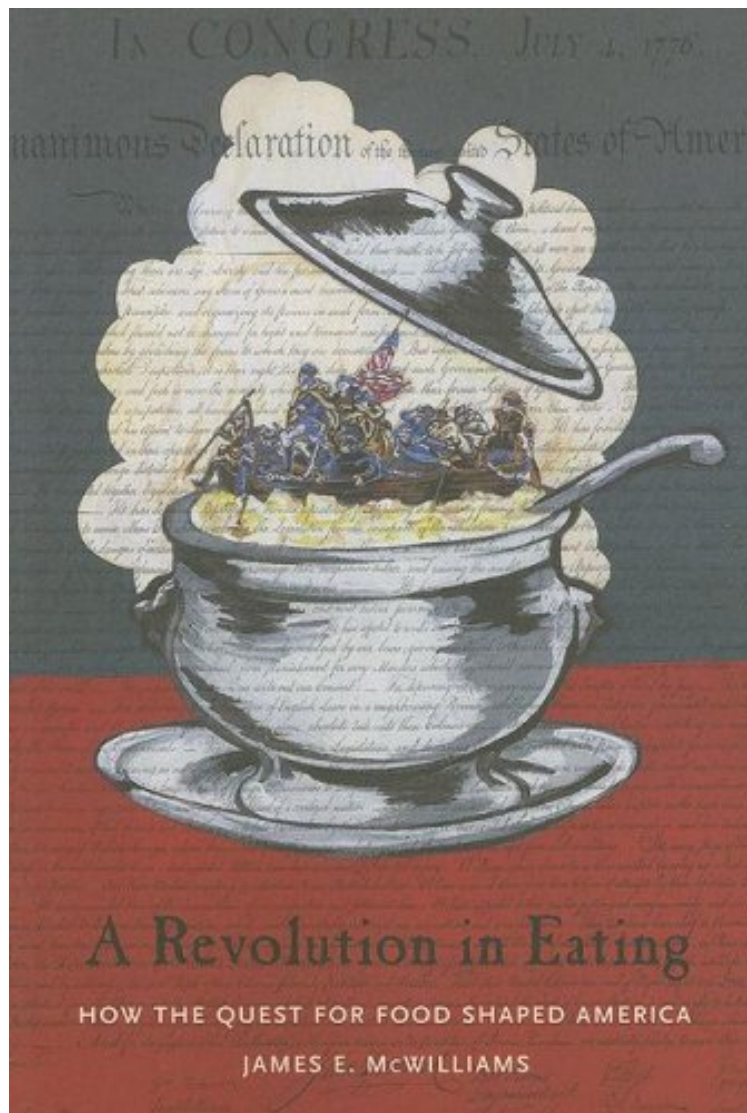


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A Revolution in Eating: How the Quest for Food Shaped America (Arts and Traditions of the Table: Perspectives on Culinary History)

James McWilliams

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#1387853 in Books James E McWilliams 2007-11-26 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.88 x .70 x 6.06l, 1.14 #File Name: 0231129939400 pages A Revolution in Eating How the Quest for Food Shaped America | File size: 18.Mb

James McWilliams : A Revolution in Eating: How the Quest for Food Shaped America (Arts and Traditions of the Table: Perspectives on Culinary History) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Revolution in Eating: How the Quest for Food Shaped America (Arts and Traditions of the Table: Perspectives on Culinary History):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. chapter five focuses on how the upper middle colonies became the most successful in growing traditional crops due to expansive back country and better cooperation with the native tribes that, coupled with the influences of non-English settlers, diversified markets, industries, and food choices. Covered in chapter six, the change of attitudes about food and the interest of maintaining cultural hegemony with England altered regional divisions of food ways into integrated ones. This was aided by alcohol consumption, as McWilliams explains in chapter 7, where, especially Rum, facilitated trade and exchange of culture between the colonies. However, alcohol was detrimental to Native American culture and power. Finally in chapter eight, after the Revolution, Americans looked to redefine themselves through food by embracing and defending a frontier diet that embodied simple republicanism removed from European decadence. I would suggest this book to anyone interested in the development of culinary culture in the United States, especially in regards to the influences of Slavery and Native Americans. My only critiques are the repetition of detailed recipes, especially in the section of chapter three about William Byrds dietary selection. Otherwise McWilliams shows how regional developments of food shaped national identity.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The sources he uses for these formative years in Colonial America are in great abundance and range from the journals of colonist John Winthrop to modern peer reviewed articles, all of which can be seen in the extensive endnotes (319, to be exact) at the end of his book (granted, the lack of associated superscript in the books text makes it much harder to find what you are looking for). Partially evident by his regional division, and in line with the Anglicization theory, McWilliams argues that the American colonies first developed unique food cultures that were distinct both from England and the other colonies. Once he has gone through his overview of distinct colonial American food ways, he artfully pulls all the regions together and depicts how, as the American Revolution neared, the colonies became more like their British masters and more like one another. Starting in Chapter 6, McWilliams makes ample use of period cookbooks and often details how colonial products were made to detail how the Colonies were becoming Anglicized. For the layman reader, these historic recipes are just as insightful for McWilliams overarching thesis as they are a quaint pleasure to read.. He argues that rum, for example, might be called the first genuine colonial product (pg. 264) and there is satisfaction in knowing how an important piece of Americana was manufactured. The book concludes by devoting a chapter to post-revolutionary American food and how the trend towards simplicity. Like the rest of this book it is full of delectable quotes, descriptions, and recipes that manage to be both scholarly and entertaining.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By tom waltman This book is awesome. Great historical read.

Sugar, pork, beer, corn, cider, scrapple, and hoppin' John all became staples in the diet of colonial America. The ways Americans cultivated and prepared food and the values they attributed to it played an important role in shaping the identity of the newborn nation. In *A Revolution in Eating*, James E. McWilliams presents a colorful and spirited tour of culinary attitudes, tastes, and techniques throughout colonial America. Confronted by strange new animals, plants, and landscapes, settlers in the colonies and West Indies found new ways to produce food. Integrating their British and European tastes with the demands and bounty of the rugged American environment, early Americans developed a range of regional cuisines. From the kitchen tables of typical Puritan families to Iroquois longhouses in the backcountry and slave kitchens on southern plantations, McWilliams portrays the grand variety and inventiveness that characterized colonial cuisine. As colonial America grew, so did its palate, as interactions among European settlers, Native Americans, and African slaves created new dishes and attitudes about food. McWilliams considers how Indian corn, once thought by the colonists as "fit for swine," became a fixture in the colonial diet. He also examines the ways in which African slaves influenced West Indian and American southern cuisine. While a mania for all things British was a unifying feature of eighteenth-century cuisine, the colonies discovered a national beverage in domestically brewed beer, which came to symbolize solidarity and loyalty to the patriotic cause in the Revolutionary era. The beer and alcohol industry also instigated unprecedented trade among the colonies and further integrated colonial habits and

tastes. Victory in the American Revolution initiated a "culinary declaration of independence," prompting the antimonarchical habits of simplicity, frugality, and frontier ruggedness to define American cuisine. McWilliams demonstrates that this was a shift not so much in new ingredients or cooking methods, as in the way Americans imbued food and cuisine with values that continue to shape American attitudes to this day.

From Publishers Weekly "[T]he way [colonial] Americans thought about food was integral to the way they thought about politics," McWilliams persuasively argues in this survey of the creation of American cuisine. The Texas State University San Marcos history professor explores what the colonists ate and why, how that affected their emerging political and cultural values, how their farms and their rights intersected and how "food remained at the core of America's Revolution." At the root of American cuisine, McWilliams finds, is the immeasurable impact of Native American agricultural practices. He explores the effect of the staple crop peculiar to each area of colonial America upon the development of regional foodways, as well as upon their economic and social practices. With remarkable clarity, he delineates the technical aspects of various agricultural tasks, from crop cultivation (sugar cane, rice, tobacco, corn, wheat) to more domestic work (building a kitchen garden, churning butter). The broad range of scholarship, the smooth weaving of political and social history and the full notes and fat bibliography will inform historians, while the lucid style and jaunty tone (the Quakers were "a people who made a virtue of frugality while making frugality more elaborate than anyone could have imagined") make this accessible to all. (July) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. The lucid style and jaunty tone...make this accessible to all. (Publishers Weekly) Delicious from start to finish. (Kirkus s) Meticulously researched and packed with fascinating detail, this book provides an excellent account of the culinary development of Colonial America. (Library Journal) A Revolution in Eating, a lively new tour of Colonial American 'foodways.' (Joshua Glenn Boston Globe) Flexibility, even tolerance may well have contributed to the uniqueness of American food, according to historian McWilliams in this extremely rich, readable book. (The FOOD Museum Online) Fascinating... Anyone curious about the cultural history of that meatloaf on the dinner plate will gobble it up. (Tina Jordan Entertainment Weekly) McWilliams presents a colorful and spirited tour of culinary attitudes, tastes, and techniques through out colonial America. (Staten Island Star Reporter) McWilliams's examination of the culinary history of Colonial America is more than a... gastronomic tour... A lively and informative read. (New Yorker) [A] fresh perspective is well worth the read. Instead of learning our origins through a well-worn trail of war and peace on a time line, it takes us on a more pleasant route from pewter spoon to mouth. (Shelley Preston Ledger) A Revolution in Eating gives its readers much to chew over, and whets the appetite for further work on the development of American Cooking. (Claire Hopley The Washington Times) McWilliams has penned an illuminating account of the evolution of foodways in the colonial Americas. (Josh Friedland Washington Post Book World) Pleasingly filling. (Susannah Meadows New York Times Book) For the cook who likes history or the history buff who likes to cook. (Linda Bassett Georgetown Record) McWilliams vividly illustrates the intimate knowledge and relationship colonial Americans had with their food. (Claudia Kousoulas Books-for-cooks.com: Appetite for Books) McWilliam's perspective... provides an essential link from the past to the present and into the future. It's a fascinating foray. (Dona's Kitchen Kapers) McWilliams manages to be simultaneously instructive and entertaining. (MM Pack Austin Chronicle) McWilliams brings colonial times to life through vivid detail. (William R. Wood Kalamazoo Gazette) Don't let the fact that its publisher is Columbia University Press fool you into thinking this is a book for scholars only. (Margot Cleary Daily Hampshire Gazette) McWilliams manages to show food and drink as an integral part of history... Recommended. (Choice) [An] exciting work of comparative colonial history. (Journal of Popular Culture) McWilliams has contributed a valuable book to early American history. (Michael A. LaCombe The Journal of Southern History) A lively investigation of Colonial eating habits and how they shaped the revolutionary views of the new Americans. (Paulette Beete American Spirit) About the Author James E. McWilliams is associate professor of history at Texas State University-San Marcos. His articles have appeared in The New York Times, The Los Angeles Times, and The Washington Post, among other publications, and he is the author of Building the Bay Colony: Local Economy and Society in Early Massachusetts.