman farmers as the ideal Americans and even facilitated Americans in acquiring land without mortgages, instruments that made farmers

7. Herman, *Hunting*, 246.

8. Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 19.

9. Deloria, *Playing Indian*, 19.

dependent upon creditors. As Jefferson wrote, “Those who labor in the earth are the chosen people of God, if ever he had a chosen people, whose breasts he has made his peculiar deposit for substantial and genuine virtue.”¹⁰ This focus on the simple, agrarian lifestyle combined with an increased appreciation of independence from any kind of oppression, financial or otherwise, and ownership of land translated into a new, seemingly republican culinary tradition. Americans consciously adopted republican values in their kitchens shortly after they became infused in American thought during the Jeffersonian period. Ingredients, recipes, and meal preparations became deeply intertwined with the ideals of the new Republic, stressing the value of the land, homegrown produce, and a strong sense of domesticity and personal attachment to the new nation. Food acted as both a construct of and contributor to a uniquely American culture that began to develop, fully taking shape in the mid-nineteenth century.

In post-Revolutionary America, newly independent elites struggled to redefine their roles as the new nation took shape. One way American elites reconciled their new identities by embracing farming and gardening culture. As Tamara Plakins Thornton points out, “rural pursuits,” or the movement of elites to the country “took on new meanings in post revolutionary Boston . . . in a world in which everything had to be redefined and reoriented In acquiring country estates and practicing gentleman farming, prominent Bostonians . . . defined what it meant to be members of an American

10. Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, 244.

elite. Rural pursuits turned out to be a powerful means of self-characterization.”¹¹

American elites used gardening and farming, particularly at their country estates, to define themselves, their roles in society, and perhaps ultimately their concepts of the nation as a whole.

By the late eighteenth century, farms and private gardens came to hold great symbolic value in American culture as they represented the ability of man to produce his own food from his own soil and offered a medium for American men to shed dangerous dependencies. Many founding fathers took great pride in maintaining their own farms or gardens. When George Washington’s enemies accused him of wanting to be a King in 1792, Washington declared that “he had rather be on his farm than to be made Emperor of the world.”¹² The actual farming was often performed by field laborers and slaves, particularly in the case of the elite founding fathers; however, private gardens allowed these men to participate in farming on a much smaller scale. Charles Butler of Philadelphia explained in *The American Gentleman* in 1836, “the work of the garden is usually left to a peasant But the operations of grafting, or inoculating, of pruning, of transplanting, are . . . pleasing as well as curious, those can testify who remember what they felt on seeing their attempts in the amusement of practical gardening attended with

11. Tamara P. Thornton, *Cultivating Gentlemen: The Meaning of Country Life among the Boston Elite, 1785-1860* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 21.

12. Thomas Jefferson, *Memoir, Correspondence, and Miscellanies, From the Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, ed. by Thomas Jefferson Randolph (Charlottesville, VA: F. Carr, and Co., 1829), 4:491.

success.”¹³ Gardening provided a pleasurable escape for common and elite men, despite the fact that much of the manual labor was actually performed by lower-class workers.

Washington was not the only founding father who professed enjoyment in growing his own produce. Thomas Jefferson had great respect for farmers. Jefferson took great pride in his private garden, using it to equate himself with the common farmer that he so admired. He developed a seven-year agricultural system, alternating crops such as corn, peas, potatoes, and wheat.¹⁴ Jefferson wrote to Dr. Vine Utley in 1819, “I live so much like other people, that I might refer to ordinary life as the history of my own I have lived temperately, eating little animal food, and . . . [not] so much as a condiment for the vegetables, which constitute my principal diet.”¹⁵ Jefferson most likely emphasized the importance of vegetables in his diet because they came from American soil and were grown by hard labor. After all, Jefferson considered the small, independent farmer to be the most virtuous of the American people, an embodiment of self-reliance and deep personal investment in the nation’s future. While gardens most often appealed to lower-class Americans as a means of subsistence, elite men like Jefferson found pleasure in maintaining or supervising a private garden as a means of amusement and as a medium through which to gain a personal connection with the land.

13. Charles Butler, *The American Gentleman* (Philadelphia: Hogan and Thompson, 1836), 268-269.

14. Thomas Jefferson, *The Life of Thomas Jefferson: With Selections from the Most Valuable Portions of his Voluminous and Unrivalled Private Correspondence*, edited by B.L. Rayner (Boston: Lilly, Wait, Colman, and Holden, 1834), 290.

15. Jefferson, *Memoir, Correspondence, and Miscellanies*, 313.

In the seventeenth century and beyond, gardens allowed families in America to shed the dangerous dependencies on others that Jefferson so despised. Americans had experienced the drawbacks of dependency through their strained relationship with Britain in the eighteenth century, and perhaps it was this negative memory that propelled Jefferson's concept of the republican farmer into the kitchens of the common and genteel. Gardens, whether necessary for survival or just as a hobby, allowed all American men, but particularly the elite, to embrace Jefferson's ideal of the self-reliant farmer and laborer without having to move west from the cities or adopt farming as a career.

By the mid-nineteenth century, gardens were a prominent feature of the American landscape. In 1822, William Cobbett, a British traveler, noted of New Harmony, Indiana that "the houses . . . have, each one, a nice garden well stocked with all vegetables and tastily ornamented with flowers."¹⁶ At the time, New Harmony was operated by the Harmony Society, a group of German Pietists led by George Rapp. This society promoted communalism, and each community member was expected to assist in promoting the survival and further development of the community.¹⁷ By 1824, however, the society abandoned the location, and New Harmony was soon converted into Robert Owen's

16. William Cobbett, *A Year's Residence in the United States of America: Treating the Face of the Country, the Climate, the Soil, the Products, the Mode of Cultivating the Land, the Prices of Land, of Labour, of Food, of Raiment; of the Expenses of House-keeping, and of the usual Manner of Living; of the Manners and Customs of the People; and of the Institutions of the Country, Civil, Political, and Religious*, 3rd ed. (1822), 274.

17. Gerald Gutek and Patricia Gutek, *Visiting Utopian Communities: A Guide to the Shakers, Moravians, and Others* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998), 89-91.

concept of utopia.¹⁸ Although atypical of American cities, this community illustrated an exaggerated effort to utilize gardens as a means of beauty and subsistence. Contrary to gardens in England, American gardens continued to serve a largely practical purpose as most American gardeners put great emphasis on growing foodstuffs, particularly vegetables, rather than flowers and aesthetic landscapes. American gardens differed significantly from those in Britain insofar as they served a practical purpose for most American families. Cobbett once declared, “I can never leave this country without an attempt to make every farmer a gardener.”¹⁹ He found American gardens to be wild and lacking aesthetic appeal, likening them more to common farms. Cobbett observed that the garden at his temporary residence in New York grew “white cabbages, green savoys, parsnips, carrots, beets, young onions, radishes, white turnips, Swedish turnips, and potatoes.”²⁰ In fact, according to Cobbett, the garden was large enough to produce a surplus of vegetables that lasted well into March of the same year. From the British perspective, this was not the purpose of a real garden but a farm. American gardens, influenced by an ethic of self-sufficiency, differed from the British variety.

Americans maintained gardens predominately for practical reasons, and some larger gardens could be likened to small farms.²¹ American gardens lacked the elitism that surrounded their British counterparts. After visiting England in 1786, John Adams

18. Gutek, *Utopian Communities*, 117.

19. Cobbett, *Year's Residence*, 43.

20. Cobbett, *Year's Residence*, 40.

21. Cobbett, *Year's Residence*, 43.

professed, “[I]t will be long, I hope, before . . . Pleasure Grounds, Gardens, and ornamented farms grow so much in fashion in America. But Nature has done greater things and furnished nobler materials there.”²² In contrast to England, at the end of the eighteenth century and beginning of the nineteenth century, Americans maintained gardens for both practical and pleasurable purposes and all levels of society were able to participate in some way in a developing garden culture. Charles Butler advised his audience, “let not the rich suppose they have appropriated the pleasures of a garden.” He continued to declare, “The possessor of an acre, or a smaller portion, may receive a real pleasure from observing the progress of vegetation, even in a plantation of culinary plants Even the orchard, cultivated solely for advantage, exhibits beauties unequalled in the shrubbery.”²³ Butler urged all Americans to maintain gardens in order to promote health and appreciation of nature, but unlike the focus of English gardens on flowers, Butler suggests that edible plants possessed just as much beauty as well as practical uses.

Some American gardens paired aesthetics with practicability. One such case was at a home in Boston, built in 1804 to be “a convenient and comfortable Mansion.” The owner, Christopher Gore, was a prominent lawyer and statesman. As Tamara Plakins Thornton explains, “the house was set in a landscape designed according to the latest aesthetic precepts: broad expanses of lawn, a deer park, plantations of forest trees, as well

22. John Adams, quoted in Ann Leighton, *American Gardens of the Nineteenth Century: For Comfort and Affluence* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1987), 145.

23. Butler, *American Gentleman*, 270.

as a thriving kitchen garden, two greenhouses, and a large variety of fruit trees.”²⁴ In addition to that, however, Christopher Gore’s garden included a farm.²⁵ According to Thornton, while Gore lived at the residence, he experimented with agriculture in several ways: he “experimented with new crop rotations and fertilizers, planted test plots of various field crops, tried out the latest in farm implements, and bred livestock.”²⁶ While he took advice from British agricultural innovators, Gore’s motives were distinct from the British gentlemen who grew the most exotic plants in their home gardens as symbols of status.

According to Reverend Ripley in 1815, Gore’s agricultural advancements were not intended “merely to gratify personal feelings, or attract observation and receive applause.”²⁷ Instead, as Ripley wrote, “they are devoted to the raising of every variety of horticulture, grass, corn, wheat, barley, &c.:—and while this variety itself delights the eye of the beholder, it makes him feel, that utility is the main design of the exertions there displayed.”²⁸ Gore practiced farming at his private home not for the purpose of impressing his neighbors with his accomplishments but for practical purposes. Ripley referred to these efforts as “compatible with the highest rank and most exalted mind, to

24. Thornton, *Cultivating Gentlemen*, 27.

25. Thornton, *Cultivating Gentlemen*, 27.

26. Thornton, *Cultivating Gentlemen*, 28-29.

27. Rev. Ripley, quoted in Thornton, *Cultivating Gentlemen*, 29-30.

28. Rev. Ripley quoted in Thornton, *Cultivating Gentlemen*, 29-30.

study the convenience and supply the wants of society.”²⁹ While Ripley suggested that Gore experimented with agriculture in order to improve society, Gore never publicized his findings, suggesting that the experience was ultimately an act of what Thornton terms “private, self-characterization.”³⁰ The act of experimental, gentleman farming was one way in which Gore, and other elite Americans, could break away from city life, feel more connected with the land, and finally, distinguish themselves from British aristocrats.

Precisely when garden culture flourished, meanwhile, the American economy was becoming more thoroughly capitalist. As Richard L. Bushman asserts in *The Refinement of America*, the first half of the nineteenth century marked a dramatic shift toward a market economy. Whereas gentility had previously been concentrated in a small elite population, a great number of middle-class Americans partially embraced genteel values, purchasing products intended to raise the respectability of homes and, by extension, their inhabitants. Status focused on visible, tangible refinement and, therefore, on a new active participation in the American market. As Bushman writes, houses and furnishings served as “outward signs of what inhabitants hoped would be an inward grace.”³¹ Similarly, many Americans also felt it important that their gardens be publicly visible as it provided them with a sense of pride, potentially with regards to their promotion of republican ideals. Gardens may have acted as outward signs of inner republicanism. As O. S. Fowler

29. Rev. Ripley, quoted in Thornton, *Cultivating Gentlemen*, 29-30.

30. Thornton, *Cultivating Gentlemen*, 29-30.

31. Richard L. Bushman, *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), xii.

wrote regarding an organ that he suspected caused “inhabitiveness,” a love of one’s home and country, “it is also large in most farmers, and, with Approbation large, gives a kind of pride in having a nice farm, house, furniture, garden, &c., together with a disposition to improve one’s residence.”³² As American gardens were used for both practicality and aesthetic appeal, Americans may have had different reasons for their pride; however, this suggests a brief intersection of Bushman’s capitalist material culture and culinary culture during the period of Respectability.

Aside from this example, food culture and material culture developed almost inversely to each other. At the same time that Americans were embracing a materialistic market culture, print culture and private memoirs suggest that they also relied less—at least in theory—upon markets for food products, promoting the ideal of complete independence in food production and consumption. Fowler argued that growing crops with the intention of selling them was potentially damaging to mental health. He asserted,

If our farmers, instead of laboring with all their might to become *rich*, would labor just enough to earn a livelihood, and devote the balance of their time to reading and study, no class of people on earth would be equally happy, or moral, or talented; and to leave the farm for the city or counting-room, evinces a species of folly bordering on derangement, or else sheer *ignorance* of the road to happiness.³³

32. O. S. Fowler, ed., “Inhabitiveness: Or love of Home, and the Domicil of both childhood and after life: attachment to the Place where one lives, or has lived: unwillingness to change it: desire to locate, and remain permanently, in one habitation, and to own and improve a homestead: Patriotism,” in *The American Phrenological Journal and Miscellany: Fowler on Matrimony: Or, Phrenology and Physiology Applied to the Selection of Congenial Companions for Life; Including Directions to the Married for Living Together Affectionately and Happily*, Vol. 4 (New York: Fowler’s Phrenological Press, 1842), 18.

33. Fowler, “Inhabitiveness,” 18.

Fowler suggested that Americans would be happiest and most virtuous if they grew their own food and avoided purchasing their food from markets. While this may not have been popularly practiced, it is important to note that Fowler and others stressed home-grown produce.

Overall, American garden culture had a direct impact on the tables of Anglo-Americans who prepared dishes made of homegrown produce, dishes that held great cultural significance. Aside from the significance attached to laboring in the soil, many Americans stressed the importance of foods that were grown in American soil and, more literally, in their own backyards. As historian James E. McWilliams argues, Americans considered the right to govern their own food production and, therefore, survival to be an essential element of freedom.³⁴ There was pride in growing one's own means of survival as opposed to depending on merchants; however, complete self-sufficiency was usually an ideal, not a reality.

Small farmers often grew only a portion of their diet on their own land, supplementing their crops with purchases from local mills or markets. Although these farmers were unable to live up to Jefferson's ideal of total independence, their purchases at local markets offer a look at the importance of particular foods to everyday life in America. Benjamin Hawley, a small farmer from Chester County, wrote in 1775 that he finished his garden by planting peas and beans, but his diary clearly illustrates the importance of a handful of other crops to his diet. Hawley writes that he visited the local

34. James E. McWilliams, *A Revolution in Eating: How the Quest for Food Shaped America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 284.

mill or market multiple times per week to pick up produce, most often corn, wheat, sugar, bran, and, of course, snuff. On February 14, 1776, Hawley visited the mill to purchase three bushels of wheat and one gallon of molasses, only to visit the mill again the following day to purchase one and a half bushels of corn and three bushels of bran.³⁵ At this point, Americans consumed largely the same foods that they had consumed prior to the Revolution, though this diary does illustrate the uses of particular foods in the American diet. As the diary shows, small farmers often grew their own peas and beans, and despite the fact that they may not have grown other crops on their own farms, they could acquire them from local suppliers. The availability of particular foods at the market suggests the popularity of those crops and products. If Hawley was able to visit the mill for two consecutive days, it must have been relatively close to his home. This suggests that corn, wheat, sugar, bran, and snuff may have been widely available throughout Pennsylvania. Travelogues offer another view of the American marketplace, illustrating the popularity and availability of particular foods across the American landscape.

In 1827, Frances Trollope, a famous British novelist, observed that “common vegetables are abundant and very fine” at local markets.³⁶ As Trollope illustrated, some crops were more prominent than others in the American markets. While she encountered no sea-cale or cauliflower on her journey, she experienced an overabundance of Indian

35. Benjamin Hawley, Transcript of Benjamin Hawley’s Diary, Chester County, 1769-82, Jay Anderson Foodways Research Collection, Merrill-Cazier Library Special Collections, Utah State University, Logan, UT.

36. Frances Trollope, *Domestic Manners of the Americans*, ed. by Donald Smalley (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1949), 298.

corn.³⁷ Trollope's experiences in American markets suggest that, in the early nineteenth century, American farmers and merchants displayed a fondness for particular crops.

There were several crops, such as peas, beans, and corn that Americans commonly grew or purchased at local markets.

The popularity of particular crops was regional, yet many were almost universally accepted as household staples. In describing crop production in Virginia in the Early Republic, Jefferson wrote, "our farms produce wheat, rye, barley, oats, buck wheat, broom corn, and Indian corn We cultivate also potatoes, both the long and the round, turnips, carrots, parsnips, pumpkins, and ground nuts The gardens yield muskmelons, water-melons, tomatas, okra, pomegranates, figs, and the esculent plants of Europe."³⁸ Additionally, a guide to the domestic economy of America printed an 1828 address delivered by Elias Horry of South Carolina, titled *The American Farmer*, that stated, "All the different grains and vegetables cultivated in Europe were grown in the colonies; and besides they cultivated Indian corn, hemp, and flax; also more southerly the sweet potato, beans, and peas of every kind, tobacco, rice, indigo and cotton."³⁹ Horry continues to report that in South Carolina, "corn, peas and potatoes were cultivated as

37. Trollope, *Domestic Manners*, 298.

38. Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, 59.

39. Elias Horry, "An Address, Delivered in Charleston, before the Agricultural Society of South Carolina, at its Anniversary Meeting, August 19th, 1828" in *The American Farmer, Containing Original Essays and Selections on Agriculture, Horticulture, Rural and Domestic Economy, and Internal Improvement: With Illustrative Engravings and the Prices of Country Produce*, ed. by John S. Skinner (Baltimore: John D. Toy, 1828), 10:234.

provision crops.”⁴⁰ Though far from a complete list of crops produced in the Early Republic, these two documents imply, at the very least, that corn and potatoes were relatively popular throughout different regions. Some crops, then, appealed to Americans more than others, potentially because of their long history in American soil. Despite their frequent mention in American lists, some crops that were popular in America were rarely mentioned or utilized in the British-dominated cookbook culture of the Revolutionary period, except perhaps to be mentioned as a curiosity or novelty.

Indian corn was one of those crops as it had more application in American cuisine than in European. In 1775, the residents of Williamsburg, Pennsylvania consumed 4,500 barrels of corn per year for only 1,880 persons.⁴¹ According to an 1840 census, by 1839, the nation was producing approximately 377,531,865 bushels of corn.⁴² Corn was also drastically cheaper per bushel than both wheat and flour throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.⁴³ Corn was often ground into corn meal. White corn meal was popular in the South, whereas yellow corn meal was more popular in the North.⁴⁴

40. Elias Horry, “An Address,” 234.

41. Lorena S. Walsh, “Feeding the Eighteenth-Century Town Folk, or, Whence the Beef?,” The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, http://research.history.org/Historical_Research/Research_Themes/ThemeRespect/Feeding.cfm (accessed February 20, 2011).

42. *The American Review; A Whig Journal Devoted to Politics, Literature, Art, and Science*, Vol. 6 (New York: George H. Colton, 1847), 434.

43. *The American Review*, 433.

44. Kathleen A. Smallzried, *The Everlasting Pleasure: Influences on America's Kitchens, Cooks and Cookery, from 1565 to the Year 2000* (New York: Appleton-Century Crofts, 1956), 7.

Although journals suggest that corn was extremely popular in homes prior to and during the Revolution, it was largely unmentioned in the public culture until the publication of Amelia Simmons' *American Cookery* in 1796. As a distinctly American culture took shape in the Early Republic, a new culinary culture began to celebrate crops that colonists had grown in American soil; cookbooks put special emphasis on these “native” foods.

Recipes using native vegetables were often inspired by Indian tradition and shaped to create American versions. As *The Oxford Companion to American Food and Drink* explains, “sweet potato biscuits and corn breads come from the Indian tradition. Corn pudding, spoon bread or batter bread, hominy, grits, and sweet potato and pumpkin pies, were all adaptations using local ingredients.”⁴⁵ Additionally, several of these recipes were renamed after American people or places. One example is Brunswick stew—named after Brunswick County, Virginia, where it was most likely developed—which was composed of “squirrel, onions, chicken, lima beans, corn, okra, and tomatoes.”⁴⁶ By the mid-nineteenth century, Brunswick stew had come to hold a new meaning in Virginia, largely disconnected from its Native American origins. In an American magazine from 1863, one man recalled Brunswick stew as one of the best foods that he had ever eaten. Visiting his cousin in Virginia, the author recalled, “being tired of fried chicken and other every day Virginia dishes, the decree went forth for a

45. Andrew F. Smith, ed. *The Oxford Companion to American Food and Drink* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 111.

46. Smith, *American Food and Drink*, 111.

Brunswick stew.”⁴⁷ Brunswick stew was distinct from other American fare; however, American values were bound up in its preparation and consumption. He continued,

That very evening, the squirrels were fetched from the tops of the tall oaks in the forest hard by, the garden furnished the vegetables, and the next day it was served copiously, superbly, royally, under a grand old walnut tree There was no other dish but the Brunswick stew, and that was enough; for it contained all the meats and juices of the forest and garden magnificently conglomerated.⁴⁸

The author was fascinated by the natural elements of the stew. It combined vegetables from the local gardens with animals from the nearby forest, seemingly connecting those who consumed it with the land and animals that surrounded them. Although Americans modified and renamed Indian recipes, they nonetheless adopted them in an effort to align themselves more closely as native elements of the American landscape.

In much the same way, elements of Native American cooking sometimes redefined traditional British recipes. One prominent example of this is the evolution of an American Hasty Pudding. The British recipe for Hasty Pudding called for wheat to be boiled, either in milk or water. The resulting porridge would then be “sweetened and spiced.”⁴⁹ By the late eighteenth century, Americans had modified the recipe to incorporate cornmeal instead of the typical wheat flour. In 1793, Joel Barlow wrote a

47. “Good Eatings,” in *The Southern Literary Messenger: Devoted to Every Department of Literature and the Fine Arts*, (Richmond: Macfarlane & Fergusson, 1863), 37:308.

48. “Good Eatings,” 308.

49. Andrew F. Smith, ed., *National Cookery Book: Compiled from Original Receipts, For the Women’s Centennial Committees of the International Exhibition of 1876* (Boston: Applewood Books, 2005), viii.

three-canto poem about the dish, highlighting its significance to him as an American. In Barlow's poem, he describes the process of preparing Hasty Pudding in America, indicating the change in ingredients:

In boiling water stir the yellow flour:
The yellow flour, bestrew'd and stirr'd with haste,
Swells in the flood and thickens to a paste,
Then puffs and wallops, rises to the brim,
Drinks the dry knobs that on the surface swim;
The knobs at last the busy ladle breaks,
And the whole mass its true consistence takes.⁵⁰

Barlow intentionally identified the flour as "yellow flour," nodding to the presence of corn meal and, more importantly, the distinction between the British and American Hasty Puddings. As the poem was an ode to the pudding, Barlow repeatedly reemphasized that the dish referred to in the poem was the American variation and not the British traditional recipe. In commenting on European varieties of Hasty Pudding, Barlow wrote,

For thee through Paris, that corrupted town,
How long in vain I wander'd up and down
Where shameless Bacchus, with his drenching hoard,
Cold from his cave usurps the morning board.
London is lost in smoke and steep'd in tea;
No Yankee there can lisp the name of thee;
The uncouth word, a libel on the town,
Would call a proclamation from the crown.
For climes oblique, that fear the sun's full rays,
Chill'd in their fogs, exclude the generous maize:
A grain whose rich, luxuriant growth requires
Short, gentle showers, and bright, ethereal fires.

But here, though distant from our native shore,
With mutual glee, we meet and laugh once more.

50. Joel Barlow, "The Hasty Pudding" in *The Poets and Poetry of America: With an Historical Introduction*, ed. by Rufus Wilmot Griswold (Philadelphia: Corey and Hart, 1847), 55.

The same! I know thee by that yellow face,
 That strong complexion of true Indian race,
 Which time can never change, nor soil impair,
 Nor Alpine snows, nor Turkey's morbid air;
 For endless years, through every mild domain,
 Where grows the maize, there thou art sure to reign.⁵¹

As if following Barlow's lead, American cookbook authors of the 1830s identified the American version of Hasty Pudding as Indian Mush, entirely casting off the British origins of the recipe by removing the British title. In Eliza Leslie's *Directions for Cookery*, first published in 1837, both British and American variations of Hasty Pudding appear side by side; however, Leslie identified the British recipe as "Flour Hasty Pudding" and the American recipe as "Indian Mush."⁵² In this way, Americans aligned many of their recipes with their Indian origins, stressing the connection between themselves and the native inhabitants of the land in the period of Early National development.

Recipes incorporating corn and cornmeal, such as Indian Mush, were one way that Americans embraced native eating habits. One of the first recipes incorporating cornmeal was for Ash Cake. The recipe called for the cook to "add a teaspoonful of Salt to a Quart of sifted Corn Meal" and add the dry mixture to boiling water. The mixture was then placed on the hearth and covered with hot wood ashes, hence the name.⁵³ This process was originally practiced by Algonquians in Virginia and was quickly adopted by

51. Barlow, "The Hasty Pudding," 55.

52. Eliza Leslie, *Directions for Cookery, in Its Various Branches*, 11th ed. (Philadelphia: Corey and Hart, 1840), 301.

53. Smallzried, *Everlasting Pleasure*, 11.

early colonists. It was originally referred to as Corn Pone, meaning simply roasted or baked corn, from the Algonquian *poan*.⁵⁴ Demonstrating its initial popularity among colonists, William Strachey of Jamestown Colony supposedly declared that one of the few distractions that could cause a man to let an Ash Cake cool before he ate it was a naked Indian girl—namely Pocahontas—turning cartwheels in the colony’s marketplace.⁵⁵ This recipe was greatly improved upon over time to yield two more popular forms of cornmeal cakes by the nineteenth century.

Johny Cakes and Hoe Cakes, largely unmentioned in the British cookery books and their American adaptations in the eighteenth century, became prominent in nearly every cookbook of American origin in the nineteenth century. These cakes came to hold a significant place in American culture. Following the expulsion of the British from the territory, Americans sought ways to make themselves feel even more like they belonged there. Cooking with corn, a crop that had been reaped from North American soil long before the presence of the first British colonists, allowed for just that. Additionally, corn was a more effective crop than any brought over from Europe because it produced the most per acre, so it appealed to the first Euro-Americans in the colonies and lasted as a staple crop for over a century.⁵⁶ By the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, Johny Cakes and Hoe Cakes became an American tradition. Hoe Cakes were named for

54. Charles C. Cutler, *Tracks that Speak: The Legacy of Native American Words in North American Culture* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2002), 31.

55. William Strachey, quoted in Smallzried, *The Everlasting Pleasure*, 11.

56. Alfred W. Crosby, “Maize, Land, Demography and the American Character,” *Revue Francaise D’etudes Americanines* 48-49 (1991): 154-155.

their preparation, “a plain cornmeal, water, and salt bread baked on a griddle on a hoe.”⁵⁷ By contrast, Johny Cakes were the colloquial name for the “Journey Cakes” that wayfarers could easily pack for travel.⁵⁸ Over time, the cakes became better known as Jonny, Johny, or Johnny Cakes. The spelling of the cakes often varied, but they were universally present in Early America. According to Henry Manchester and William Baker, the cakes “were found along the Atlantic coast from Newfoundland to Jamaica,” though New Englanders claimed to have invented them.⁵⁹ Manchester and Baker assert that the cakes were always spelled “j-o-n-n-y with no H,” short for their original name.⁶⁰ This spelling, however, was never standardized as the name of the cake was simply a linguistic metamorphosis of the original. Regardless of the spelling, the popularity of the cake is evident in American cookbooks as well as American literature.

In “The Hasty Pudding,” contrasting the American variety of the pudding from the inferior wheat product in Britain, Barlow also referred to the popularity of several corn-based dishes, including Johny Cake and Hoe Cake, in comparison with his favorite cornmeal pudding:

Let the green succotash with thee contend,

57. Sandra L. Oliver, *Food in Colonial and Federal America* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 145.

58. Henry Manchester and William Baker, “Rhode Island Jonny Cakes,” in *The Food of a Younger Land: A Portrait of American Food—before the National Highway System, Before the Chain Restaurants, and Before Frozen Food, When the Nation’s Food was Seasonal, Regional, and Traditional—From the Lost WPA Files*, ed. by Mark Kurlansky (New York: Riverhead Books, 2009), 86.

59. Manchester and Baker, “Rhode Island Jonny Cakes,” 86.

60. Manchester and Baker, “Rhode Island Jonny Cakes,” 86.

Let beans and corn their sweetest juices blend;
 Let butter drench them in its yellow tide,
 And a long slice of bacon grace their side;
 Not all the plate, how famed soe'er it be,
 Can please my palate like a bowl of thee.
 Some talk of Hoe-Cake, fair Virginia's pride!
 Rich Johnny-Cake this mouth hath often tried;
 Both please me well, their virtues much the same,
 Alike their fabric, as allied their fame,
 Except in dear New England, where the last
 Receives a dash of pumpkin in the paste,
 To give it sweetness and improve the taste.⁶¹

In this stanza, Barlow acknowledged the popularity of both Hoe Cake and Johnny Cake, and informed the reader about the regional variations of the simple cakes in New England and Virginia. As the purpose of this poem was to distinguish between American and British cuisine as previously discussed, it is important to note that Barlow included these dishes as examples of characteristically Yankee foods.

These cakes were popular enough that they were often served at the tables of some of America's most well-known elite. In the *Biographical Memoirs of the Illustrious General George Washington*, first published in the early 1800s, Thomas Condie took note of Washington's daily schedule after his retirement from the presidency, including breakfasting at "about seven o'clock on Indian hoecake and tea."⁶² The author deliberately specifies that Washington's eating habits were remarkably simple, suggesting that these cakes may not have been eaten by Washington's genteel

61. Barlow, "The Hasty Pudding," 55.

62. Thomas Condie, *Biographical Memoirs of the Illustrious General George Washington, Late President of the United States of America, Containing a History of the Principal Events of his Life, with Extracts from his Journals, Speeches to Congress, and Public Addresses*, 4th ed. (Brattleborough, VT: William Fessenden, 1811), 191.

contemporaries. According to an 1805 British observer, Richard Parkinson, “the better sort of people make a very nice cake, with eggs and milk, about the size and thickness of pyfleets, or what are called crumpets in London. The lower class of people mix the flour with water, make a sort of paste, and lay it before the fire, on a board or single, to bake This is called a Johnny cake.”⁶³ From a British perspective, Johnny cakes were suitable only for the lower sorts of people, not for the tables of the elite. While there may have been different methods of preparation for the upper and lower class, corn and cornmeal cakes still held universal appeal to Americans, whether common farmers or even presidents.

Parkinson was not the only British traveler to show contempt for Johnny and Hoe cakes. By the 1820s, corn-based dishes were served at most American tables. Frances Trollope, an English novelist, sailed to America in 1827 and documented her experiences there. Trollope noted that “the ordinary mode of living is abundant but not delicate They eat the Indian corn in a great variety of forms The flour of it is made into at least a dozen different sorts of cakes, but,” as Trollope declared, “in my opinion all bad. This flour, mixed in the proportion of one-third, with fine wheat, makes by far the best bread I ever tasted.”⁶⁴ Trollope was equally disgusted with the foods served at a tea party that she attended in Cincinnati shortly after her arrival in the States. Not only was Trollope offended by the disparaging manners of the American men as they spoke

63. Richard Parkinson, *The Experienced Farmer's Tour in America: Exhibiting, in a Copious and Familiar View, The American System of Agriculture and Breeding of Cattle, with its Recent Improvements* (London: J.B. Boadley, Esq., 1805), 332.

64. Trollope, *Domestic Manners*, 297-298.

politics and spit tobacco, but the tea itself was distasteful to her. When she referred to “the tea”—meaning the overall dining experience as opposed to the specific drink—Trollope deliberately put the word in quotation marks, implying that the American “tea” did not meet British standards. She mentioned that several foods were served with the tea, including “hot cake, and custard, hoe cake, johny cake, waffle cake, and dodger cake.”⁶⁵ Most of these cakes contained some form of corn, most commonly cornmeal. Trollope not only disliked such cakes but made a point to include them in the list of unfamiliar and uniquely American vocabulary and phrases at the end of her book. These foods composed about one-fourth of the total vocabulary list, illustrating the frequency with which Trollope must have encountered them during her stay.

These cornmeal cakes appeared in private cookbooks as well, often referred to by other names. One handwritten receipt book, presumably composed around 1820 and found at the estate of Dr. Benjamin F. Heyward in Worchester, Massachusetts, gave directions for making Indian Cakes: “1 quart milk Flour or Indian meal mixed/ to a batter—2 tablespoonsful of yeast—3 egg/ ½ oz of Butter—little salt.”⁶⁶ This recipe varies only slightly from the first published recipe of “Johny Cake” in Amelia Simmons’ cookbook. Heyward’s recipe calls for eggs, yeast and butter, ingredients not included in Simmons’ Johny Cake. Additionally, Heyward’s recipe excludes the molasses that was

65. Trollope, *Domestic Manners*, 58-59.

66. Recipes from the Estate of Dr. Benjamin F. Heyward, Worchester, MA, ca. 1820, Jay Anderson Foodways Research Collection, Merrill-Cazier Library Special Collections, Utah State University, Logan, UT.

called for in Simmons' receipt.⁶⁷ The Heyward cookbook also includes other recipes using corn meal. One such recipe is a Boiled Indian Pudding: "6 gills milk—1 pint meal—2 eggs—1 gill molasses/1 teaspoonful salt."⁶⁸ Many recipes containing cornmeal were identified by their origins in Indian tradition despite the adaptations that were made to the original Indian Pone. Johny Cake, Hoe Cake, and Indian Cake: all these recipes, though they varied slightly, may have allowed Americans who produced and consumed them to associate themselves with the American Indians who originally ate them. While Americans could thus connect themselves more deeply with the American soil, they could, more importantly, connect themselves with its historical past.

Another crop that was native to the Americas was squash. Although seemingly less popular than corn, squash appeared in several American cookbooks, published and unpublished. An unpublished cookbook, presumably written in 1828, shares a recipe titled Squash Pudding: "Bake or boil your Squash, add one pint of milk or cream to 1 pint of squash, 4 eggs, a little rosewater & ginger or lemons Sweeten to the taste."⁶⁹ It is clear

67. Amelia Simmons, *American Cookery: Or, the Art of Dressing Viands, Fish, Poultry, and Vegetables, and the Best Modes of Making Pastes, Puffs, Pies, Tarts, Puddings, Custards, and Preserves, and All Kinds of Cakes, from the Imperial Plum to Plain Cake. Adapted to this Country, and All Grades of Life* (Hartford: Simeon Butler, 1798), 34.

68. Recipes from the Estate of Dr. Benjamin F. Heyward. A gill was a British measurement equaling approximately one quarter of a pint

69. Handwritten recipes, Charlotte F. W. Gilbert from her friend A. D. Waters, 1828, Jay Anderson Foodways Research Collection, Merrill-Cazier Library Special Collections, Utah State University, Logan, UT.

from the recipe books and other writings of the nineteenth century that squash was understood by most Americans to be a uniquely American crop.

The importance of squash as an American crop is evident not only in the way Americans wrote about their cooking but also in the way they understood and even parodied themselves as American. Asa Greene, an American living in New York, included squash as a chapter in his travelogue parody, mocking the accounts of British travelers in America. In 1833, Greene published *Travels in America* under the pseudonym of George Fibbleton, the fictional ex-barber to the King of England. Greene imagined an entire exchange about squash between the fictional British traveler and American gentlemen and merchants at a market in New York. While enjoying what he thought was American watermelon, Fibbleton is approached by a gentlemen who, “with that rudeness which characterizes all classes” in America, inquires as to what he is eating.⁷⁰ When Fibbleton explains what he is eating, the gentleman asks how he liked it, to which he replied, “I don’t think it quite equal to our English melons.”⁷¹ The story continues as the gentleman informs Fibbleton that he is not eating a melon, but rather a squash. Fibbleton grows enraged at this and confronts the woman who sold him the “melon.” Once confronted, the woman declares, “he asked me no questions, and I told him no lies. I sell squashes to any body that wants ‘em. If they chuse to eat them raw, it’s

70. Asa Greene, *Travels in America by George Fibbleton, Esq., Ex-Barber to His Majesty, The King of Britain* (New York: William Pearson, 1833), 210.

71. Greene, *Travels in America*, 210.

no consarn of mine.”⁷² The entire market breaks into laughter, mocking Fibbleton for his ignorance, and eventually forcing him to return to England, disgusted with American behavior. This story illustrates not only the strained relationship between the British and the Americans, but also the role of squash as a symbol of what it meant to be American. Greene used the squash in his fictional story to illustrate the common bonds between the people in the market and, more so, to set off Fibbleton as an ignorant outsider.

As illustrated in the Smith-Martineau dinner, the potato was another crop that continued to appeal to all classes of American society in the nineteenth century, whereas the crop had fallen completely out of favor among the British aristocracy by mid-eighteenth century. There are several theories on the origins of the potato; however, as almanacs and magazines of the time indicate, most nineteenth-century British and Americans agreed that the potato had been discovered by Sir Walter Raleigh in modern day Virginia and taken to Ireland upon his return in 1584. As one British writer noted, “For some time after its introduction into this country, the potato was planted in the gardens of the nobility as a curious exotic.”⁷³ Once it became a more common commodity, however, it lost its appeal to the aristocracy. The rich had initially shown disgust for the potato, later embraced it as an oddity, and eventually abandoned it, viewing it as a food fit only for the lower class. “A dish of sodden, wafy potatoes,” announced the author, “would be scorned in their first introduction by the rich, as it now

72. Greene, *Travels in America*, 211.

73. “The Potato,” in *The Magazine of Domestic Economy* (London: W.S. Orr & Co., 1841), 6:140-141.

would be by those in a lower rank of life; for . . . even the artisan is now particular in the choice of his potatoes.”⁷⁴ Most of England rejected the potato at their own tables and cultivation remained low until the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century when necessity forced the British to reevaluate their stance on the crop.

Instead, the potato was distributed throughout the British colonial possessions. It was cultivated in India, in particular, allowing the British to regard it as their gift to the natives because of its substantial nutritional value and high yield. Additionally, the British government attempted to cultivate the crop in Ceylon, where “a basket of these roots is sent every morning for the supply of the governor’s table.”⁷⁵ The British found the potato to be unfit for their consumption; however, they found it perfectly adequate for the inhabitants of their colonies. Although the British colonial governor of Ceylon consumed the potatoes on a daily basis, governors of Ceylon typically adopted native practices after a prolonged period of time in the region. As H.B. Henderson declared in 1829 in his analysis of India, colonial governors were considered to “measure [their] own humanity by the standard of a conquered and degraded race.”⁷⁶ This may account for this particular governor’s consumption of the potato as well as to illustrate the contempt that the British had toward native peoples and their habits, including the consumption of these “lower” crops.

74. “The Potato,” 141.

75. “The Potato,” 143.

76. H.B. Henderson quoted in E.M. Collingham, *Imperial Bodies: The Physical Experience of the Raj, c. 1800-1947* (Boston: Polity Press, 2001), 2.

The potato had become a cheap and common crop in Britain which destroyed its appeal to the aristocrats. It became part of a paternalistic gesture from the British to its colonies, and ultimately, the potato was identified by most English citizens as an inferior food. Unlike the British, however, Americans did not disdain to eat potatoes. In contrast to the negative connotations that that potato received in England up to and throughout the nineteenth century, elite American women such as Margaret Bayard Smith continued to serve the vegetable at their tables despite its disfavor abroad. While the potato had taken on class-based connotations in England, it maintained the same meaning that it had always had to Americans: it was a nutritious and widely available food source.

Americans drifted away from British traditions in the early nineteenth century, seeking instead to establish their new identity as “American.” Foods allowed these metaphorically motherless ex-colonists to define, in some small terms, what it meant to be American by first defining what it meant to eat like an American. The values of the Jeffersonian Republic permeated American food culture well into the mid-nineteenth century. American recipes incorporated corn, potatoes, and squash—native crops that had been grown in American soil since before colonization—as a way for Americans to forge a closer connection between themselves and the American landscape. Food was a tool for dislocated colonists to establish cultural ties with their new physical as well as political nation.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION:

NATURE OF NATIONAL CUISINE

The story of Margaret Bayard Smith's dinner party is an excellent example of the changing concepts of American food in the nineteenth century; however, this culinary clash between British and American tastes was not necessarily reflective of the entire society, not even the entirety of Washington D.C. Not everyone adopted egalitarian foodways. Margaret Bayard Smith, to be sure, refused to serve as many meat dishes as Henry Orr suggested; some hostesses, however, followed his instruction. Indeed, Orr reported that at an earlier dinner honoring Martineau, one Mrs. Woodbury had taken his suggestions regarding the number of meat dishes to be served, providing thirty dishes for eighteen guests.¹ It is unclear whether Mrs. Woodbury always served meals of this magnitude, or if this was an especially large dinner; nonetheless, it must be noted that the values of egalitarianism, republicanism, and democracy were not universally adhered to in American culinary culture, nor did they always exist in harmony.

Americans set themselves apart from the British through new democratic politics of food, embracing free market approaches to acquiring goods and culinary services. There were, however, numerous attempts by the American government to regulate food production and sale in the early nineteenth century. Similarly, an egalitarian cookery that embraced moderation as well as simple and affordable recipes was not present in every

1. Margaret Bayard Smith, "Letter to Mrs. Kirkpatrick, Feb. 4, 1835" in *The First Forty Years of Washington Society: Portrayed by the Family Letters of Mrs. Samuel Harrison Smith (Margaret Bayard) from the Collection of Her Grandson, J. Henley Smith*, edited by Gaillard Hunt (New York: C. Scriber's Sons, 1906), 360.

American kitchen, particularly in a country that was developing into a capitalistic, industrial powerhouse with increasing inequality. Similarly, republican appreciation of the yeoman farmer, lack of dependency, and reliance on homegrown produce was undermined by the myriad environments of a geographically diverse America, as those regions with less stable climates often depended more upon purchasing goods rather than producing one's own foodstuffs. Despite these challenges and the diverse cultural landscape of the new nation, an overarching American culinary tradition took shape in the first half of the nineteenth century as Americans embraced egalitarianism, republicanism, democracy, or some combination thereof, as guiding principles and ideals that defined the new nation and its sense of self.

There are, of course, inherent contradictions in the study of American national identity and even more poignant problems in defining a national culinary identity. Any time a study aims to characterize the nature of an entire nation, particularly one as vast as the United States, there will always be exceptions to the rules. While egalitarian, republican, and democratic values existed within a developing American food culture in the nineteenth century, it is important to note that they were by no means universally reflective of the American population. Instead, they were often wound up in several inherent dichotomies that existed in the nineteenth century. One such difficulty in assessing American national identity emerges from culturally, politically, and environmentally distinct regions that undermined larger, shared concepts of nationhood. Similarly, other inherent contradictions challenged the burgeoning culinary culture. Refinement and egalitarianism, seemingly clashing trends, surfaced throughout the

American public in the nineteenth century, establishing a inconsistent and unstable cultural basis for national development. Competing factors such as these, however, yielded a uniquely American approach to social, political, and cultural issues and, ultimately, a brief sense of a coherent American national identity.

One contradiction within American cookery of the nineteenth century is the role of food as both a representation of egalitarian values and a symbol of refinement and wealth. American cookbook authors often professed a desire to educate all Americans equally on recipes that virtually all Americans had the means to prepare; however, neither fine hotels nor restaurants shared the desire for simplicity and moderation, catering instead to an elite clientele. While American democratic values dissolved the old divisions between the genteel and the common, Americans developed new measures of social stratification they began to accrue wealth in the second half of the nineteenth century. Edward Pessen asserts, “Far from being an age of equality, the antebellum decades featured an inequality that appears to surpass anything experienced by the United States in the twentieth century.”² From the end of the Revolution through the Civil War, wealth was increasingly concentrated in an “ever-smaller percentage” of the American population.³ This wealth contradicted the egalitarian values of the new nation. Inequality was true of many groups that dominated regional culture and politics in urban centers during the Early Republic from the Boston Brahmins to Philadelphia’s banking elite, and

2. Edward Pessen, *Riches, Class, and Power: America Before the Civil War*, 3rd ed. (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2009), 42.

3. Pessen, *Riches, Class, and Power*, 41.

the upper-classes of New York City. These new elites differed from the British aristocracy in that they were, as Frederic Cople Jaher explains, functional elites, who took advantage of the opportunities that became available to them as America evolved into an industrial power.⁴ Although a great deal of American wealth was concentrated in these elites, they gained hegemony through economic specialization and the accumulation of wealth in contrast to traditional concepts of aristocracy, which were based on inherited social status, divorced from wealth.

While this wealth, concentrated among elites, could be said to contradict republican values, the embrace of wealth as an American measurement of status marked a radical shift from traditional views of social stratification. Gordon Wood asserts that while there was an increased concentration of capital, “many could still feel equal to those of superior wealth as long as that wealth was seen as self-achieved and, more important, was not accompanied by any other pretensions to social superiority, such as those cultural attributes claimed by eighteenth-century gentlemen that money could not easily buy.”⁵ Wood argues that although class distinction still existed, it was based only the possession of wealth, which any American had the potential to obtain. This set American apart in a radical way from the aristocratic structure of Britain which essentially disallowed upward mobility. Still, as Neil Harris writes, “wealth brought

4. Frederic Cople Jaher, *The Urban Establishment: Upper Strata in Boston, New York, Charleston, Chicago, and Los Angeles* (Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1982), 12.

5. Gordon Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1991), 343.

luxury in its train, and patriots worried about the loss of civic virtues acquired in the austerity of the young republic.”⁶ As a result, some American foods began to represent the developing class distinctions, celebrating social superiority rather than equality.

Hotels in major cities offered elaborate dinners, and the cost of the meals yielded an exclusive clientele as few had the means to pay for the luxury of overeating. In the earlier taverns, such as Fraunce’s Tavern in New York, food was served in large portions; however, the establishment charged customers on “the American Plan,” meaning that the entire meal was covered in a single cost, typically included with the price of a room, regardless of the amount of food that the patron consumed. By the second half of the nineteenth century, however, most food-serving establishments adopted the “European Plan,” charging patrons individual prices based on portions as well as types of food consumed. The first to adopt this plan was the Astor House hotel in New York, constructed in 1836.⁷

In a menu from Thursday, October 11, 1849, the Astor House offered over fifty choices for entrees, side dishes, and desserts. The entrees consisted of game meats, roasted or boiled, ranging from black ducks to short neck snipe to venison served with currant jelly sauce.⁸ The side dishes offered more small birds as well as organs. The

6. Neil Harris, “American Manners,” in *Making America: The Society and Culture of the United States*, edited by Luther S. Luedtke (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 152.

7. Smith, Andrew F., ed., *The Oxford Companion to American Food and Drink* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 499.

8. Lately Thomas, *Delmonico’s: A Century of Splendor* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967), 35.

vegetable selection included boiled potatoes, mashed potatoes, squash, sweet potatoes, and corn. Other European dishes also appeared on the menu, such as eggplant, suggesting a French influence that would become more prominent in later decades, particularly with the opening of Delmonico's in New York. The seven dessert options were pumpkin pies, cranberry pies, rice pudding, bread pudding, Charlotte Russe, almond cakes, and ice cream, again illustrating both American and French influences.⁹ The American origins of Pumpkins and cranberries may have contributed to their popularity.

According to Lately Thomas, this fare differed significantly from the establishment's fare in 1838. As Thomas writes, "evidently the public would not be content with 1838 fare in 1849" due to "mere number and variety of dishes" that were offered in the latter.¹⁰ Thomas explained that, "the Astor House was the most sumptuous hotel on the American continent, and its dining room was famous." In contrast to later restaurants such as Delmonico's that served predominately European, and more specifically, French dishes, "the Astor itself set an example of sticking to plain American terms, rather than try to compete."¹¹ Even the ritziest hotels in nineteenth century America served meals that embodied American cookery, embracing game meat as well as

9. Thomas, *Delmonico's*, 36.

10. Thomas, *Delmonico's*, 36.

11. Thomas, *Delmonico's*, 35.

homegrown vegetables. While the meals were costly, consumers could choose from a range of options, allowing them to pay for only what they ate.¹²

To British travelers, however, even elite dinners proved inferior. In London in 1871, *The Food Journal* published an article about hotel fares in America written under the pseudonym S. Phillips Day. As the author noted, “to say the least, the Americans do eat somewhat heartily, nor do they study aestheticism at the table. Even in leading hotels one sees much that is more or less offensive to good taste.”¹³ The article continued to assert that “the majority of Transatlantic hotels, even of the highest character, are unlike those of this or any other European country. They have not, nor can they have, exclusively select guests.”¹⁴ By contrast to the European hotels, the article stated, “hotels in American are open to all comers.”¹⁵ Gordon Wood explains that this approach to social distinction set America apart from Europe. By the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, Wood argues, “equality in America meant not just that a man was as good as his neighbor and possessed equal rights, but that he was,” as Jedidiah Morse noted in 1791, “weighed by his purse, not by his mind, and according to the preponderance of that, he rises or sinks in the scale of individual opinion.” Wood continues to assert that this new concept of social equality was “a kind of equality that no

12. Smith, *American Food and Drink*, 499.

13. S. Phillips Day, “Hotel Fares in America,” *The Food Journal; A Review of Social and Sanitary Economy and Monthly Record of Food and Public Health* (London: J.M. Johnson & Sons, 1872), 2:392.

14. Phillips, “Hotel Fares in America,” 392.

15. Phillips, “Hotel Fares in America,” 392.

revolutionary had anticipated,” citing this as an example of the truly radical nature of the Revolution.¹⁶ Despite the reality of social stratification, the ideals expressed in many American recipes illustrate this shift in conception about the bases for social distinction.

Hotel dinners were elite functions, not because they catered exclusively to genteel guests as in England, but because they were expensive. Unlike elite functions in Britain, no one could be prohibited from dining out if they had the means to pay.¹⁷ Thus, although social stratification—visibly expressed through feasting and fine dining—did exist, it was still distinct from the social divisions in England. For the purpose of this study, then, the egalitarian nature of American food did not necessarily imply that Americans considered one another to be equal in terms of class-standing. Instead, it implied that Americans conceived of each other above all as Americans. Social class became, in a sense, a subcategory, subordinated to the concept of nationality and nationhood. This nationhood was marked by egalitarianism as the categorization of “American” superseded the role of subcategories based on wealth. Being American meant having the opportunity to rise or fall on one’s own merit. Significantly then, this new society judged Americans based on their own accomplishments and not a superficial superiority. Stratification based on wealth influenced America to a lesser extent as American society functioned, predominately, within this larger concept of earned status, embracing the notion of the self-made, and, most importantly, American, man.

16. Wood, *Radicalism of the American Revolution*, 243.

17. Phillips, “Hotel Fares in America,” 392.

Refinement and egalitarianism, though opposites, did exist, often within the same establishments, as American refinement was achievable by all members of society. This theme was present in the rest of American society as gentility increasingly became a thing of the past, and more Americans were able to attain at least physical representations of refinement in the structures and furnishings of their homes, or as Richard L. Bushman writes, “outward signs of what inhabitants hoped would be an inward grace.”¹⁸ Americans, then, cast off the aristocratic notions of Britain and embraced a more egalitarian approach to class, blurring the lines between common and genteel.

Another contradiction that must be explained is one that emerges within any study of nationhood. The existence of national identity presumes a lack of regional and ethnic identities that serve to undermine the concept of an all-encompassing, universal identity. Thus, for the purposes of this study, regional and ethnic disparities must be taken into account. Although each region had its own culinary distinctions, much like dialects, there were several commonalities across the American landscape. When Harriet Martineau visited America, she visited more than just Washington D.C. In Massachusetts, Martineau breakfasted on “bread, potatoes, hung beef, and tea.”¹⁹ In addition, she was served clam chowder, a regional specialty. In Alabama, Martineau was served “cornbread, buckwheat cakes, broiled chicken, bacon and eggs, hominy grits, fresh

18. Richard L. Bushman, *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), xii.

19. Rodney P. Carlisle, ed., *Handbook to Life in America: The Early National Period and Expansion, 1783 to 1859* (New York: Infobase Publishing, 2009), 233.

pickled fish, and beefsteak.”²⁰ Despite these variations, corn dishes were present at each. According to Rodney P. Carlisle, by the end of her trip, Martineau had been served corn dishes so often that she “concluded that corn was a more valuable commodity than gold,” particularly in the South.²¹ Foodways historian Sandra L. Oliver asserts that even backcountry settlers shared common aspects of their diet with the rest of the country in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. She writes, “The meals of the day in the backcountry were largely as they were elsewhere.” More specifically backcountry breakfasts “consisted of mush or hasty puddings; hoecakes, ashcakes, johnnycakes, sometimes accompanied by meat and/or eggs,” simple elements that were popular in the rest of the country as well.²²

Regional culinary distinctions, one hastens to add, are dictated in part by environmental differences. One possible explanation for the popularity of corn-based dishes, for example, is that it was a more reliable and versatile crop than other grains. The crop was widely available in nearly every region, and even the poorest Americans could afford it. By contrast, New England soil was not conducive to the growth of wheat crops. In the mid-eighteenth century, many northern farmers lost their confidence in wheat after wheat rust destroyed the crop.²³ By contrast, corn grew readily in virtually every climate.

20. Carlisle, *Life in America*, 233.

21. Carlisle, *Life in America*, 234.

22. Sandra L. Oliver, *Food in Colonial and Federal America* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2005), 187.

23. Carlisle, *Handbook to Life in America*, 230.

Wheat was still commonly grown in the middle states, though corn was often more popular as a grain crop.²⁴ The universal availability of corn may have contributed to the embrace of corn-based recipes as uniquely American foods. Corn was affordable and accessible to all levels of society, even in frontier areas.²⁵

One example of regional distinction is the treatment of food in the American South which corresponded with a tradition of hospitality, often translating into grand feasts. As Linda Civitello explains, “American cooking developed along two parallel lines.” On Southern plantations, slaves did all of the preparation and cooking, so the foods could be prepared over the course of the entire day. In the North, by contrast, cooking “arose from the middle-class necessity of doing a great deal of work as quickly as possible.”²⁶ Civitello asserts that the popularity of Hasty Pudding and Johny Cake in the North was not the flavor; instead, it was the fact that these were an early American form of “fast food,” that was quick to prepare and easily transportable. Because of the environmental differences as well as the extra labor supply in the South, Southern cooking developed differently from its northern counterpart.²⁷

While a majority of Americans strove to set their cookery apart from British tradition, many British customs still resonated in particular regions. In Virginia, for

24. Oliver, *Food in Colonial and Federal America*, 145.

25. Carlisle, *Life in America*, 230.

26. Linda Civitello, *Cuisine and Culture: A History of Food and People* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2008), 152.

27. Civitello, *Cuisine and Culture*, 152.

example, social rank still influenced cookery methods and styles. Up until the nineteenth century, “great planters carefully cultivated the only true *haute cuisine* in British America,” and Virginian cooks served up elaborate dishes, similar to those prepared in English south and west.²⁸ Many of these dishes were still prepared despite the culinary shift in the rest of the states.

Additionally, slave labor distinguished Virginia and the South from the rest of British America as it facilitated a feasting culture. While New Englanders occasionally feasted to honor their dead, southerners, particularly in Virginia, feasted in celebration of weddings, christenings, Christmas, Easter, other holidays, and the arrival of guests.²⁹ David Hackett Fischer asserts that “various customs of feasting, dining and cooking were fully established in Virginia by the late seventeenth century.” Fischer continues to argue that these traditions set the Chesapeake region apart from the rest of British America as “they became the basis of inherited food ways” from Britain.³⁰ As this suggests, the movement to develop a uniquely American cuisine distinct from that of Britain was not universal. In *Albion’s Seed*, Fischer argues that several British folkways from four different regions of Britain influenced the cultural development of the United States. Many of these traditions may have been abandoned, but several others continued into the twentieth century. Fischer explains, “Independence did not mark the end of the four

28. David Hackett Fischer, *Albion’s Seed: Four British Folkways in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 350.

29. Fischer, *Albion’s Seed*, 354.

30. Fischer, *Albion’s Seed*, 354.

British folkways in America, or of the regional cultures which they inspired. The history of the United States is, in many ways the story of their continuing interaction.”³¹ It is important to note, then, that regional distinctions did exist throughout the American landscape, and the movement to “Americanize” the nation’s cookery did not necessarily include the rejection of all British culinary traditions, particularly in the South.

Regional distinctions also existed within cookbook culture. Sidney W. Mintz explains, “One reason for [regional] differences was the wide variation in natural environments Another was the differing food habits of the various migrant groups.”³² Mintz argues that while these differences always existed, they did not become prominent until the late nineteenth and twentieth century as Americans began to identify particular regions with their characteristic cuisines, such as Cajun food in New Orleans.³³ Prior to that, regional cookery was only addressed in a handful of nineteenth-century cookbooks. Some American cookbook authors published books claiming to present true New England cookery or Virginia housewifery.

The first of these cookbooks emerged in Vermont in 1808. Lucy Emerson’s *The New-England Cookery* offered few regionally significant recipes, and instead, large portions of the book very closely resembled Amelia Simmons’ *American Cookery* from 1796. Even the subtitle of Emerson’s book was taken almost word for word from

31. Fischer, *Albion’s Seed*, 783.

32. Sidney W. Mintz, *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom: Excursions into Eating, Culture, and the Past* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996), 111.

33. Mintz, *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom*, 111.

Simmons' publication, replacing the word "viands" with "flesh" and omitting the word "poultry." Instead of the recipes being "adapted to this country" as in Simmons' cookbook, Emerson asserted that her recipes "adapted to this *part* of our country," referring specifically to New England.³⁴ Emerson also plagiarized her preface, copying it directly from Simmons' preface. Nearly all of the recipes in the cookbook were also copied from Simmons in the same order in which she had originally written them. There were a few exceptions to this interspersed throughout the book, recipes that appear to be Emerson's own, such as "An Egg Pie."³⁵ Emerson's cookbook illustrates that while New England may have developed a unique regional cookery, that cookery shared commonalities with a broader American cuisine. Indeed, by transforming the recipes from *American Cookery* into New England cuisine, Emerson defined her region as fundamentally part of America and only secondarily New England.

Unlike Emerson's *New England Cookery*, which offered few distinctly regional recipes, Mary Randolph's *The Virginia Housewife* offered a taste of the region, nonetheless integrating nationally renowned dishes into her concept of Virginian cookery. First published in 1824, most historians consider *The Virginia Housewife* to be

34. Amelia Simmons, Title page to *American Cookery: Or, the Art of Dressing Viands, Fish, Poultry, and Vegetables, and the Best Modes of Making Pastes, Puffs, Pies, Tarts, Puddings, Custards, and Preserves, and All Kinds of Cakes, from the Imperial Plum to Plain Cake. Adapted to this Country, and All Grades of Life* (Hartford: Simeon Butler, 1798); Lucy Emerson, Title page to *The New-England Cookery, Or the Art of Dressing All Kinds of Flesh, Fish, and Vegetables, and the Best Modes of Making Pastes, Puffs, Pies, Tarts, Puddings, Custards and Preserves, and All Kinds of Cakes, From the Imperial Plum to Plain Cake, Particularly Adapted to this Part of Our Country* (Montpelier, VT: Joseph Parks, 1808).

35. Emerson, *The New-England Cookery*, 42.

the first real regional cookbook. The cookbook featured many southern recipes, incorporating ingredients such as catfish and okra, which she spelled “ochra.”³⁶ In addition, Randolph included recipes such as Fayette Pudding, Indian Pudding, Corn meal Bread, and Dough Nuts, which she also refers to as Yankee Cakes.³⁷ Randolph introduced new ingredients in her cookbook, yet she still included other, regionally non-exclusive recipes. The specifically “southern” recipes, while notable, only composed a small portion of the cookbook. The remaining recipes were instructions for preparing beef, poultry, and fish in a variety of ways, as well as traditional desserts such as pound cake, that were found in all cookbooks of the nineteenth century, and even earlier. Despite a professed focus on the cuisine of a particular region, common elements existed within each of these cookbooks, suggesting that particular food items actually transcended regional lines. Specific regions, ethnic groups, and cultures did have their own unique cookery styles, but these seemingly existed in harmony beneath a much larger concept of American cuisine that authors differentiated from the cuisine of Great Britain.

Ethnic differences are also important to take into account. African-American culture had a significant impact on the foodways of Virginia. Often, the female slaves who prepared the meals after the late seventeenth century incorporated different ingredients, notably “eggplant, black-eyed peas, sesame, yams, sorghum, watermelon,

36. Mary Randolph, *The Virginia Housewife: Or, Methodical Cook* (Baltimore: Plaskitt, & Cugle, 1838), iii-viii.

37. Randolph, *The Virginia Housewife*, iii-viii.

bananas, rice, and possibly tomatoes” as well as introducing new dishes, such as gumbo.³⁸ Even though the cooks were directed in which meals to prepare, cultural differences often permeated the dishes. As Karen Hess explains, “even when thoroughly English dishes were cooked by hands that had known other products, other cuisines, the result would never quite be English.”³⁹ Thus, by the time Americans began to add their own twists to British recipes in the nineteenth century, African-Americans had already made many of their own alterations to the cookery of the American South.

Similarly, German immigrants composed a large portion of the population, particularly in Pennsylvania and backcountry Pennsylvania. They often embraced American cookery, combining elements of their own cookery with the new ingredients and techniques. Quaker cookbooks, such as Elizabeth Lea’s *Domestic Cookery*, featured several recipes that could be found in other religiously and ethnically un-affiliated cookbooks of the time, printing recipes such as Washington Cake and Jackson Jumbles, thus promoting nationalistic foods.⁴⁰ Similarly, Germans in Pennsylvania adopted several American recipes, such as traditional American pies.⁴¹ German Moravian settlers in the Carolina backcountry incorporated American vegetables such as squash, beans, pumpkins, corn, and sweet potatoes into their traditional cooking despite the fact that

38. David Hackett Fischer and James C. Kelly, *Bound Away: Virginia and the Westward Movement* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2000), 67.

39. Hess, quoted in Fischer and Kelly, *Bound Away*, 68.

40. Elizabeth E. Lea, *Domestic Cookery, Useful Receipts, and Hints to Young Housekeepers*, 13th ed. (Baltimore: Cushings and Bailey, 1869), 115 and 119.

41. Oliver, *Food in Colonial and Federal America*, 172.

they had brought several vegetables—peas, carrots, turnips, beets, etc.—with them. Most of these vegetables were simply boiled and added to meat.⁴² While the preparation style was characteristic of the Moravians, the new ingredients made German dishes into hybrid recipes. Indeed, the first “authentically” German cookbooks published in the U.S. did not appear until the 1870s.⁴³

In addition, some German-Americans held a relatively strong influence in the development of an American culinary identity. The German presence in the American public and political discourse of food is evident in the role of Christopher Ludwig, who served as Baker-General of the Continental Army. Ludwig was an extremely wealthy immigrant. Born in 1720 in Upper Rhine, Germany, Ludwig arrived in Philadelphia in 1753. By the onset of the Revolution, Ludwig owned “nine houses in Philadelphia, a farm near Germantown, and three thousand five hundred pounds, Pennsylvania currency.”⁴⁴ As citizenship was not clearly defined for several decades, Ludwig leapt directly into the politics of Pennsylvania and was elected to the Pennsylvania “Committees and Conventions” for three consecutive years, dealing in the affairs of the

42. Oliver, *Food in Colonial and Federal America*, 186.

43. Janice B. Longone and Daniel T. Longone, *American Cookbooks and Wine Books 1797-1950, Being An Exhibition from the Collections of, and with Historical Notes by, Janice Bluestein Longone and Daniel T. Longone, Describing in Text and by Example, for the First Time, the Evolution of American Cookery and Wine Literature, from the Earliest Days of the Republic* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Clements Library and Wine and Food Library, 1984), 27.

44. Benjamin Rush, M.D., *An Account of the Life and Character of Christopher Ludwick, Late Citizen of Philadelphia, and Baker-General of the Army of the United States During the Revolutionary War* (Philadelphia: Garden and Thompson, 1831), 10.

Revolution.⁴⁵ Ludwig was a wealthy German, and as such, he was an active element in the formation of the independent state of Pennsylvania. By that measurement, Ludwig was considered an American despite the fact that he had only recently immigrated to the country.

Although Ludwig was of German heritage, he contributed personally to the colonial cause, and therefore, came to be regarded as somewhat of a hero who embraced the aims of the revolution, the freedom of social mobility, and a more American style of baking. Many members of ethnic minorities who did not exemplify the same values as Ludwig or actively participate in the revolution were simply left out. Ethnic minorities were largely excluded from discussions of nationhood as, with the exception of the wealthy, public and print cultures were most often dominated by Anglo-Americans, as we have seen in cookery books published in both America and Britain throughout the nineteenth century. Collectively, the exclusivity of Anglo print culture and the example of Ludwig, illustrates that considerations of ethnicity were not paramount to Revolutionary zeal. Instead, regardless of ethnicity, if a man was personally invested in the values and politics of his colony, and later state, he was considered American.

Even if Ludwig embraced a republican identity that connected him to American culture and foodways, some Europeans did influence American foodways. French culinary culture made its way to America by the end of the nineteenth century and had its largest impact on the developing restaurant culture. Restaurants surged in popularity after the Civil War, though they decreased in popularity during the depressions in the late

45. Rush, *Life and Character of Christopher Ludwick*, 10.

nineteenth century.⁴⁶ Delmonico's in New York provided a prime example of French cookery in a fine dining setting.⁴⁷ Although ethnic variations existed within American cuisine, these were not typically of British origin, and therefore, they were not characterized as "un-American." For French cuisine in particular, there are numerous explanations for the popularity it enjoyed. The French had been allies to the Americans during the Revolution, they had later embarked on a similar mission with their own revolution, and French culture had enjoyed a certain vogue cosmopolitanism among both British and American elites for several centuries, all of which may explain the popularity of French food among American, particularly the elite, like Jefferson.⁴⁸

Even Jefferson, who preached the ideal of the yeoman farmer, hosted elaborate dinners within his home, often featuring European dishes. During his travels to Europe, Jefferson encountered foreign foods which he, in turn, brought back to his own kitchen. These foods were typically of Italian or French origin. According to Loretta Frances Ichord, Jefferson was a culinary connoisseur; some of his favorite foreign foods were macaroni, parmesan cheese, ice cream, and crepes.⁴⁹ John Adams supposedly criticized Jefferson's eating habits, asserting that he served too many foreign dishes as opposed to

46. Krishnendu Ray, "Nation and Cuisine," *Food and Foodways* 16 (2008): 278.

47. Thomas, *Delmonico's*, 35.

48. Gerald Newman, *Rise of English Nationalism: A Cultural History, 1740-1830* (London: Macmillan, 1997), 79.

49. Loretta Frances Ichord, *Hasty Pudding, Johnnycakes, and Other Good Stuff: Cooking in Colonial America* (Minneapolis: Millbrook Press, 1998), 22.

traditional American dishes.⁵⁰ Nonetheless, Jefferson embraced European recipes, not British recipes, and he welcomed American culinary values within his home. Despite his large dinner parties and overabundance of dishes, Jefferson had more modest personal eating habits. His overseer noted that “he was never a great eater, but what he did eat he wanted to be very choice.”⁵¹ Jefferson was a prime example of a culinary elitist, seeking the finest meals to share with his guests, though he, himself, ate in moderation. In addition, Jefferson’s affinity for French cuisine may have been related to his fascination with the French Revolution. After a visit to France in 1789, historian Conor Cruise O’Brien argues that Jefferson’s letters illustrate that “what he brought with him to America was the French Revolution as an article of faith.”⁵² By the end of the eighteenth century, Jefferson was a firm advocate of the Revolution in France, despite the violence. This admiration of the French Revolutionaries may have contributed to his appreciation of French cuisine.

American nationalism is a complex concept. Overall, the interplay of egalitarianism, democracy, and republicanism in America yielded a complicated—and often contradictory—concept of American foodways, which is what made it just that, American. Theorists must find a way to reconcile the diverse cultural landscapes into a single entity. David Waldstreicher writes,

50. Ichord, *Hasty Pudding*, 22.

51. Ichord, *Hasty Pudding*, 22.

52. Conor C. O’Brien, *The Long Affair: Thomas Jefferson and the French Revolution, 1785-1800* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 150.

Too often, American nationalism has been taken at its word and examined alone, as an idea that waxes and wanes, and not in relation to other identities, beliefs, and practices. For example, local, regional, and national identities existed simultaneously, complementing or contesting one another; nationalism is always one of several ideologies in a larger cultural field.⁵³

As Waldstreicher explains, while no universal national identity can be said to exist, it is the co-existence of various concepts of nationhood that truly defines a nation. In this case, it is the coexistence of several often conflicting factors in American food that defines a true American culinary identity.

Following Waldstreicher's advice for analyzing national identity, this study suggests that instead of forming one cohesive identity, the values of egalitarianism, republicanism, and democracy often worked against each other; however, it was these contradictory values that defined American cuisine and American nationhood. Only in American food, in the first half of the nineteenth century, were these factors able to coexist, albeit briefly. The latter half of the century, dominated by sectionalism and the Civil War, saw regional, ethnic, and class divisions become more and more apparent and distinct from one another. This multiplicity of different, and sometimes more exclusive, identities resulted in an extremely diverse landscape that was marked far more by differences than similarities. In the wake of this, old and new regional and ethnic identities began to take precedence over a nascent national identity, and the possibility of a national cultural identity was pulled in different, competing directions of what it meant to be American. Similarly, as the restaurant industry gained popularity, foreign cuisines overwhelmed the culinary traditions that had developed in the Early Republic and

53. Waldstreicher, *Midst of Perpetual Fêtes*, 6.

characterized American food. By the end of the nineteenth century, Old definitions of what it meant to be American were no longer workable after the Civil War and increased immigration strained the delicate relationship between national, regional, and ethnic identity.

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