“I CHOOSE TO SIT AT THE GREAT NATIONAL TABLE”: AMERICAN CUISINE AND IDENTITY IN THE EARLY REPUBLIC

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ABSTRACT

“I Choose to Sit at the Great National Table”: American Cuisine and Identity in the Early Republic

Doctor of Philosophy, History Dissertation by

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This dissertation reviews the deliberate and evolutionary development of cultural nationalism through food and cuisine, specifically the methods and manners in which Americans during the early Republic conceptualized and produced a distinct national culinary culture. Through multiple forms of evidence including published cookbooks, travelogues, etchings and paintings, nutritional studies, newspaper articles, and essays, Americans and Europeans employed food as a symbolic tool to redefine their definitions of national culture. The production and consumption of certain foodstuffs was indeed an essential component in the process of interpreting the burgeoning American postcolonial national consciousness, often at the expense however of an open and inclusive society. While the current scholarship contends that Americans remained anchored to their colonial British food systems in the early national period, this research reveals a more complicated narrative of identity construction that ultimately highlights a complex ideological and cultural transformation. In short, this work analyzes how intellectual descriptions of American cuisine affected attitudes and perceptions of national character formation in the early American Republic.

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For my dad

INTRODUCTION

In July 2008, The James Beard Foundation issued a report titled "The State of American Cuisine." The organization, named after one of the twentieth century's most celebrated American chefs and champions of American cooking (often referred to as the "dean of American cuisine"[1]), had recently celebrated its 20th anniversary. As part of the celebration, the foundation orchestrated a national food festival named "Taste America." Hundreds of food critics, chefs, academics, and members of the public attended the event, and each person was asked to fill out a questionnaire to answer a deceptively simple question: what exactly is American cuisine? The foundation's findings were published months later in a report.[2]

The survey first asked whether an American cuisine truly existed. A substantial majority of the participants (90.8%) answered with a definitive "yes," while only 9.2% believed such a concept could not be defined.[3] However, when the participants were asked to list the specific components that constitute American cuisine, they answered with scores of different foodstuffs and preparation techniques. None of these answers constituted a majority: the words "region" or "regional" were mentioned most frequently in only 34.2% of the surveys, the unspecified term "culture" was second in 16.2% of responses, and "comfort," "melting pot," and "native," rounded out the top five answers, each mentioned in less than ten percent of the surveys. Not one foodstuff was mentioned in a majority of the responses either, with the most frequently mentioned item, "hamburger" listed in 44.2% of surveys.[4] The foundation concluded that, while certainly a majority of Americans believe a national cuisine exists, there is no consensus as to exactly what this cuisine consists of. As one respondent wrote, "American cuisine is not one cuisine, not yet… What is sometimes called (New) American Cooking is still evolving…Is it 'cuisine?' U b [*sic*] the judges!"[5]

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[1] Julia Child, introduction to *Beard on Food: The Best Recipes and Kitchen Wisdom from the Dean of American Cooking* (New York, NY: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2008), vi.

[2] Mitchell Davis, Anne McBride, eds. *The State of American Cuisine: A white paper issued by the James Beard Foundation based on surveys conducted as part of the 2007 James Beard Foundation's 'Taste America' national food festival,* (New York, NY: James Beard Foundation, 2008).

[3] Ibid., 6.

Nevertheless, the foundation conceded that defining an American cuisine is an extremely important endeavour. "We understand that we are American because we share a land, an economy, and a political system that are easy to identify," the editors of the study wrote, "But we also share something much more fluid: national character… The foods we eat and how we cook them contribute to this more intangible idea of nation, especially in a country such as the United States, where general agreement about what defines our national cuisine is hard to come by."[6] The inability to define such an essential component of national character therefore remained a highly problematic issue in the conceptual development of American national identity.

* * *

This dissertation stands at the confluence of food and nationalism studies in the early American Republic, and reveals that the problem of defining an American cuisine highlighted in the James Beard Foundation's survey has much older roots than previously assumed. My work builds upon prior research into food, society, and nationalism to detail a complex narrative, an evolutionary process from postcolonial to nationalistic identity construction and the attempted—but ultimately unsuccessful—intellectual and cultural formation of a distinctly American culinary character. Therefore, as this dissertation will address, the development of a cohesive, singular, and unified national cuisine was and remained problematic from the onset of American nationhood itself.

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[4] Davis and McBride, *The State of American Cuisine*, 6.
[5] Ibid., 3.
[6] Ibid.

Equally apparent as the difficulties of defining an American cuisine in the early American Republic, however, were the numerous attempts during the era to actively and deliberately codify the cultural construct. In part, this issue can be answered by reviewing the climate of the early American Republic itself—when an attempted American national cuisine first took shape—and understanding American attitudes towards their cuisine in this era. Through cultural and intellectual discourse, as well as a myriad of resources such as published cookbooks, travelogues, etchings and paintings, nutritional studies, and memoirs, Americans of this era used food as a symbolic tool to redefine their notions of a distinct national identity. The production, dissemination, and consumption of certain foodstuffs was indeed an essential component in characterizing the spirit of a nascent postcolonial (and later national) consciousness, often at the expense, however, of an open and inclusive society. In short, this work analyzes the ways in which symbolic descriptions of American cuisine affected actual perceptions of nationalism and national character formation in the early American Republic, and how ultimately, such constructs failed to unify the populace.

But to understand this distinctly American construction and evolution, we must also comprehend outsiders' interpretations of American national eating habits. The United States in the early national period remained greatly influenced by the cultures of Europe (most notably the English) an empire that America had only recently declared political independence from, but one which still dictated American cultural standards. As historian Kariann Yokota argues, Americans needed to "un-become British" by shedding their colonial identities in order to become a culturally independent nation.[7] The American postcolonial response to often negative European descriptions of their eating habits would have an immense impact on the formulation of an American cuisine. There was a need, therefore, to end such social mimicry and, as critical theorist Homi Bhabha writes regarding more modern postcolonial societies, manifest a "desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite."[8] Americans' choices—ranging from certain American Indian foodstuffs, to non-Anglo European influences such as French, Dutch, and German dishes, to West African and Caribbean cooking styles—exemplify the ever-changing, heterogeneous, and ultimately loose concoction of dishes that would combine to form an attempted unified national cuisine.

American cuisine of the era was, therefore, created more through appropriation than originality: Americans absorbed dishes that originated in other cultures and fit them into their own national history. They were in essence forced by Europeans to reject certain European culinary characteristics and embrace others outside of this sphere to create a distinct and hybridized culinary culture. Thus, if the nineteenth century gourmand Brillat-Savarin's famous statement, "tell me what kind of food you eat, and I will tell you who what kind of man you are"[9] is true, America's collective culinary identity was originally shaped by what others thought about what they ate, and consequently who they were as a nation. This fact further exacerbated the inability to construct a cohesive and effective national food culture, which consequently became emblematic of America's inability to effectively unite under a singular national structure.

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[7] Kariann Yokota, *Unbecoming British: How Revolutionary America Became a Postcolonial Nation* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011), 10.

[8] Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*. 2nd ed. (New York, NY: Routledge, 2004), 122.

* * *

In the historiographical survey *Recent Themes in Early American History: Historians in Conversation*, historian James E. McWilliams argues that, "One can, in short, identify at least a vague emergence of something that historians are only beginning to explore in real depth: American food…Food, in short, provided Americans a venue to figure out who they were."[10] Food's quotidian, equalizing nature wields enormous influence on a society's intellectual and cultural makeup, and the benefits of reviewing early American cultural history through the lens of food and cuisine offers, therefore, an entry point for understanding cultural and national consciousness in the early American Republic.[11] But as McWilliams points out, this type of study has been under-examined in academic scholarship. The dominant narrative—enforced in Richard Cummings' seminal 1940 work *The American and His Food* and echoed in modern research—is that early American tastes remained rather static from the end of the Revolution until the Civil War. Food culture in this era was understood to be simply bland, boring, and British. As Cummings states, throughout the early national period "A monotonous round of badly cooked food…was the lot of most Americans."[12] Many historians have more recently addressed food culture during other eras of American history, including Trudy Eden's survey of colonial American cuisine, *The Early American Table: Food and Society in the New World* and Hasia Diner's late-nineteenth century scholarship in *Hungering for America: Italian, Irish, and Jewish Foodways in the Age of Migration*. But because of earlier misconceptions, the food culture of the early Republic has not generated as much scholarship.[13]

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[9] Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, *The Physiology of Taste: Or, Transcendental Gastronomy* (Philadelphia, PA: Lindsay & Blakiston, 1854), 25.

[10] James McWilliams "Groping for a National Identity by Forging a National Cuisine" in Donald A. Yerxa, ed. *Recent Themes in Early American History: Historians in Conversation* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2008), 92.

[11] It is important to detail the naming conventions implemented in this dissertation. I use the years and parameters listed by the Society for Historians of the Early American Republic (SHEAR) when discussing this time period. As their website states, "Established in 1977, the

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Society for Historians of the Early American Republic (SHEAR) is an association of scholars dedicated to exploring the events and the meaning of United States history between 1776 and 1861." http://www.shear.org/ . The phrase is often used interchangeably with the historical descriptor, "the early national period," although I mainly use "the early national period" when describing the era immediately following the American Revolution and ending with Andrew Jackson's presidency. As the study of food and society does not neatly fit into political and historical eras, there are sections of the dissertation that will detail events that occurred before the American Revolution and slightly after the Civil War. The majority of the work, however, will remain in the period of the early American Republic.

[12] Richard Osborn Cummings, *The American and His Food: A History of Food Habits in the United States* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1940), 45.

[13] Of course this is not to say that surveys of early national American culinary culture do no exist. See: James McWilliams, *A Revolution In Eating: How the Quest for Food Shaped America*, (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2005); Sarah F. McMahon, "'A Comfortable Subsistence': The Changing Composition of Diet in Rural New England, 1620-1840," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 42, no. 1 (January 1, 1985); Monika M. Elbert and Marie Drews, *Culinary Aesthetics and Practices in Nineteenth-Century American Literature*, (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); and Mark McWilliams, "Distant Tables: Food and the Novel in Early America," *Early American Literature* 38, no. 3 (January 1, 2003): 365–93.

James McWilliams' work broaches the subject of early national cuisine but focuses mostly on early American foodstuffs. McMahon's work stays mostly in the early national period, yet is

Some of the lack of scholarship on cuisine and early national American identity can also be attributed to the relatively recent development of food studies as a well-respected and accepted field of academic research. The field's origins and growth sheds light on the evolutionary understanding and link between food and culture, and early anthropologists such as Audrey Isabel Richards were some of the first academics to review this link. Richards' work, however, focuses its study on the social impact of food preparation in certain tribal settings. Her influential 1932 treatise *Hunger and Work in a Savage Tribe: A Functional Study of Nutrition Among the Southern Bantu* is an example of such research. In subsequent decades, famed anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss elevated the study of food in a manner heretofore unparalleled. In an essay titled *The Culinary Triangle*, first published in 1966, Levi-Strauss articulates a methodological approach to the study of food. He argues,

> It would seem that the methodological principle which inspires such distinctions is transposable to other domains, notably that of cooking which, it has never been sufficiently emphasized, is with language a truly universal form of human activity: if there is no society without a language, nor is there any which does not cook in some manner at least some of its food.[14]

By equating cooking with the far more respected and well-documented intellectual discussion of language, Levi-Strauss solidified food's importance as a serious field of research. Levi-Strauss was well-respected as a scholar and linguist, and had

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confined to regional cuisine in New England. Both Elbert and Drews and Mark McWilliams' theses pertain to food in the early national period, yet focus primarily on the intellectual construct of American cuisine in literature and novels. There are other examples of scholarly works that detail cuisine creation in the early national period that will be discussed in more detail in later sections of this dissertation.

[14] Claude Levi-Strauss,"The Culinary Triangle," in *Food and Culture: A Reader*, ed. Carole Counihan (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 1997), 28.

introduced his structuralist philosophy on language creation in previous works. His correlations between food preparation and the creation of language as two interchangeable universal practices of social interaction were enormously influential to the field.

The purpose for such a study was ultimately to structuralize a universal framework for the creation of society. According to Levi-Strauss, such a structure can be "superposed on other contrasts of a sociological, economic, esthetic or religious nature… Thus we can hope to discover for each specific case how the cooking of a society is a language in which it unconsciously translates its structure—or else resigns itself, still unconsciously, to revealing its contradictions."[15] For Levi-Strauss, food, like language, religion, and politics, was a product that could be systematized in order to understand its basic construction. Inherent in a study of food and social structures was the development of a stronger understanding of the manners and methods that separate societies from one another. Cultural differences could be assessed at least in part by understanding the different methods that each culture used to alter their natural world. In essence, food was integral to an understanding of culture, even if it was generally dismissed by a large portion of previous professional scholarship.

Levi-Strauss' essay enabled a paradigmatic shift in academia's acceptance and understanding of the connections between food and society. Other influential anthropologists followed suit, tweaking and improving upon his arguments.
Levi-Strauss' specific research would certainly be critiqued, but no one could truly

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[15] Strauss, "The Culinary Triangle," 35.

dismiss the overarching conclusion that food and eating habits were foundational components of the generation of social structures.

Mary Douglas echoed Levi-Strauss' association between food and language in her essay *Deciphering a Meal*. In reviewing the traditions and customs associated with Jewish kosher dinner preparation, Douglas contends that a specific and universal social culinary system could be extruded. She argues, "If food is treated as a code, the messages it encodes will be found in the social relations being expressed. The message is about different degrees of hierarchy, inclusion and exclusion, boundaries and transactions across the boundaries."[16] Douglas' conclusion is particularly interesting not only in its parallels to Levi-Strauss, but also for its inclusion of social hierarchy into the discussion of food studies. In many respects, Douglas was able to turn the same system which had previously excluded food studies from its rightful place in academia on its head, making food dictate social hierarchies rather than social hierarchies affecting the study of food.

Furthermore, the notion of codification—which was central to Douglas' argument—continued the trend of defining food as an aspect of a universal social structure. Similar to language, Douglas believed that food traditions were structured and widespread throughout different cultures. And like language, food should not be secondary to an understanding of how societies operate and function. "The rules of the menu," she argued, "are not in themselves more or less trivial that the rules of verse to which a poet submits."[17] Thus, an appreciation of the "rules" of food becomes equal to an understanding of the structures of all other basic methods of communication.

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[16] Mary Douglas, "Deciphering a Meal," in *Myth, Symbol, and Culture*, ed. Clifford Geertz, (New York, NY: Norton Press, 1972), 61.

Both Levi-Strauss and Douglas advocated an anthropological model that was dependent on common themes and universal social systems. This structural method of scholarly inquiry remained an influential practice well into the twenty-first century, as evidenced by anthropologist David Sutton's recent argument that "sensory anthropology is in a structuralist key. Basic flavors and other sensory properties are seen in binary oppositions that code for other important structural oppositions."[18]

Social anthropologist Jack Goody has adapted the initial viewpoints and arguments of food studies into a more modern and complex thesis. Goody moved beyond the more simplistic descriptions of food as symbolic of universal social structures and asserted the innate complexities of food and class. Goody's work *Cooking, Cuisine, and Class* examined Sub-Saharan cultures in an effort to comprehend the different social hierarchical structures within each group. "My own discussion of cooking," he concludes, "takes place not so much in terms of the dichotomously based structures of gustemes…but of the more diversified structures of household and class… The analysis of cooking has to be related to the destruction of power and authority in the economic sphere, that is, though the system of class or stratification and to its political ramifications."[19]

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[17] Douglas, "Deciphering a Meal," 80.

[18] David E. Sutton, "Food and the Senses," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 39, no. 1 (2010): 210.

[19] Jack Goody, *Cooking, Cuisine, and Class: A Study in Comparative Sociology* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 37.

Goody's insistence that binary oppositional structures are superseded by more complex notions of class differed greatly from the structuralist arguments of Levi-Strauss and Douglas. Furthermore, his findings highlight major differences in class structures; differences not necessarily in cooking methods, but the manner in which comparable cooking methods run in stark contrast to class distinctions within tribal societies. Societies treated certain foods and food habits differently, some labeling certain practices *haute cuisine* and *basse cuisine*, while others having no distinction. The differentiation between the two systems highlighted the social stratification within each society, granting differing notions of appeal and meaning dependent on the society in question. As Goody argues in regards to cooking, "It is clear that there are not so much alternatives at least in some of their aspects; a concern with 'meaning' does not exclude a concern with the social role of food."[20] Thus, the symbolism of certain foods is dependent on the society in which it is consumed, and the relative high or low denomination of each food correlates to the social hierarchical meanings within each group.

Goody's seminal work helped to further solidify food studies as a respectable academic practice. The ability to combine both the symbolic and the realistic traditions and interpretations of food culture into a single study was indeed profound, and his work has influenced scores of other academics to look deeper into the cultural and social implications of researching eating habits. Furthermore, while Goody's work was rather specific in its scope, his conclusions were broad and far-reaching. Goody not only argued that Sub-Saharan African societies represented a specific model of food culture, but also that similar models could be examined in other tribes, cultures, and nations. In fact, Goody's conclusion that "the boundaries of the meaning of an item of food may extend far beyond the context in which it is produced or consumed,"[21] opened the door to a plethora of scholarly arguments that could better formulate the connections between food and a global system of cultural communication.

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[20] Goody, *Cooking, Cuisine, and Class*, 33.

While Goody's work was certainly influential, he was not alone in incorporating food into a larger understanding of both regional and international cultural studies. Carol Counihan writes that "access to food might be called the most basic human right, yet with the development of capitalism and its handmaidens of colonialism, imperialism, and food commodification, access to food has become a key measure of power and powerlessness."[22] In many respects, Counihan's conclusion is influenced by the work of anthropologist Sidney Mintz. In *Sweetness and Power*, and later in *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom,* Mintz articulates yet another important aspect of the correlation between food and society: the important role that power relations play in the delivery of foodstuffs. As he argues, "The ability to "supply" things, in the broadest sense, is also a vital source of power, not only because it may include some ability to bestow meaning, but also because meaning coalesces around certain relationships…it was the purveyors of the foods…who exercised the power that made the foods available."[23]

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[21] Goody, *Cooking, Cuisine, and Class*, 213-214.

[22] Carole M. Counihan, *Food and Gender: Identity and Power*, (New York, NY: Taylor & Francis, 1998), 3.

[23] Sidney W. Mintz, *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom: Excursions Into Eating, Culture, and the Past* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1997), 31.

Mintz's arguments specifically examine the role that sugar and sugar production in the Americas had on the definition of specific power structures and relations. Power was generated in two particular methods: by controlling the production and distribution of sugar throughout the world, and also more importantly by withholding sugar—a commodity that was quickly incorporated into the daily routine of millions of people without the ability to grow sugar cane themselves—to certain nations and peoples in efforts to alter international relations.[24] In either scenario, what became abundantly clear in Mintz's review of the history of sugar production was its production had very little to do with the actual foodstuff, and much more to do with the ability to control and impose restrictions on its distribution. Food, and the withholding of food, was a powerful international and cultural tool.

If Levi-Strauss and Douglas had argued that food was an important, omnipresent aspect of all social structures, Goody and Mintz refined the field into a more tangible and workable method of scholarly research. They were not necessarily interested in finding a singular interpretation of food studies that could be transplanted onto all cultures. Rather, Goody and Mintz used specific examples of both the symbolic and practical ways in which food was was used to influence societies, and examined the ability for these conclusions to affect a far larger group than their initial study intended. The arguments that both Goody and Mintz articulated represent a far more nuanced methodology, a methodology that was able to be both specific in its resources and expansive in its implications.

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[24] Mintz, *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom.,* 24.

But perhaps even greater than their actual conclusions, Goody and Mintz emboldened scholars to directly oppose the dismissive approach to food that had permeated academia for years. As philosopher Carolyn Korsmeyer argues, many philosophers "have concurred that food does not represent anything outside itself and thus fails in one of the standard tasks of art, to deliver understanding and insight about life and the world."[25] Scholars could now take issue with equivalent assumptions. Disagreeing wholeheartedly with such an hypothesis were scholars such as Judy Adapon, who in her work *Culinary Art and Anthropology* asserts that "food is not merely an object of exchange…food's necessity of having good flavor and being made with culinary technical mastery is what makes it analogous to a work of art."[26] Such an argument simply could not have been articulated without the effort of previous scholars to legitimize the field.

As food studies continues to grow in influence and popularity, so too does its complexity as a scholarly course of study. As a result, branches and subfields of its study have form to address complicated, often interdisciplinary challenges to seminal social and cultural questions. Studies of food identity formation and nationalism, for instance, forces scholars to delve into history, even if this is not their chosen field. Sociologist Anne Murcott explains that Levi-Strauss' and Douglas' work in food, "by-pass[ed] historical change as a phenomenon to be analyzed… Any such shifts are only referred to or treated as just ‘there’ in the background.”[27] This was one of the major faults with their work: one cannot forego the influence that the past has on present social conditions, and food and eating habits especially are influenced by this process. In regards to national cuisines—and nationalism studies as a whole—this argument is paramount, as the history of the creation of these ideas has a direct impact on perceptions of what constitutes a nation.

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[25] Carolyn Korsmeyer, *Making Sense of Taste: Food & Philosophy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002), 118.

[26] Joy Adapon, *Culinary Art and Anthropology* (Oxford, UK: Berg Publishers, 2008), 40.

Unfortunately, even a sound definition of the term “nation” itself has become a contested topic in academic discourse. Perhaps the most succinct definition comes from historian Carroll Smith-Rosenburg, who writes that a nation is “a named human population occupying a historic territory or homeland and sharing common myths and memories.”[28] Most scholars of nationalism would agree—at least initially—with such a description. Although concise, this explanation becomes problematic rather quickly. Inherent in this definition is the overarching issue that nations are not definitive and tangible objects. The existence of nations relies almost entirely on intangible forces such as cultural traditions, mythology and memory. Ernst Gellner provides an intriguing counterpoint to this complication, adding to Smith-Rosenberg’s definition by asserting that the process of conceptualizing a nation is the most influential component of a definable nation itself. “It is nationalism which engenders nations,” Gellners states, “and not the other way round.”[29] Therefore, intangible ideas shape tangible spaces, allowing for concepts such as culture and history to be extremely influential and applicable in actuality.

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[27] Anne Murcott, “Food as an Expression of National Identity,” in Sverker Gustavsson and Leif Lewin eds. *The Future of the Nation State: Essays on Cultural Pluralism and Political Integration* (New York, NY: Psychology Press, 1996), 25.

[28] Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, *This Violent Empire: The Birth of an American National Identity* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 3.

[29] Ernest Gellner, *Nations And Nationalism*, 3rd ed. (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2006), 54.

In *Accounting for Taste, The Triumph of French Cuisine*, sociologist Priscilla Ferguson makes a related argument in regards to food studies by defining a concept called "culinary nationalism." Ferguson argues, "Just like nationalism generally, culinary nationalism continues to flourish in the twenty-first century. There is not only the sentiment of difference, of pride in indigenous traditions but a very real difference…with the investment that the country makes in the culinary."[30] National policies, as well as cultural perceptions, are affected by the creation of a culinary identity. Therefore, what could initially be viewed as simply an exercise in cultural idealism can have lasting and tangible effects on particular societies.

While culinary nationalism can instill a sense of pride in its adherents, the creation of a specific culinary identity can also have negative connotations for outside societies. Belittling other cultures in order to espouse cultural dominance over the "other" is at times a consequence of culinary nationalism. As Murcott explains, "Eskimo, for instance, is a derivation of *eskimantsik*, the derisive word meaning 'eater of raw meat'… [Furthermore,] North Americans make metaphorical reference to the supposed eating habits of the French, the Germans, and the Italians in speaking of 'Frogs,' 'Krauts,' and 'Macaronis.'"[31] Like nationalism itself, culinary nationalism has the ability to both bring certain subgroups together into a community and to exclude and ridicule the

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[30] Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson, *Accounting for Taste: The Triumph of French Cuisine* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 172.

[31] Murcott, "Food as an Expression of National Identity," 21.

"other." Nevertheless, what is formed from such concepts has a very strong impact on each societies' perception of itself. That food plays an important role in such identity creation is an essential addition to the study of nationalism.

Beyond its ability to evoke negative social perceptions, culinary nationalism can also prompt passionate debates within academia. For instance, Mintz describes an example of this when, during a lecture, he argued that the United States has no national cuisine. "In the next five minutes of dialogue," he wrote, "I came to realize I had said something that some members of the class found at the least hurtful, if not downright insulting."[32] Why would students be insulted by their perceived lack of a cuisine? Perhaps the answer lies in the strong connection between the foods we consume and the communities we identify with. As anthropologist Pat Caplan writes, "We must not lose sight of the *socially* constructed nature of identity, which is symbolized so clearly by food and commensality."[33] An insult to a national cuisine is therefore an insult not only to one's perceived nation of origin, but to those in one's immediate community. Inevitably, to understand the strong reactions to such statements, the nature and study of nationalism must be delved into deeper.

While Mintz's example focuses on a more anecdotal and philosophical level, the best answers to the major questions in this field come from larger historical examples, and the early American Republic is perfectly suited to tackle these challenges. Indeed, the United States emerged at a time when modern conceptualizations regarding the nature of nations were beginning to take shape. Early American rejection of hierarchical elitism during the Revolution is in many ways Gellner and others' intangible conceptions of nationalism implemented in reality. Furthermore, the United States' post-colonial nature and strong patriotic tendencies allow for a plethora of resources in which scholars can review such arguments. And finally, the multitude of class, race, and gendered issues that pervaded the era can help further extrapolate the true nature of nationalism and its impact on a diverse group of people. Food, and the study of national cuisine, are an integral component of this structure.

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[32] Mintz, *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom*, 106-107.
[33] Pat Caplan, *Food, Health and Identity* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2013), 15.

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As in nationalism studies as a whole, the study of American nationalism's most pervasive question remains centered on the concept of agency and identity, and the tangible and intangible repercussions of this power structure. Whereas broad studies of nationalism tend to allow for more variety in their answers, early American nationalism studies tend to divide themselves into rather stringent sub-fields. Sociologist Stephen Mennell quite succinctly argues, for instance, that American nationalism "was championed by politically and economically powerful figures."[34] There is no real room for a bottom-up approach in such an argument. Complications arise and are dependent on the type of cultural system being studied—such as the development of the cultural construct of American cuisine—rather than from a philosophical perspective. Therefore, one must review a multitude of cultural arenas in order to understand the trajectory of early American nationalism studies.

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[34] Stephen Mennell, *The American Civilizing Process* (New York, NY: Polity, 2007), 46.

In regards to political nationalism, scholars tend to view the elite as the most powerful entity capable of advancing the concept of a nation. Historian Albrecht Koschnik contends that, through the use of an intellectual public sphere and print culture, leaders were able to both denounce partisanship and revel within it. Constituents found moral righteousness in supposedly removing themselves from partisan bickering, while simultaneously enjoying their baser instincts to connect with a specific community and condemn another. Consequently, politically savvy leaders were able to use this to their advantage.[35]

Indeed, other scholars take this notion a step further, arguing that the entirety of the national movement in the period was an intellectual endeavor articulated by a select few. For instance, legal scholar Alison LaCroix states, "Rather than viewing federalism as a transcendent notion that was always available to canny nation builders…the federal idea was an artifact of intellectual endeavor at a particular historical moment."[36] While this nation-building that LaCroix asserts certainly has its internal debates—most notably the amount with which independent levels of government could exist within a single political unit—the differences remained focused only on the actions and thoughts of those with political influence.[37]

Likewise, in historian Joyce Appleby's argument, it was liberalism championed by an intellectual elite that not only aided in developing a national sense of self, but also in marking “a break with the Old World and the old regime.”[38] Her emphasis on older hierarchical systems is telling. Appleby’s assertion was that intellectual elites in the United States both rejected components of older systems and appropriated others to develop their own agency in America. The rejection and appropriation of older systems are seemingly incongruent actions, but for the purposes of nation-building, this is exactly what elite individuals were able accomplish.

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[35] Albrecht Koschnik, *"Let a Common Interest Bind Us Together": Associations, Partisanship, and Culture in Philadelphia, 1775-1840* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2007), Chapter 4.
[36] Alison L. LaCroix, *The Ideological Origins of American Federalism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 6.
[37] Ibid.

The elites members of society’s ability to publicly express this intellectual shift in power was highly effective. As political scientist Mlada Bukovansky concludes, “If leaders are able to articulate a collective (state) role in terms of principles that meet these criteria, then policy continuity will result. A principled account of state identity thus explains how a coherent state interest is shaped from diverse domestic interests, which then accounts for policy continuity.”[39] Thus we see the rise of institutionalized political parties with specific goals and morals. Political parties and intellectual organizations worked in tandem in formulating a group of individuals who would inherit these principals and continue this level of nation-building into future generations.

The Federalist Party was particularly apt in this regard. Koschnik argues that in Philadelphia, young Federalists “created a set of interrelated institutions which, in connection with their professional socialization, provided the setting for their personal and political coming-of-age.”[40] It may not have been insidious in nature, but the impact of these associations was immense. These groups dictated the narrative of nationalism throughout the era, and either purposely or indirectly excluded the middle and lower classes from this discussion. In the process, any political and intellectual agency for these classes was greatly diminished. According to historian Trish Loughran, "One of the central paradoxes of early American nationalism and one of the key theoretical insights of the extended republic was that in order for the work of national building to proceed, it was best for the people to be both absent and unaware of just exactly what it was that their representatives were doing."[41]

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[38] Joyce Oldham Appleby, *Liberalism and Republicanism in the Historical Imagination* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 32.

[39] Mlada Bukovansky, “American Identity and Neutral Rights from Independence to the War of 1812,” *International Organization* 51, no. 2 (1997): 240.

[40] Koschnik, “*Let a Common Interest Bind Us Together*,” 183.

Such top-down approaches to American nationalism were not completely restricted to the political sphere, however. In order to perpetuate the notion of a "proper" national sense of self, elites dictated acceptable moral structures and systems—including those that facilitated a national food culture—to all American citizens. Physician and politician of the early national era Benjamin Rush claimed that the creation and development of a coherent national identity needed to be addressed solely in an intellectual manner by other intellectuals. As Smith-Rosenberg argues, "For Rush…civility was not only a class-defining social grace. Upholding the new nation's claim to international respectability had become the bourgeoisie's civil responsibly."[42] While others were more inclined to incorporate the bourgeoisie into this narrative, they were accepted into the discussion only if their actions and thoughts were of a high enough moral quality: qualities that were agreed upon by the upper-class. Historian John

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[41] Trish Loughran, *The Republic in Print: Print Culture in the Age of U.S. Nation Building, 1770-1870* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2009), 212.
[42] Smith-Rosenberg, *This Violent Empire*, 304.

Brooke echoes this sentiment when he argues, “men and women of the Federalist leanings turned to culture, religion, and benevolence, hoping to establish bonds of a common nationality out of the vestiges of the early modern confessional state.”[43] In this new sense of nationalism, personal character equated to national character, a concept that was surprisingly well articulated in the development of a national American cuisine.

Scholars have applied comparable approaches to nationalism studies in the early American Republic in a number of intellectual approaches. Historian Eve Kornfield discusses in her work how early museums attempted to “train” Americans to be national subjects. In *Creating an American Culture, 1775-1800*, she discusses how Charles Wilson Peale’s Museum in Philadelphia “wanted to create a national museum that could serve the purpose of training proud American republicans by humanizing their minds through the promotion of learning and virtue more than any other school.”[44] Peale’s son Raphaelle, however, would later use artistic depictions of American foodstuffs to counter this elitist approach.[45] Additionally, Catherine O'Donnell Kaplan reveals a similar mentality in the creation of scientific and intellectual institutions in the era whose goals were not just to promote knowledge, but also to highlight the intellectual pursuits of certain Americans on an international scale.[46] In the process, these societies attempted to reshape the perceptions of American society held outside of the United States.[47] In each of these examples, elite white male Americans forced specific moral systems onto the concept of American national character, bypassing the cultural influence of the lower and middle classes as well as African American culture, immigrant culture, American Indian culture, and women.[48]

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[43] John L. Brooke, *Columbia Rising: Civil Life on the Upper Hudson from the Revolution to the Age of Jackson* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 11.

[44] Eve Kornfeld, *Creating an American Culture, 1775-1800* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), 31.

[45] See Raphaelle Peale’s use of still life as a revolutionary artistic tool in “Chapter 2: As American as Apple Pudding - A Distinct Culinary Culture Emerges.”

[46] Agricultural institutions formed in the 1780s and 1790s are examples of such institutions, and are discussed in “Chapter 1: ‘A Federal Diet’ As Symbol - Food and the Foundations of a Postcolonial Identity.”

The attempts of elites to dictate and define American nationalism in the early American Republic were not entirely effective, however. For instance, historian Marshall Foletta asserts that while "intellectual elites accepted the fundamental unity of all mankind, traced racial differences to environmental factors, and argued that the condition of all could be raised to equal rights through the course of educational and historical progress," he concludes that this egalitarianism ultimately did not come to fruition.[49] Like the development of a national cuisine in the early national period, the question of whether or not these methods were effective seems to be a resounding "no." "Even their most fervent admirers would have to admit," according to Kornfield, "that the founders of the American state did not succeed in their quest to create a strong, unified, national culture… A national culture based on civic virtue seemed ever more remote and impossible to create."[50] Nevertheless, that such an endeavor remained a persistent, if allusive, goal for decades following independence made the phenomenon extremely influential on the development of American culture. And even if its founders were unable to formulate this lasting situation, their actions still had influential, if unintentional, effects. As Bukovansky concludes, "the process by which American identity was conceptualized…was critical to the constitution of the state…since the same territory and people could have continued to exist as a colony or perhaps become a very different type of state."[51] Therefore, partial failure of a such a system does not necessitate overlooking the purpose and rationale behind its original goals.

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[47] See Catherine O'Donnell Kaplan, *Men of Letters in the Early Republic* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2008).

[48] The exclusion of African American and American Indian influences of American food and national culture is discussed in detail in "Chapter 4: Barbecues and Pepperpots - The Politics of Commensality and Exclusion."

[49] Marshall Foletta, *Coming to Terms with Democracy: Federalist Intellectuals and the Shaping of an American Culture* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2001), 187.

[50] Kornfeld, *Creating an American Culture*, 77–78.

In order to detail how and why attempts to form a national cuisine emerged during this period—as well as the effects such a construct had on the formation of an American identity—I have separated my research into five sections. Each section builds upon the other to track the evolutionary trajectory and conscious cultural development of nationalism through symbolic representations of food and cuisine throughout the period.

The first chapter places food culture in America in historical context. Beginning early in the colonial period, European settlers detailed the impressive natural resources of the North American continent. In British North America, these resources were slowly and consciously removed from their indigenous origins (often at the expense of beneficial means of food production) to disassociate their surroundings from "savage" lifestyles. In the decades preceding the American Revolution, colonists developed a complex food system that helped define their identity, an identity consciously unlinked from the climate and culture of the continent.

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[51] Bukovansky, *American Identity and Neutral Rights from Independence to the War of 1812,* 28.

The formation of identity through food choices in the late colonial period allowed American colonists to recognize food as a powerful cultural and political tool. Representations of social injustice through food symbolism became a mainstay of revolutionary protests (such as the rejection of British tea imports in Boston) but also in small scale demonstrations throughout the colonies. The connection between food symbolism and political power remained ensconced in American society following independence, leading to the desire for economic and social independence from British imperialism in the late-eighteenth century. Attempts at complete independence played out in domestic food production systems such as the creation of numerous statewide agricultural societies, and the constant calls for a "federal diet" to be instituted that was removed from international and colonial British influences.

The efforts to design a nascent independent culture in the years following ratification of the Constitution subsequently led to comparisons between American society and its European counterparts. In the second chapter, I detail the efforts to form a distinct food culture through comparative written discourses and the Atlantic exchange of ideas. The scientific debates of the era—most notably the European concept of climatological degenerative theory and its extrapolation to human and social degeneration—greatly affected the formation of an American identity.

Because of (and often in spite of) these characterizations, Americans began to form a distinct postcolonial identity. No longer able to distance themselves only from the indigenous American Indian cultures of the continent, Americans were forced to distance themselves from European society as well. Americans used food and food systems to exemplify this cultural shift, exemplified in Joel Barlow's epic poem *The Hasty Pudding* that espoused the humble and uncomplicated character of American society through descriptions of cornmeal pudding, and Amelia Simmons' *American Cookery*, the first American cookbook published in the United States. The prominence of American culture—and its difference from American Indian and European societies—was therefore well articulated with examples of distinct American food and foodways.

The third chapter continues the comparisons between American and European society by focusing specifically on descriptions of the new American lifestyle in European travelogues. An extremely popular type of publication in the early national period, travelogues excited readers with descriptions of exotic locales and entertaining adventures. But they also served to define—and often overgeneralize—cultures and societies. By delving deep into these works, I will showcase a rather effective method of cultural identity formation implemented by European authors and review the responses to these depictions in the American press.

Food, and more specifically the notion of cuisine, played an influential role in such writings. In a similar vein to Ferguson's argument regarding the development of French culinary nationalism, this era saw a paradigmatic cultural shift in identity formation in both Europe and the United States through the simultaneous emergence of the concepts that define modern nationalism as well as those that define a national cuisine. Indeed, the development of the concept of a cuisine was predicated on the desire to define national boundaries through cultural constructs, and to apply a hierarchical order to "civilized" societies. Therefore, the detailed descriptions of America's poor eating habits and food choices in European travelogues was used to demote and belittle American society in comparison to its European counterparts. America's response to these accusations of a defective national character further defined what a singular unified national American cuisine would consist of.

The fourth chapter reviews the internal, national components that formed a working definition of a national American culinary culture. Unable to rely on any positive European influences on food and cuisine and unwilling to incorporate indigenous dishes fully into their shared culture, Americans turned inward to develop a succinctly national food system. This new American cuisine was showcased primarily through celebrations in the public sphere: holidays, political rallies, feasts, market days, parades, and other public fetes comprised a detailed review of the impact of social commensality and food culture in the early Republic.

But the public celebrations of American food culture in the era remained highly exclusive, advocating a mostly white, male, bourgeois intellectual depiction of what constituted American cuisine. This chapter therefore also details the exclusion of vast swaths of American society from this cultural construct; namely the exclusion of African Americans, American Indians, and the working class from the public discourse. The inability and unwillingness to accept what was considered the "other" into the development of American cuisine helped sow seeds that would ultimately lead to the failure of the system in the ensuing decades.

The fifth chapter concludes the narrative by exposing the failed attempts to construct a united national food culture to cure the supposed ills of American society.

The chapter explores the impact of domesticity, health, memory, and nostalgia on food and society, as the constant threat of disunion forced Americans to look lovingly back at their supposed halcyon past. In turn, some renounced modern American industrial society by forming utopian communities dedicated to the sanctity, cleanliness, and purity of the pastoral lifestyle. Others, like the writer Thomas Hazard in *The Jonny-Cake Papers*, opined that the bucolic world of early America—represented in the titular noble simplicity of the johnnycake—was forever lost.

The nostalgia of the era loomed heavy over the growing regional divide in the United States that would ultimately lead to civil war. The expansion of the nation westward agitated this divide and paradoxically further facilitated a desire to devise a single, dominant story for the nation. It is this mindset that drove Sarah Josepha Hale and others to advocate for the passage of Thanksgiving—a national holiday situated in a nostalgic New England past that celebrated American unity through food and commensality—as a federal holiday. While ultimately successful in forming the federal holiday, the efforts came too late. A national day of Thanksgiving was issued by Abraham Lincoln in 1863 in the midst of the Civil War, a stark reminder of the failings of American cuisine to unite the nation under a singular cultural construct.

In a manner analogous to the James Beard Foundation's 2008 survey, my research began with a deceptively simple question: what is American cuisine? The short answer is equally deceptively simple: it depends. American cuisine of the early American Republic may only have existed in the minds and perceptions of those who advocated its adoption.

Surely tangible distinctions exposed a food culture separate from other societies: the nature of the North American continent and the cooking habits and traditions of Europe had a profound impact on the tastes of Americans in the early national period. Pumpkins, tomatoes, maple syrup, and turkeys were exotic dishes that combined with European cooking techniques formed a culinary style separate from other nations. But whether a singular, national, "cuisine" existed in American during this era is dependent on the perceptions and ultimate goals of those who attempted to define one. Through a myriad of methods, Americans and Europeans consciously constructed an intellectual framework for a distinct national American culture, using food to symbolize a nascent and fast-forming society. However, the perception of an American cuisine did not eventually lead to its fruition in reality, and ultimately the internal divisions inherent in the United States— issues of gender, regional, racial, ethnic, and class distinctions—overpowered any efforts to unify and define an effective national sense of self.

Like their predecessors in the early American Republic, Americans today continue to grapple with the notion of a unified, codified, American cuisine: they believe one exists, but they do not know how it should be defined. The following does not purport to define American cuisine in the early American Republic—or today, for that matter—but it is an effort to understand how and why one came to be defined, and what impact its development had on the the construction of American nationalism.

CHAPTER 1:
"A Federal Diet" As Symbol - Food and the Foundations of a Postcolonial Identity

The October 8, 1788 edition of *The Philadelphia Gazette* contained a letter that began with a provocative declaration. "Solomon, speaking of mankind, says, 'madness is in their *hearts*,'" the anonymous author wrote, "had he lived in the United States…he would certainly have added, that 'madness is in their *stomachs*.'"[52] The supposed "madness" was caused by the prominence of imported foodstuffs in the American people's dietary habits, a practice by which Americans obtained "their *breakfast* from China, their *drinks* from the West India islands, and their *supper* (when it consists of *cheese*) from Great Britain."[53] According to the author, reliance on the importation of daily necessities had so poorly affected the culture that this "American malady" needed to be immediately cured with a radical transformation and reinvention of culinary habits; a new system of food production and consumption throughout the country that he named the "federal diet."[54]

Calls for greater manufacturing independence in America were not necessarily rare occurrences in the late-eighteenth century postcolonial discourse, and proclamations similar to the "federal diet" frequently appeared in newspapers for decades before and after the American Revolution. The increased production and consumption of American goods—including the removal of extraneous imported foodstuffs and a larger general dependence on domestic agriculture to sustain the American diet—were economic measures seen by revolutionary-minded colonists as requisite to political independence from Great Britain. As historian T.H. Breen asserts, colonists as early as the Seven Years War viewed consumer "retrenchment…as a means of keeping ordinary people in their place as a vehicle for reviving the general prosperity. Consumer virtue even acquired a patriotic tone, for men and women who saved their money during a difficult path thereby contributed to an imagined common good."[55] Indeed, such mindsets further intensified during the Revolution, and formed the basis of strong importation regulations and duties imposed by the federal government in the early national period. A country that could not produce enough goods to support its people and relied too heavily on outside powers for the basics of everyday life would in turn be unable to maintain an independent government. After the Revolution and into the early national period, such arguments remained staples of federalist-leaning public writings.

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[52] "A Federal Diet," *The Pennsylvania Gazette,* October 8, 1788, 3.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Ibid.

The anonymous appeal for a "federal diet" was further unremarkable for its method of dissemination. *The Pennsylvania Gazette* often ran articles and opinion pieces detailing plans for increased American economic prosperity, including calls for complete marketplace independence. David Hall and William Sellers (editors of *The Pennsylvania Gazette* after its original editor Benjamin Franklin retired from the business in 1748) made their positions as patriots well known by printing radical revolutionary articles throughout the 1760s and 1770s. After Hall's death in 1772, his sons and Sellers continued the tradition until the paper was discontinued in 1800.[56]

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[55] T. H. Breen, *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2004), 208.

[56] Jeffrey Alan Smith, *Printers and Press Freedom: The Ideology of Early American Journalism* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1990), 145. Smith mentions that Hall and Sellers

Therefore, the "federal diet" editorial advocated a rather straightforward and well-trodden economic position in 1780s America, and did so in a paper known for publishing similar stances. On the surface—beyond the provocative and exaggerated references to national madness and maladies—the "federal diet" would seem to be a somewhat unexceptional article detailing a stance frequently advocated in the papers of the era.

Nevertheless, the article was reprinted in numerous newspapers throughout the country after its initial publication on October 8th. Without stringent copyright laws, it was a common practice for newspaper editors throughout the United States to reprint articles from other sources. Generally, if the original paper was referenced or if the article came from exchange papers (newspapers with a countrywide subscription audience that published general correspondences) it was an accepted practice to not credit the original printer.[57] It is significant therefore that the "federal diet" article, which was not from an exchange paper, was reprinted in at least eight other newspapers in seven states from October to November, 1788.[58] The frequency of reprints, the scope and range

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remained committed to a certain level of objectivity and would occasionally print loyalist perspectives in their paper to balance out the more radical revolutionary material.

[57] Jeffrey L. Pasley, *The Tyranny of Printers: Newspaper Politics in the Early American Republic* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2002), 77.

[58] "A Federal Diet" was reprinted in *The Pennsylvania Packet and Daily Advertiser* on October 9, 1788; *The Connecticut Journal* on October 15, 1788; *The New-Jersey Journal and Political Intelligence* on October 15, 1788; *The Massachusetts Centinel* on October 18, 1788; *The American Mercury* (Philadelphia, PA) on October 20, 1788; *The United States Chronicle; Political, Commercial and Historical* (Providence, RI) on October 30, 1788; *The Freeman's Oracle Or New-Hampshire Advertiser* on November 1, 1788; and *The Vermont Gazette* on November 24, 1788. Of these papers, only four papers give proper credit to *The Pennsylvania Gazette. The New-Jersey and Political Intelligence* went as far as to omit the greeting "Mess'rs Hall & Sellers" from the original article—the printers of *The Pennsylvania Gazette*—and added a greeting to their own printer.

of the publications, and the relative speed with which the letter was reprinted suggests an acknowledgement of the importance of its content by certain editors; an article of greater importance than the more conventional opinion pieces advocating for a stronger federal system of government.

What was it that made the "federal diet" editorial so influential? Certainly the timing of its publication played a role in its numerous reprints. By the summer of 1788, all but North Carolina and Rhode Island had ratified the U.S. Constitution, setting the stage for Congress to meet and complete the process the following March, 1789.[59] Discussions on the scope and influence of federalism crowded the newspapers and debates of the era as Americans grappled with what it would truly mean to be a country united under a more powerful federal system of government. The proposed development of multiple institutions and concepts designed to promote unity around the country became ubiquitous during the era. Some of these concepts came to fruition—such as the designation of the centrally-located Washington D.C. as capital city on the banks of the Potomac River and the creation of a national museum by Charles Wilson Peale in Philadelphia—while others such as a plan for a national university never materialized.[60]

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[59] For an in-depth review of the debate over the ratification of the U.S. Constitution, specifically as it played out in the public discourse, see: Pauline Maier, *Ratification: The People Debate the Constitution, 1787-1788* (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 2010).

[60] For general information on the campaigns to foster federalism and republican civic unity in the late-eighteenth century, see: Colleen E. Terrell,"'Republican Machines': Franklin, Rush, and the Manufacture of Civic Virtue in the Early Republic" *Early American Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 1, no. 2 (2003): 100-132. For more information on Peale's museum in Philadelphia, see: Joel Orosz, *Curators and Culture: The Museum Movement in American, 1740-1870* (Tuscaloosa, AL: The University of Alabama Press, 1990). And for a detailed description of the plans to develop a national university, see: Albert Castel, "The Founding Fathers and the Vision of a National University" *History of Education Quarterly* 4, no. 4 (December 1964): 280-302.

Regardless of their success or failure, these unifying federal concepts were indicative of a dramatic cultural shift in American society that prioritized the formation of institutions based on republican ideals in order to enlighten the American citizenry and encourage a sense of civic unity throughout the country.

While arguments over federal reach, citizenship, and the national economy were mainstays of American discourse in the years surrounding the ratification process, the influence such a federalist system would have on the quotidian habits of the American people was rarely reviewed. The concept of a "federal diet," therefore, was a novel idea that spoke to the overwhelming reach that a new, postcolonial republican identity could have on not only the political and economic realms of American culture, but also on the daily lives of its citizens. The article was the first deliberate and codified attempt to define the nascent nation using food culture as a unifying social system. What Americans ate, therefore, could unite them as strongly as their political and economic institutions.

Moreover, by the end of the eighteenth century, depictions of food and foodways in American culture became vital components in the development of a political, economic, and social identity. By growing Old World crops on American soil and using traditional cooking methods, early European colonists helped differentiate themselves culturally from native populations, even when native crops proved more practical to grow. And by using foodstuffs as symbolic representations of greater economic and political injustices, later colonists forged communal identities separate from the British colonial establishment. In these instances, the identities formed using food were often deductive; colonists found it easier and more effective to define what they were not (not American Indian, not British, etc.) more so than what they actually had become. Nevertheless, such ideas and actions would lay the groundwork for the development of a distinct national cuisine in the ensuing decades, a national cuisine that was predicated on the rejection of indigenous and colonial power structures and the initial acceptance of a postcolonial republican political and cultural system in the United States.

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More than simply a call to action, the "federal diet" letter continued with a specific plan for the implementation of this new postcolonial culinary system. The letter detailed the preparation methods and types of foods that Americans should eat, divided into sections for breakfast, dinner, and supper. For breakfast, "milk may be used in a variety of ways…either with bread, or rice, or Indian mush, or apple pye, or with the ripe fruits of the season."[61] That milk—a drink used primarily to "fatten hogs" in the early national period and not as often for human consumption—should be a primary ingredient in the American breakfast spoke to the author's desire to defy certain cultural stigma and promote resourcefulness and independence in American society. Furthermore, the choice between bread, rice, or "Indian mush" as a grain reveals the author's awareness of different food staples prevalent throughout the country (short grain white rice in particular being a staple of southern states and low-country diets) and speaks to his attempt to unite Americans while remaining cognizant of their regional preferences.[62]

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[61] "A Federal Diet," *The Pennsylvania Gazette,* 3.

[62] For a description of the culture surrounding rice production and consumption in the low-country region of the southern United States, see: S. Max Edelson, *Plantation Enterprise in Colonial South Carolina* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), Chapter 2: Rice

And choosing to eat “ripe fruits of the season” further allowed for regional variations as well as championed fresh, local produce as opposed to imported dried or preserved products.[63]

In contrast to the other sections, the author left open the options for dinner. For this meal, “all the meats and fishes of our country, with bread made of wheat, rye or Indian corn,” were acceptable, “the more vegetables that are eaten with meat the better.”[64] No other specifics were offered. Instead, the author devoted the remaining space to a discussion on the cost savings of rye bread versus wheat and the health benefits of vegetable broth, particularly for younger children. Supper, he insisted, should consist of simply “the same as breakfast.”[65] The generality of the final section suggests either the author’s inability to find a single comprehensive foodstuff agreeable to all Americans for supper, or was an attempt to promote the variety and abundance of American foods by allowing citizens to decide on their own most appealing menu options. Regardless, it is regrettable that the letter ends with such little detail and without a compelling conclusion.

What the “federal diet” letter did accomplish, however, was the creation of a plan to bridge the gap between a dependent colonial culture and a postcolonial republican society by detailing a set of culinary guidelines for all Americans to follow. By advocating American-made products with priority given to local produce, the author

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Culture Origins. Edelson argues, “By the close of the colonial period…instead of taking bread with their morning coffee or tea, Charlestown elites ate thin rice cakes… A century after rice growing began in Carolina, planters had embraced rice and other distinctive foods as their own for so long that they seemed exotic only to visitors.” Edelson, *Plantation Enterprise in Colonial South Carolina*, 90-91.

[63] “A Federal Diet,” *The Pennsylvania Gazette,* 3.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Ibid.

attempted to compel the country toward self-reliance and conviviality through the consumption of a unified singular diet.

In the weeks following its initial publication, *The Pennsylvania Gazette* and other newspapers published follow-up articles that complimented and amended the call for a "federal diet." One of the more detailed articles contained instructions to convert the sap of maple trees into a variety of useful foods and drinks.[66] Echoing the "federal diet's" concern with an over-dependence on imported goods, the author, named "Agricola" (the Latin word for "farmer") believed the "immense sums of money sent every year to the West-Indies for sugar" could be used instead to cultivate "a species of the American maple containing genuine sugar, and if properly prepared, would in every respect equal in all its qualities the sugar obtained from the cane of the West-Indies."[67] Similar to the *The Connecticut Journal's* correspondence regarding American cheese production, the author saw a great deal of potential from the effective cultivation of certain American foods, particularly in relation to their international counterparts.[68] According to both articles, what was lacking was not the quantity or quality of the natural resource (milk for the cheese and trees for the maple syrup) but the will of American farmers and merchants to adopt new procedures to effectively prepare these foodstuffs and implement improved methods of production.

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[66] Agricola, "To Make Maple Sugar," *The Pennsylvania Gazette,* October 22, 1788, 3.

[67] Ibid.

[68] In 1791, Dr. Benjamin Rush would echo this sentiment in a widely-published treatise on maple sugar trees. "The *quality* of this sugar is necessarily better than that which is made in the West-Indies," he wrote, "whoever considers that the gift of the sugar maple trees is from a benevolent Providence, that we have many millions of acres in our country covered with them, that the tree is improved by repeated tappings, and that the sugar is obtained by the frugal labor of a farmer's family…will not hesitate in believing that the maple sugar may be manufactured much cheaper, and sold at a *less price* than that which is made in the West-Indies." Benjamin Rush, *An Account of the Sugar-Maple Tree, of the United States, and of the Methods of Obtaining Sugar from it, Together with Observations upon the Advantages Both Public and Private of this Sugar* (Philadelphia, PA: American Philosophical Society, 1792), 9-10.

The article continued with a list of recipes made using the sap of trees, each "earnestly recommended to those citizens of the United States who live in the neighborhood of the sugar maple."[69] The items ranged from a simple maple sugar made from boiling and refining maple sap, to maple molasses, and even maple beer, wine, and vinegar. An impressively detailed description of each step accompanied the items, allowing readers to easily recreate and attempt each recipe with their local supply of maple trees.

The similarities in writing styles, the focus on American financial and cultural independence through foodstuffs, and the close proximity of the place and date of publication suggests that the authors of the "federal diet" letter and the maple sugar recipes were acting in conversation with one another. It is even more likely they may have been the same person: *The Pennsylvania Packet and Daily Advertiser* reprint of the "federal diet" letter uses the letter "A" as the pseudonym of the author, which may have been shorthand for "Agricola."[70] Agricola was in fact the frequent moniker of George Bryan, a wealthy Irish merchant living in Philadelphia who was an early supporter of the Revolution and of a unified powerful federal government, and who later advocated in favor of the radical concept of a unicameral federal congress.[71] Nevertheless, the similarities between these publications is evidence of a prolonged campaign to wean the American palate off of imported colonial foodstuffs and unify American eating habits using a distinctive combination of food preparation methods and native ingredients. To the authors (or author) of these articles, what should—and what should not—be consumed by American citizens would have a fundamental influence on the development of a singular federal character.

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[69] Rush, *An Account of the Sugar-Maple Tree*, 10.

[70] The practice of using pseudonyms or anonymous sources was common in eighteenth century American newspapers, particularly writings that discussed radical political ideologies. Further, according to Jeffrey Pasley, "Unidentified writing helped preserve the impression that newspapers essays and pamphlets were spontaneous expressions of American public opinion." Pasley, *The Tyranny of Printers, 35.*

The increased awareness of the confluence of republican federalism and postcolonial culture during the late 1780s—particularly in regards to food consumption—is evident not only in the "federal diet" and its accompanying editors, but also in other published articles of the period. *The Connective Journal's* reprint of the "federal diet" declaration, for instance, was flanked by two correspondent reports from Philadelphia. The first correspondence praised the recent election of two Pennsylvanian legislators to the United States Senate, stating that the "two federal characters which have been elected…are good omens of the future happiness under the new constitution."[72] The article followed with a review of the process by which other federal positions would be filled (the source favored and correctly predicted George Washington as President and John Adams as Vice President) before abruptly shifting focus to recent improvements made in the manufacturing of American cheese. "Proof," the author argued,

> that the *English cheese* does not owe its peculiar good quality to the soil, climate or pasture of Great Britain. American cheese, when kept equally long with the

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[71] George David Rappaport, *Stability and Change in Revolutionary Pennsylvania: Banking, Politics, and Social Structure* (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2010), 175.

[72] "Correspondence from Philadelphia, October 8," *The Connecticut Journal*, October 15, 1788, 2.

> English, is equally good. It is to be lamented that the *capital* of our farmers will not admit of their keeping the cheese long enough to bring them to perfection.[73]

While the two sections of this correspondence may seem unconnected on the surface, the correlation between plaudits of the federal government and pride in a national foodstuffs (notably in relation to the quality of those in Great Britain) were both equally important advancements in the evolving definition of a postcolonial American character. That the author concluded the quality of English cheese was not uniquely remarkable and lamented the fact that American farmers were unaware of the promise of their own cheese products suggested a measure of hope for the untapped potential of American federal cultural in comparison to (and in defiance of) its European counterparts.

* * *

One of the more problematic foodstuffs mentioned in the "federal diet" system were caffeinated drinks, for which the author advocated complete abstinence. Tea and coffee, however, were mainstays of American tables for generations, and the national wholesale abandonment of these drinks would be extremely impractical.[74] Yet in clear terms, the "federal diet" advocated for their removal. The drinks are only mentioned under the "breakfast" section of the essay, oddly referenced in passing when discussing salted meats: "Salt meat of all kinds, and salt fish (which has been made a part of the American breakfast in order to make up for the deficiency of *tea* and *coffee* articles of diet) should never be tasted at breakfast.[75] Unfortunately, how salted fish supposedly became a substitute for coffee and tea is not discussed any further.

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[73] "Correspondence from Philadelphia, October 8," *The Connecticut Journal,* 2.

[74] The dependence on such drinks in many colonial and early national households has been copiously reported by contemporary and modern authors alike. For an eighteenth century account on the influence and consumption of tea and coffee, see: Jonas Hanway, *An Essay on Tea: Considered as Pernicious to Health, Obstructing Industry, and Impoverishing the Nation: With a Short Account of Its Growth, and Great Consumption in These Kingdoms* (London, UK: H. Woodfall, 1756). For a modern review of the subject, Breen is again an excellent source. See: T. H. Breen. *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004). Another useful resource is: Martin Daunton and Matthew Hilton, *The Politics of Consumption: Material Culture and Citizenship in Europe and America* (New York, NY: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2001), Chapter 3.

Nevertheless, the strict abandonment of tea and coffee is an obvious conclusion of the proposed system, as according to the rules laid out by the author, imported items are to be avoided at all costs. What is of note, however, is that the author provided no suitable native-based alternative to the consumption of coffee and tea.[76] With the use of the sap of North American maple trees, copious research and pages of recipes were presented to showcase a viable alternative to imported sugar. Americans following the "federal diet," however, were left with no substitute for a caffeinated breakfast beverage, when in fact there did exist a native alternative available.

The solution lay in yaupon (also known as cassina), a species of holly native to the southeastern United States. The leaves of the plant contain high levels of caffeine, and it is the only North American holly species to contain high enough levels of the drug to cause a noticeable chemical reaction in humans. Yaupon leaves had been dried, boiled, and drunk by the Timucua peoples of modern-day Florida for generations prior to the arrival of European colonists in North America, and its use as a tea was well known by European colonists as early as the mid-sixteenth century.[77]

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[75] "A Federal Diet," *The Pennsylvania Gazette,* 3.

[76] There were a number of concoctions made to substitute imported tea during the the 1760s and 1770s (often collectively called "liberty teas") made from ground flax and other local flowers and dried herbs. None were caffeinated, however, making them rather ineffective as tea substitutes. For a detailed description of these "liberty teas" as well as the impact of boycotts on domestic life in colonial and revolutionary America, see: Nancy Siegel, "Cooking Up American Politics," *Gastronomica* 8, no. 3 (2008): 53–61.

During explorer Jean Ribault's 1564 expedition to the southeastern corner of North America, crewmember and artist Jacques le Moyne was the first European to depict numerous native rituals. One of his engravings contained an event described as a Ticucua "council of state" in which "the chief sits at the place of honor surrounded by his advisors," and "a bitter black tea called casina [*sic*] is prepared by the women."[78]

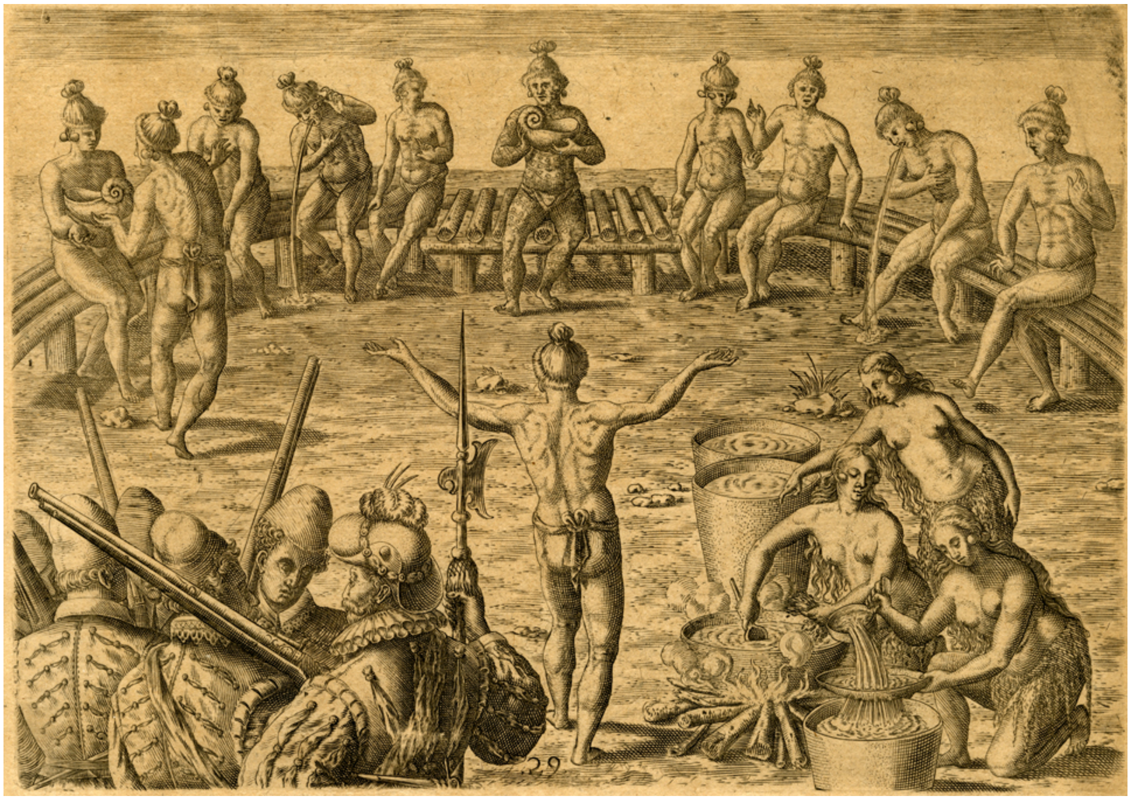

Figure 1: Jacques le Moyne, *Plate XXIX: A Council of State*, 1564, engraving, Special Collections Department, University of South Florida Archives. Courtesy of the USF Libraries Digitization Center.

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[77] Fred Lamar Pearson, "The Florencia Investigation of Spanish Timucua," *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 51, no. 2 (1972): 166-176.

[78] Jacques le Moyne, *Plate XXIX: A Council of State*, 1564, engraving, Special Collections Department, University of South Florida Archives. Digitization provided by the USF Libraries Digitization Center.

In the image, a woman is seen dropping leaves into large boiling cauldrons, while another ladles the mixture and pours it through a sieve into another pot. Large conch shells are passed around containing the tea to the council-members, as French Huguenots (clad in armor and brandishing muskets and pikes) look on. These engravings were reproduced and compiled with maps and other depictions of the New World by master engraver Theodorus de Bry, who widely disseminated them throughout Europe in his publication, *America*.[79]

Yaupon tea continued to be consumed in portions of the southern United States well into the nineteenth century. An 1842 botany guide described the yaupon fruit as being "used for tea in Paraguay, and the famous *black drink* of the Creek Indians is prepared from the leaves of cassena; which are still used as a substitute for tea in some parts of the Southern States."[80] A later essay by chemist Henry M. Smith described yaupon as having a "very agreeable odor, perhaps faintly resembling that of raw tobacco, but having also a tea-like smell" and was "largely used in the South as a substitute for tea, coffee, and other stimulants."[81] Thus, yaupon was a well-known alternative to imported caffeinated drinks such as tea and coffee and had been widely consumed for centuries by native, European, and American populations throughout large sections of North America.

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[79] For a detailed review of the publication of these engravings and their influence on depictions of native populations throughout Europe, see: Michael Gaudio, *Engraving the Savage: The New World and Techniques of Civilization* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 45-73.

[80] Asa Gray, *The Botanical Text-Book* (New York, NY: Wiley and Putnam Press, 1842), 308.

[81] Henry M. Smith, "Yaupon," *The American Journal of Pharmacy* 4, no. 53 (May 1, 1872): 216-217.

Why then, would the proponents of the "federal diet" present maple syrup as a viable substitute for imported sugar, but not present yaupon as a viable substitute for imported tea and coffee? Regional variation may have been partly to blame, as yaupon was mostly consumed by peoples in the southern United States. However, as previously noted, recommendations in the "federal diet" did consist of other southern regional staples such as cultivated short grain rice. It is therefore probable that the "federal diet" could incorporate other regional items like yaupon, if the food item were considered a beneficial addition. Further, yaupon is a light and dried foodstuff that (like tea and coffee) could have been transported over long distances without the fear of spoil, allowing for countrywide consumption and effectively negating its regional nature as an obstacle.[82]

It is more likely a certain cultural stigma associated with the drink that barred it from being adopted on a national level. Yaupon tea was erroneously labeled an emetic by early European settlers: early depictions of the drink associated it with warrior endurance rituals that often ended in the participants vomiting. The first example of such a depiction was Jacques le Moyne's image discussed previously, which showed two men sitting around a fire circle vomiting while others nearby drank the tea.[83] It was a false correlation, however: the tea does not make a person vomit, and eyewitness testimony—either through mistranslation or misconstrued cultural cues—confused the participants' reactions to the physical exhaustion of the ritual with imbibing yaupon. Nevertheless, the association of yaupon with vomiting became so ingrained in Western culture that well into the twentieth century, the scientific term for the yaupon holly remained *Ilex vomitoria*.[84]

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[82] This is not to say, however, that regional and transportation issues were not absent from consideration. The inability of yaupon and other foodstuffs to be adopted nationwide was certainly in contention to some degree with the practical difficulties of long range transportation in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. Furthermore, regional variation and proclivities played a significant role in the incorporation of other foodstuffs and components of American food culture. A detailed description of the effect of regional dominance on national American cuisine is discussed in later chapters, most notably in relation to the attempts to impose a national holiday in celebration of the New England regional tradition of thanksgiving meals in "Chapter 5: "The Permanency and Unity of our Great American Festival" - What Became of American Cookery."

The example of yaupon highlights an important requisite for the assimilation of specific foodstuffs into the American dietary lexicon. While both maple trees and yaupon holly are native North American species with well-documented culinary uses, yaupon tea's misrepresentation and close association with American Indian society stifled its assimilation into European—and later American—culinary traditions. Although the conversion of maple sap into edible syrup was a practice first introduced to European settlers by indigenous peoples throughout the northern forests of North America, the production methods and byproducts developed were far enough removed from their native origins that maple syrup no longer bore the stigma of a foodstuff solely consumed and produced by indigenous peoples.[85] By the eighteenth century, colonial maple sugaring methods had become a process distinct from their native counterparts. Copper cauldrons and piping replaced the wooden buckets used by native peoples, and boiling to form the syrup reduction replaced the indigenous technique of sap-freezing.[86] Consequently, the maple byproducts reflected a greater European culinary influence, such as the “maple beer” and “maple vinegar” recipes detailed in *The Pennsylvania Gazette*. Yaupon, however, could not shake its connection to indigenous cultural rituals (and to native people themselves) enough to be assimilated into the federal American diet.

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[83] Le Moyne, "Plate XXIX: A Council of State." The descriptor of the plate stated, "those who vomit up the tea are considered to be unfit for battle."

[84] Frederick B. Power and Victor K. Chesnut, "Ilex Vomitoria as a Native Source of Caffeine," *Journal of the American Chemical Society* 41, no. 8 (August 1, 1919): 1308.

[85] Robin M. Mower, "Maple Syrup," *The Oxford Companion to American Food and Drink* Andrew F. Smith, ed. (New York, NY: Oxford University Press: 2007), 365.

Due to the negative perceptions of American Indian “savage” society prevalent during the early national period, the decision to incorporate certain native foodstuffs into the “federal diet” hinged substantially on the ability for Americans to separate native *foods* from their native *cultures*. With an estimated 1,800 distinct plant species used as food by indigenous peoples that were originally unknown to European colonists, the decision to incorporate one type of foodstuff over another was complex. Foods with similar counterparts in European cuisine (such as certain types of blackberries and cranberries) were at times easier to assimilate into colonial diets than completely foreign items. But familiarity was only one component; often colonists’ disdain towards American Indian society played a role in dietary decisions.[87] A notable example of the European colonists’ negative perceptions of American Indian people and food culture is highlighted in Kariann Yokota’s review of the 1807 children’s book, *The People of All*

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[86] The laborious process of sap-freezing consisted of draining the maple sap into wooden buckets, waiting for the sap to freeze, and scraping off the top layers of ice that would form. This process had to be repeated multiple times to completely remove the water from the sap and reduce the concoction into a maple syrup. This method was time-consuming as it forced participants to refreeze the sap over many nights, and was dependent on seasonal cold temperatures that facilitated the freezing. The colonial preference for boiling was far more efficient and less time-consuming. See: Benjamin Rush, *An Account of the Sugar-Maple Tree*, 10.

[87] Nancy J. Turner and Patrick von Aderkas, “Sustained by First Nations: European Newcomers’ Use of Indigenous Plant Foods in Temperate North America,” *Acta Societatis Botanicorum Poloniae* 81, no. 4 (December 12, 2012): 311.

Nation; An Useful Toy for Girl or Boy. The work compares a drawing of a native Virginian holding tobacco leaves with a drawing of an Englishman eating a meat pie. Yokota writes, "Whereas New World peoples were associated with natural commodities, the 'civilized' Englishman in *The People of All Nations* is marked by his consumption rather than his production."[88] Yokota concludes that this difference reflects the earlier Enlightenment concept that "a society's commercial production and habits of consumption were thought to reflect its 'character' and the level of civility it had attained."[89] Indeed, while the "civilized" production and consumption of "savage" commodities remained an integral component of American identity formation well into the nineteenth century, it had its origins in early European colonists' prejudiced representations of indigenous society and food culture.

* * *

Nevertheless, beginning with the earliest contact with North America, European explorers continually marveled at the abundance and bounty the continent had to offer. As early as 1493, Christopher Columbus declared the New World as ripe for a bountiful harvest. In a letter to King Ferdinand II's finance minister, Columbus wrote that the island of Hispaniola had "very lofty and beautiful mounts, great farms, groves and fields, most fertile both for cultivation and for pasturage, as well adapted for constructing buildings. The convenience of the harbors in this island, and the excellence of the rivers, in volume and salubrity, surpass human belief."[90] Thus, the quality of the soil and the possibility of future agricultural development were items considered worthy of praise in early European accounts of the New World. A sampling of crops grown in this rich and bountiful soil soon made their way back to Europe, and certain European crops carried over by colonists soon were planted in the Americas. This prosperous interplay, known as the Columbian Exchange, had profound effects on Old World and New World populations.[91] Through the transfer of biological goods, Europeans were exposed to new staple crops that—within a century after first contact—would become mainstays of European diets. The inclusion of the potato into British and Irish culture, the introduction of the tomato into Mediterranean and Gallic cuisines, and the widespread adoption of sugar cane as a sweetener throughout the Old World, for instance, can all be traced back to this exchange. Many of these crops (most notably corn and potatoes) produced far higher yields for poorer European farmers, and thus were adopted with great speed and vigor.[92] In general, however, all classes of European society were affected by the Columbian Exchange; the ease with which so many new foods were adopted into their diets stood as testament to their excitement and admiration of particular New World foodstuffs.

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[88] Kariann Akemi Yokota, *Unbecoming British: How Revolutionary America Became a Postcolonial Nation* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2011), 19.
[89] Ibid., 21.

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[90] Christopher Columbus, *Letter to Luis de Sant' Angel: Escribano de Racion of the Kingdom of Aragon, Dated 15 February 1493,* Michael P. Kerney and Bernard Quaritch, trans. (New York, NY: G. Norman and Son, Printers, 1893), 10-11.

[91] See: Alfred W. Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Company, 1972). Crosby was one of the first scholars to name and describe in detail the transfer of biological goods across the Atlantic. Crosby argues that the exchange of foodstuffs had a significant long-term impact on both the New and Old World. A similar argument focused exclusively on the sugar trade can be found in: Sidney Wilfred Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1986).

[92] Anthropologists calculate that an average yield using traditional seventeenth century European agricultural methods could produce 4.2 million hectares of wheat, 5.1 million hectares of barley, and 5.5 million hectares of oats. New World crops grown in Europe at the same time could produce 7.3 million hectares of corn and 7.5 million hectares of potatoes. See: Alan Taylor, *American Colonies* (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2002), 45.

The same level of admiration afforded to certain crops ceased when authors chronicled the native populations in the New World, however. As a consequence, such depictions often ignored native people's ability to effectively cultivate resources, and/or stressed their supposed ignorance of the continent's agricultural promise. In describing the large quantities of available fish in the Virginia colony, for instance, Thomas Hariot (the English advisor to Sir Walter Raleigh) commented that the natives were "free from all care of heapinge of Riches for their posterity, content with their state…and of those things which god of his bountye [*sic*] hath given unto them, yet without giving him any thanks according to his decree. So savage is this people."[93] For certain early settlers, the native populations were unaware of and ungrateful for the rich and bountiful foodstuffs afforded to them in America.[94] That they did not give thanks to the same god was evidence of their ungrateful, and more importantly "savage" nature. Food items that were prepared by the native populations were therefore viewed—at least initially—with a degree of caution.

Furthermore, native diets were considered bad for one's health. The myriad of exotic plants and cooking methods surely had an initial negative effect on some European palates and stomachs, and even when foods did not cause illness, there was concern that an indigenous diet would have long term dangerous effects on European settlers' constitutions. For example, the conquistador Jerónimo de Aguilar, who became stranded in the forests of the Yucatan Peninsula in 1511, was reportedly unable to return to a European diet after his rescue. "After so much time accustomed to the food of the Indians," a shipmate later remarked, "his stomach would regard Christian food as foreign."[95] Indeed, the land was rich, bountiful, and full of possibilities, but the continent's original inhabitants—and the foods they prepared—were considered savage and dangerous and could have a negative, long-lasting effect on the character and identity of European settlers.

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[93] Thomas Hariot, *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*, Richard Hacklvit, trans. (New York, NY: J. Sabin & Sons, 1871), 51.

[94] Although generally reluctant of foodstuffs consumed by the native populations, Hariot is credited with introducing the potato to Europe. In the same report, he wrote, "suche commodities as Virginia is knowne to yeelde [*sic*] for victuall and sustenance of man's life, usually fed upon by the natural inhabitants: as also by us during the time of our abroad… OPenauk [Potato] are a kind of roots of round forme, some of the bignes [*sic*] of walnuts, some far greater… Being boiled or sodden they are very good meate." Ibid., 15.

The juxtaposition between a relatively positive reaction to certain North American crops and an overarching reluctance to consume native meals prepared with these crops had a profound effect on the development of colonial European communal identities. This distinction dictated a generally conservative approach to the adoption of native foodways into European colonial diets. Humoral physiology—the medieval belief that good health was achieved by consuming foods that maintained a stasis between the four "humors" of the human body (blood, yellow bile, black bile, and phlegm)—remained a prevalent concept in the Americas, making colonists wary to incorporate new foodstuffs into their diet for fear of unbalancing their inner fluids. Out of necessity, some meals were reluctantly assimilated into diets, but only when other European crops had failed or if these New World foods were prepared using Old World methods.[96]

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[95] Cervantes de Salazar, "Crónica de la Nueva España," in Rebecca Earle, "'If You Eat Their Food…': Diets and Bodies in Early Colonial Spanish America," *The American Historical Review* 115, no.3 (June 1, 2010): 694.

The New World simultaneously mirrored the utopian land of milk and honey with a seemingly endless supply of raw materials and natural resources at their disposal, and a dangerous, ruthless wilderness that could ultimately destroy inhabitants' civilized identities. North America was, in many respects, the mythical medieval Land of Cockaigne made manifest.[97] As a result, American colonists soon learned to hybridize their eating habits by using native foodstuffs reminiscent of Old World counterparts, or cultivating when possible crops from Old World seeds. Although still dependent on a foreign environment to provide sustenance, colonists doggedly used their shared cultural identity to maintain cooking traditions.[98] As historian William Cronon writes, "environment may initially shape the range of choices available to a people at a given moment, but culture reshapes environment in responding to those choices. The reshaped environment presents a new set of possibilities for cultural reproduction, thus setting up a new cycle of mutual determination."[99] Through this acculturation process, colonial identities remained mostly intact, while the influence of American Indian culture on colonial foodways was mitigated.

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[96] Trudy Eden, *The Early American Table: Food and Society in the New World* (Dekalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2008), 55. For more information on humoral physiology and its impact on colonial identity, see: Alan S. Rome, *The English Embrace of the American Indians: Ideas of Humanity in Early America* (New York, NY: Springer Publishing, 2016) and Zachary McLeod Hutchins, *Inventing Eden: Primitivism, Millennialism, and the Making of New England* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014).

[97] The Land of Cockainge (an altered spelling of the Middle French term for "plenty") was a mythical realm where peasants had unlimited access to resources, including most notably unfettered access to food. While the land was normally described in a positive manner, it was feared by certain authors that the temptation of this lavish lifestyle would lead to idleness, and Cockainge was ultimately considered harmful to its inhabitants. The concept first originated in the 10th century poem, *The Land of Cockaygne.* See: Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 84-86.

[98] Colonial food habits have been the focus of a number of academic treatises. Eden's, *The Early American Table: Food and Society in the New World* is an important contribution to the topic. For more general information on the interplay between colonial food and colonial society, see: James McWilliams, *A Revolution in Eating: How the Quest for Food Shaped America* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2007); C. Carter Smith, *Daily Life: A Sourcebook on Colonial America* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1991), and: Sally Smith Booth, *A History of Eating in Colonial America* (New York, NY: Clarkson N. Potter, 1971).

Even when praising the abundance of North American resources, for instance, some colonists had difficulty crediting American Indians for their cultivars. David Pietersz de Vries, a Dutch settler in New Amsterdam, commented that in regard to the diet of the American Indians, "the food supplies are various. The principal one is maize, which is their corn, and which is called by us Turkish wheat."[100] That de Vries and his fellow colonists would label corn as "Turkish" exemplifies the contempt with which they held American Indians and their agriculture. For some European colonies, a grain so hearty, dependable, nutritious, and useful as corn could not be associate with "savage" peoples, and therefore must have been a descendant of Old World seeds. Because food and communal identity remained well intertwined in colonial American mindsets, to remove corn from the continent was to remove American Indians from corn.

Indeed, the belief that corn (arguably North America's most useful and profitable native crop) did not originate from North America remained a prevalent and much-debated biological theory well into the nineteenth century. In his essay on the history of corn, horticulturist Peter Arrell Browne wrote that as late as 1831, *Lieber's Encyclopedia Americana* argued, "the native country of the Indian corn remains still undetermined…it is a reflection upon, not only the learned, but the mass of the community, that their great *staple commodity*–the plant that demands and receives the patronage, the skill, and the industry of a large agricultural part of a great agricultural nation, should be so imperfectly known."[101] Browne debunked multiple theories that claimed corn originated in the Old World, including de Vries' assertion that corn was associated with Turkey. Browne's desire to rationally disprove the idea that corn was not native to the Americas spoke more to the negative colonial perceptions of American Indian agriculture and society than to any scientific evidence needed to validate the contrary.[102]

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[99] William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (New York, NY: Hill and Wang, 1983), 13.

[100] David Pietersz de Vries, "Short Historical and Journal Notes of Various Voyages," John Franklin Jameson, ed. *Original Narratives of Early American History* (New York, NY: Scribner, 1909), 218.

Beyond discrediting native populations' ownership claims to staple foods, early colonists also waged campaigns to replace indigenous crops with their own familiar foodstuffs. With varying levels of success, colonists grew crops that they were comfortable consuming and that would supposedly help maintain their collective health and identity. David Pietersz de Vries further contended that, although there were some uses for "Turkish wheat," colonists preferred to harvest their own native foodstuffs:

> Our Netherlanders raise good wheat, rye, barley, oats, and peas, and can brew as good beer here as in our Fatherland, for good hops grow in the woods; and they who make it their business can produce enough of those things, as everything can

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[101] Peter Arnell Browne, *An Essay on Indian Corn* (Philadelphia, PA: Printed by J. Thompson, 1837), 6.

[102] It is of note that Browne uses the term "Indian corn" to describe the foodstuff. By the nineteenth century, the term had won out over "Turkish grain" or any other geographically erroneous monikers, and "Indian corn" was the most widely used term. This change was an example of the slow evolutionary shift toward cultural acceptance of the crop's American Indian origin in the ensuing decades.

> be grown which grows in Holland, England, or France. It is a pleasant and charming country, if only it were well peopled by our nation.[103]

De Vries' pride for his fellow countryman shown through clearly in this passage. But more importantly, his insistence that foodstuffs grown in North America rivaled those of his homeland and other European nations signified a growing rift in colonial society: European colonists remained intellectually attached to their country of origin but increasingly began to make comparisons between their new home and their old, often ultimately favoring the new.

This sentiment was not isolated to the Dutch in New Amsterdam. Colonists in New England as well grappled with similar effects of imposing European agricultural methods in North America. As historian Sarah F. McMahon argues, "Seventeenth-century colonists brought English plants, grains, and livestock to the New World, hoping to recreate their familiar fare in an unfamiliar country. Necessary alterations of the diet… reflected accommodations of old tastes and preferences to the agricultural realties of the new land."[104] Indeed, throughout North America, European colonists formed a new culinary identity by begrudgingly adopting certain native foodstuffs (often without their implicit connections to the indigenous people consuming them), obstinately cultivating traditional crops and re-creating European cooking methods. Though European by birth or by heritage, colonists slowly saw the New World as equal to (if not exceeding) Europe in resources and opportunities for future development. Abundant and bountiful crops and the high quality food products produced from them were examples of the possibilities unique to America, but mostly in regard to those products acquired from the Old World and supplanted in the new.

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[103] De Vries, "Short Historical and Journal Notes of Various Voyages," 219.

[104] Sarah F. McMahon, "A Comfortable Subsistence: The Changing Composition of Diet in Rural New England, 1620-1840," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 42, no. 1 (January 1, 1985): 44.

Definitions of “American” foods—namely, those indigenous to the continent—were incorporated into colonial American diets out of necessity from the onset of colonization. Over multiple generations, these foodstuffs slowly became associated with a particular American lifestyle and set of habits, and made American diets distinct from their earlier European colonizers. However, food choices (other than a small sampling of native ingredients and foodstuffs) still remained primarily European in their methods of preparation and consumption. With the growing trend toward political and cultural independence from Great Britain in the mid-eighteenth century—and the subsequent removal of European colonial systems and structures—Americans began further articulating their new society through symbolic gestures that distanced themselves from older associations. This separation included the foods they ate, as well as how they ate them. Combined, these actions would constitute a proto-cuisine based on an evolving amalgamation of practical necessity and cultural symbolism that would become even further ensconced in postcolonial American society.

In 1766, Asa Dunbar and his fellow Harvard classmates marched to the administrative offices to demand a redress of grievances. As retold a year later in a semi-farcical poem, Dunbar articulated their concern as follows: “Behold, our butter stinketh!”[105] For weeks, the students had complained that the supply of butter in the commons had gone rancid. Faculty supposedly saw no issue with the butter, but students remained adamant that their food supply was far below acceptable standards. Further exacerbating the situation, school regulations passed a year prior declared that "no Undergraduate shall be put out of the Comons [*sic*] but by a Note from the Pres^{dt} or one of the Tut^{rs}… And no Graduate shall put himself out of the Comons [*sic*], unless he is going out of Town for a Week."[106] Forced to eat on campus and seeing no other options, students stormed out of the offices, marched on the streets of Cambridge (supposedly causing a great deal of commotion), and ate breakfast at local shops. After days of unrest and threats of suspensions, students and faculty finally came to an agreement: the students apologized for their actions, and the butter supply was replaced.[107]

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[105] William C. Lane, “The Rebellion of 1766 in Harvard College,” *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts* (Boston, MA: Published by the Society, 1907), 40. The poem was

On the surface, the "Butter Rebellion" as it was called in subsequent retellings is a rather insignificant anecdote; a light-hearted story of unruly students and unyielding administrators. But the event exemplified a growing shift in colonial American society toward a willingness for citizens of a community to address perceived injustices directly; to confidently act in solidarity to upend traditional power structures. To a certain extent, the protest over rancid butter was emblematic of growing resentment for the American colonial system itself, which by the 1760s had become unnecessarily dependent on the importation of essential daily goods. As historian Samuel Eliot Morison argues, the

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written to mirror passages from the King James translation of the Bible, hence the anachronistic use of "eth" at the end of certain verbs.

[106] The Board of Overseers of Harvard College, "Articles Respecting the Diet and the College, Proposed by the Board of Overseers and Adopted, with Alterations, by the President and Fellows, 10 September, 1765," *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts* (Boston, MA: Published by the Society, 1907), 35.

[107] Lane, "The Rebellion of 1766 in Harvard College," 56-58.

problem with the rancid butter represented “a broken New England colonial economy. Little butter was produced in winter; hence the merchants imported Irish butter in the fall, and by the spring it was bad, very bad.”[108] Colonial dairies were more than able to produce enough quantities of fresh butter for the students of Harvard, but a provision in the 1765 college rulebook required all purchases of butter to be placed in bulk along with other imported goods.[109] Using a method emulated decades later in the “federal diet” declaration, the students that protested rancid butter used food as a symbol of a greater systematic political and economic issue.

From a purely practical perspective, the rancid butter in the Harvard commons was a daily mealtime inconvenience that needed to be addressed but did not warrant the response it provoked. For the Harvard students who marched on the streets of Cambridge, however, the butter represented the greater mismanagement of an oppressive and inflexible administration, a mismanagement of power to be righted by force of action if necessary. What is of import in this event is the response of the students and how their response exemplified a cultural shift in subsections of colonial American society toward a new collective understanding of the role the people should play as citizens of a community. In the ensuing decade, this reinterpreted interaction between the American people and their colonial authorities would play out on a much grander scale.

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[108] Samuel Eliot Morison, *Three Centuries of Harvard, 1636-1936* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1964), 118.

[109] The provision stated that the “buttery” was to be “supply’d out of the College Stock & be furnish’d as the Corporation shall Order wth Wines & other Liquors, Tea, Coffee, Chocolate, Sugar, Bisket [*sic*], Pens, Ink, & Paper & other suitable Articles for Scholars.” The Board of Overseers of Harvard College, “Articles Respecting the Diet and the College,” 36.

Food and foodways—both pragmatically and symbolically—continued to play a central role in national discussions during the revolutionary era. Taxes placed on certain imported goods became the impetus for colonial resistance to British authority: the Sugar Act of 1764 and the Intolerable Acts of 1774 being two primary examples of British legislation passed to levy funds on imported food items that were met with strong opposition in the colonies. Colonial resistance to the Sugar Act (which included a variety of goods other than sugar, including coffee, pimiento, coconuts, and pearl ash) is seen by some scholars as one of the first large-scale acts of resistance against colonial authority in America, predating the Stamp Act riots by one year.[110] Ten years later, the Intolerable Acts were passed in direct response to the events of the Boston Tea Party, itself an act of resistance that used food as a symbol of colonial oppression.[111]

Food also served as an entryway into civic action for members of society often not included in the public discourse. As food shortages led to price increases during the war, Americans en masse protested, many of whom doing so for the first time in their lives. According to historian Barbara Clark Smith, those who engaged in the more than thirty large-scale food riots during the Revolution revealed,

> the existence of a particular political role in the eighteenth century, the experience of a public formed outside the town meeting open to participation by some who could not vote as well as by many who could… Price rioters exhibited the

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[110] Robert Paul Thomas, "A Quantitative Approach to the Study of the Effects of British Imperial Policy upon Colonial Welfare: Some Preliminary Findings," *The Journal of Economic History* 25, no. 4 (December, 1965): 615–38.

[111] For a detailed description of the Boston Tea Party and the cultural impact of the event on Americans in the early national period, see: Alfred F. Young, *The Shoemaker and the Tea Party: Memory and the American Revolution* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2000).

> capacity for independent judgement; they assumed the right not to be convinced by elite ideas of justice; they asserted the ability to hold and express their own.[112]

Food, therefore, was central to a number of important events and ideals of the revolutionary era that in turn helped redefine perceptions of American social and political power structures.

Moreover, establishments such as colonial taverns, coffeehouses, and tearooms—communal places where most members of society were welcomed—became the epicenter of political and social discourse in America. The venues served as meetinghouses and debate-halls in which the nature of citizenship and the meaning and implications of independence could be freely discussed.[113] A 1775 letter to the *New York Journal* declared that "in this time of public difficulty and danger…coffee houses have been universally deemed the most convenient places of resort, because, at a small expense of time or money, persons wanted may be found and spoke with, appointments may be made, current news heard, and whatever most concerns can be known."[114] The conviviality of these venues—the ability to debate the major issues of the era over a pint of beer or a cup of coffee—made them conducive to more open and forthright reexaminations of the complex ideologies that advanced the political and social goals of revolution.

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[112] Barbara Clark Smith, "Food Rioters and the American Revolution," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 51, no. 1 (January 1, 1994): 29-30.

[113] See: Baylen J. Linnekin, "Tavern Talk and the Origins of the Assembly Clause: Tracing the First Amendment's Assembly Clause Back to Its Roots in Colonial Taverns," *Hastings Constitutional Law Quarterly,* no. 39 (Fall, 2011): 593-615. Linnekin's article details the manner in which boisterous tavern culture facilitated more open debate within a larger portion of the citizenry. The author contends that this practice was held in such high regard that tavern culture served as an impetus for the development of the First Amendment's right to peacefully assemble.

[114] A Friend to the City, "To the Inhabitants of New York," *New York Journal,* October 19, 1775, 2.

The years following independence would see a dramatic and purposeful shift toward defining a postcolonial identity in more conclusive terms, leading to calls for systems such as the "federal diet," among other similar declarations. But declaring political independence and establishing the foundations for a national cultural identity in practical terms were not one in the the same. In the years directly following independence, Americans struggled to accurately define what it truly meant to be an American, and began to come to terms with the difficulties inherent in restructuring a loosely-connected and diverse citizenry into a singular entity.

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It was within this historical context—the practical and philosophical emergence of postcolonial American identity formulated through a greater understanding of the wants and desires of the people of the country—that the eighteenth century writer J. Hector St. John de Crèvecœur asked the misleadingly simple question: "What then is the American, this new man?"[115] Crèvecœur published his optimistic answer in a series of "letters" written by an American farmer; a man whom he saw as representative of the strongest virtues of the new society. Crèvecœur believed the United States to be uniquely suited to develop wholesale the enlightened ideals of freedom and liberty, in part because the nation was made up of generations of immigrants who chose to remove themselves from the social hierarchies and dynastic authoritarianism of Europe.

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[115] J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer*, *Reprinted from the Original Edition, 1782* (New York, NY: Fox, Duffield, and Co., 1904), 54.

Born in France in 1735, Crèvecœur emigrated to Quebec as a young adult. He was later imprisoned by the British during the American Revolution, and after his release sailed back to France. He published *Letters from an American Farmer* while in Europe but later returned to United States and lived in New York.[116] Thus, Crèvecœur's immigrant lifestyle and experiences in both Europe and North America placed him in a unique and compelling position to observe the nascent American culture. In Crèvecœur's vision of America, the titular farmer was free to forge a new identity based not on hereditary titles but on the merits of his work and the quality of what he produced. "What attachment can a poor European emigrant have for a country where he had nothing?" Crèvecœur asked of his readers, "His country is now that which gives him land, bread, protection, and consequence: *Ubi panis ibi patria.*"[117]

Ubi panis ibi patria: a Latin phrase translated as "where there is bread there is a country," succinctly embodied Crèvecœur's and other late-eighteenth century American writers' views on the relationship between food and identity. New political ideologies (and an enlightened population of citizens freed from Old World power structures) necessitated a reexamination of the components that define a country. Deconstructing the United States in this matter prioritized the production of bare essentials over more haughty characteristics of a society. Thus, it was not lineage or wealth, or even great literature or the arts that defined and unified American people: it was their "bread" that sustained them and gave them their identity.

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[116] For more information on Crèvecœur's biography and social political leanings, see: Gay Wilson Allen and Roger Asselineau, *St. John de Crevecoeur: The Life of an American Farmer* (New York, NY: Viking Press, 1987).

[117] Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer*, 54.

Crèvecœur summarized the new American doctrine that his farmer embodied as follows:

> What should we American farmers be without the distinct possession of soil? It feeds, it clothes us, from it we draw even a great exuberancy, our best meat, our richest drink, the very honey of our bees comes from this privileged spot… This formerly rude soil has been converted by my father into a pleasant farm, and in return it has established all our rights; on it is founded our rank, our freedom, our power as citizens, our importance as inhabitants of such a district…for this is what may be called the true and the only philosophy of an American farmer.[118]

Of note in Crèvecœur's statement is his focus on the soil. Similar to early European colonists' descriptions of the New World, Crèvecœr praises the fertility of the land. What was considered a promising if daunting situation to early colonists, however, had come to fruition for Crèvecœur's generation. In his narrative, the "rude soil" of America, this "privileged spot," had already been converted by his European ancestors. Not surprisingly, the narrative completely omitted the native population and their agricultural influence. Americans of the early national period could quite literally reap the benefits of European colonization while whitewashing their hegemonic and oppressive relationship with American Indians. Nevertheless, using this soil, Crèvecœur's farmer produced not only the highest quality foodstuffs but also revealed the ideological foundations for political and social freedom. This linkage was not accidental: for Crèvecœur, the products of the soil beget the ideals of the country. In this regard, *The American Farmer* is a triumphant narrative which spoke to the naive confidence of writings in the early national period.

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[118] Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer*, 27-28.

The American Farmer's insistence on the importance of agriculture in national character development was part of a larger conceptual framework championed by wealthy elite Americans in the years following independence. In his *Notes on Virginia*, Thomas Jefferson also detailed the important status of the American farmer in relation to the general well-being of the nation. "Those who labor in the earth are the chosen people of God," he argued, "Corruption of morals in the mass of cultivators is a phenomenon of which no age nor nation has furnished an example."[119] For Jefferson, the purest pursuit for an American citizen was to cultivate and own his own farm. Through ownership and toiling on the land, it was argued, Americans would be free from the vices that corrupted older European systems of government. Similar to the arguments made for the development of a "federal diet," the central component that allowed American farmers to remain virtuous was their independence from reliance on foreign or outside agencies for their sustenance. If a family could grow its own crops and sustain a humble existence, they would be less likely to be corrupted by outside temptations. As Jefferson argued, dependence on others, "begets subservience and venality, suffocates the germ of virtue, and prepares fit tools for the designs of ambition."[120]

In essence, what Jefferson, Crèvecœur, and others advocated was a political and social system based on the primacy of agriculture. A sustainable, principled nation was only possible if its citizens' basic needs were met internally. Cultivating enough crops to provide food for all Americans, therefore, was the first step towards sustaining and growing a strong national character. The republican idealism that Jefferson championed in *Notes on the State of Virginia* became a mainstay of American political discourse, elevating the symbol of the modest, self-sufficient, and virtuous yeoman farmer to highest levels of American society.[121]

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[119] Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, 8th ed. (Boston, MA: Printed by David Carlisle, 1801), 244.
[120] Ibid.

Whether such an idealized version of American agriculture existed—or was even possible—is debatable. Historian Richard Hofstadter discredits the concept, labeling Jefferson's ideal "the agrarian myth," and contending that,

> whatever the spokesman of the agrarian myth might have told him, the farmer almost anywhere in early America knew that all around him there were examples of commercial success in agriculture—the tobacco, rice, and indigo, and later the cotton planters of the South, the grain, meat, and cattle exporters of the middle states. The farmer knew that without cash he could never rise above the hardships and squalor of pioneering and log-cabin life.[122]

Thus, the economic realities of the early American Republic made it impossible (and unappealing) for farmers to completely detach themselves from the temptations of the burgeoning market economy. In this practical model, social and economic improvement lay not in abiding by lofty goals and idealized traditions, but in adapting to new and more efficient modern methods.[123]

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[121] For a detailed description of Jefferson's argument, see: Scott M. Roulier, "American Pastoral: Jefferson Agrarian Republic," *Shaping American Democracy: Landscapes and Urban Design,* Scott M. Roulier ed. (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 27-46. Roulier's review of Jefferson's agrarian ideal as in direct opposition the Federalist preoccupation with manufacturing and industry is a particularly interesting and worthwhile analysis.

[122] Richard Hofstadter, "The Myth of the Happy Yeoman," *American Heritage*, 7, no. 3 (April, 1956): 48.

[123] For further information on the practicality of Jefferson's yeoman farmer ideal, as well as a more detailed modern historiography of its counterpoints, see M. Andrew Holowchak, "Jefferson's Moral Agrarianism: Poetic Fiction or Normative Vision?" in *Agriculture and Human Values*, 28, no. 4 (December, 2011): 497-506.

Symbolism, however, can have an effect on identity formation without needing a practical application. In *Imagined Communities*, historian and political scientist Benedict Anderson insists the impact of intangible concepts can be equally influential in the formative identity of nations. Andersen believes a nation to be made up of a hypothetical grouping of people who share a collection of similar ideologies; a population defining its identity not from necessarily direct interaction or pragmatic systems (the market economy, for example) but from a collection of shared beliefs and understandings that unify the populace. In essence, a single culture, political system, and geographic boundary connects citizens who otherwise would have no real connection to each other. "Nationalism," he argues, "or, as one might prefer to put it in view of that word's multiple significations, nation-ness, as well as nationalism, are cultural artifacts of a particular kind."[124]

This "particular kind" of cultural studies relies on intellectual constructions that, although not physical or quantifiable in any actual sense, nevertheless have a remarkable impact on the lives of those wrapped within such a system.[125] In this scenario, perception becomes more influential than reality. Therefore, regardless of the "mythic" status of the agrarian ideal, the concept itself had tangible ramifications that influenced the development of America's postcolonial identity. Although the people of the United States had yet to define themselves in Anderson's modern, twentieth century nationalistic terminology, the foundations of such a cultural and social construct—namely, the development of a sense of shared identity that transcended the practical limits of a community and could be represented in intangible concepts such as the agrarian ideal—quickly became a common practice in the late-eighteenth century's postcolonial republican discourse.

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[124] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (Brooklyn, NY: Verso Press, 2006), 4.

[125] It is important to note that Anderson does not mean "imaginary" when he discusses imagined communities. He certainly contends that nations exist in some actual form, but the important variables that unite people are less tangible than asserted in other analyses of nationalism.

An example of the yeoman farmer ideal's substantive effect can be found in the creation of a number of organizations developed to promote the advancement of nationwide improvements in agriculture in the early Republic. These societies—mostly created by wealthy patricians to disseminate information on agricultural best practices—formed throughout the Europe and the United States in the late-eighteenth century. Members of these societies labelled themselves "gentlemen farmers," a term that can be traced to Scottish philosopher Lord Henry Home Kames. Kames argued that wealthy landowners who had resources and leisure time in abundance could improve agricultural techniques through diligent study and testing. In turn, the conclusions of the gentlemen farmers were meant to directly aid all other farmers who had little time to devote to research.[126]

Kames' argument was echoed in multiple agricultural society mission statements, including the Bath and West of English Society for the Encouragement of Agriculture that argued gentlemen farmers, "being men of considerable landed property, have in their power to make experiments, which would perhaps be imprudent for common farmers to make at their own risque [*sic*]. Such gentlemen, therefore…are peculiarly entitled to the thanks of their country. At a very trifling expense they become the primary means of increasing the wealth and happiness of the community."[127] Statements such as these are strong examples of the link between cultural elitism and Enlightenment ideologies, viewpoints that were highly prevalent in the writings of European authors of the era. Nevertheless, their genuine attempt to increase agricultural yields and consequently improve the general well-being of their countries' inhabitants made such societies immensely popular within certain social circles. Whether or not the findings of these institutions had an effect on the yeoman farmer and other "common" members of society, however, is debatable.

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[126] Lord Henry Home Kames, *The Gentleman Farmer: Being an Attempt to Improve Agriculture by Subjecting It to the Test of Rational Principles* (Edinburgh, UK: W. Creech, 1776), 313-333.

By the end of the eighteenth century in the United States, more than a dozen such agricultural organizations had been established. The largest of these societies were the Philadelphia Society for Promoting Agriculture and Other Rural Concerns; the Burlington (New Jersey) Society for the Promotion of Agriculture and Domestic Manufactures; The South Carolina Society for Promoting and Improving Agriculture; The New York Society for Agriculture, Arts, and Manufacturers; and the Massachusetts Society for Promoting Agriculture.[128] While located throughout the country in a variety of regions with extremely different crops, climates, topographies, and agricultural methods, the member makeup and goals of the organizations remained remarkably similar.

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[127] Bath and West of England Society for the Encouragement of Agriculture, *Letters and Papers on Agriculture, Planting, &c.,* vol. 2 (Bath, England: Printed by Order of the Society, 1792), vi-vii.

[128] R. Douglas Hurt, *American Agriculture: A Brief History* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2002), 103.

As a testament to their desire to unify disparate regions under a single consolidated culture, each organization used agriculture and food as representations of the positive effects that postcolonial nation building could have on American society. In a published address to his colleagues, James Kent, President of the New York Society for Agriculture, Arts and Manufacturers, said,

> From a country like ours, profusely blessed by the hand of nature, enjoying so convenient outlet, being so abundantly watered and covered with a rich soil, and immense quantities of unimproved land at market on cheap and easy terms, it was to be expected that agriculture and commerce should receive and communicate redoubled vigor.[129]

Kent used language similar to descriptions of American natural resources made by early European colonists. The bounty and size of the nation was simply unparalleled, it was a land blessed with immense abundance. Whereas many colonists lamented the misuse of such valuable resources by native populations, Kent determined a vigorous focus on improvements to American agriculture to be a foregone conclusion of settlement in the New World.

Further, using direct comparisons to European nations (whose previous agricultural systems were almost universally praised and doggedly copied by colonists on the American continent), Kent continued by critiquing the “poverty, desolation, and wretchedness” of Irish, French, and German farmers and land tenets, and called the Spanish practice of employing French farmers to reap their harvests, “indolent and degraded."[130] The address exemplifies a dramatic shift in the perception of European agricultural systems, as well as a significantly optimistic estimation of their American equivalent. "The result is," he concluded, "that we have before us the utmost encouragement to exertion, and the brightest prospects of presenting to mankind a new and exemplar spectacle of national felicity."[131] Thus, the promise of American society was represented in its ability to harness and develop the enormous tracts of land and bountiful resources of the continent, which if deployed effectively would intrinsically lead to the greater happiness throughout the country.

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[129] James Kent, “Address delivered before the Society in the Assembly Chamber, in the City-Hall at New York, the evening of November 8, 1796,” *Transactions of the Society for the Promotion of Agriculture, Arts, and Manufactures Instituted in the State of New York*, vol. 1 (Albany, NY: Charles R. and George Webster, 1801), 195.

Statements from other organizations contained similarly optimistic declarations on American agriculture. For example, James Mease, Vice President of the Philadelphia Society for Promoting Agriculture, proclaimed in his inaugural address, "When our people, and those who represent them, are convinced of our agriculture, the capabilities and enterprise of the American character will achieve all that could be wished on the subject."[132] In both of these agricultural societies' proclamations, the prevailing theme remained the need to improve and unify the production of American foodstuffs to ensure federal and republican prosperity. However, while these societies' goals, published findings, and efforts were commendable, the specific results and practical methods used to apply their objectives on a national scale remained relatively ambiguous.

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[130] Kent, "Address delivered before the Society in the Assembly Chamber," 198.
[131] Ibid., 202.
[132] James Mease, "An Address on the Progress of Agriculture, with Hints for its Improvement in the United States," *Memoirs of the Philadelphia Society for Promoting Agriculture*, vol. 4 (Philadelphia, PA: Benjamin Warner, 1808), xxv.

By the 1790s, American political and social structures had evolved into entities distinct from their European colonial counterparts. So too were American cultural systems slowly separating from their origins, including most notably the opinions and reactions towards American agriculture and diet. Early colonial reluctance to incorporate native foodstuffs into their daily lives had gradually waned, and a new sense of pride and appreciation for the plentiful nature of the American continent (mostly void of descriptions of the native populations themselves and their cooking styles) replaced previous misgivings. Food became emblematic not only of the bounty and promise of America, but in the instance of imported foodstuffs, a symbolic reaction to the economic oppression and colonial resistance resulting from British rule. In turn, culinary self-sufficiency became synonymous with postcolonial political independence, and both the yeoman farmer and the agricultural methods he employed were revered as representative of a new auspicious federal republican character.

For Americans of the late-eighteenth century, there was a clear understanding of what a single, unified "federal diet" was not: it was not the "savage" meals consumed by native populations, nor was it composed of imported items representative of the tyrannical economic and social structures of the Old World. It was apparent that a "federal diet" should consist of abundant crops and plentiful domestic meals harvested by self-sufficient, virtuous American farmers. However, the plausibility that such a system could be implemented nationally was still in question. By the turn of the nineteenth century, Americans and their cuisine lay in a state of limbo: seemingly no longer beholden to both indigenous and European colonial cultural manifestations of identity, yet ultimately uncertain of how to define and assert this new distinctive character. In essence, the people of the United States had used food and food culture to examine what they were not, but they had yet to effectively articulate who they actually were.

CHAPTER 2:
As American as Apple Pudding - A Distinct Culinary Culture Emerges

On October 1, 1787, Thomas Jefferson willingly received a moose carcass at his residence in Paris. Living in the city as the French Ambassador of the United States, it was no simple feat to obtain such an enormous specimen. The moose had been killed by an acquaintance of Jefferson's and carried to the docks in Boston to be shipped to him as quickly as possible in order to minimize rot and degradation. The carcass was inexplicably left on the docks, unfortunately, which delayed its shipment and destroyed much of the meat and hide.[133] Along with elk antlers that were much smaller than Jefferson had asked for, the situation was not an ideal scenario, but the cargo was nevertheless adequate enough for Jefferson's intended purpose. "I had taken measures, particularly, to be furnished with large horns of our elk and our deer," Jefferson wrote, "and therefore beg of you not to consider those now sent, as furnishing a specimen of their ordinary size… The moose is, perhaps, of a new class."[134] Jefferson hoped to impress those who saw the animals with their size and their exotic nature. Mere written descriptions were not adequate, according to Jefferson, to convey the impressive nature of these purely American creatures. But why exactly would he feel the need to go to such great lengths to prove the size of these animals, what was he hoping to accomplish, and who exactly did he wish to impress?

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[133] For a concise description of the events that led up to the procurement of Jefferson's moose, as well his reasoning for acquiring the specimen and its implications on perceptions of American natural history, see: Lee Dugatkin, "Jefferson's Moose and the Case against American Degeneracy," *Scientific American* 304 (February, 2011): 84-87, and his more detailed earlier book: Lee Dugatkin, *Mr. Jefferson and the Giant Moose: Natural History in Early America* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2009).

[134] Thomas Jefferson, "Letter To Monsieur le Comte de Buffon, October 2, 1787," *Memoirs, Correspondence, and Private Papers of Thomas Jefferson: Late President of the United States* (London, UK: H. Colburn and R. Bentley, 1829), 243-244.

The answer to these questions reveals a growing cultural shift during the early American Republic against a passive national identity formation and toward a far more active—and often reactive—approach. Jefferson's acquisition of a moose is emblematic of a desire to alter discussions of American identity, attempt to forge a new narrative and direct the conversation on what it meant to be American away from its previous Eurocentric dominance. Through a complicated process of rationalizations and justifications, Americans like Jefferson built an argument for American supremacy rooted in the superiority of the climatological, biological, and ultimately culinary world in which the country occupied. What grew on the continent and what foods those who lived on the continent ate became an integral component of this theory, but these attempts at establishing greater federal agency remained predicated on answering the accusations of European thinkers, therefore reaffirming European influence rather than removing it entirely.

That the natural world of North America and cooking practices of the United States had become distinct and (and some would argue superior) from their Old World colonial counterparts during the period was not a foregone conclusion, however. Food journalist Waverly Root wrote that after the American Revolution, Americans, "might very well have seized the opportunity to declare its independence of the English cuisine. As a matter of fact, in 1776 it was already too late… American *native* cooking would remain thereafter a branch of English cooking…[remaining] according to a well-worn saying 'as American as apple pie' - a dish imported from England."[135]

However, Root's argument oversimplifies the cultural exchange inherent in American postcolonial societal development. To define American cooking solely as an offshoot of British cuisine ignores the elaborate and often subtle cultural shifts that occurred, such as the earlier calls and attempts at republican identity formation exemplified in the 1788 "federal diet" editorials. However, whereas previous generations of Americans merely hoped to describe a new culinary postcolonial food system, by the early-nineteenth century this process had begun to materialize in descriptions of minute changes to the natural world, which in turn affected the perception of certain foodstuffs and culinary practices.

This nuanced exchange is best articulated and applied in this scenario using social anthropologist Ulf Hannerz's work, *Cultural Complexity: Studies in the Social Organization of Meanin*g. Hannerz tackles the effect of globalization on postcolonial societies and uses the concept of creolization—the process of assimilating multiple cultures to form a single identity—to detail the complex interplay between societies of disparate political and social influence. Although generally reserved for modern, twentieth and twenty-first century global power structures, this hypothesis can also be partially applied to the United States in the decades following independence from Great Britain.

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[135] Waverly Root and Richard De Rochemont, *Eating In America* (New York, NY: Ecco Press, 1981), 10. More recently, James McWilliams has echoed this sentiment to a degree when he argues that American recipes of the era "were largely relics of the English system of cookery that, more often than not, are interesting for their plagiarizing from English sources dating back to the 1730s than for their recording of rough-hewn American innovation." James McWilliams, *A Revolution in Eating: How the Quest for Food Shaped America* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2007), 311. While McWilliams is more apt to give credence to the development of a uniquely American cuisine in the late-eighteenth century, the remnants of the longstating argument that American food remained mostly British after the American Revolution remains influential in most modern food scholarship.

According to Hannerz, "the cultural process of creolization is not simply a matter of a constant pressure from the center toward the periphery, but a much more creative interplay. As languages have different dimensions…so creole cultures come out of multidimensional cultural encounters and can put things together in new ways."[136] Thus this mixture of cultures, this "creolization," can be used to describe the multiple methods in which postcolonial societies—including the United States in the early national period—can both affect and be affected by other societies. The effect can vary from culture to culture, and the amount and type of mixing is certainly different in each manifestation, but nevertheless, the concept itself is essential to a stronger understanding of the nature of postcolonial national identity formation.[137]

Therefore, Jefferson's desire to showcase American moose and deer carcasses in Paris was an effort to represent the American continent's natural preeminence, and consequently the American people's excellent social character. Jefferson's procurement of the beasts was in direct response—and in his mind a complete repudiation—of the doctrine of degeneration theory; the eighteenth century European scientific community's prevailing belief regarding organic hierarchies.[138] The concept of degeneration blended biological theory with emerging social sciences to define a process by which organisms—affected by negative forces in their environment—devolved from their initial complex structural systems into simplified, degraded forms. This process was then extrapolated from single organisms to complex social systems, including plants, animal herds, and human civilizations inhabiting certain environments, ultimately painting a pessimistic view of the future of certain non-enlightened societies.[139]

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[136] Ulf Hannerz, *Cultural Complexity: Studies in the Social Organization of Meaning*, (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1992), 265.

[137] For more information on the concepts of complex cultural identity formation as they pertain to foodsystems, see: Sidney Wilfred Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1986) and: Richard Wilk, *Home Cooking in the Global Village: Caribbean Food from Buccaneers to Ecotourists* (New York, NY: Berg Publishers, 2006). Both works examine the development of cultural interchanges and globalized nation-building through the lens of international foodways. For cultural national identity formation specific to the early national period, see: Kariann Yokota, "Postcolonialism and Material Culture in the Early United States," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 64, no. 2 (January 1, 2007): 263–270.

The first philosopher to define this supposed phenomenon was the French naturalist Georges-Louis Leclerc, also known as the Comte de Buffon. First published in 1749, Buffon's massive 36 quatro *Histoire Naturelle* detailed a number of biological and environmental observations that would have an enormous impact on scientific study for decades. Although controversial for its rejection of biblical history (it was one of the first public treatises of its kind that argued the earth was older than 6,000 years) *Histoire Naturelle* was a bestseller that sold out of its first publication in less than six weeks, remained in print for over five decades, and would eventually be translated into over four languages.[140] While the work covered a variety of natural phenomena, Buffon's analysis of the American continent was by far the most problematic. "In America," Buffon wrote, "animated Nature is weaker, less active, and more circumscribed in the variety of her productions; for we perceive, from the enumeration of the American animals, that the numbers of species is not only fewer, but that, in general, all the animals are much smaller than those of the Old Continent."[141] It was this description of degeneration applied to the American continent that would have an enormous effect on the European perception of the United States in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries.

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[138] For a complete review of the theory and its implications on Western thought, see: J. Edward Chamberlin and Sander L. Gilman, eds. *Degeneration: The Dark Side of Progress* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1985), particularly Sander L. Gilman's essay, "Biology and Degeneration." Despite the lack of evidence, degeneration remained a prominent conceptual framework well into the twentieth century, affecting perceptions of gender and race, and driving advancements in psychotherapy. To review the theory's implications into the modern era, see: Robert C. Holub, "Dialectic of the Biological Enlightenment: Nietzsche, Degeneration, and Eugenics," in *Practicing Progress: The Promise and Limitations of Enlightenment,* Richard E. Schade and Dieter Sevin, eds. (New York, NY: Rodopi Publishers, 2007). To review the theory and its effect on American identity, see: Ralph N. Miller, "American Nationalism as a Theory of Nature," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 12, no. 1 (1955): 74–95.

[139] Arthur Herman, *The Idea of Decline in Western History* (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 1997), 109-111.

The concept that civilizations declined based on their environment was applied to North America over a century before the term was officially defined, however. While certain European settlers lauded the environmental and agricultural possibilities of the continent, others saw the extreme weather conditions as detrimental to settlement. English colonist William Wood remarked in 1634 that "Virginia having no Winter to speake [*sic*] of, but extreme hot Summers, hath dried up much *English* blood, and by pestiferous diseases swept away many lusty bodies, changing their complexion."[142] Wood notably did not fault the "victuals or necessary foode" of the region for the change in English complexion as Buffon and others would later assert, as he felt the "soyle [*sic*] is very fertile and pleasant, yielding both Corne and Cattle plenty."[143] Rather, it was the "climate, which indeed is bound to be hotter than is suitable to an ordinary *English* constitution" that was the cause for this malady.[144] While some of his conclusions on the effects of poor climate differed from later philosophers, Wood nevertheless detailed a similar causality structure wherein climate lead to a degradation of human health and wellbeing.

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[140] Sandra Knapp and Robert Huxley, eds. *The Great Naturalists* (London, UK: Thames and Hudson, 2007), 140–148.

[141] Georges Louis Leclerc Buffon, *The Natural History of Quadrupeds*,Thomas Nelson, trans. (Edinburgh, UK: Thomas Nelson and Peter Brown, 1830), 83.

[142] William Wood, *New England's Prospect: A True, Lively, and Experimentall Description of That Part of America, Commonly Called New England* (London, UK: John Dawson, 1634), 8.

Buffon, however, directly linked extreme climate to a degradation of foodstuffs, and consequently to a degradation of animals that ate such food. "We know from experience," he wrote, "that animals or vegetables, transported from distant climates, often degenerate…This effect, it is obvious, is produced by the difference of climate and food."[145] Buffon used a number of supposed examples to illustrate his stance, including specimen of wild horses introduced to North America by Spanish conquistadors that allegedly had reduced significantly in size by their third generation, and the meat of sheep eaten in America, which he described a "more meagre, and their flesh less succulent and tender than that of the European sheep."[146] For Buffon, portions of America prone to extreme temperatures and climatological shifts (relative to the more temperate climate of most of Western Europe) had developed over hundreds of years an environment unsuitable for healthy and efficient agricultural conditions. In turn, the animals that had survived in this climate had degenerated significantly, producing inferior samples of their respective animal species, including—at least in part—the species of man.

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[143] Wood, *New England's Prospect*, 9.

[144] Ibid.

[145] Buffon, *The Natural History of Quadrupeds*, 83.

[146] Ibid., 22.

Buffon’s proto-food chain hypothesis of degeneration ultimately concluded with racist depictions of American Indians. America’s climate negatively affected plant life, which was consumed by and negatively affected animal life, which in turn was consumed by and negatively affected humans native to the continent.[147] “All beings,” he wrote, “ are subjected to physical laws, and as the brute animals, as well as man, feel the influences of the heavens and the earth.”[148] Thus, to Buffon:

> In the [American] savage, the organs of generation are small and feeble. He has no hair, no beard, no ardour for the female. Though nimbler than the European, because more accustomed to running, his strength is not so great. His sensations are less acute; and yet he is more timid and cowardly. He has no vivacity, no activity of mind. The activity of his body is not so much an exercise or spontaneous motion, as a necessary action produced by want. Destroy his appetite for victuals and drink, and you will at once annihilate the active principle of all his movements.[149]

Therefore, degeneration was a theory not merely of natural history, but of the progress (or lack thereof) of civilization. Buffon's rationalizations bolstered racist inaccuracies regarding American Indian peoples, making his influential work both reflective of and more damaging to preconceived notions of the inferior “savagery” of native populations.

Buffon’s theories served as justifications for prejudice not only of American aborigines, however, but also for European settlers to the continent. Although he never explicitly theorized that degeneration applied to white Europeans in America, Buffon's contemporaries took his argument to its logical conclusion. The Dutch geographer and political philosopher Cornelius de Pauw, for instance, argued that "the Europeans who pass into America degenerate, as do the animals; a proof that the climate is unfavourable to the improvement of either man or animal."[150] He further summarized, referring to Buffon, that this process of human degeneration in America had "prevented Americans from emerging out of savage life. Through the whole extent of America, from Cape-horn to Hudson's-Bay, there has never appeared a philosopher, and artist, a man of learning or of parts, whose name has found a place in the history of sciences."[151] Whereas Buffon's hierarchy of the effects of degeneration culminated with American Indians, De Pauw quite explicitly applied the theory to white Americans and in turn denounced not only their natural composition, but their society as a whole.

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[147] Buffon theorized (and his peers further argued) that the humidity in America had stunted plant growth, leading to massive piles of rotting flora. The noxious vapors from these plants made the soil unfit for agriculture, the standing waters toxic, and the air dangerous to breathe. See: Cornelius de Pauw, introduction to *Selections from Les Recherches Philosophiques Sur Les Américains of M. Pauw,* D. Webb, trans. (London, UK: R. Cruttwell, 1795), for a summation of Buffon’s theory of noxious fumes.

[148] Buffon, *The Natural History of Quadrupeds*, 220.

[149] Ibid., 39.

The end result of degeneration for De Pauw, therefore, was the inability for citizens of the United States to compare to their more civilized European counterparts. The American climate created degenerate plants and animals, and thus Americans who lived within this environment and consumed food derived from it were themselves ultimately inferior, uncivilized humans. Food, therefore, was paramount to the development of civilization. "It is agriculture," he wrote, "that has led man by the hand from a savage state to a political constitution: the more cultivated the soil, the more abundance the harvest, the sooner will the cultivators humanize."[152] For De Pauw, the inverse of this statement applied to both native and naturalized Americans.[153]

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[150] De Pauw, *Les Recherches Philosophiques Sur Les Américains*, 17.
[151] Ibid., 27-28.

Although neither Buffon nor De Pauw ever travelled to America, their observations on American natural history had an enormous impact on thinkers both in Europe and the United States. The exchange of intellectual theories and information across the Atlantic between elite members of eighteenth century society—known as the Republic of Letters—facilitated the relatively rapid influence and adoption of degeneration theory even within the United States.[154] It was in the context of this cultural and intellectual exchange that Jefferson first responded to the accusations of American degeneration theory. Jefferson included his reactions and response to Buffon and others' writing in his *Notes on the State of Virginia*, published in 1785. "So far, the Count de Buffon has carried this new theory of the tendency of nature to belittle her productions on this side the Atlantic," he wrote, "I only mean to suggest a doubt, whether the bulk and faculties of animals depend on the side of the Atlantic on which their food happens to grow, or which furnishes the elements of which they are compounded?"[155] In a complete reversal of Buffon's theory, Jefferson asserted that, rather than degrading the products of the natural world, the climate in America *improved* conditions for cultivation. Jefferson continued:

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[152] De Pauw, *Les Recherches Philosophiques Sur Les Américains*, 8.

[153] De Pauw attempted to place his degeneration theory in historical perspective, inaccurately surmising that "In North America, the first settlers of Virginia were forced to return to Europe through want of food; while the colony of Philadelphia, and more than forty other, absolutely perished by famine. No wonder this should happen in a country totally uncultivated." De Pauw, *Les Recherches Philosophiques Sur Les Américains*, 24. His use of "uncultivated" in this context could have a double-meaning, describing both the inability to cultivate the land for agriculture, as well as describing the lack of culture and civilization in America.

[154] Much has been written on the impact and implications of the Republic of Letters in the United States. See: Michael Warner, *The Letters of the Republic: Publication and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), for an exceptional study on the technological and cultural impact the exchange had in the development of a national identity in the United States. Catherine O'Donnell Kaplan, *Men of Letters in the Early Republic* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2008) is a more recent example of scholarship on the Republic of Letters, and while focused primarily on American cultural exchange, her work also details the exchange between Europe and the United States. Finally, Stanford University's *Mapping the Republic of Letters* (http://republicofletters.stanford.edu) is an online digital humanities project that uses innovative mapping technology to visualize the exchange that connected ideas and writings across Europe and the United States during the era.

> It is by the assistance of heat and moisture that vegetables are elaborated from the elements of earth, air, water, and fire. We accordingly see the more humid climates produce the greater quantity of vegetables. Vegetables are mediately or immediately the food of every animal: and in proportion to the quantity of food, we see animals not only multiplied in their numbers, but improved in their bulk, as far as the laws of their nature will admit.[156]

Jefferson's claims represent a deliberate reactionary reversal of the negative perceptions perpetrated by Buffon's American degeneration theory. Jefferson used a procedural scientific process similar to Buffon's, but one in which the conclusion regarding foodstuffs placed America above rather than beneath Europe in cultivation abilities. Further, like others who advocated degeneration theory, Jefferson applied and extrapolated his natural history argument to American civilization as a whole. Rather than concluding that Americans degenerate, however, Jefferson provided a comprehensive list of the yields of American foods staples such as wheat and corn, giving, "a positive sketch of our minerals, vegetables, and quadrupeds, and being led by a proud theory to make a comparison of the latter with those of Europe and [extending] it to the Man of America, both aboriginal and emigrant."[157] Indeed, Jefferson reversed the theory using its own methodologies, and in the process helped develop a national response to notions of American inferiority. What was missing in both theories, however, was the rigorous and wide-ranging scope of modern scientific studies: Buffon used second-hand information to design his hypothesis, and Jefferson designated generalizations and personal anecdotes as evidence. For the time, however, such methods were accepted and commonplace, as the majority of scientific discoveries and theories were developed on top of such shaky foundations.[158] It was with this theory in mind that Jefferson—less than two years after the publication of *Notes on the State of Virginia*—would procure the moose carcass in Paris and deliver it to Buffon's nearby residence. Writing to Buffon, Jefferson wished, "these spoils, Sir, may have the merit of adding anything new to the treasures of nature, which have so fortunately come under your observation."[159]

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[155] Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, 90.

[156] Ibid., 62.

[157] Ibid., 94.

Jefferson's preoccupation with the natural world, and particularly its application to agriculture and subsequently to cookery, were widely known at the time within the elite social social circles of America and France. At his home in Monticello, visitors were welcomed in his entryway with busts of elk and deer and a taxidermied buffalo, each of which labeled with Jefferson's copious scientific observations.[160] His garden, maintained by his slave known as Great George, grew a wide variety of native crops including tomatoes, mint, and "corn from Cherokee country."[161] Jefferson, however, also had an infamous affinity for French cuisine and culinary practices—amassing an enormous French wine collection costing a small fortune to ship to Virginia—that political rivals were eager to pounce on as illustrative of Jefferson's foreign loyalties. Patrick Henry, for instance, supposedly remarked that Jefferson had all but "abjured his native victuals" while abroad in Paris.[162] Therefore, Jefferson's letter to Buffon regarding the moose was not only indicative of his personal interest in the natural world, but also an attempt to reaffirm his allegiance to America by defending his country's natural resources.

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[158] An excellent resource on the origins of the scientific method and its implications on society and culture can be found in: Steven Shapin and Simon Schaffer, *Leviathan and the Air-Pump: Hobbes, Boyle, and the Experimental Life* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011).

[159] Thomas Jefferson, "Letter To Monsieur le Comte de Buffon, October 2, 1787," 243-244.

[160] Joyce Henri Robinson, "An American Cabinet of Curiosities: Thomas Jefferson's 'Indian Hall at Monticello,'" *The Winterthur Portfolio* 30, no. 1 (1995): 47.

In a letter sent less than two weeks before the arrival of the moose, Jefferson commented to his friend and fellow gentleman farmer Nicholas Lewis that, while Jefferson loved French culinary practices, French foodstuffs were in general inferior to their American counterparts. "I cultivate in my own garden here Indian corn for the use of my own table, to eat green in our manner," he wrote, "But the species I am able to get here for seed, is hard, with a thick skin, and dry."[163] Of note is not only Jefferson's description of European corn as inferior, but also his desire "to eat green in our manner" referring to consuming foodstuffs he was accustomed to eating at home, and consequently making an explicit distinction between American culinary habits and those of Europe. Jefferson's letter continued by asking Lewis to send him "bacon hams…a dozen or two would last me a year, [and] would be better than any to be on this side of the Atlantic, which, inferior as they are, cost about a guinea apiece."[164] Jefferson's choice of the word "inferior" when describing French hogs was deliberate and in direct opposition to Buffon's theory. Thus, a defense of American culinary habits preoccupied Jefferson's writings while at residence in Paris and gave context to his desire to obtain the moose carcass to counter Buffon's degeneration theory.

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[161] Thomas Jefferson, "Letter To Nicholas Lewis, September 17, 1787," *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson, Volume 12: August 1787 to March 1788*, Julian P. Boyd, ed. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018), 134.

[162] James Schouler, *Thomas Jefferson* (New York, NY: Dodd, Mead, and Co., 1893), 209.

[163] Jefferson, "Letter To Nicholas Lewis, September 17, 1787," 134.

Jefferson and Buffon had met before and had discussed the era's scientific advancements, but they had never formally debated the particulars of degeneration.[165] It was Jefferson's goal to use the moose carcass as an impressive example of the *improved* rather than degraded specimens of the animal kingdom native to America and to debate these examples with Buffon in person. It would be further surmised that if the climate of the continent could aid in the development of such a large and powerful species such as the moose, then the continent—and the United States in particular—could develop a citizenry and civilization that could rival, if not exceed, the cultures of Europe. Unfortunately, Buffon had fallen ill in the summer of 1787 and by October was is no condition to receive guests, let alone a giant dead moose. Buffon would die the following April, 1788 never seeing the animal specimens sent by Jefferson and consequently never amending his theories on degeneration to account for these specific American specimens.

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[164] Jefferson, "Letter To Nicholas Lewis, September 17, 1787," 134.

[165] In a letter to James Madison in July, 1788, Jefferson reminiscenced about a conversation between he and Buffon on the similarities between the sciences and the culinary arts. He wrote, "Speaking one day with Monsieur de Buffon on the present ardor of chemical enquiry, he affected to consider chemistry but as cookery, and to place the toils of the laboratory on a footing with those of the kitchen." Thomas Jefferson, "Letter To James Madison, July 19, 1788," *Memoirs, Correspondence, and Private Papers of Thomas Jefferson: Late President of the United States* (London, UK: H. Colburn and R. Bentley, 1829), 339.

As a result, degeneration theory would continue to remain highly influential in the development of natural and social hierarchical systems in Europe and America.

Nearly twenty-five years after Buffon's death, his theories continued to weigh heavily on American intellectuals, including North Carolina politician and physician Hugh Williamson. Williamson wrote, "It has been remarked by historians and philosophers of the greatest celebrity* that the distinguishing character of nations is formed, in a great measure, by climate, situation, and food… The difference, in general, is to be explained by the difference of the climates in which they live; and the form and face of the country they inhabit, or the food by which they are nourished."[166] In a note at the bottom of the page, the first of Williamson's "philosophers of the greatest celebrity" was Buffon.[167] Degeneration theory, and the connection between climate, food, and national identity had become so deeply ingrained in Western scientific and social thought that even Williamson—a patriot and signer of the the U.S. Constitution—conceded that while, "the soil of America seems to produce animals of equal strength and firmness," they are "less ferocious of disposition than are produced on the other continent," and would probably lead to a similar "existence of a race of men."[168] However, Williamson opined that by virtue of this disposition, the citizens of the United States may be "less prone to destroy one another, and more desirous to improve the understanding and cultivate social virtues."[169] While Williamson's ultimate conclusions may have distorted Buffon's original theory to effectively paint Americans in a more positive light (although he was not very prophetic in his assessment of the United States' future pacivity), his writings nevertheless reveal the continued, long-lasting impact of degeneration theory on conceptions of American character, even from within American society.

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[166] Hugh Williamson, *Observations on the Climate in Different Parts of America, Compared with the Climate in Corresponding Parts of the Other Continent :To Which Are Added, Remarks on the Different Complexions of the Human Race; with Some Account of the Aborigines of America* (New York, NY: T&J Swords, 1811), 169.
[167] Ibid.
[168] Ibid., 180.

Conversely, Jefferson's desire to reverse the negative perceptions of Buffon's theory—and in the process to exonerate the United States from allusions to its social degeneracy—also remained prevalent in the cultural undercurrents of early national writings. Moreover, food and cuisine continued to be used as a means to represent the supposed social and cultural ascendancy of nations. The American-born English physicist Benjamin Thompson, also known as Count Rumford,[170] echoed this sentiment when he wrote, "there is certainly no subject of investigation more interesting to mankind as providing subsistence, [it is] an object of first concern in all countries, and any discovery or improvement by which the procuring of good and wholesome food can be facilitated…to promote the happiness of society."[171] Into the nineteenth century, the cultural association between food and national character formation continued to influence enlightened thought on both sides of the Atlantic, even in essays on more empirical scientific subjects.[172]

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[169] Williamson, *Observations on the Climate in Different Parts of America*, 180.

[170] Benjamin Thompson was born in Massachusetts in 1753. Thompson remained an avid loyalist during the American Revolution, and consequently moved to Great Britain after the war. Thompson later moved to Bavaria in the 1780s, where he was made a Count of the Holy Roman Empire. He chose the name "Count Rumford" after the town of Rumford, New Hampshire, where he lived prior to the American Revolution. For more information on Benjamin Thompson's life, see: Sanborn C. Brown, "A Biographical Sketch of Count Rumford," *Men of Physics: Benjamin Thompson—Count Rumford on the Nature of Heat* (New York, NY: Elsevier Publishing, 2013), 3-11.

[171] Benjamin Thompson (Count Rumford), "Essay on Food," *Essays Political, Economical, and Philosophical* (London, UK: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1800), 249.

As an American by birth, Count Rumford retained his affinity (and to a certain extent a cultural, if not political, allegiance) for his native foods while living in Europe. Rumford used his unique situation as both an American and a European citizen to clear long-standing biases toward American foodstuffs. "People who have not been accustomed to this American cookery may be prejudiced against it," he wrote, "in a country which produces all the delicacies of the table in the greatest abundance, it is not to be supposed that a whole nation should have a taste so depraved as to give it a decided preference to any particular…Food which has not something to recommend it."[173] Two items are of note in Rumford's assessment. First, Rumford reaffirmed the position that the American continent produced a great abundance of foodstuffs, in direct opposition to proponents of American degeneration. That Rumford—an esteemed member of the European scientific community—would make this statement in a widely published volume was itself rather significant. Second, Rumford was one of the first writers to publicly and directly address European prejudice against American cookery. Previous authors had certainly published treatises that hinted at a deficiency in American foodstuffs, but they were almost universally cloaked in scientific rationalizations such as those of Buffon and De Pauw. Rumford explained the negative perception in cultural terms, however, indicating a bias that was removed from logical, scientific justifications.

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[172] Count Rumford's "Essay on Food" was part of a collection of essays on the effect of thermodynamics and the caloric composition of certain foodstuffs and the application of these conclusions on society at large. His cultural comments on food and national identity are generally inconsistent with the majority of his other writings in this volume.

[173] Benjamin Thompson (Count Rumford), "Essay on Food," 254-255.

Rumford continued by describing numerous American foodstuffs in order to bolster his argument, but his commentary on foods made with American apples was one of the more effective. "A pudding of great repute in all parts of North America, is what is called an *apple pudding*" he argued, "this is an Indian pudding, sometimes with, and sometimes without suet, with dried cuttings of sweet apples mixed with it; and when eaten with butter, it is [a] most delicious Food."[174] Rumford's assertion that the pudding's reputation encompassed all of North America was a statement that spoke to the availability and nationalist tendencies of certain foodstuffs of the era. That the dish was made with dried apples removed the seasonal and regional requirements for apple production, and allowed for the meal's easier adoption throughout the nation.

Further, Rumford's clarification that the apple pudding was a form of "Indian pudding" revealed the American origin of the dish. As discussed earlier, by the end of the eighteenth century it was common practice for any meal made from corn to be labelled "Indian," a moniker that denoted the dish's roots in North America. Most intriguing, however, was Rumford's assertion that apple pudding was made "sometimes with, and sometimes without suet." On the surface, the statement would seem a rather innocuous detail of a cooking preference. A review of the cultural morés of food consumption in the era reveals a more complex statement.

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[174] Benjamin Thompson (Count Rumford), "Essay on Food," 254-255.

Suet is a hard fat extracted from beef kidney used to give body to certain dishes, and puddings made from suet were considered a specialty of British cuisine. While the use of suet in puddings can be traced back to medieval Europe, suet puddings did not become readily available and associated with British cooking practices until the invention of the pudding cloth in England in the seventeenth century.[175] By the late-eighteenth century, suet puddings had become synonymous with British cuisine, and European and American readers would have understood this reference without further explanation.[176] Therefore, when Rumford stated that the dish could be made with or without suet, he was referring to the ability of pudding recipes to use either British or American cooking practices. This distinction revealed the growing divergence of American cooking away from its earlier British methods and toward a more uniquely American style.

Thus, any assertion of complete British cultural dominance in early postcolonial American cuisine ignores the development of wholly unique variants of American foodstuffs, especially those that originated in the Old World and evolved their own character in the United States. The apples referenced in Rumford's apple pudding, for example, were often entirely different cultivars in the United States than compared to those used in English dishes. Therefore, even if on the surface an apple dish would seem to be similar on either side of the Atlantic, the subtle variations in soil, climate, and farming practices would alter an apple enough to make the American form distinct from its European counterpart.

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[175] Pudding cloth is a thin, porous reusable linen used for straining the liquid from certain food items. It is similar to a modern cheesecloth.

[176] "Suet and Suet Puddings" in Alan Davidson ed. *The Oxford Companion to Food* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2014), 786.

Due to their complicated cultivation, apples in particular serve as a strong illustration of the wide range of disparate varieties possible from a single foodstuff. No sweet apples grew natively in North America prior to European colonization, and the only available apples were crabapples: small, bitter fruits that had little culinary applications. Propagation of Old World sweet apples in North America began in the late-seventeenth century, becoming commonplace throughout the continent by the early-eighteenth century, and subsequently a staple of American cookery. The nature of apple propagation, however, made replication of exact cultivars extremely difficult. Apple seeds from one apple cannot simply be planted to grow a tree with identical fruit: each apple seed contains a genetic code slightly different from the originating apple, which in turn produces a completely different fruit. In order to grow an orchard of similar cultivar, therefore, a farmer needs to graft the branch of one apple tree with another.[177]

In the colonial era, grafting remained enough of an inexact science to produce apple trees with an enormous variety of characteristics within a single orchard. As late as 1904, orchardist and author R. Lewis Castle wrote, "until grafting and budding became the general method of propagation for the Apple, the usual means was by seed. At the present time there are thousands of old seedling Apples scattered about the country, which originated in this way, many of which have been perpetuated locally. Some of these are very good and distinct."[178] Therefore, within a few generations Americans had cultivated (mostly by accident) numerous distinct apple varieties, some of which held in high esteem by American and European orchardists alike.

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[177] R. Lewis Castle, *The Apple: With Chapters on Propagation, Grafting and General Pruning* (New York, NY: John Lane Company, 1904), 7-8.
[178] Ibid.

John Chapman was perhaps one of the best proponents of these distinct apple varieties and the influence they possessed in shaping notions of American identity. Better known by his folkloric moniker Johnny Appleseed, Chapman was an eclectic and influential pioneer of the western portions of the United States in the early Republic.[179] Chapman believed strongly in the need for American society to expand and develop communities as far west as possible, and in order to do so, he instituted an ingenious plan to plant apple trees by spreading seeds in unclaimed meadows throughout the frontier. When American settlers arrived in these supposedly uninhabited regions, they were greeted with thriving apple orchards to build homesteads around. The apple, therefore, became a symbol of the prosperity and promise of the expanding American countryside, and the orchards Chapman planted—as well as Chapman himself—became emblematic of the economic and cultural ascendancy of the United States. As one newspaper reported after Chapman's death in 1845, "[t]his man had imbibed so remarkable a passion for the rearing and cultivation of apple trees from the seeds to cause him to be regarded by the few settlers, just the beginning to make their appearance in the country, with a degree of almost superstitious admiration."[180]

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[179] Born in 1774, Chapman was known not only for his apple orchards throughout Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, but also for his homespun demeanor (he often roamed the countryside barefoot) and dedication to the Swedenborgian faith. For more information on Chapman's life, as well as his cultural impact and the rise of his mythic status, see: William Kerrigan, *Johnny Appleseed and the American Orchard: A Cultural History* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press 2013).

[180] "The History of the Life of Johnny Appleseed," *Boston Evening Transcript*, April 18, 1846, 4.

The memory of Johnny Appleseed is wrought with benign illustrations of a magnanimous frontiersman randomly spreading apple seedlings throughout the country. However, John Chapman's actions were far more calculated and purposeful than those of his mythic alter ego. The frontier that Chapman roamed was of course not uninhabited: numerous American Indian societies laid claim to the forests and fields Chapman planted his apples. Therefore, the act of planting the seeds in these regions was designed partly to "civilize" the supposed western wilds by removing the native populations through agriculture expansion. Chapman's actions represented another example of white America's desire to distance itself from, ignore, and/or remove their indigenous counterparts from the continent. Further, Chapman's decision to plant seedlings and not graft from existing trees was itself a deliberate renunciation of European agricultural foodstuffs and techniques, and a practice that ultimately produced new and distinctly American apple variants. As scholar William Kerrigan argues, "the difference between the seedling apple tree and the grafted one served as a symbol of culture divides within European America…by growing apples trees only from seed and rejecting grafting, Chapman had taken a side in the culture war of his time."[181]

Thus, Chapman's actions represent an evolution in the development of a separate American social and culinary identity. Chapman dismissed both the wild "savagery" of the American Indian by converting forests into "civilized" orchards, but also dismissed the practices and agricultural styles of his Old World European counterparts by planting seeds instead of grafting trees. In the process, men like Chapman helped to develop a distinctive postcolonial American identity, an identity that employed foodstuffs like the apple to represent this transformative cultural shift. As Kerrigan concludes on the mythic representation of Chapman, "imagining Johnny Appleseed as a person who fit harmoniously in both the Indian and white worlds has allowed white Americans of later ages to imagine an alternative version of the transformation of American forest to field. But Chapman was an eager agent in this transformation."[182]

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[181] Kerrigan, *Johnny Appleseed and the American Orchard*, 6.

Therefore, these distinctive apples and their cultivation techniques exemplified the superiority of postcolonial American society. They became items worthy of pride and admiration throughout the United States in the early-nineteenth century. American orchardist James Thacher expressed this sentiment when he wrote, "There is nothing of which a good [American] farmer is so proud, as of his orchard: and the state of the orchard is generally a pretty good test of the character of the man as to [their] industry and capacity… Our climate and soil are thus being well adapted to the apple tree."[183] Similar to Buffon and other philosophers, Thacher echoed the belief that climate affected the quality of a crop, which in turn dictated the character of a people. Unlike proponents of degeneration theory, however, Thacher argued (in a manner similar to Jefferson) that American climate was well suited to *improve* rather than denigrate certain crops.

Further, Thacher believed the cultivation of American apples differed so greatly from their European counterparts that the research for his book, he described, was almost entirely "collected from the practical experience and observations of our own countryman. There is, therefore, no part of this production but what may be adopted as applicable to our climate, and calculated to promote the interests of the cultivators of our soil."[184] Although not calling on Buffon and others by name, Thacher's repudiation of American degeneracy theory is extremely evident in his writings.

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[182] Kerrigan, *Johnny Appleseed and the American Orchard*, 93.
[183] James Thacher, *The American Orchardist: A Practical Treatise on the Culture and Management of Apple and Other Fruits* (Boston, MA: Joseph W. Ingraham, 1802), 163.

Like Thacher, pomologist William Coxe believed the American climate ideal for the production of distinct and excellent apple varieties. "It has long been the opinion of accurate judges," he wrote, "that the middle States possess a climate eminently favourable to the production of the finer liquor and table apples."[185] Originally a congressman from New Jersey, Coxe spent nearly twenty years researching and cultivating American apple varieties around the country, and his culminating published volume, *A View of the Cultivation of Fruit Trees, and the Management of Orchards and Cider* was one of the first and most extensive written collection of apple cultivars native to the United States. Accompanying Coxe's descriptions of over one hundred unique apple varieties were detailed drawings of each apple, revealing the impressive diversity of the fruit in the United States.

Among his portrayals was that of the large yellow Newtown Pippin, "the finest apple of our country, and probably of the world," he wrote, "it varies much in quality, with soil, aspect, cultivation, climate and age…a superior table fruit."[186]

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[184] Thacher, *The American Orchardist*, v.

[185] William Coxe, *A View of the Cultivation of Fruit Trees, and the Management of Orchards and Cider: With Accurate Descriptions of the Most Estimable Varieties of Native and Foreign Apples, Pears, Peaches, Plums, and Cherries, Cultivated in the Middle States of America* (Philadelphia, PA: M. Carey and Son, 1817), 9.

[186] Ibid., 142.

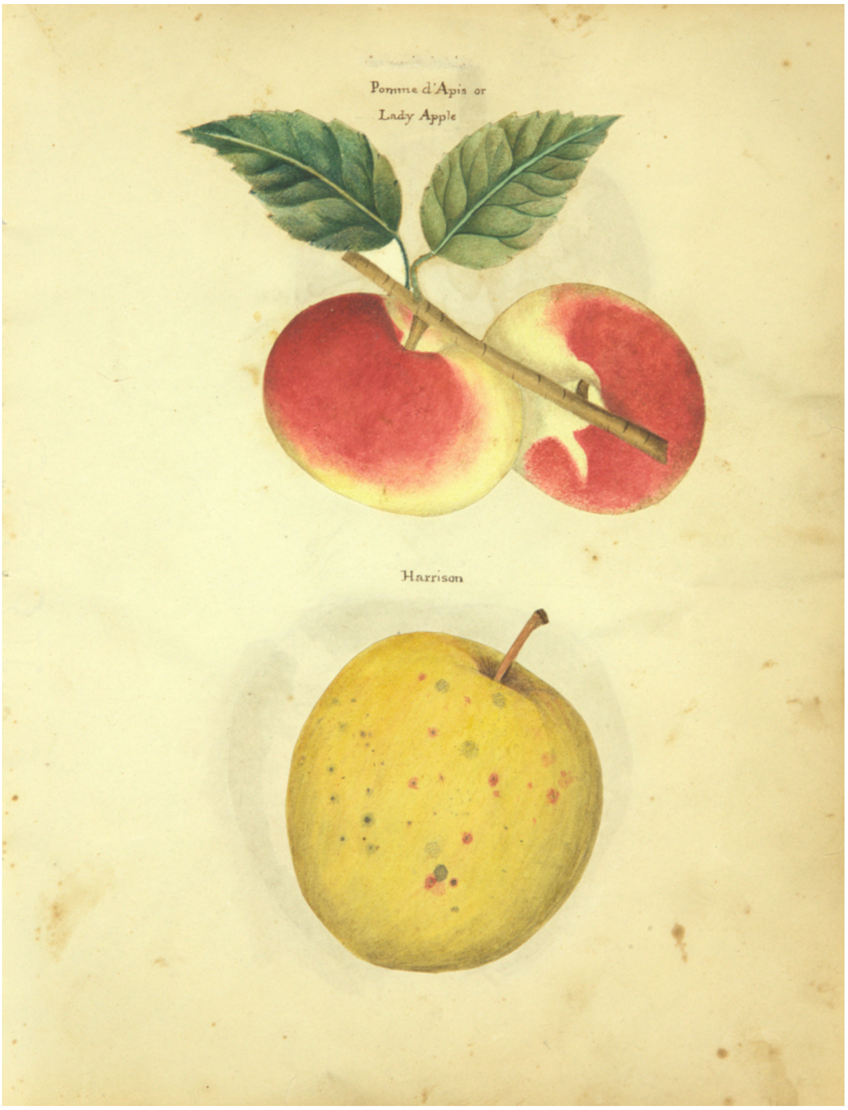

Figure 2: William Coxe, *Sketch of Lady Apple and Harrison,* c. 1810-31, unpublished manuscript. Courtesy of The Special Collection, National Agricultural Library.

There was also the Esopus Spitzenberg, an apple he described of "great beauty, and exquisite flavour,"[187] the Golden Pippin, that Coxe believed, "possesses the highest reputation in England…but in this country it does not rank very high in the scale of good apples,"[188] the Harrison, "the most celebrated of the cider apples…the taste pleasant and sprightly…[from a] tree of strong and vigorous growth,"[189] and dozens of other peculiarly-named varieties with hyperbolic descriptors. It is clear from the text that Coxe was fastidious, determined, comprehensive, but most importantly, proud and delighted with his country's native fruits. Born of European stock, these apples had been molded by their environment and cultivators, and had developed into diverse, distinct, and superior examples separate from their progenitors. Coxe's magnum opus was, in essence, a detailed renouncement and repudiation of degeneration theory, an early thesis on the country's exceptionalism and, as he described it, the "enterprising spirit of the American cultivator."[190]

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[187] Coxe, *A View of the Cultivation of Fruit Trees,* 127.

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In the technical writings of politicians, physicists, and gentleman farmers, the cultivation and preparation of fruits like the apple came to symbolize the evolving distinctive character of the nascent American nation. In the arts as well, fruits and other dishes became emblematic of the emerging promise and spirit of the United States: a social character wholly distinguishable from their European counterparts in both its idealism and practical application. The American painter Raphaelle Peale exemplified this cultural shift the nearly fifty paintings of fruits, vegetables, and other foodstuffs he created from the late-eighteenth to early-nineteenth centuries. Though less descriptively and explicitly patriotic in tone, Peale's collection of still lifes nevertheless reveals the artist's fascination with American food as a symbol worthy of the praise of high art.[191]

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[188] Coxe, *A View of the Cultivation of Fruit Trees*, 138.
[189] Ibid., 149.
[190] Ibid., 7.

Raphaelle Peale was one of five children of Charles Wilson Peale, the acclaimed painter, naturalist, and founder of the first museum in the United States. Born into an artistic household (Charles named three of his children after Renaissance painters: Rembrandt, Raphaelle, and Titian) Raphaelle Peale was well versed in the artistic conventions of his time.[192] It is surprising, therefore, that Raphaelle chose still life as his primary focus starting in the 1790s, an endeavour that art historians David C. Ward and Sidney Hart describe as "the least valued genre in the hierarchy of painting."[193] Still lifes were particularly undervalued in comparison to landscapes, portraits, and historical and political scenes, genre paintings considered properly representative and noteworthy of this era in American art.[194] Nevertheless, Peale's colorful and intricate still lifes helped to elevate the style into a respectable artform, leading him to be posthumously considered a pioneer in a field that would become extremely popular in the subsequent decades.[195]

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[191] Peale painted such still lifes for many decades, straddling those years in the early-nineteenth century wherein American society shifted political and social tendencies dramatically from the postcolonial to the national. Therefore, portions of his work (and the subsequent analysis of it) include theories of more modern nationalism studies that—although introduced and broached earlier—will be described in more detail later chapters of this dissertation.

[192] For a description of Raphaelle Peale's early life and his father's influence on his artistic career, see: Lillian B. Miller, "Father and Son: The Relationship of Charles Willson Peale and Raphaelle Peale," *American Art Journal* 25, no. 2 (1993): 5–61.

[193] David C. Ward and Sidney Hart, "Subversion and Illusion in the Life and Art of Raphaelle Peale," *American Art* 8, no. 4 (January 1, 1994): 97.

[194] Ibid.

[195] Edward J. Sozanksi, "The American Pioneer of Still-Life Painting," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, February 19, 1989, 3.

Peale left frustratingly little written evidence for his decision to devote his artistic energy to still lifes of foodstuffs, unfortunately. Family letters disclose Raphaelle's supposed infatuation with eating and gluttony: a possible reason for his focus on food in his art. In a letter to his brother Rembrandt, his father Charles remarked that Raphaelle suffered constantly from gout, placing the cause of his suffering on "indulging too much his appetite at the same time with Pickles &c which every prudent man ought to banish from his table as being neither good for the old or the young… Simple food makes good blood, good spirits, good health."[196] Of note in this letter is the elder Peale's association with "simple food" and health, a concept predicated on earlier colonial notions of the humoral body infused with postcolonial principles that glorified the simple and common as worthy characteristics for both individual persons and society as a whole.[197]

Yet more than a simple glutton, Raphaelle and his decision to paint still life may have also come from a purposeful renunciation of the elitist hierarchical artistic communities of Europe and America, and subsequently a desire to transcribe American ideals of democratic egalitarianism into his artwork. American art curator Nicolai Cikobsky Jr. states that "the most vexing issue that every serious American artist faced in the fifty years surrounding the turn of the eighteenth century was, generally speaking, nationality. Few historical precedents gave guidance to what kind of art it was possible for, or incumbent upon, an American artist to make in the circumstances of republican government and democratic society."[198] As an artist deeply ensconced in the burgeoning American art community, Peale would have be wholly aware of the "issue" Cikobsky proposes regarding republicanism and American identity. The decision to use foodstuffs—items considered too common and unworthy of serious artistic attention—revealed Peale's desire to highlight more democratic and egalitarian subject matter, subjects more representative of the political and social ideals of the young United States.[199] As art historian Wendy Katz argues, this preoccupation with still lifes of fruit "suggests that the genre was part of the cultural nationalist effort to establish a positive, indigenous model of American taste."[200]

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[196] "Letter from Charles Willson Peale to Rembrandt Peale, Belfield, 9 October 1815," *The Peale Family Collection*, Col. 396, The Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera at The Winterthur Library, Winterthur, Delaware.

[197] Colleen E. Terrell, "'Republican Machines': Franklin, Rush, and the Manufacture of Civic Virtue in the Early Republic," *Early American Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 1, no. 2 (2003): 100–132.

Furthermore, Peale would have been fully aware of the negative perceptions of the still life genre and financial and reputational consequences of undermining such established artistic morés. In regard to the "imitation" of still life, eighteenth century English painter Sir Joshua Reynolds condensed the prevailing viewpoint as follows: "There are excellencies in the art of painting beyond what is commonly called the imitation of nature… A mere copier of nature can never produce anything great; can never raise and enlarge the conceptions, or warm the heart of the spectator."[201] That Peale thus choose to almost exclusively paint such images was therefore in itself a revolutionary action, a subversion of the authority of European schools of artistic thought.

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[198] Nicolai Cikovsky Jr., "Democratic Illusions," in *Raphaelle Peale Still Lifes* (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1988), 54.

[199] As referenced in the "Introduction" of this dissertation, Carolyn Korsmeyer details a number of ancient and modern thinkers who, as she writes, "have concurred that food does not represent anything outside itself and thus fails in one of the standard tasks of art, to deliver understanding and insight about life and the world." Carolyn Korsmeyer, *Making Sense of Taste: Food & Philosophy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002), 118.

[200] Wendy J. Katz, "The Republic of Fruit: Nationalism and Still-Life Painting," *Poetical Fire: Three Centuries of Still Lifes,* Brandon K. Rudd, ed. (University of Nebraska-Lincoln: Sheldon Museum of Art, 2011), 15.

Therefore, focusing on both a technique and subject matter long thought to be beneath the talents of respected artists, Peale's decision to paint still lifes of fruits and vegetables can be viewed as a direct renunciation of established (mostly European) artistic norms. It was, as Cikovsky argues, a "deliberate, relatively sudden, radical inversion of artistic order in which a subject long relegated to the bottom of the artistic scale was raised to its top."[202] In the process, Peale featured a distinctly American presentation of common, ordinary, democratic dishes; the popular daily breads of his fellow countrymen. His works included: *Blackberries,* a bowl of unripe and ripe blackberries set against a simple black background;[203] *Orange and a Book*,a sliced-open orange with its peel draped atop a red, leatherbound book;[204] *Still Life with Wine Glass*,an assortment of muffins and breads alongside fresh berries still attached to their green leaves, and a chalice of wine;[205] *Still Life with Cake,* an iced dessert described as a "poor man's pound cake" alongside a yellow apple remarkably similar to William Coxe's description of the large yellow Newtown Pippin;[206] and dozens of other paintings of cheeses, meats, corn, and fruits and vegetables native to the United States. Peale's works stand as testament to the ability to subvertly and enigmatically define postcolonial American society through the lens of the visual arts.

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[201] Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Discourses on Art*, Robert R. Wark, ed. (San Marino, CA: The Huntington Library, 1959), 41-42. Quoted in Nicolai Cikovsky Jr., "Democratic Illusions," *Raphaelle Peale Still Lifes* (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1988), 41.

[202] Cikovsky Jr., "Democratic Illusions," 56.

[203] Raphaelle Peale, *Blackberries*, c. 1813, oil on canvas. Courtesy of The de Young Museum, San Francisco, California.

[204] Raphaelle Peale, *Orange and a Book*, c. 1817, oil on canvas. Courtesy of The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

[205] Raphaelle Peale, *Still Life with Wine Glass*, c. 1818, oil on canvas. Courtesy of The Athenaeum, Boston.

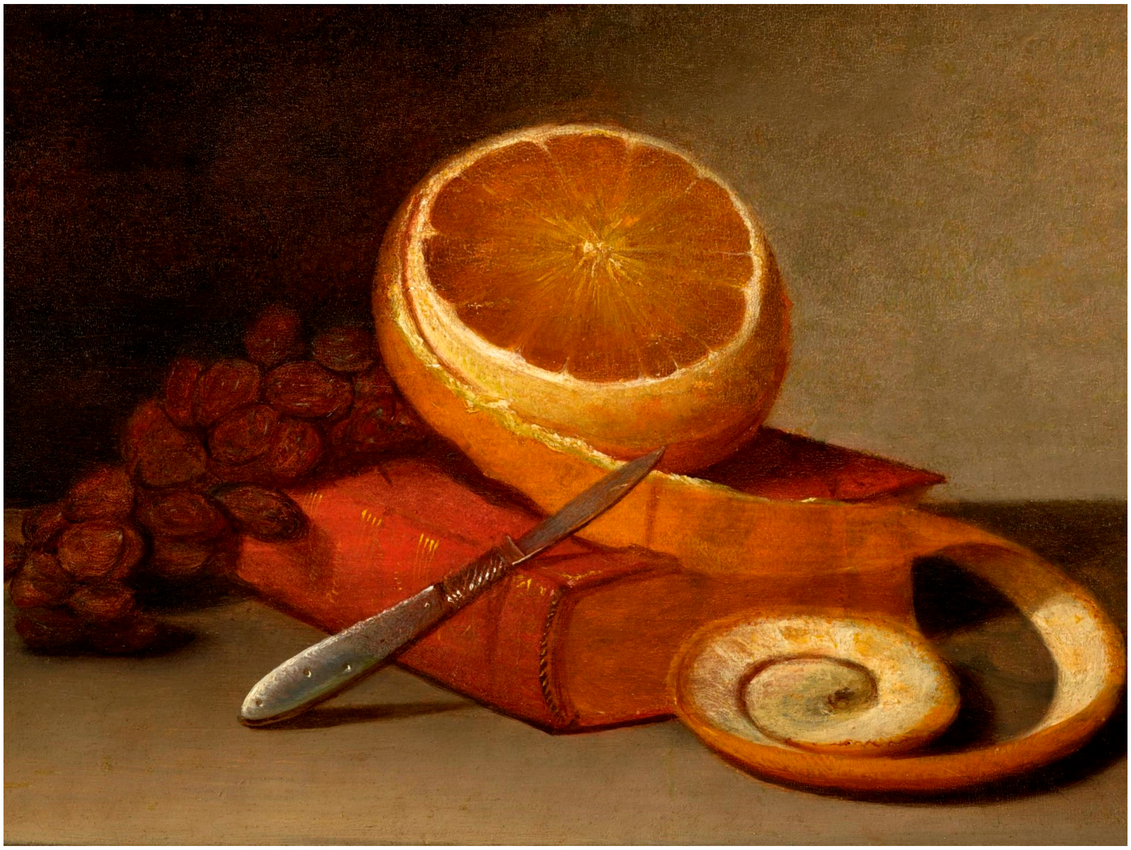

Figure 3: Raphaelle Peale, *Orange and a Book*, c. 1817, oil on canvas. Courtesy of The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

Still life painting was not the only artform judged too unsophisticated and underrepresented to be taken seriously in early American Republic, however. In *Notes on the State of Virginia*, Jefferson quoted the Abbe Raynal—a supporter of Buffon's degeneration theory—who remarked on another artform supposedly lacking representation in American society: "America has not yet produced one good poet," wrote Raynal.[207] The esteemed American poet Joel Barlow would certainly have disagreed with this assessment, however. Barlow, a veteran of the American Revolution and close associate of revolutionaries like Thomas Paine, is often most associated with his epic poem *Vision of Columbus*, which showcased his democratic sentimentalities wrapped in a fanciful American origin story. Barlow was also a respected diplomat who travelled throughout major European cities including Paris (being briefly imprisoned there during the Reign of Terror), Moscow, and Vienna.[208] Like both Thomas Jefferson and Count Rumford, living in Europe seemed to have a profound effect on Barlow's vision and nostalgia for his homeland.

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[206] Raphaelle Peale, *Still Life with Cake*, c. 1822, oil on canvas. Courtesy of The Brooklyn Museum.

While in Savoy in 1796, he published the poem *The Hasty Pudding*, an ode to his favorite American dish, and one that he missed longingly while living abroad. The poem was divided into three "cantos" and written to mirror the classical style of an heroic, longform narrative. Although seemingly simplistic in its subject matter, *The Hasty Pudding* was instead a powerful cultural tool that employed food as a symbol of the burgeoning American national identity of the late-eighteenth century. However, the poem was not received with great fanfare at the time, nor was it taken as a serious work of literature by the academic community until well into the late-twentieth century. Literary scholar Leo Lemay wrote as late as 1982 that, "A patronizing attitude toward *The Hasting Pudding* still exists in the criticism and anthologies."[209] While newer works have delved into the poem's greater themes and nuance of the poem, Lemay's argument still remains mostly accurate.[210] As he asserts, Barlow "is still generally regarded as a poet devoid of complexity and his *The Hasty Pudding* as a simple poem."[211] Therefore, the connections inherent in Barlow's work between foodstuffs and the general state of American affairs at the end of the eighteenth century have only recently been reviewed by scholars in any significant detail.

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[207] Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia,* 90.

[208] See: Richard Buel, *Joel Barlow: American Citizen in a Revolutionary World* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011) for a review of Barlow's life during the American Revolution, as well as his travels and diplomatic missions in Europe in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries.

As the title of the poem suggests, *The Hasty Pudding* is an ode to the cornmeal-based porridge frequently consumed in the American northeast during the colonial and revolutionary eras. In his *Essay on Food*, Count Rumford strongly recommended the dish, one that he argued "is in the highest estimation throughout America, and which is really very good and very nourishing."[212] He continued with a description of how to cook the dish:

> A quantity of water, proportioned to the quantity of hasty pudding intended to be made, is put over the fire in an open iron pot, or kettle, and a proper quantity of salt for seasoning the pudding being previously dissolved in the water. Indian

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[209] J. A. Leo Lemay, "The Contexts and Themes of 'The Hasty-Pudding,'" *Early American Literature* 17, no. 1 (1982): 3.

[210] The poem is anthologized with a greater analysis of its themes in: Barbara Perkins, *The American Tradition in Literature* (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 2002), 462-470; and highlighted in works such as: Jeri Quinzio, *Pudding: A Global History* (London, UK: Reaktion Books, 2013), 70-77; and articles such as: Rafia Zafar, "The Proof of the Pudding: Of Haggis, Hasty Pudding, and Transatlantic Influence," *Early American Literature* 31, no. 2 (1996): 133–49. All three delve into the poem's symbolism and associations with republican political and social morés of the early national period.

[211] Lemay, "The Contexts and Themes of 'The Hasty-Pudding,'" 3.

[212] Rumford,"Essay on Food," 254.

> meal is stirred into it, by little and little, with a wooden spoon with a long handle, while the water goes on to be heated and made to boil.[213]

Rumford further described the addition of vinegar, brown sugar, molasses, butter, and a variety of other seasonings that may be added to the dish dependant on personal preference, cost, and regional availabilities.[214] The meal's simplicity, efficacy, versatility, and high nutritional value were all praised by Rumford, laudations and characteristics that were mirrored in other writings, including Barlow's poem.

While Rumford's essay focused primarily on the practical application of the dish, Barlow's *The Hasty Pudding* was eager to connect the food's numerous benefits to a more romanticized interpretation of the meal and its country of origin. After a brief stanza surveying historic events such as the French Revolution (the "Gallic flags to that o'er their heights unfurl'd, Bear death to kings, and freedom to the world,"[215]) Barlow continued his poem by stating that he had chosen a softer concept for his writing, what he called a "virgin theme, unconscious of the Muse… My morning incense, and my evening meal, The sweets of Hasty Pudding! Come, dear bowl, Glide o'er my palate, and inspire my soul."[216] It is clear that Barlow held the dish in high esteem; a meal that, although it did not have the same historic weight of major political events, bore a deep and profound effect on the author's daily life. Immediately, the reader of *The Hasty Pudding* was aware of the significance of meal for Barlow beyond mere nourishment.

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[213] Rumford,"Essay on Food," 253-254.

[214] Rumford was also fond of hasty pudding as a meal for the poor, both in the United States and in his adopted country of England. He wrote that the meal "renders itself singularly useful as Food for poor families,—that when more of it is made at once than is immediately wanted, what remains may be preserved for several days, and a number of very palatable dishes may be made of it." Rumford, "Essay on Food," 257.

[215] Joel Barlow, *The Hasty-Pudding: A Poem in Three Cantos* (New Haven, CT: William Storer Publishing, 1838), 1.

[216] Ibid.

Barlow continued by addressing the origins of the dish, making a reference to its American Indian origins: "Thro' wrecks of time thy lineage and thy race; Declare what lovely squaw, in days of yore… Fire gave thee to the world."[217] Barlow's praise of the hasty pudding's origins then quickly turned to disdain for his inability to find the a good example of the meal throughout his travels. As he wrote:

> For thee through Paris, that corrupted town,
> How long in vain I wandered up and down,
> Where shameless Bacchus, with his drenching hoard
> Could from his cave usurps the morning board.
>
> London is lost in smoke and steeped in tea;
> No Yankee there 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,
> Chilled in their fogs, exclude the generous maize;
> A grain, whose rich luxuriant growth requires
> Short gentle showers, and bright ethereal fires…
>
> That strong complexion of the true Indian race,
> Which time can never change, nor soil impair;
> Nor Alpine snows, no Turkey's morbid air.[218]

The poem's descriptions are telling. In yet another reversal of American degeneration theory, Barlow argued that America contained the only climate able to adequately sustain and develop proper Indian corn for the pudding. For Barlow, Paris was far too "corrupted" by gluttony and bacchanalian feasts for the wholesome dish, and London's fog and lack of sun rendered the area unable to grow corn effectively. Further, America's "gentle showers" and "bright, ethereal fires" were a direct reputation of Buffon, De Pauw, and other's assertion of America's subpar climate and weather conditions. Even the Alpine regions of lower Germany and Switzerland, and the "morbid air" of Turkey make proper agriculture impossible, according to Barlow. Thus, for a myriad of reasons—from the debased extravagance of certain populations, to hazy, fog-filled industrialized cities and extreme weather conditions, Europe was unable to produce a proper replication of hasty pudding. By contrast, America stood above these nations in its ability to efficiently grow Indian corn, and therefore ranked superior in both climate and character.

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[217] Barlow, *The Hasty-Pudding,* 2.
[218] Ibid., 3.

Barlow was well aware of the negative perception of Americans that many Europeans held, especially in regards to their food and eating habits. Like the assumptions regarding climate, Barlow renounced these arguments and reversed their rationale against them. He wrote:

> There are who strive to stamp with disrepute
> The luscious food, because it feeds the brute;
> In tropes of high-strained wit, while gaudy prigs
> Compare thy nursling man to pampered pigs…
>
> My song resounding in its grateful glee,
> No merit claims; I praise myself in thee.
> My father loved thee through his length of days:
> For thee his fields were shaded o'ver with maize;
> From thee what health, what vigor he possessed,
> Ten sturdy freeman sprung from him attest;
> Thy constellation ruled my natal morn,
> And all my bones were made of Indian corn.[219]

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[219] Barlow, *The Hasty-Pudding,* 4-5.

In this passage, Barlow showed no shame for the association of Indian corn with livestock, a dish that "feeds the brute." If anything, Barlow saw this lowly connotation as a positive: the corn gave him and his descendants "vigor" and vitality, enough for his father to produce ten children. Indeed, the hearty nature of the grain—as opposed to the more refined and delicate staples of European culinary culture—produced a race of men in America stronger and more virile than their European counterparts.

In this regard, Barlow's poem mirrored the writings of Robert Burns, the Scottish bard who wrote the poem *Address to a Haggis* in 1787. Burns used haggis (a local Scottish meal of meats, oats, and spices, often frowned upon by other cultures for its homespon, indelicate nature) and imbibed it with admirable characteristics, thus elevating the dish to a point of national pride.[220] Like Burns, Barlow contended that the hearty nature of Americans could be directly associated with the hearty meals they ate, as exemplified in Barlow's profound statement that "all my bones were made of Indian corn." This notion was yet again in opposition to degeneration theory: for Barlow, the superior American climate produced superior American foods that in turn produced Americans superior in composition to their European counterparts.

Following the theory that food consumption correlated to generalized character traits in a given society, Barlow concluded that the simple wholesome dish of hasty pudding produced not only a race of powerful, virile men, but a nation of free, democratic citizens. As he further argued:

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[220] Zafar, "The Proof of the Pudding: Of Haggis, Hasty Pudding, and Transatlantic Influence," 140-143. Zafar contends that Barlow (being a well-read man) would have certainly been aware of Burns' poem, and may have purposely echoed some of Burns' arguments in *The Hasty Pudding*. *Address to a Haggis* had such a profound effect on notions of Scottish nationalism that the poem is still read aloud today (along with samplings of the dish) at annual celebrations of Burns' birthday every January 25.

> 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;
> From this the kitchen Muse first framed her book,
> Commanding sweats to stream from every cook…
>
> Not so the Yankee—his abundant feast,
> With simples furnished, and with plainness drest [*sic*],
> A numerous offspring gathers round the board,
> And cheers alike the servant and the lord.[221]

Therefore, hasty pudding provided "social virtue" through an "abundant feast" that was simply prepared and "with plainess drest [*sic*]." It is clear in this section that Barlow saw the burgeoning American nation as symbolically associated with the same positive characteristics of the pudding. That nearly all members of American society could partake in this dish ("the servant and the lord" alike) was a testament to its versatility. In her description of the term "culinary nationalism," Priscilla Ferguson echoes Barlow when she asserts, "in the foods of peasant and bourgeois alike…the local becomes the national."[222] While the modern conceptual frameworks that define nationalism and nationhood were still in their infancy in the 1790s, Barlow's work and its methodology include some of the earliest published instances of this concept taking shape in American thought.[223] Thus, hasty pudding's wholesomeness and plain simplicity was reflective of the virtues of the populace—and ultimately of the nation—that consumed it. In essence, hasty pudding was America, and America was hasty pudding.

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[221] Barlow, *The Hasty-Pudding,* 6.

[222] Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson, "Culinary Nationalism, *Gastronomica: The Journal of Food and Culture* 10, no. 1 (2010): 107.

[223] See "Chapter 3: The Empires Strike Back - Europeans in America and the Creation of National Cuisine" for a detailed description of this important political and social shift from postcolonial to national identity formation.

The simplistic nature of the meal also appealed to a larger audience (the "numerous offspring" that "gathers round the board") and aided hasty pudding's adaptation and appropriation throughout a larger area than its northeastern regional origins. Although hasty pudding was a "Yankee" dish, it could easily be adopted throughout the country. In turn, the dish became synonymous with the character of the the United States as a whole. Barlow's poem is consequently far more than a modest ode about his favorite meal: hasty pudding was a symbol of the virtues and exceptionalism of Barlow's native country. By comparing the dish favorably against its European counterparts, he simultaneously countered the established narrative of American degeneration and lauded the characteristics of the American people. *The Hasty Pudding* was therefore a rather subversive social and political commentary disguised in light-hearted verse.

Later editions of *The Hasty Pudding* contained a mock recipe at the end of the poem and a list of recommendations of how to properly cook the dish.[224] These paragraphs reveal a desire to ensure the dishes' widespread adoption by homecooks throughout the country. Through the addition of cooking methods and ingredients into his poem, Barlow and/or his publishers understood the importance of recipes as a method to replicate and define a type of cultural patriotism. But Barlow’s poem was not a cookbook. In general, male authors declined to publish cookbooks, leading the genre to be dominated by female authors of the era. In turn, cookbooks of the late-eighteenth century became venues for female authors to assert their place in the development of American culture, and consequently, these works became one of the more forthright and effective means of imparting a sense of identity using food as a symbolic representation of national character. But cookbooks (also called “receipt books,” an archaic term for “recipes”) were relatively rare in the early national period. The first cookbook written by an American and published in the United States, for example, was Amelia Simmons' 1796 work *American Cookery*, a revolutionary text not necessarily for its content but the precedent it set. There were of course cookbooks available in the country for generations—including books published in Europe and shipped to America as well as those reprinted from European texts in America—but Simmons' work was unique for being the first American text written specifically for an American audience.

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[224] An 1856 edition of *The Hasty Pudding* added a paragraph detailing cooking times and a number of "sauces" that could be added to the meal to make it more flavorful. It is unclear whether this paragraph was added by the publisher, or was taken from original drafts of Barlow's poem. While the text does appear in earlier additions as well, it does not appear in any addition published before Barlow died in 1812. See: Joel Barlow, "The Hasty-Pudding; a Poem, in Three Cantos," (New York, NY: W.H. Graham, 1856), 9.

Prior to Simmons' book, publication of cookbooks in the United States consisted solely of reprinting previous editions of English works. England was by and large the most prolific nation publishing English language cookbooks prior to 1800. William Carew Hazlitt’s survey of published cookbooks, for instance, lists over thirty-eight specific works published in England in the eighteenth century, with titles ranging from *The Ladies Cabinet Opened* and *The Complete Family Piece* to *Royal Cookery; or, the Complete Court Cook* to *A Treatise on all Sorts of Foods*, titles that would attract readers from all walks of life with a wide scope of cooking styles and recipes offered.[225] Conversely, a similar study of cookbooks published in America during the same time period produced only four distinct cookbooks, all of whom were reprints of British works.[226]

One book of particular interest was titled, *Concise Observations on the Nature of our Common Food*, a work printed in London and reprinted in New York in 1790. That American publishers would reprint an English text referring to a shared or "common food" style spoke to the presence of an American audience still clinging to English cultural customs and traditions and gives credence to the argument that American cuisine remained mostly British in the decades following the American Revolution.[227] Indeed, it is clear that England remained the primary locus for recipe books well into the early national period, with American homes relying almost exclusively on English texts for their published cooking instructions.

The most republished and respected cookbook in eighteenth century America was Hannah Glasse's *The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy*. First published in 1747, Glasse's work became a mainstay in colonial American households despite the lack of a single dish specifically developed for American palettes or catering to American foodstuffs. By publishing *American Cookery*, Amelia Simmons attempted to remedy this issue. In the preface of her work, she wrote, "The candor of the American Ladies is solicitously intreated by the Authoress, as she is circumscribed in her knowledge, this being an original work in this country."[228] Simmons was keenly aware of the novelty of her work and of the possible ramifications of authoring the first published cookbook by an American. Her plea to the "candor of the American Ladies" was an acknowledgment that the work would be under intense scrutiny by the woman of the United States, precisely because the text was such a radical departure from their typical English cookbooks.

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[225] William Carew Hazlitt, *Old Cookery Books and Ancient Cuisine* (London, UK: Elliot Stock, 1886), 67-81.
[226] Waldo Lincoln, *American Cookery Books* (Worcester, MA: American Antiquarian Society, 1929), 1-4.
[227] Ibid., 3.

Throughout her introductory text, Simmons referred to the importance of her work as a distinctly American endeavour. The subtitle of her book described the recipes as being "adopted to this country, and all grades of life" echoing the republican ideals of social equality and inclusiveness regardless of class distinction, notions that were directly opposed to English cookbooks catering to specific classes of society.[229] Simmons also made a point to mention her volume as being published "by act of Congress."[230] While all works of the time were published in this manner, few advertised this distinction so prominently. Simmons therefore seemed well aware of the importance of her work and wished to remind authors of its American origins wherever possible.

A peculiar component of *American Cookery* was the author's declaration that the book had been published specifically for "those females in this country, who by the loss of their parents, or other unfortunate circumstances, are reduced to the necessity of going into families in the line of domestics."[231] Simmons had written her cookbook specifically for orphaned women, those who did not have the knowledge and guidance of their own mothers to aid them in providing for their new home. In fact, Simmons described herself as "an American orphan" in the title page, one of the few clues historians have about Simmons' life and upbringing. One can certainly take her description and preface at face value and assume that *American Cookery* was meant as a treatise solely for orphaned American women. However, Simmons' awareness of her work's novelty in American history and impact on a national scale (she argued that her work "is calculated for the improvement of the rising generation of *all Females* in America"[232]) puts into question her desire to develop a work with such a narrow audience in mind.

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[228] 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 Plumb to Plain Cake. Adapted in this Country, and All Grades of Life* (Hartford, CT: Hudson & Goodwin, 1796), iii.

[229] Amelia Simmons, *American Cookery,* i.

[230] Ibid.

While there is no reason to doubt Simmons' assertion that she is an orphan or that the work intended to be helpful to other American orphans, the term "orphan" itself may have multiple meanings in this context. For instance, Simmons' argument that "the orphan, tho' left to the care of virtuous guardians, will find it essentially necessary to have an opinion and determination of her own," mirrored the hopeful optimism of other contemporary authors' notions of self-determination when referring to the nascent American nation. Simmons continued, "the world, and the fashion thereof, is so variable, that old people cannot accommodate themselves to the various changes and fashions which daily occur."[233] The "old people" could be a reference to Europe and the older traditions of the continent. Decades later, James Thacher would echo a similar sentiment in his own national treatise when he declared that apple farmers “adhere pertinaciously to the routine of their predecessors,” and advocated for a new, wholly American approach to agriculture that freed itself from its past European influence.[234] Simmons section can therefore be read as a critique of older, European colonial morés (represented as parents and “virtuous guardians”) that abandoned young women (representative of the American colonies) and were thus “orphaned” by their former colonial authorities.

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[231] Amelia Simmons, *American Cookery,* iii.
[232] Ibid., i.
[233] Ibid.

Simmons’s writings connect her own orphaned status to the communal feelings of postcolonial cultural abandonment the country felt in the early national period. *American Cookery* is therefore a text similar to Jefferson, Rumford, Barlow, and others that refuted European traditions and forged new, distinctly American identities in their stead. And like other American authors, Simmons was hopeful that American national identity could ultimately surpass its European counterparts through the development of a virtuous republican citizenry. “The orphan must depend solely upon *character*,” she wrote, “how immensely important, therefore, that every action, every word, every thought, be regulated by the strictest purity, and that every movement meet the approbation of the good and wise.”[235] More than a collection of recipes, Simmon’s *American Cookery* was therefore a disquisition on communal identity formation exemplified through the preparation of food.

For all its calls to revise cookery for an new American populace, *American Cookery* relied heavily on English cooking preparation methods. Many of Simmons’ cakes and puddings are lifted from Glasse’s *The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Simple,* and entire recipes were taken verbatim from Susannah Carter's *The Frugal Housewife*, published in London in 1772.[236] Nevertheless, the additions that Simmons did make to the culinary fabric of the early American Republic were profound. *American Cookery* was one of the first cookbooks to describe cookies (from the Dutch *koekje*) and cabbage slaws in detail, a nod to the Dutch influence in the Mid-Atlantic states and the appropriation of their culture into the greater American cuisine.

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[234] James Thacher, *The American Orchardist*, iv.

[235] Ibid.

Further, Simmons' use of pearl ash as a leavener (the precursor to modern baking soda) was also an original American creation credited to Samuel Hopkins, who obtained the first patent issued by the United States in 1790 for his invention of the improved leavener.[237] Indeed, the prevalence of American foodstuffs in *American Cookery* made the work an important contribution to the development of a distinctive American culture. For the first time, American women had popular recipes that referenced pumpkins, tomatoes, maple syrup, Indian puddings, and turkeys not as intriguing exotic additions to meals, but as the simple staple foods and ingredients present in nearly every American home and kitchen.

American Cookery was an extremely successful cookbook. The book was publicized in newspapers throughout the country, and would ultimately become popular enough to warrant the printing of five other editions.[238] *American Cookery* remained in print continuously until 1822, and its popularity led to a number of forgeries and plagiarized works.[239] But more importantly, *American Cookery*'s popularity also lead to a revolution in cookbook writing in the United States. By the turn of the nineteenth century, American cookbook publication had begun wholesale, with well over a dozen original American cookbooks published in the first decade of the century alone.[240]

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[236] Susannah Carter, *The Frugal Housewife, Or, Experienced Cook* (London, UK: T. Hughes, 1772), 98. Simmons used Carter's recipe, "To make a fine Syllabub from the Cow" in its entirety in *American Cookery*.

[237] Karen Hess, "Historical Notes" in *Amelia Simmons: American Cookery* (Bedford, MA: Applewood Books, 1996), xi.

[238] In 1796 alone (the year of its first edition), booksellers prominently advertised their stock of *American Cookery* in newspapers ranging from *The Connecticut Courant,* to *The Hampshire*

American Cookery also affected the publication of English cookbooks, who now saw the need to incorporate distinctly American dishes into their pages. In a surprising reversal of practice, *The Frugal Housewife* even copied recipes for maple sugar, maple molasses, and maple beer nearly verbatim from the recipes published in *The Pennsylvania Gazette* in 1788.[241] Furthermore, the 1803 edition of *The Frugal Housewife* added an eleven-page appendix "containing several new receipts adapted to the American Mode of Cooking," which included recipes for Indian pudding, pumpkin pie, doughnuts, cranberry tarts, and many other distinctly American dishes.[242]

Therefore, this shift in the makeup and presentation of certain recipes revealed the beginning of separate, well-defined examples of foodstuffs considered entirely American in nature and composition. By using foods and recipes as symbolic manifestations of their idealized national characteristics, American authors like Simmons therefore asserted

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Gazette, *The Albany Gazette, The Centinel of Freedom, The Hudson Gazette,* and well over a dozen other presses.

[239] Karen Hess, *American Cookery*, xi.

[240] Waldo Lincoln, *American Cookery Books*, 8-13.

[241] Agricola, "To Make Maple Sugar," *The Pennsylvania Gazette,* October 22, 1788, 3. The recipes in Carter's *The Frugal Housewife* are found on pages 209-210.

[242] Susannah Carter, *The Frugal Housewife, Or, Experienced Cook* (New York, NY: G&R Waite, 1803), 205-216.

themselves and their burgeoning culture as wholly divergent from—and in certain ways superior to—the cultures and nations of Europe.

By the turn of the nineteenth century, Americans had begun to firmly establish their position as a country worthy of praise from the international community. Yet a significant portion of that international community were not prepared to accept the United States as a cultural and political force of influence. From this mindset emerged theories designed to denigrate and delegitimize American society.

Under a veil of supposed scientific objectivity, European thinkers like Buffon, De Paw, and Raynal attempted to expose foundational flaws in the American continent's natural history. The extrapolation of these theories of nature onto the sociological and political capabilities of the American people is evidence of their ulterior motives. For these philosophers, degenerate climate led to degenerate foods that ultimately led to degenerate people and inferior societies. The intellectual justifications for the renouncement of American society birthed in the mid-eighteenth century would subsequently remain a cornerstone of certain European mindsets and ideologies for generations to come.

American responses to these accusations came in the form of a myriad of approaches. Diplomats such as Jefferson and Rumford attempted to combat degeneration theory with scientific evidence, engaging in an intellectual debate over the specifics of the theory. Other writers such as Thacher and Coxe furthered this approach with published works lauding the unique agricultural advancements made throughout the country. Painters and poets like Peale and Barlow subverted entire genres and devoted their works to elevating the American infatuation with republican ideals of the simple and the commonplace to subjects worthy of serious artistic interpretations. And cookbook authors such as Simmons purposely detailed original American dishes, connecting cooking methods and practices to advancements in American society at large. In the process, Americans began—for the first time en masse and in conversation with one another—to define components of a distinct culinary national culture.

The desire to refute claims of inferiority forced Americans to consider intellectual justifications for their social and political systems, and the production and consumption of foodstuffs served as convenient representations of their arguments. Certain foods were straightforward and relatable symbols of complex concepts regarding the burgeoning American national culture. American food was described as plentiful, pure, and diverse; consequently, so too were the American people. American food borrowed heavily from prior established practices, but used its unique environment and distinct resources to forge a new, hybridized, and improved culinary culture, just as they had forged an improved society from earlier colonial social and political systems. American authors in the late-eighteenth century did not so much deny the core concept of degeneration theory—that climate and food affected the character of a populace—so much as they turned the theory on its head. American climate and food did affect American society: it made Americans superior to their European counterparts.

However, what was slowly forming into an American national cuisine continued to be based mostly on reactionary justifications. Rather than describe and define what their food actually consisted of, Americans merely challenged accusations of cultural inferiority, accusations themselves rooted in earlier hierarchical colonial interpretations of the natural world. Consequently, European authors continued to criticize American eating habits and society, and Americans in turn continued to grapple with defining their relationship with food. Therefore, whether a singular culinary culture—and in turn a unified national system—was even a possibility remained questionable well into the early-nineteenth century.

CHAPTER 3:
The Empires Strike Back - Europeans in America and the Creation of National Cuisine

The publication of the collection of literary essays titled *Salmagundi* was an unexpected success. Authors Washington Irving, his brother William Irving, and James Paulding initially envisioned their satirical short essays that described the characters and makeup of New York City would engage readers in the metropolitan area almost exclusively. Consequently, the first publication numbers were relatively small. By the end of the twenty series run in 1808, however, it was clear to the authors and their publisher that *Salmagundi* had a much broader appeal throughout the United States, and even in Europe. Disputes between Washington Irving and publisher David Longworth ultimately lead to Irving distancing himself from the project, and regretting his contribution to the works in his later years.[243] Nevertheless, *Salmagundi* remained an influential piece of American literature for decades, leading one French literary society in 1854 to proclaim, "the exact and skillful adaptation of [*Salmagundi's*] delicate and witty allusions to the peculiar circumstances of the times, the rich humour with which prevailing follies were held up to ridicule, and above all, the exquisite good nature of the satire…rendered it the most popular work that had ever issued from American press."[244]

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[243] *Salmagundi* was first published in twenty short pamphlets distributed by David Longworth's "Shakespeare Gallery" in New York from January, 1807 to January, 1808. See: Martha Hartzog Stocker, "Salmagundi: Problems in Editing the So-Called First Edition (1807-08)," *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 67, no. 2 (June 1973): 141.

[244] Baudry's European Library, *The Complete Works of Washington Irving in One Volume: With a Memoir of the Author* (Paris, FR: Casimir Printing, 1834), viii.

Modern readers will be excused if they are unfamiliar with the definition of "salmagundi" and the implications present in naming the collection of essays using this term, but an early-nineteenth century audience would have understood the reference clearly. Salmagundi was a culinary concoction developed in the mid-seventeenth century, probably by French peasant cooks. There is not a single accepted recipe for the dish, but most consist of a chopped, boiled white meat combined with a fish, onions, and collections of fruits vegetables, oils, and spices. *The Lady's Housewife's and Cookmaid's Assistant* of 1769 contained a recipe for salmagundi with "cold veal, or cold fowl, the white part, free of fat and skin," as well as "a red herring, a pickled herring, or three or four anchovies, if you please," and mixed with "a couple of onions, core, pared, and shred two apples," that were to be garnished with lemon and eaten "with oil, mustard, and vinegar."[245] Another contemporary work, *The Lady's Assistant* of 1777, detailed a salmagundi dish with veal or chicken as well, but with "four or five eggs boiled hard, the whites of the same, a large handful of parsley, a British herring," and "some beet-root, some red cabbage…with spun butter at the top."[246] Cookbooks of the eighteenth century were far less rigid than their modern counterparts, and variations in certain foodstuffs, vague cooking procedures, and unspecified quantities of ingredients were all rather common characteristics of recipes from the era.[247] However, the sheer range of foodstuffs—and seemingly random assortment of items—in salmagundi recipes indicated a dish without a clear consensus of its makeup. Salmagundi was, in essence, a mixed compilation of whatever meats, fishes, vegetables, and spices the home cook had lying around their kitchen, chopped fine and thrown together however they saw fit.

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[245] E. Taylor, "To Make Salmagundi," *The Lady's Housewife's, and Cookmaid's Assistant : Or, the Art of Cookery* (Berwick upon Tweed, UK: Printed by H. Taylor, 1769), 54.

[246] Charlotte Mason, *The Lady's Assistant for Regulating and Supplying Her Table: Being a Complete System of Cookery, Containing One Hundred and Fifty Select Bills of Fare, Properly Disposed for Family Dinners* (London, UK: Printed for J. Walter, 1777), 427-428.

[247] For a detailed description of the style and format of cookbook recipes in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, see: Henry Notaker, *A History of Cookbooks: From Kitchen to*

It is understandable, therefore, why the term "salmagundi" later became synonymous with any collection of disparate materials randomly (and sometimes awkwardly) combined to form a singular object. By the early-nineteenth century the term was used interchangeably with the more modern terms "hodge-podge" or "potpourri." And by the end of that century the culinary reference to the word was almost completely lost, in turn falling out of even general usage in the twentieth century. This process has complicated its etymology in modern parlance.[248] However, at the time of *Salmagundi*'s publication, the word retained its literary double meaning as both a dish of cold meats and vegetables and a term for a miscellaneous collection of items.

In labeling the collection of essays *Salmagundi,* the authors deliberately and playfully hinted to the readers that the essays—and the characters satirized within—were

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Page Over Seven Centuries (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2017), Chapter 9: The Recipe Form.

[248] The esteemed food critic Craig Claiborne addressed the etymology of salmagundi in the late-twentieth century in a series of editorials for *The New York Times*. "One of the most interesting and curious words in the English language having to do with food is salmagundi" he wrote. "It is a word of uncertain origin, but most authorities think it stems from the French salmigondis, described in *Larousse Gastronomique* as a reheated ragout of meats, including chickens." Craig Claiborne, "De Gustibus: Healthy Serving of Culinary Word Soup," *The New York Times*, December 19, 1977, 54.

Weeks later, Claiborne published a number of letters to the editor that disputed the origin of the term, including one reader who claimed the word originated from the Latin "salgama" meaning "preserved," and another who argued the term came from a Jamaican spiced meat dish named for its creator, Solomon Grundy. "There is something about the word 'salmagundi,' Claiborne mused, "that has an unmistakable appeal for savants with a leaning toward gourmandism." Craig Claiborne, "The 'Salmagundi' Debate Continues," *The New York Times*, January 16, 1978, 26.

a seemingly random assortment that combined to produce a single, pleasurable dish. A nineteenth century audience understood the food reference well enough that the authors introduction proclaimed, "As every body [*sic*] knows, or ought to know, what a SALMAGUNDI is, we shall spare ourselves the trouble of an explanation."[249]

Surprisingly, the actual text of the essays rarely mentioned food in any great detail. One of the few instances of direct discussion on food and eating habits was in the mock travel essay, "The Stranger in New Jersey, or Cockney Travelling" supposedly penned by a wealthy British aristocrat named Jeremy Cockloft (the younger). The essay lampooned the simplistic note-taking style of many traveling Europeans in the United States, whose curt and often meaningless observations overgeneralized components of American society. "A knowing traveler always judges of everything by the innkeepers and waiters," the author wrote, "[For instance, I] set down in Newark, [and] all the people are as fat as butter."[250]

Some culinary references were also included outside of the actual content of the essays. For instance, an 1880 reprint contained a front page lithograph of the authors proudly presenting a gigantic serving dish labelled "salmagundi" above their heads, with a collection of items from the stories stacked within and served as a meal.[251] Further, the introductory quotation placed below the title page of each edition (written in mock Latin and then translated into English) also referenced cooking terminology by detailing the supposed purpose of *Salmagundi*:

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[249] Washington Irving, William Irving, and James Kirke Paulding, *Salmagundi: Or, The Whim-Whams and Opinions of Launcelot Langstaff, Esq. and Others* (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers, 1835), 1.

[250] "The Stranger in New Jersey, or Cockney Travelling" Irving, et al., *Salmagundi*, 67.

[251] Washington Irving, William Irving, and James Kirke Paulding, *Salmagundi: Or, The Whim-Whams and Opinions of Launcelot Langstaff, Esq. and Others* (New York, NY: Putnam, 1880).

> In hoc est hoax, cum quiz et jokesez,
> Et smokem, toastem, roastem, folksez,
> 		Fee, faw, fum.
>
> With baked, and broiled, and stewed, and toasted,
> And frying, and boiled, and smoaked [*sic*], and roasted,
> 		We treat the town.[252]

The double entendres present in Irving's collection of essays highlight a growing literary and cultural trend in the early national period. Authors of the era frequently employed the language of food for both figurative and metaphorical exposition. The universality and approachability of such vernacular descriptions aided in the introduction of complex topics—such as the nature and composition of communal (and ultimately national) character formation—presented to an emerging bourgeois audience that otherwise may have been hesitant to engage with and address such concepts. Indeed, by the first decade of the nineteenth century, food symbolism had become an effective cultural tool employed to present the foundational shift in the the United States from a postcolonial republican society to one centered around the concept of a singular, nationalistic identity.

Historian Lisa Wood argues that Irving's strategy was furthermore also widespread throughout European texts at the time. "Writers are the end of the eighteenth century in Britain," she writes, "used food figuratively as a way of negotiating a number of cultural and social issues, including gender, class, race, revolution, and nationalism."[253] Irving—who had recently returned from an extended stay in England when he, his brother, and Pauling began drafting the essays—was one of the first American writers to use food in this manner in the United States. Although light-hearted and satirical, the essays in *Salmagundi* each painted vivid portrayals of colorful citizens and characters that, when combined, revealed a singular portrait of New York City in 1807. The popularity of the essays throughout the nation was a testament to the relatability of the characters (and their social and political mindsets) beyond Manhattan society. Irving used food to as a metaphor for a newly-developing American sense of self, articulating a notion of nationalism by "roasting" and "toasting" the people to gain a stronger sense of what constituted "the town."[254] America itself was a salmagundi: a potpourri of disparate and conflicting peoples and ideas strewn together on a large plate, vaguely resembling some form of a cohesive unit and identity. Thus, nearly a century before the "melting pot" was appropriated from culinary vernacular to describe American society, there was salmagundi.

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[252] Irving, Irving, and Paulding, *Salmagundi*, 1835, 1.

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[253] Lisa Wood, "'Wholesome Nutriment' for the Rising Generation: Food, Nationalism, and Didactic Fiction at the End of the Eighteenth Century," *Eighteenth Century Fiction* 21, no. 4 (2009): 615-616.

[254] American literary scholar Walter Sondey argues that almost all of Washington Irving's works contain a similar nationalist motif. He writes, "Irving was the first American author to realize that the productions of the literary press…constituted the primary means to regulate the nation's self-image. His books demonstrate how the apparently moribund values of American conservatism might achieve a renewed influence over bourgeois individuals if…figured in terms of the domestic sentimentality associated with the private character of liberal democracy." Walter Sondey, "From Nation of Virtue to Virtual Nation: Washington Irving and American Nationalism," *Narratives of Nostalgia, Gender, and Nationalism*, Jean Pickering and Suzanne Kehde, eds. (New York, NY: New York University Press, 1997), 53. It is fair to say, therefore, that Irving would have been honing this method of "domestic sentimentality" using food symbolism in his early works like *Salmagundi*.

Salmagundi's food references represent an evolution in the cultural development and process of building an American culinary identity. Whereas previous representations focused on how best to incorporate specific food items into a burgeoning American society (such as indigenous corn crops) or how best to use foodstuffs as a tool to differentiate postcolonial American identity from its European counterparts (such as William Coxe's descriptions of American apple varieties), *Salmagundi* represented the inclination to describe the burgeoning American national character metaphorically through cookery. Foodstuffs and preparation methods combined to form a new and more nuanced type of culinary vocabulary that in turn helped codify what it meant to be a citizen of the nation. From such conceptual frameworks emerged simultaneously the intellectual notion of a "cuisine," a construct that—in its modern application—was intrinsically linked to the cultural development of nationalism, and would help to shape how the American nation and its people would be defined at home and abroad.

* * *

Salmagundi was first published outside the United States in London in 1811. Because of the work's culturally-specific satire and colloquialisms, British author and traveller John Lambert was asked to write an introductory essay with explanatory notes for European readers. Lambert's introduction was fifty-four pages long: over a quarter of the length of *Salmagundi* itself.[255] Lambert touched on a number of subjects relevant to his British audience, including most significantly an assurance to his readers that their preconceptions of American literature—and American society—were inaccurate. Lambert wrote,

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[255] John Lambert, introduction to *Salmagundi: Or, The Whim-Whams and Opinions of Launcelot Langstaff, Esq. Reprinted from the American Edition with an Introductory Essay and Explanatory Notes by John Lambert,* by Washington Irving, William Irving, and James Kirke Paulding (London, UK: Printed for J.M. Richardson, 1811).

> I positively assure my *gentle*, as well as genteel, readers, that the *Salmagundi* is, bona fide, a *dish* of real American cookery; and, if they will only allow me first to disperse the little acrimonious crudites that prevent digestion, I will present them with such an excellent ragout of wit, humour, and genius, that they may feast on forever without the least apprehension of a surfeit.[256]

Like the authors of *Salmagundi* themselves, Lambert used food and cookery vernacular to describe the content and methodology of the essays, detailing the "crudites that prevent digestion" and the "excellent ragout of wit" inherent in the literature. It is telling that Lambert describes *Salmagundi* as a "*dish* of real American cookery," alluding to the relatively recent cultural differentiation between American and British literary styles.[257] Like Joel Barlow's *The Hasty Pudding*, *Salmagundi* was an original American literary piece born from a new political and cultural society. And like other wholly American creations of the era, there was a good deal of hesitation from European readers regarding *Salmagundi's* literary quality. Lambert addressed this hesitation, declaring, "A SALMAGUNDI is, indeed, a dish that may at first alarm some of delicate appetites, especially those who have no great partiality to the country in which it was cooked."[258] Like the titular strange concoction of ingredients, American culture was on the surface strange and unappealing. But the further one delved into its ingredients, according to Lambert, the more appetizing the meal (and country) could be. Setting aside the culinary metaphors momentarily, Lambert directly concluded, "the contempt in which American literature is generally held in this country is both unjust and groundless."[259]

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[256] Lambert, "Introduction," in *Salmagundi*, ix.

[257] For more information on the growing rift between British and American literary genres of the era, as well as an excellent analysis of the use of food metaphors in these works, see: Mark McWilliams *Food and the Novel in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York, NY: Rowman Altamira, 2012).

[258] Lambert, "Introduction," in *Salmagundi*, ix.

The genesis of this cultural divide, according to Lambert, was "the unfortunate revolution" that caused a level of "jealousy between the two nations."[260] Lambert wrote that American jealousy of Britain is "chiefly of a political nature," whereas the British "prejudices extend to everything American, whether it be the politics of the democrats [or] the manners of the people."[261] These "manners" of the people included what Americans ate, and how they ate; a topic of discussion in may European travelogues of the United States.

Echoing Amelia Simmons' metaphorical concept of the United States as an orphaned child of the paternal British Empire, Lambert believed that the undue animosity of the British toward American society was similar to a parent's disapproval of an unruly offspring. Lambert opined, "I believe it is more difficult for a parent to pardon the undutiful behaviour of a child than for a child to forget the ill-treatment of a parent. The same reasoning may, perhaps, apply to nations as well as to individuals; for the conduct of men in their public capacity is guided very often by the same feelings and passions as influence them in private life."[262] Lambert's assessment was rather complex: he conflated the private with the public, and the individual with society in a manner that detailed the formation of nationalism and the conceptual development of a national character. Thus, Britain as a singular entity could embody characteristics (jealousy, parental disappointment, etc.) normally reserved for the attributes and emotions of a person. This mindset— a form of civic anthropomorphism—allowed for the association of inanimate conceptual frameworks such as "nations" and "nationalism" to be described as having an identity, a sense of self. It is with this understanding and mentality that Europeans and Americans were able to associate the characteristics of food and eating (notions exclusive to animate objects) with an inanimate concept such as a nation. Finally, of note is the fact that Lambert uses "nation" to describe the United States in this text, a moniker rarely used in this context by either European or American authors prior to the first decade of the nineteenth century. That the United States could be considered a "nation" on par with other modern civilized political entities (rather than merely a former colony or "illegitimate" country) represented a transformative and influential moment in the development of American nationalism in the early Republic.

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[259] Lambert, "Introduction," in *Salmagundi*, ix.
[260] Ibid.
[261] Ibid., iii.
[262] Ibid.

But what made British author John Lambert an expert in Anglo-American relations and American character, so much so that his massive introduction was included in the first international edition of Irving's *Salmagundi*? At the same time that Irving and others were writing and publishing their essays, Lambert was touring North America. Lambert spent a total of three years travelling around the United States and Canada, experiencing every aspect of North American life he could review, from the size and placement of churches in New York to the treatment of slaves in South Carolinian fields. Lambert was by all accounts a fastidious and prolific author who treated the subjects of his work with great detail and fairness. As one of the preeminent American literary critics, Josephus Nelson Larned, wrote of Lambert's work, "the sketches of society are written with much humor; the the descriptive portions are well done, and much important information is given."[263] Therefore, both in England and the United States, Lambert's views held great weight.

In his travelogue, Lambert recorded his views on a myriad of American cultural conventions, including most notably his views on American eating habits. His general observations concluded that:

> English breakfasts and teas, generally speaking, are meagre repasts compared with those of America; and as far as I had an opportunity of observing, the people live, with respect to eating, in a much more luxurious manner than we do, particularly in the great towns and their neighborhoods. But their meals, I think, are composed of too great a variety, and of too many things, to be conducive to health; and I have little doubt but that many of their diseases are engendered by gross diet, and the use of animal food at every meal… Formerly, pies, puddings, and cyder used to grace the breakfast table: but they are now discarded from the genteeler houses, and are found only at the small taverns and farm-houses in the country.[264]

It is apparent from the text that Lambert was in general impressed with the quantity and quality of American meals. In a reversal from many of his contemporary European authors, Lambert saw American eating habits as far more luxurious than their European counterparts. And surprisingly, he observed the staples of English cuisine—pies and puddings—that were supposedly so prevalent in the United States, "discarded from the genteeler houses." Unfortunately, Lambert does not detail what replaced these staple dishes, but it is nevertheless interesting that he recorded fewer English dishes in America than he had previously assumed; a nod to the growing cultural separation between the countries and the increasing distinctiveness of American society highlighted through its citizens choice of foodstuffs.

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[263] Josephus Nelson Larned and Philip Patterson Wells, *The Literature of American History: A Bibliographical Guide* (Boston, MA: Published for the American Library Association, 1902), 425.

[264] John Lambert, *Travels through Canada, and the United States of North America, in the Years 1806, 1807, & 1808: To Which Are Added Biographical Notices and Anecdotes of Some of the Leading Characters in the United States* (London, UK: Printed for C. Cradock and W. Joy, 1814), 40.

It is of note, further, that although Lambert considered the meals to be of high quality, he believed Americans' health suffered due to their eating habits. In later writings, Lambert argued that, "Those who have the means of living better are great eaters of animal food, which is introduced at every meal; together with a variety of hot cakes, and a profusion of butter: all of which may more or less tend to the introduction of bilious disorders, and perhaps lay the foundation of those diseases which prove fatal in hot climates."[265] Lambert's observations here are yet again multifaceted. He simultaneously praised Americans for their variety and wealth of meals and blamed such variety for a greater prevalence of sickness. In this instance, Lambert was influenced by early modern beliefs on humoral health and its ties to food and eating habits, as evident in his perception of "bilious disorders." His mention of climate as affecting the health of Americans also brings to mind Buffon and other European philosophers' arguments pertaining to North American climate and American social degeneracy. Nevertheless, Lambert was overall impressed and fond of American food and American eating habits. One one occasion, upon rushing to catch a ferry to cross Lake Champlain into Canada, Lambert described missing breakfast at the local tavern. Luckily however, the ferryman's wife "soon baked a *johnny-cake* of Indian meal and rye at the fire, and I made an excellent breakfast."[266]

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[265] Lambert, *Travels through Canada, and the United States of North America,* 83.
[266] Ibid., 523.

John Lambert’s methodology and literary style were similar to an almost innumerable list of other European writers who, in the decades following American independence, travelled to the United States in search of observing a nascent, unified national character. Those who catalogued and published their findings satiated a public need to detail and expose what was perceived as an exotic and exceptional country: new and foreign, yet built from the foundations of the old. Like so many before them, the European authors of these works travelled to America to answer Crèvecœur’s perennial question: “What then is the American, this new man?”[267] And like Irving in *Salmagundi*, the authors used food—both metaphorically and analytically—as an recognizable and approachable literary motif for their bourgeois audiences to define larger and more complicated assertions regarding nationalism and identity.

At times, such as in Lambert’s assessment, cuisine was used to praise America and its citizens; defining a people without want living convivially and marching forward to their newfound sense of nationhood. More often, however, European authors used food and eating habits to demote American society; viewing Americans as unrefined, gluttonous mobs incapable of reaching the high culinary and cultural levels of their European counterparts.

When confronted with these critiques, American authors responded either by pushing back against negative mischaracterizations or begrudgingly accepting their conclusions. Regardless of the response, European travelogues of America proved to be popular on both sides of the Atlantic, defining America’s national impression of itself as much as they defined Americans for European audiences. These interactions informed a continued debate on the nature and promise of American society that started with Buffon and Jefferson and the opposing views of degeneration theory as applied to national character. Worthwhile conclusions that could be made in these instances obviously included some combination of the two extremes, but in these literary works, perception ruled over reality when employing food to symbolize and define a singular national identity.

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[267] J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer*, *Reprinted from the Original Edition, 1782* (New York, NY: Fox, Duffield, and Co., 1904), 54.

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It can be argued that the genesis of our modern definitions of nations and nationalism are attributed to the writings of a single author: the eighteenth century Prussian philosopher Johann Herder. Herder wrote extensively on nationalism at a point in history when nations were forming into their current incarnations, and thus his thoughts on the subject have had a lasting impact on contemporary interpretations. One of the more compelling aspects of Herder's thesis, as historian Royal Schmidt argues, was "that the most natural state is one nation with one national character."[268] Cultural unification, therefore, was paramount to Herder's understanding of what defined a nation.

But the composition and allocation of power within this unified system was equally important; the final goal of nationalism for Herder was to empower the *volk* (the people) and assert authority over the old dominion. In essence, a nation was a unifying concept that attempted to remove pedigree and prestige from the power structure.[269] In Herder's analysis, European political systems based upon heredity and religious hierarchies had proven disastrous to the people, and therefore a "modern" society needed to be centered around the will of people in order to move the world beyond the archaic parameters of monarchical and dogmatic power systems.[270]

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[268] Royal J. Schmidt, "Cultural Nationalism in Herder," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 17, no. 3 (June 1, 1956): 407–408.

The concept was indeed revolutionary, but it was also heavily influenced by Herder's contemporary political and social context. By the late-eighteenth century, power structures in Europe had hit an impasse; they had lost their legitimacy both at home and in their colonial holdings. Therefore, Herder's concept of a nation came at a moment when conditions were ripe for upheaval. As the political scientist Benedict Anderson contends, "in the course of the nineteenth century, and especially in its latter half, the philological-lexicographic revolution and the rise of intra-European nationalist movements, themselves the products, not only of nationalism, but of the elephantiasis of the dynastic states, created increasing cultural, and therefore political, difficulties for many dynasties."[271] Therefore, nations—including the newly-formed United States—evolved out of a power vacuum of the old dominion, thereby restructuring and reforming essential social structures.

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[269] Johann G. Herder, *Against Pure Reason: Writings on Religion, Language, and History* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2005), 39.
[270] Ibid.
[271] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (Brooklyn, NY: Verso Press, 2006), 39.

In regard to food culture, however, any discussion on its connection to national character formation presupposes that a national cuisine can even exist. Modern scholars are divided on this question. In *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom* anthropologist Sidney Mintz argues, “A ‘national cuisine’ is a contradiction in terms; there can be regional cuisines, but not national cuisines. I think that for the most part, a national cuisine is simply a holistic artifice based on the foods of a people who live inside some political system, such as France or Spain.”[272] Priscilla Ferguson has a more fluid definition of the concept, however, stating that, “A truly national cuisine is something else again. A modern phenomenon, a national cuisine is part and parcel of the nation-state that emerged in the West during the nineteenth century as a culinary system both different from and greater than the sum of its regional parts.”[273] In both assessments, the existence of a structured national cuisine hinges on the ability to define a cultural construct of disparate regional foodstuffs linked solely by the political conception of a nation-state. As both cuisine and nationhood are intangible, it become doubly difficult to classify a national cuisine. For Mintz, this leads to the inability to recognize the existence of national cuisines in modern society. For Ferguson, placing national cuisines in historical context render their true existence moot: national cuisines existed because historical characters—affected by their social circumstances—deemed them necessary to exist in order to characterize the emergent intellectual and political designations of the state.

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[272] Sidney W. Mintz, *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom: Excursions Into Eating, Culture, and the Past* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1997), 104.

[273] Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson, *Accounting for Taste: The Triumph of French Cuisine* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 5-6.

At the dawn of the nineteenth century, it was the French people who most profoundly and effectively merged food with nationhood.[274] As scholar Stephen Mennell argues, the era "saw the full establishment of a French international culinary hegemony, not merely over England but over must of the rest of Europe and, by the end of the century, North America too."[275] As evidence of France's widespread influence on food and cooking, the internationally recognized term "cuisine"—a word used to define a structured system of foodstuffs, cooking practices, and eating habits—originated from the French word for "kitchen." For most of the early national period, Americans seldom used the term "cuisine" to define their food and eating habits, opting most often for the term "cookery" as its closest equivalent. "Cuisine" appeared mostly in the American books and newspaper articles of predominantly French-speaking regions—notably New Orleans—in reference to physical kitchens, or to "chef de cuisines" (heads of the kitchens) of restaurants and other types of dining establishments.[276]

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[274] See: Ferguson, *Accounting for Taste: The Triumph of French Cuisine* for a complete and well-structured review of the progression, scope, and influence of national French culinary culture in post-Revolutionary Europe.

[275] Stephen Mennell, *All Manners of Food: Eating and Taste in England and France from the Middle Ages to the Present* (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1996), 134.

[276] An example of this usage of the term "chef de cuisine" is found in an article advertising a new restaurant in New York City in 1834. The author, J. Weller, called himself the "late Chef De Cuisine at the City Hotel." It is of note that Weller distanced himself from "ignorant practitioners" of the culinary arts by promoting his "apprenticeships in Europe" and detailing his experiences "studying the taste of this community, and [gleaning] information in varied businesses from a hundred artists of different nations." J. Weller, "Advertisement," *The American* (New York, NY), November 13, 1834, 4.

That the chef felt it beneficial to describe both his experiences within "the community" of New York as well as his experiences with European chefs highlights the cultural clash between

One of the earliest uses in the English language of the term to define an American culinary system appeared in an 1845 travelogue titled, *The Letters and Journal of Fanny Ellsler*. Upon arriving in New York City in 1840, the famous Austrian-born dancer (whose name was actually "Elssler," and the American publisher made an egregious typo) wrote, "I ordered my dinner, not a little curious to see something of the mystery of an American *cuisine.*"[277] The meal seemingly exceeded her admittedly low expectations. "Nothing could have been better cooked or of better quality," she wrote, "There is 'science' in the kitchens of the hotels, and I begin to think that America is not quite so barbarous as fine folks have assured me."[278] To her surprise, Americans even used napkins at the dinner table, rendering the dozen she brought with her—predicated on the assurances of her friends that "a napkin was not to be found in the country"—useless.[279] Elssler's incorporation of napkin etiquette in her discussion on cuisine showcased how the term encompased far more than the staple foods of a nation: cuisine included cooking and preparation techniques, dining manners, and a host of other cultural components that—combined with specific foodstuffs—formed a definition of a nation's "cuisine." Furthermore, Europe's linguistic and cultural dominance over the United States is well exemplified in Elssler's backhanded compliments of American culture, such as her use of a French culinary term to describe how little barbarity she saw in what and how Americans ate.

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regional and international influences and the dominance of European cuisine in American restaurants of the era.

[277] Fanny Elssler, *The Letters and Journal of Fanny Ellsler: Written Before and After Her Operatic Campaign in the United States* (New York, NY: H. G. Daggers, 1845), 38.

[278] Ibid.

[279] Ibid.

Indeed, France's culinary hegemony remained prevalent throughout the nineteenth century, but its dominance was not a foregone, naturally-derived conclusion. The cultural supremacy of French cuisine in the Atlantic world originated from a concerted and deliberate attempt to combine a disparate collection of regions, peoples, and ideas into a singular unified cultural entity; a construct that served to reinforce cultural (and subsequently political) dominance when compared with other nation-states. This development was a form of cultural nationalism, and, as food scholar Amy Trubek contends, "cultural nationalism functioned well in the evangelical agendas of French chefs: their audience of bourgeois consumers easily understood the links being made between France, French cultural power, and culinary excellence."[280] A national cuisine, therefore, was a deliberately-conceived cultural tool wielded for political purpose.

But because a national cuisine was constructed from distinct and varied components, it could never truly exist as the unified construct it purported to be. This is evident in the early attempts to define a national French cuisine, such as the *Carte Gastronomique de la France. Carte Gastronomique de la France* is an elaborate map first published in the opening fold-out page of *Cours Gastronomique*, a memoir of Charles Louis Cadet de Gassicourt that detailed the author's life as a gourmand, as well as a collection of his scientific and cultural aphorisms declaring the importance and usefulness of fine dining in society.[281]

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[280] Amy B. Trubek, *Haute Cuisine: How the French Invented the Culinary Profession* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), 67.

[281] Charles Louis Cadet de Gassicourt, *Cours Gastronomique ou Les Diners de Manant-Ville, ouvrage Anecdotique, Philosophique et Litteraire* (Paris, FR: Capelle et Renand, Libaires Commissionnaires, 1809).

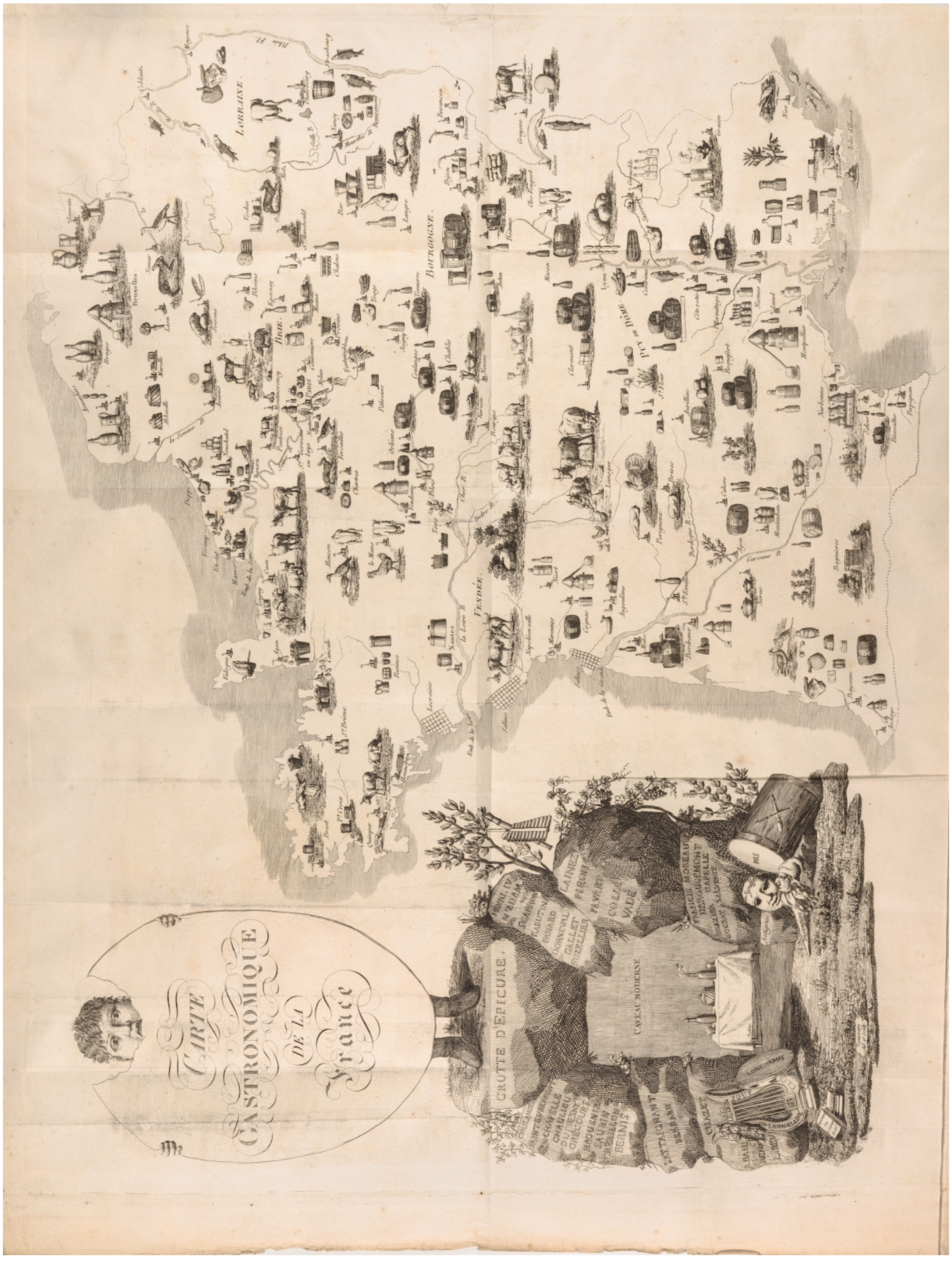

Figure 4: Jean François Tourcaty, *Carte Gastronomique de la France*, 1809, wood engraving. Courtesy of the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, LC-USZ62-87363.

The meticulous map laid out the prominent culinary specialties of a number of regions throughout France.[282] There are dozens of engravings in the work, ranging from depictions of native plants and animals to etchings of distilleries, table settings, and other cooking paraphernalia. The Dijon region, for instance, was depicted with bottles of mustard and mustard seed, while Lorraine was shown with a plucked pheasant and ham hocks. There were grazing cattle in the Caen region, and Rennes was visualized with a copper pot and earthen cookware.[283]

Each area had its own very distinct and unique culinary marker, and the only unifying characteristic of these items was their geographical placement within the political boundaries of France. Without this political boundary, the consolidation of these components of cuisine would be wholly arbitrary. Thus, like the literary metaphor of *Salmagundi*, the multiple disparate ingredients of the country were deliberately combined to encapsulate a singular entity. Cadet de Gassicourt and his engraver Tourcaty designed the map as an intentional cultural tool used to laud the diversity and quality of the unifying concept of a national French cuisine.

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[282] Similar "carte gastronomiques" (national culinary maps) continued to be designed well into the twentieth century, most notably the far more detailed *Carte Gastronomique de la France* by noted chef Alain Bourguignon in 1929. Bourguignon's map removed all visuals, opting instead for more detailed text descriptions of each region's culinary specialties. The map is also notable for its division by provinces as well as grape varietals specified by their wine-growing region (called "crus"), an intricate system developed by the French government decades after Cadet de Gassicourt's maps publication. See: Alain Bourguignon, *Carte Gastronomique de la France*, 1929, engraving. Courtesy of the Bibliothéque Nationale de France.

Designated areas for wine production further defined a national French cuisine by arguing that the specific environmental factors of a region—its temperature, soil, and traditional growing methods, collectively described as "terrior"—combined to make certain places superior producers of certain types of wine. For a detailed description of the concept of terroir, as well as its modern impact on agriculture and cultural identity, see: Elizabeth Barham, "Translating Terroir: The Global Challenge of French AOC Labeling," *Journal of Rural Studies,* 19, no. 1 (January 1, 2003): 127–38.

[283] Jean François Tourcaty, *Carte Gastronomique de la France*, 1809, wood engraving. Courtesy of the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, LC-USZ62-87363.

The desire to unite France using food was not reserved to the conceptual literary works of one gourmand, however. Antonin Carême, one of the most influential chefs of the nineteenth century, also used cuisine to help define nationalism. As France shifted from monarchical to republican power in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, Carême too shifted from "the king of cooks and the cook of kings" to become a proto-celebrity chef of the Parisian bourgeoisie.[284] His association with the politician and diplomat Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand led to an invitation to serve as *chef de cuisine* at the Congress of Vienna, the post-Napoleonic negotiations that carved out political boundaries throughout Europe.[285] In an attempt to remind the other European delegations of France's culinary, cultural, and therefore political supremacy, Talleyrand instructed Carême to impress the diners with sumptuous feasts using French dishes and French cooking styles at the end of each day of negotiations.

France's recent military defeats had put this supremacy in question. As a contemporary British political cartoon exemplified, this unbalanced power structure placed France in a subservient position to its rivals. titled, "National Contrasts, or Bulky and Boney," the cartoon depicted a rotund Englishman sitting atop a literal conrucopia of riches, flanked by a large ham dinner and a pint of ale. Across from the

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[284] Atsuko Ichijo and Ronald Ranta, *Food, National Identity and Nationalism: From Everyday to Global Politics* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 110.

[285] Marc Jacobs, "Commensal Soft Power Tools for Elites in European States: Networks and Dramaturgy between Divergence and Convergence," *Food and History* 10, no. 1 (January 1, 2012): 49–68.

Englishman—sitting a far distance away from the dining table— is a dangerously thin and noticeably agitated Napoleon, without even a morsel to eat. The contrast between the two nations was clear: England's bounty and political influence far surpassed that of France.[286]

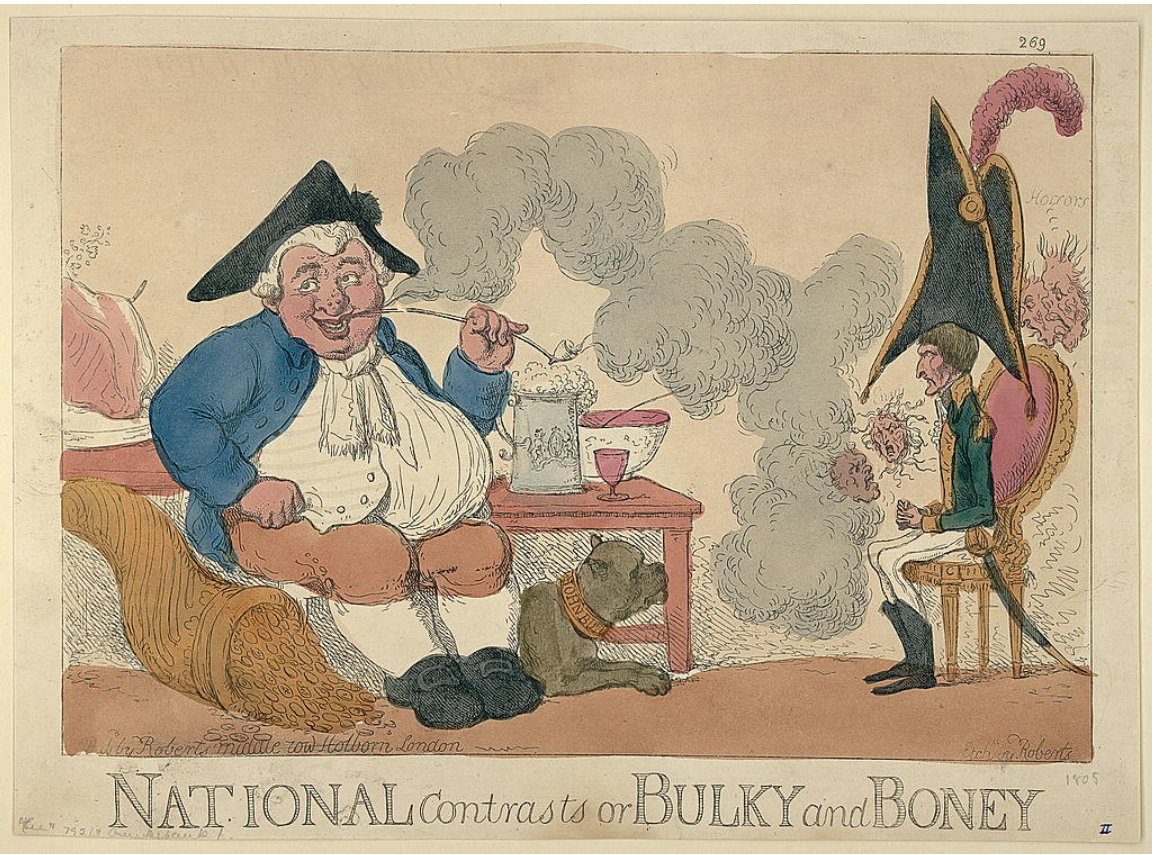
269
Horrors
JOHN BULL
Pub by Roberts middle row Holborn London
Etch'd by Roberts
1805
NATIONAL Contrasts or BULKY and BONEY
II

Figure 5: Piercy Roberts, *National Contrasts: or Bulky and Boney,* ca. 1803-1807, hand-coloured etching. Courtesy of The British Museum, 1948.0214.683.

Carême's role in Vienna, therefore, went far beyond merely satiating dignitaries; his dinners were a form of French culinary diplomacy. Indeed, Talleyrand believed so greatly in the positive impact that cuisine could serve on the political negotiations, that when asked by France's Louis XVIII what additional supplies he might need at the Congress, Talleyrand supposedly replied, "Sire, I need more saucepans than secretaries. Let me do my work and count on Carême."[287]

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[286] Piercy Roberts, *National Contrasts: or Bulky and Boney,* ca. 1803-1807, hand-coloured etching. Courtesy of The British Museum, 1948.0214.683.

In general, the negotiations ended with favorable results for France's interests. Carême's actual influence on the negotiations are not easily quantified, but nevertheless, the chef's popularity throughout Europe in the years following the Congress of Vienna afforded him the opportunity to dictate culinary trends throughout the continent for decades. In a series of published works in the 1820s, Carême laid out a detailed blueprint for modern French *haute cuisine.* The works addressed nearly every aspect of the culinary arts, ranging from the proper placement of cutlery on the table to the ideal method to cook a steak. But one of Carême's most long-lasting contributions to cuisine (and one that helped cement France's cultural culinary superiority internationally) was the codification of the "mother sauces." Carême devised four base sauces—each representative of a specific style of cooking—that could be altered and applied to a variety of meals. These sauces remain a staple of fine dining throughout the world; an example of France's culinary influence and cultural hegemony.

Although representative of the nation of France, some of Carême's mother sauces had international origins. This fact spoke to the arbitrary and complicated process of devising a national cuisine. The creamy egg-based allemande sauce, for instance, was named for a German dance. Further, the dark brown roux-based Espagnole sauce literally translated to "the sauce of Spain" and included tomatoes in the recipe, foodstuffs native to North America.[288] Consequently, the constant interaction between other nations and cultures and the inability of foodstuffs to be restricted by arbitrary political boundaries made the development of authentic French national cuisine nearly impossible to determine. Nevertheless, the mere attempt to organize a system of cultural culinary constructs was enough to make French cuisine a dominant and powerful international force. Combined, Cadet de Gassicourt's map, Talleyrand's diplomacy, and Carême's sauces are examples of conscious attempts to dictate the cultural superiority of French cuisine, and in turn the superiority of French nationhood and French political culture in the early-nineteenth century. The efforts of the men helped define and intricately link the types of food people ate with their perceptions of the type of nation they lived in.

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[287] Jean-Robert Pitte, *French Gastronomy: The History and Geography of a Passion*, Jody Gladding, trans. (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2002), 105.

But more than simply lauding the components of its native culinary practices, the proponents of national cuisine further solidified their cultural supremacy by comparing themselves to other nation's cuisines, often heavily critiquing or demeaning these cuisines in order to further restate their own nation's primacy. Thus, when travel authors unfavorably compared the meals and cooking practices of other nations to their own, they were inadvertently engaging in cultural combat; vying for culinary dominance by viliying inferior nations' cuisines. While such publications and practices were common throughout Europe and America in the early-nineteenth century, the United States was particularly targeted for its supposed culinary and cultural inferiority, especially by French travellers who so proudly and emphatically proclaimed their own national culinary character at home.

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[288] Carême first mentioned some of these sauces in: Antonin Carême, *Le Pâtissier Royal Parisien* (Paris, FR: J.G. Dentu, 1815), 85. The notion of French "mother sauces" evolved over the following decades. After Carême's death in 1833, the great French chef Auguste Escoffier changed some of the sauces and added a new sauce to the list. Like Carême, Escoffier's five mother sauces (béchamel, espagnole, hollandaise, sauce tomate, and velouté) were similarly influenced by international tastes. The additional sauce Escoffier added to the list was "Hollandaise" sauce, named for the country of Holland. See: Linda Civitello, *Cuisine and Culture: A History of Food and People* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2007), 195.

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The Port Folio, a literary magazine started in Philadelphia in 1801, was created with the intent to generate a sense of literary nationalism throughout the United States. In the years following the War of 1812, elite American authors attempted to use the patriotic fervor of the era to further distance the United States from its European counterparts, detailing this shift in a number of periodicals designed to rival the literary and cultural hegemony of the Old World with published materials from the new. As historian Jaap Verheul argues, the purpose of some of these magazines "explicitly referred to the parallel between the two battlefields" of European and American society.[289] The publication *The Port Folio* is an example of an influential magazine of the era that personified this goal. In fact, the editors of *The Port Folio* outright called for America to "become as renowned in literature, as she is in arms."[290] To place American society on equal footing with the rest of the civilized world entailed, according to the pages of *The Port Folio,* a concerted effort to present American culture as distinct and worthy of praise and subsequently, its authors and writings worthy of publication.

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[289] Jaap Verheul, "'A Peculiar National Character': Transatlantic Realignment and the Birth of American Cultural Nationalism after 1815," *European Journal of American Studies* no. 7, (March 29, 2012), 10.

[290] Quoted in: John C. McCloskey, "The Campaign of Periodicals after the War of 1812 for National American Literature," *PMLA*, no. 1 (1935): 264.

It is fitting, therefore, that a publication designed to increase the standing of American culture would find the trend of French authors publishing travelogues critiquing United States culture to be a grave threat to American society. In an essay titled, “America by French Pens,” that ran in the September 1814 edition of *The Port Folio*, the author began by stating:

> Few travellers have visited this country, who have disentangled themselves from prejudice. Few nations, indeed, have been so frequently misrepresented either by blind enthusiasm, or malicious falsehood. Several French writers have decorated their descriptions with the most romantic fables, whilst the English, with scarcely an exemption, have filled their volumes with expresses of scorn and hatred.[291]

The author’s contempt for such travellers is on full display in the piece. Regardless of their intentions, it was argued that European travellers had done a massive disservice to their audience by simplistically representing American character. It is of note that the author included English “scorn and hatred” in the essay’s introduction.[292] Although focused primarily on French writers, the author found it necessary to at least mention English travellers as well, as their writings were also considered rather derisive.

The essay continued by directly addressing the European authors. “Let [the writer] ask himself whether circumstances peculiar to the country do not make difference necessary,” he wrote, “whether the climate, soil, and locality do not require appropriate habits? Whether the habits of his own country, however, superior at first sight, would not be inconvenienced and unsuitable abroad?”[293] By admitting the difference in the climate and soil—similar to the environmental distinctions made by early European colonists and furthered by scientific theories on American degeneration in the late-eighteenth century—the author understood that a significant discrepancy existed between the natural worlds of Europe and America. However, he argued that cultural differences stemming from their natural differences were formed by a conscious choice. American culture, therefore, altered European manners and practices ingeniously in order to suit the conditions found on the continent. Thus, according to the author of the essay, criticism of these new American customs exposed the naïveté of the French authors to the realities of cultural identity formation. "Foreign manners and customs contemplated in this sober way," the author asserted, "must, not unfrequently, extort praise from the judicious tourist, rather than satire."[294]

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[291] “America by French Pens,” *The Port Folio*, July-December, 1814, vol. 4 (New York, NY: Bradford & Abraham H. Irtskeep, 1815), 199.

[292] The author would later include Germans in this description, writing “The French, English, and even the Germans have dipt [*sic*] their pens in gall, and lost sight of decency and truth, when describing America.” Ibid., 201.

[293] Ibid., 200.

The author ended his argument with a call to arms to the American people:

> Having been grossly and constantly misrepresented by European writers, it should be the aim of every American to defend the good name of his country, and to consolidate our different manners and opinions into one durable and impressive shape, which may place us distinctly, consciously, and immovably among the communities of the earth, as a characterized people; so that it shall no longer be pretended that we are a heterogeneous assemblage, early claiming kindred with other countries, while we slight our own.[295]

Like the French nationalists before them, the editors of *The Port Folio* advocated condensing America's disparate collection of customs and peoples into a singular homogenous entity that could compete with the cultures of Europe. Further, the desire to reject previous associations with other nations is reminiscent of the "federal diet" concept propagated during the constitutional ratification debates of the late 1780s. Since independence, Americans tried to rid themselves of foreign influence in order to develop a strong national character. Yet well into the nineteenth century, it was apparent that the ragtag assemblage of peoples who made up the nation were unable to form a singular, united culture. *The Port Folio's* lament in this essay—that Americans slight their own nationalism—began as a critique of European authors' assessment of American national character. Yet the argument concluded with the onus on Americans themselves to prove these foreign philosophers wrong.

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[294] "America by French Pens," *The Port Folio*, 200.

[295] Ibid.

The French authors accused of slanderous generalizations in "America by French Pens" was long and impressive, and included figures such as Crèvecœur and Talleyrand. Talleyrand had toured the United States at the end of the eighteenth century and had published a record of his travels. Included within his memoirs were arguments regarding American commercialization, including what Talleyrand saw as an unnecessary dependence on English manufacturing, which in turn lead to a preponderance of English traditions and customs in the new nation. The American people's inability to break ties with England, according to Talleyrand, kept the United States from developing its own national culture.

In describing the impact of the fishing industry on the eastern coast of the United States, Talleyrand argued, "we must not compare these fisherman to those of Europe… [American fisherman] are attached to no place… It is the sea that affords them nourishment: hence a few cod-fish, more or less, determine their country."[296] This assessment of American fisherman—that their allegiance was predicated solely on the abundance of their catch—was a slight against America's ability to construct a stable national culture. As Talleyrand continued, "All the qualities, all the virtues, which are attached to agriculture, are wanting the man who lives by fishing. Agriculture produces a patriot in the truest acceptation of the work; fishing can alone succeed in forming a cosmopolite."[297] Talleyrand's questioning of American fishermen's allegiance to their country spoke to his perception of the flimsy foundations of American nationalism: the abundance of foodstuffs along the coast was the only component of their continued loyalty to the United States, and if the bounty ran dry, they would abandon their country.

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[296] Charles Maurice de Talleyrand, *Memoir Concerning the Commercial Relations of the United States with England, Translated from the French* (Boston, MA: Thomas B. Wait & Company, 1809), 12.

The Port Folio responded to Talleyrand's accusation on American fishermen's allegiance with an impassioned denial. "To their courage and patriotism we are indebted," the author stated, "and Mr. Talleyrand must have been totally ignorant of their singular hardihood and merit, when he presumed to class the awkward drones of his own coast above them."[298] It may seem trivial to place such zealous emphasis on fishermen, but for both Talleyrand and the writers of *The Port Folio*, the character of men who provided the nation with subsistence was a topic of immense import. If the loyalty of fishermen could be put in question, so too could the entire country's cultural supremacy; a further example of the powerful connection between food culture and national identity.

In September 1814, only a few months after their initial rebuttal to Talleyrand, the editors of *The Port Folio* published a further denunciation of French travellers in America. titled, "Letter on Cookery and Eating" and written by the satirical pen name

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[297] Talleyrand, *Memoir Concerning the Commercial Relations of the United States*, 12.
[298] "America by French Pens," in *The Port Folio*, 210.

"Epicuri de Grege Porcus" (Latin for "an Epicurean hog") the essay detailed the importance of food in society. "I do not know a more important object of inquiry to a traveller," the author stated, "than the meals of the people through whose country he journeys."[299] In direct opposition to the supposed refinement and opulence of European—and particularly French—cuisine, the author asked that the "traveller, after viewing the luxuries common in the higher ranks of society, attend to the meals of the middling classes and the poor. If he finds…the difficulty of subsistence borders upon starving…then such a government, however plausible in theory, is bad in practice."[300] For the author, a nation was only truly great if all its citizens had the ability to share in the wealth and abundance of the country's cuisine. The author's insinuation was that those of means who travel from European nations to America know only the *haute cuisine* of their own social class, and therefore do not represent the full picture of their own national culture. The author continued,

> Should our traveller, crossing the Atlantic, come here, and observe the universal prevalence of meat and fish breakfasts and suppers, among the poorest of society, the consumption of animal food in some shape or other, three times a day…he may not approve of so much of the doctrine of equality as marks our manners, and he may smile, perhaps, at occasional features of national egotism; but he must see, that the great end of society, *the comfort of the people*, is, some how [*sic*] or other, more effectually secured here than elsewhere.[301]

As the authors of *The Port Folio* contended, the scores of European travellers who ridiculed and belittled Americans and their cuisine had missed a fundamental truth: the United States was a new form of nation, one founded not on rigid social classes, but on equality and freedom for all its citizens. It may be accurate, therefore, that certain European palates may be more refined than those in America, but that refinement had come at the cost of providing subsistence to the lower classes of European society. Like France and other European nations, America too defined its nationhood in part through its cuisine. But according to the authors of *The Port Folio*, unlike Europe, Americans valued a separate set of characteristics when they constructed this cultural definition.

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[299] Epicui de Grege Porcus, "Letter on Cookery and Eating," *The Port Folio*, July-December, 1814, vol. 4 (New York, NY: Bradford & Abraham H. Irtskeep, 1815), 540.
[300] Ibid.
[301] Ibid., 540-541.

However, regardless of the strong arguments against overgeneralized conclusions of American eating habits and despite *The Port Folio*'s passionate arguments on the positive and egalitarian connections between American food and American political culture, European authors continued to travel to the United States and publish travelogues that criticized American food and American nationhood. In the decades that followed, the association—both favorably and unfavorably—between American cuisine and nationalism was further solidified by European authors, as well as the Americans who responded to those authors' accusations.

Surprisingly, Alexis de Tocqueville (one of the more famous European travellers to describe the political and social conventions of the United States in the early American Republic) wrote very little on his observations of American cuisine. In one of the few sections that mention food and eating habits in *Democracy in America*, Tocqueville wrote that the east coast of America "has a soil which offers every obstacle to the husbandman, and its vegetation is scanty and unvaried. Upon this inhospitable coast the first united efforts of human industry were made."[302] It was here, in what Tocqueville described as the "tongue of arid land" that became "the cradle of those English colonies which were destined one day to become the United States of America."[303] His depiction of American agriculture was far from complementary, and Tocqueville's analysis is reminiscent of earlier social degeneration arguments that associated the climate and soil quality of a country with its national character. While Tocqueville's assessment of America in the early national period was immensely complex in other sections—making his treatise an extremely popular and influential resource for both his contemporary and our modern readership—his review of American eating habits is lacking.[304] It is unfortunate that Tocqueville did not use his keen wit and analysis capabilities to address American nationalism as it pertained to American cuisine. This omission perhaps stymied future scholarship on the topic, as Tocqueville's treatise has remained the starting point for numerous academic works in the decades following its initial publication in 1835.[305]

A lesser known French commentator on American society (yet one extremely influential to the development of the concept of a national cuisine) was Jean Anthelme

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[302] Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America,* 7th ed., Henry Reeve, trans. (New York, NY: Edward Walker, 1847), 20.

[303] Ibid.

[304] Historians Lynn L. Marshall and Seymour Drescher argue that *Democracy in America* "occupies a rather special position in American historiography. As a classic commentary on America and American democracy, it has been ransacked for quotations which serve as corroboration or scaffolding for additional similar commentaries." However, they admit that "*Democracy* is not a simple work and not an easy one for historians to utilize." Lynn L. Marshall and Seymour Drescher, "American Historians and Tocqueville's Democracy," *The Journal of American History* 55, no. 3 (1968): 512.

[305] For a description of the impact of Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* on the cultural formation of French society after the American Revolution, see: Marshall and Drescher, "American Historians and Tocqueville's Democracy," 512-513.

Brillat-Savarin. Brillat-Savarin was a well known Parisian politician when he published his magnum opus on gourmandism, *Physiologie du Goût* ("The Physiology of Taste") in 1825. The book would become one of the most influential monographs on food and society published in the nineteenth century, running through multiple editions over the decades, translated into at least three languages, and remaining in publication today.[306] Brillat-Savarin's book treated eating as a nearly religious experience, elevating food and cooking to the level of deep intellectual thought.[307] *Physiologie du Goût* was indeed one of the first published works that explicitly reviewed cuisine as an important and influential component of culture identity and nation-building.

Divided into sections labeled "Meditations," *Physiologie du Goût* detailed the author's philosophy on gastronomy through short metaphysical aphorisms. Brillat-Savarin refuted ancient philosophers' dismissal of taste as one of the lesser senses (in comparison to sight and sound[308]) and argued instead that "taste…is the basis of many operations the result of which is that the individual believes, developes, preserves and repairs the losses occasioned by vital evaporation."[309] According to Brillat-Savarin, the foundations of memory—and the cognitive processes required to form memory—are thus intricately linked to the sense of taste. Further, Brillat-Savarin argued that taste's powerful impact on the human mind was one of the few universal daily experiences in society, and was therefore worthy of deep intellectual thought.[310] It was because of this high reverence for cuisine's impact on society that the author famously quipped, "The destiny of nations depends on the manner in which they are fed."[311] There is possibly no better and more succinct declaration of the modern conceptual correlation between national character and cuisine than this statement by Brillat-Savarin.

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[306] Daniel Sipe, "Social Gastronomy: Fourier and Brillat-Savarin," *French Cultural Studies* 20, no. 3 (August 1, 2009): 219–36.

[307] An interesting example of how seriously Brillat-Savarin's work was treated by nineteenth century audiences as a work of intellectual and philosophical genius can be found in the 1854 English translation of *Physiologie du Goût.* The publishers altered the more mundane and scientific style of the original French title from its direct translation,"The Physiology of Taste" to "Transcendental Gastronomy." It is entirely plausible that the Philadelphia publishers decided to describe the work as "transcendental" to connect the work with the growing popularity of Ralph Waldo Emerson's and Henry David Thoreau's moral and social philosophy of transcendentalism. See: Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, *The Physiology of Taste: Or, Transcendental Gastronomy* (Philadelphia, PA: Lindsay & Blakiston, 1854).

[308] For a description of the Aristotelian hierarchy of senses, see: Carolyn Korsmeyer, *Making Sense of Taste: Food & Philosophy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002), 11-38.

[309] Brillat-Savarin, *The Physiology of Taste*, 56.

While such meditations on gastronomy are purposely generalized and universally applicable, a significant portion of *Physiologie du Goût* also focused specifically on French society and French cooking habits. However, one of the few sections to review food culture outside of his native country was Brillat-Savarin's description of his travels in the United States. While completing a visiting lectureship in America in the late 1790s, Brillat-Savarin was a guest of a farmer in Hartford, Connecticut. The account of his travels with the farmer and his family are one of the more compelling examples of European travellers' fascination with American food and American society in the early national period.

In these writings, it would seem that Brillat-Savarin was infatuated with turkeys. "The turkey is certainly one of the most glorious presents made by the new world to the old," he wrote, "in the highest gastronomical circles, in the most select reunions, where politics yields to dissertations on the taste, for what do people wait? What do they wish for? a *dinde truffé* [a truffled turkey]."[312] His reverence for the bird made him immensely excited when his host asked Brillat-Savarin to accompany him on a turkey hunt.

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[310] Brillat-Savarin, *The Physiology of Taste*, 173.

[311] Ibid., 25. This page also includes one of Brillat-Savarin's other famous aphorisms, "Tell me what kind of food you eat, and I will tell you what kind of man you are," which has entered our modern lexicon in shorthand as, "you are what you eat."

Brillat-Savarin described the preparatory dinner prior to the hunt in great detail. "We sat around a well furnished table," he wrote, "A superb piece of corned beef, a stewed goose, and a magnificent leg of mutton, besides an abundance of vegetables and two large jugs of cider…made up our bill of fare."[313] He was highly impressed that a farmer—a person he felt was of limited means—was able to procure such an enormous variety of meats for dinner. Luxuries of this caliber were reserved for the bourgeoisie and nobility in Europe, and Brillat-Savarin saw this level of culinary extravagance as a product of America's auspicious geographic and political situation. During the hunt itself, Brillat-Savarin echoed this sentiment by referring to the impressive nature of the hunting grounds. He wrote, "I found myself in a virgin forest for the first time…I walked about with delight, observing the blessing and ravages of time which creates and destroys."[314] Brillat-Savarin mimicked the sentiments of countless early European colonizers in this passage, yet the forest was not "virgin" as he described it, as it had been used and occupied by American Indian and European settlers for hundreds of years. Nevertheless, the belief that America only contained vast, undisturbed tracts of land rich with vegetation and wild game was a common misrepresentation of the United States at the time.[315]

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[312] Brillat-Savarin, *The Physiology of Taste*, 107.

[313] Ibid., 109.

[314] Ibid., 110.

The hunt began with shots at "pretty grey partridges which were so round and tender," and was followed by killing "six or seven grey squirrels, highly esteemed in America," before finally arriving at a group of turkeys.[316] Brillat-Savarin's portrayal of partridges in this passage is similar to his description of the French equivalent species.[317] That he only mentioned squirrel meat as being "highly esteemed in America" is inconsistent with his other, more elaborate descriptions of other meats, and may hint at his distaste for the meal, as well as a certain level of disdain for those Americans who enjoy it. Regardless, Brillat-Savarin's attention quickly returned to the turkeys. After finally shooting the creature, he "seized on the superb bird and turned it over and over for a quarter of an hour," before heading back to his host's farmhouse with his prize.[318]

The group arrived at the home and were met by a "bright and brilliant fire" that was set by the farmer's wife and daughters. They sat around the fire and discussed the hunt, a custom that Brillat-Savarin opined, "doubtless [came] from the Indians who always have a fire in their huts."[319] Similar to his assessment of the "virgin" forest in America, the author's assumption that the fire was of Indian origin is indicative of his projected desires and presumptions regarding his participation in an "authentic"

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[315] For more information on the inaccurate European colonial belief in an uninhabited and untrodden American wilderness, see: William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (New York, NY: Hill and Wang, 1983).
[316] Brillat-Savarin, *The Physiology of Taste*, 110.
[317] See: Brillat-Savarin, "Game," *The Physiology of Taste*, 115-118.
[318] Ibid., 111.
[319] Ibid., 112.

American wild turkey hunt. Such desires led Brillat-Savarin to make oversimplified conclusions regarding American hunting culture.

The conversation later turned from the particulars of the turkey hunt to politics. Brillat-Savarin quoted the farmer in great detail, who said:

> You see in me, sir, a happy man, if there be one under heaven; all that you see here is derived from my own property. My stockings were knit by my daughters, and my cloths [*sic*] were furnished by my flocks. They also, with my garden, furnish me with an abundance of healthy food. The great eulogium of our government is, that in the State of Connecticut there are a thousand farmers as well satisfied as I am…All this is derived from the liberty we have acquired, and established on good laws.[320]

In this passage, the farmer skillfully connected the political liberty he and his fellow citizens were afforded with the abundant foodstuffs he and his family consumed. American society—and the customs of the new American nation—had helped create a self-sufficient family with nearly unlimited resources, all from their own hands and dependent on no other nation. The farmer was, in essence, the personification of the ideals of the Revolution; Crèvecœur's "American farmer" in the flesh.

Brillat-Savarin must have been very impressed with the rhetoric of the farmer, as he transcribed his speech in its entirety in the book. But surprisingly, Brillat-Savarin ended the encounter with the following statement: "On my way back I seemed absorbed by profound reflection," he wrote, "Perhaps the reader may think I mused on my host's parting words; I had very different thoughts, however, for I was studying how I should cook my turkey."[321] Brillat-Savarin's apathy toward the farmer in this section is telling.

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[320] Brillat-Savarin, *The Physiology of Taste*, 112

[321] Ibid. Brillat-Savarin was very pleased with his final preparation of the turkey. In the subsequent paragraph, he described his meal as "charming to the sight, flattering to the sense of smell, and delicious to taste." Ibid.

For a man who waxed poetic so often and so eloquently on the correlation between nationhood and cuisine, one would assume he would have been more impressed with the farmer's assessment of American abundance and its effect on American politics. But Brillat-Savarin was dismissive of the farmer and more interested in the native foodstuffs and scenery than in the people who inhabited the nation. The natural resources of America were awe-inspiring; its forests immense and its wild game exotic and delicious. The American people's quaint understanding of their personal lot, and how their national culture affected their ability to thrive personally and financially, was of little consequence to Brillat-Savarin. What mattered instead was how to cook a turkey.

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Although far more profound and poetic, Brillat-Savarin's *Physiologie du Goût* at times followed similar literary patterns and structural arguments of other European travelogues in America during the early national period. European authors often marvelled at the natural beauty and bounty of resources on the continent and simultaneously bemoaned the people and society such abundance had been wasted on. Americans ate too much fat, ate too fast, and fed with too much abandon to be a society and nation worthy of praise. Through such depictions of American eating habits and style, European authors asserted their own cultural supremacy and helped define what constituted (if anything) a true American national cuisine.

Nearly every travelogue of the era described the United States as a land of plenty. In some instances, the sheer amount of available foodstuffs was one of the only redeeming characteristics of the country's cuisine. "The abundance of variety of articles of diet in the United States are matters of common remark," wrote the American minister Charles A. Goodrich, "travellers from abroad have noticed this fact… [and although] incredible hardships and sufferings are experienced by the needy European…here, such an occurrence is scarcely heard of."[322] While travelling on the outskirts of a remote village in Louisiana, French philosopher Constantin-François Volney marvelled at being "skirted on all sides by eternal forests…and an abundance of umbelliferous plants three or four feet high."[323] The traveller observed "fields of indian corn, tobacco, wheat, barley, squashes, and even cotton," of enormous quantities surrounding a village with fewer than fifty houses.[324] In the cities as well, some travellers were impressed with the sheer quantities of food available. In New York, German author Francis Lieber argued, "The Americans have the finest materials for a plentiful and savory table, some of which do not grow at all, or not so plentifully in Europe."[325] In a subsequent note, Lieber refuted the attitudes that some European readers may have against American foods, "as they might be led to do from the accounts of some travellers" by reprinting a bill of fare from a Philadelphia coffee house.[326] The menu included "2 saddles Bear's Meat; 2 saddles Fine Mountain Venison; 2 saddles Albany mutton, 500 terrapins—large size, very fine; 40 pair Canvas Back Ducks, Pleasants, Snipe," and a host of other meats, fish, vegetables, and breads in large quantities.[327]

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[322] Charles A. Goodrich, *The Universal Traveller, Designed to Introduce Readers at Home to an Acquaintance with the Arts, Customs, and Manners, of the Principal Modern Nations on the Globe* (Hartford, CT: Canfield & Robbins, 1836), 30.

[323] Constantin-François Volney, *View of the Climate and Soil of the United States of America, Translated from the French* (London, UK: Printed for J. Johnson, 1804), 368.

[324] Ibid.

[325] Francis Lieber, *The Stranger in America; or, Letter to a Gentleman in Germany* (Philadelphia, PA: Carey, Lea & Blanchard, 1835), 138.

[326] Ibid.

The ability of some households in America to procure a nearly constant and highly varied supply of high-caloric foods was a relatively recent evolution in American society, however. As historian Jack Larkin argues, this plentiful supply in some households was "thanks to the growing scale of city livestock markets" that could provide "frequent, if expensive supplies of fresh beef and veal" throughout the seasons.[328] The quantity of animals and game, therefore, became available (at least in theory) to Americans in both the cities and the countryside. Englishmen William Cobbett echoed this sentiment when, on the road to the town of Princeton, he observed, "large flocks of fine wild turkeys, and whole herds of pigs, apparently very fat."[329] The pigs were wild, he argued, from "neglect," by Americans who preferred "sport to work" and were able to "live by shooting these wild turkeys and pigs."[330]

Cobbett's assessment of this situation is indicative of European attitudes toward American work ethic. There was little denying that the country had an enormous supply of various foods, foods that were available to most socio-economic levels. This fact was generally considered an area in which American society superseded that of Europe. However, Cobbett's complementary nature in regard to the amount of food was not carried over to those who ate it. In fact—do in part to the sheer numbers of foodstuffs available—Cobbett argued that many Americans had become lazy. They were unappreciative of their bounty, neglectful to their herds, and able to gorge themselves on large quantities of meat without much work.

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[327] Lieber, *The Stranger in America*, 138. n.b. "saddle" in this instance refers to a cut of meat that includes both loins of the animal.

[328] Jack Larkin, *The Reshaping of Everyday Life: 1790-1840* (New York, NY: Harper and Row Publishers, 1988), 176.

[329] William Cobbett, *A Year's Residence in the United States of America* (London, UK: Printed for Sherwood, Neely, and Jones, 1819), 470.

[330] Ibid.

But such condemnations were not reserved solely to European pens. Upon arriving home from an extended stay in Europe, the noted American author James Fenimore Cooper published an essay on the social makeup of the United States.[331] Within one scathing section titled "On Civilization," Cooper wrote:

> There are points of civilization on which this country has yet to learn, for while the tables of the polished and cultivated partake of the abundance of the country, and wealth has even found means to introduce some knowledge of the kitchen, there is not perhaps on the face of the globe, the same number of people among whom the good things of the earth are so much abused, and so ignorantly wasted, as among the people of the United States.[332]

Cooper's argument is multifaceted. He acknowledged the bounty of American tables and understood that the natural resources of the continent had afforded its citizens a plethora of foodstuffs. But he argued that only those of the upper class partook in any form of dignified consumption of these items, stating that "wealth" has allowed for only "some knowledge" of civilized cuisine to seep into portions of American society. Even those with means in the United States, therefore, were capable of only a modicum of civility in their diet. Thus, Cooper's argument was heavily dismissive of American character. He concluded that—in comparison to nearly every other civilized nation on earth—Americans acted the most ignorantly and abusively toward what they have been given. In essence, Americans were viewed by Cooper as spoiled brats who had been afforded all the means necessary to build a proper national cuisine, but through sheer laziness had wholly wasted the opportunity.

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[331] Cooper lived in Paris from 1826 to 1833 and felt that his stay abroad placed him in the similar situation of other native European authors to comment on American society. "A long absence from home," he wrote, "has, in a certain degree, put the writer in the situation of a foreigner in his own country." James Fenimore Cooper, *The American Democrat: or Hints on the Social and Civic Relations of the United States of America* (Cooperstown, NY: H&E Phinney, 1838), 6. For a detailed description of Cooper's *The American Democrat*, as well as further information on his views of the United States after his travels in Europe, see: John P. McWilliams Jr., *Political Justice in a Republic: James Fenimore Cooper's America* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1972).

[332] Cooper, *The American Democrat*, 165.

As if Cooper's use of food and cuisine to denounce American society were not clear enough, Cooper concluded this section by stating, "National character is, in some measure, affected by a knowledge of the art of preparing food…and it is certain that the connection between [America's] moral and physical quantities is so intimate as to cause them to react on each other."[333] Thus, in a vein similar to Brillat-Savarin's aphorism, "The destiny of nations depends on the manner in which they are fed,"[334] Cooper's understanding of national identity and national cuisine were intricately linked to one another. And for Cooper, this correlation helped to highlight enormous deficiencies in American society.

Cooper's essay also articulated another widely-held European belief: the abundance of game in the United States had led Americans to overindulge in meat consumption. "Vegetable diet is almost converted to an injury in America," Cooper wrote, "from an ignorance of the best modes of preparation, while even animal food is much abused, [it] loses half its nutriment."[335] The American people's inability to restrain themselves from this indulgence further spoke to their low character, and thus to their lower national status in comparison to their European counterparts.

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[333] Cooper, *The American Democrat*, 165.

[334] Brillat-Savarin, *The Physiology of Taste,* 25.

Other travellers also saw American overindulgence in meat as an example of their unrefined character. The English theorist Harriet Martineau wrote that in Washington, she "saw no table spread, in the lowest order of houses, that had not meat and bread on it."[336] While Martineau's passage alluded to the availability of meat in poorer homes (and could therefore be understood as a positive example of American wealth and equality) other sections show her distaste for the amount and quality of meat served. While dining on a Virginia plantation, Martineau observed a normal dinner consisted of "soup (not good) always roast turkey and ham; a boiled fowl here, a tongue there; [and] a small piece of nondescript meat, which generally turns out to be pork disguised."[337] It is clear that Martineau saw American meat consumption as prioritizing quantity over quality. The English novelist Frances Trollope succinctly reiterated this sentiment when she observed that in America, "The ordinary mode of living is abundant, but not delicate. They consume an extraordinary quantity of bacon. Ham and beef-steaks appear morning, noon, and night."[338]

The proclivity for Americans to consume too much meat was not a belief shared by all, however. Benjamin Rush had argued that in comparison to the American tables of the eighteenth century, “A revolution has taken place in the diet of our citizens.”[339] In direct opposition to Cooper, Martineau, and Trollope’s later sentiments, Rush observed that in America, “animal food is eaten only at dinner, and excess in the use of it is prevented, by a profusion of excellent summer and winter vegetables.”[340]

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[335] Cooper, *The American Democrat*, 165.

[336] Harriet Martineau, *Society in America*, vol. 1 (New York, NY: Saunders and Otley, 1837), 12.

[337] Ibid., 27.

[338] Frances Trollope, *Domestic Manners of the Americans*, vol. 2 (London, UK: Printed for Whittaker, Treacher, & Co., 1832), 129-130.

Without a broad scientific study, both Cooper and Rush’s assessment (and the assessments of all such travel writers, for that matter) cannot go beyond circumstantial evidence. These writings are not intended to be taken as accurate reviews of actual American meat consumption in the early national period.[341] What is more telling in this context is not the reality of American eating habits but its perception. Rush may have believed that Americans ate less meat in the era, but the general consensus—one certainly made among European travellers—was the opposite. Americans ate far too much meat, and their inability to control themselves reflected negatively on their character. This sentiment was repeated in a number of published works, works that were read by both European and American audiences. Therefore, the perception that Americans ate too much meat (and the subsequent conclusions made regarding their national identity) affected the reality in which American society was viewed and understood both internationally and domestically.

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[339] Benjamin Rush, *Medical Inquiries and Observations,* vol. 4 (Philadelphia, PA: J Conrad & Company, 1805), 381.

[340] Ibid.

[341] There are certain historical studies that use quantifiable data to better understand actual trends in American food consumption, however. One example of such research, focused regionally in New England, is: Sarah F. McMahon, “‘A Comfortable Subsistence’: The Changing Composition of Diet in Rural New England, 1620-1840,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 42, no. 1 (January 1, 1985): 26–65. A broader review of such data can be found in: Richard Lyman Bushman, *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities* (New York, NY: Vintage, 1993).

The type of food consumed was only one of many elements of the American gastronomic landscape reviewed and critiqued by travellers, however. The manner in which Americans ate their meals was also strongly denounced as being inferior to other "civilized" nations. The English traveller Thomas Hamilton, for instance, marvelled at the haste and gluttony of American dining. "To contrast of the whole scene with that of an English breakfast table was striking enough," Hamilton wrote, "all was hurry, bustle, clamor and voracity, and the business of repletion went forward with a rapidity altogether unexampled."[342] Cooper further articulated this argument when he wrote, "As a nation [American] food is heavy, course, ill prepared, and indigestible… The predominance of grease in the American kitchen, coupled with the habits of hasty eating…are the causes of the diseases of the stomach common in America."[343] Like John Lambert's earlier description of the "bilious disorders" he believed to be common in the United States, Cooper argued that the speed and quality of American dining was detrimental to Americans' health. It seemed that Americans were unable to restrain themselves, a character trait that reflected very negatively on their national identity.

In response to these accusations, the Boston-based literary magazine *The North American Review* published a lengthy critique of Thomas Hamilton's travelogue. "Too great rapidity in dispatching their meals has been for some years past a standing topic of reproach upon the Americans, by all British travellers," the paper wrote, "We are of the opinion, then, that the length of time devoted to the business of eating is every where

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[342] Thomas Hamilton, *Men and Manners in America* (Philadelphia, PA: Carey, Lea & Blanchard, 1833), 20-21.

[343] Cooper, *The American Democrat*, 165.

[*sic*] determined by personal and accidental considerations, rather than by any peculiarities of national character."[344] The authors' insistence that a singular hasty meal should not be used to define a national culinary identity was warranted. Additionally, the authors argued that the rapidity of consuming food that Hamilton and others observed was based more out of necessity than indicative of a character flaw. Travellers often observed dining patterns in "taverns, steamboats, and stage-coaches," wrote the editors, and all of these environments were beholden to strict time schedules.[345] Those whole ate at these establishments could not, "take [their] meals with all the leisure of a British nobleman at his seat in the country," and instead, according to *The North American Review,* must:

> Put formality in their pocket, and without dawdling over newspapers or stopping to discuss disputed points in theology or politics, seat [themselves] at the table and make a moderate meal with all the convenient despatch [*sic*], that he may be ready to take his place in the coach, at the time appointed.[346]

According to the authors, the problem of hasty eating was not an issue of defective character, but rather an issue indicative of social and economic station. The "British nobleman" may have time to sit and pontificate over breakfast, but American workers were clearly too busy to be afforded such a luxury. *The North American Review*'s repudiation took a critique of American eating habits and modified it into an example of American egalitarianism and economic progress (as well as a critique of British nobility). The young nation was industrious, lively, and efficient, making its people unwilling to partake in the daily recreations of a staid European aristocracy. Thus, this observation was interpreted in two extremely different ways, and the conclusions regarding American eating habits were more dependent on the audience's perspective and social standing than on the actual specifics of the dining experience.

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[344] "Review of *Men and Manners in America*," *The North American Review*, vol. XXXVII (Boston, MA: Charles Bowen, January 1834), 220.
[345] Ibid., 221.
[346] Ibid., 222.

Undeterred by such excuses, European travellers were further critical—and in fact often disgusted by—the etiquette they found at the American table. A major topic of discussion in these works pertained to the unrefined way in which Americans used their utensils. At a dinner hosted at West Point, the English Captain Basil Hall remarked, "I had no expectation of seeing any thing so primitive as what now took place. The meat was literally hacked to pieces…some of the youths were spooning great lumps of meat down their throats with their knives."[347] Charles Dickens, commenting after a widely publicized tour of the United States, also observed that Americans would "usually suck their knives and forks meditatively, until they have decided what to take next: then pull them out of their mouths; put them in the dish."[348] Those whom Dickens dined with "thrust their broad-bladed knives and the two-pronged forks further down their throats than I ever saw the same weapons go before."[349] Such accusations were powerful admonishments of American character. Utensil etiquette was a defining component of the recently-developed *haute cuisine* of European tables; a system of specific regulations meant to guide diners through complex social morés and separate the nobility and bourgeois classes from the remaining citizenry.[350] That Americans so grossly ate their food and used their utensils with such abandon was yet another example of the inferiority of American society in comparison to its European counterparts.

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[347] Captain Basil Hall, *Travels in North America in the Years 1827 and 1828*, vol. 2 (Edinburgh, UK: Printed for Cadel and Co., 1829), 198-199.
[348] Charles Dickens, *American Notes for General Circulation* (Paris, FR: Baudry's European Library, 1842), 199.
[349] Ibid., 147.

But perhaps one of the most egregious *faux pas* in American dining—according to European travelers—was the manner in which Americans ate eggs. Thomas Hamilton was revolted by the custom wherein eggs were "poured into a wine glass, and after being duly and disgustingly churned up with butter and condiment…was forthwith either spooned into the mouth, or drunk off like a liquid."[351] The authors of the satirical poem *The Trollopiad* (named for the English traveller Frances Trollope, who also was disturbed by the American practice of eating eggs in wine glasses) jokingly addressed this concern in the following verse: "One horrid practice they cannot pass: the brutes eat eggs (can he contain his wrath?) From wine-glass—oh! tell it not in Gath!"[352] Like other descriptions of American eating habits, the custom of eating eggs in glasses was used to denote a certain lack of refinement in the country. But as *The Trollopiad* showed, some American authors were quick to point out the absurdity and overreactions inherent in such descriptions. The poem continued from its mock surprise with a notation from the author. "We maintain that if an egg is fit to be eaten…in a wine-glass, [we] can see nothing very disgusting in it, except the description," he wrote, "It is one of the especial traits of John Bull's character to think nothing can be good which is not sanctioned by usage at the home."[353] The editors of *The North American Review* also articulated the absurdity of Hamilton, Trollope, and others' revulsion to the practice and used the opportunity to stress the independent and obstinate nature of the American people, writing:

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[350] For a detailed description of the influence of utensils and dining etiquette on the development of modern society, see: Bee Wilson, *Consider the Fork: A History of How We Cook and Eat* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2012).

[351] Hamilton, *Men and Manners in America*, 21.

[352] Nil Admirari, *The Trollopiad; or Travelling Gentlemen in America. A Satire* (Providence, RI: Shepard, Tingley & Co., 1837), 57.

> If we were to grant all that our author [Hamilton] can possibly desire in this particular, he could not with any fairness conclude that the Constitution of the United States is a bad form of Government, inasmuch as that instrument preserves no rule whatever on the subject of eating eggs, but leaves the citizen entirely free to eat them from the shell, a wine glass, in omelettes, poached, or in any other way that he may think proper.[354]

Nevertheless, despite such impassioned attempts to discredit their arguments, American authors remained generally beholden to the popularly-published characterizations made by Europeans writing on American cuisine. The components of these descriptions—their remarks on the quality and quantity of food consumed, the pace with which Americans ate, their improper table etiquette, and other supposedly odd culinary practices—combined to form a singular and provocative conclusion on American society: America culinary culture (and subsequently America as a nation) was simply inferior to its European counterparts. Cuisine was thus a cultural weapon wielded by the authors to assert their political and social dominance over the United States. That some of these works were published in the United States, and others were commented on so frequently in American journals, reveals the amount with which European authors influenced American cultural constructs in the early American Republic.

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[353] Admirari, *The Trollopiad*, 58.

[354] "Review of *Men and Manners in America*," 215.

In 1841, the esteemed Baltimorean lawyer David Hoffman published a short collection of personal anecdotes titled *Viator; or A Peep in My Notebook*.[355] In a section called "The Philosophical Eater," Hoffman recalled a dinner party he attended years prior where he met an interesting English guest. Hoffman named the guest "Apician," a reference to the Ancient Roman gourmand Marcus Gavius Apicius. Impressed by Apician's extensive world travels and reflections on food and cuisine, Hoffman transcribed much of the Englishman's words into his memoir.

"I have sometimes thought," Apician was quoted as saying, "that the national cookery afforded no little insight, *a príori*, into the national character of a people!"[356] He continued by listing for the diner guests examples taken from his travels. "Thus, in the fantastic and gossamer features of nearly all that is used from the French *cuisine*…" he said, "we find mirrored forth their ardent fancy—their devotion to things of taste and parade—their artificial worldly policy and speciousness—their indomitable vanity; and above all, their want of genuine sentiment."[357] In Germany, Apician perceived, "their national phlegm, their characteristic openness, their laborious habits, their indifference to mere physical refinements, and their pervading economy."[358] And in England, Apician viewed "the simple boil, and still more primitive roast, and the almost total absence of all greasy appliances, suit the plain and untarnished character of John Bull."[359] But when the conversation turned to the United States, he held a much different view of its cuisine. According to Apician:

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[355] Maxwell Bloomfield, "David Hoffman and the Shaping of a Republican Legal Culture" *Maryland Law Review* 38, no. 673 (1979): 17.

[356] David Hoffman, *Viator, or, A Peep into My Notebook* (Boston, MA: Charles C. Little & James Brown, 1841), 105.

[357] Ibid., 105-106.

[358] Ibid., 106.

[359] Ibid.

> The hominy, roasting-ears, hasty-puddings, treacle, wild-game, succotash, and a hundred others, among the Americans, indicate their Indian associations—whilst their German, French, British, and various other dishes, manifest their extremely miscellaneous origin; and that the people have as little of *national cookery* as of *national character*.[360]

Like Irving's *Salmagundi*, Apician saw the United States as an amalgamation of disparate ingredients. But unlike *Salmagundi*, Apician concluded that the collection of peoples and customs—including their associations with European and American Indian societies—contributed to the nation's inability to form a unified national character. America's "miscellaneous origin" made the formation of a structured, organized cuisine nearly impossible, and the lack of this cuisine subsequently led to the inability for America to define a unified character. As was the case in European travelogues, this intricate link between a culturally constructed cuisine and national identity afforded the opportunity to denounce, belittle, and question the cultural and political legitimacy of the United States on the world stage.

The concept of a national cuisine had been solidified and validated in the early years of the nineteenth century through intellectual arguments laid out in a myriad of publications. In both Europe and the United States, the political and social utility of national cuisines was well understood and was ubiquitously deployed to succinctly define national characters to a burgeoning bourgeois audience. As multiple travelogues highlighted, however, the general European consensus regarding American eating habits was extremely negative. Americans were gluttonous and unrefined, and their customs were simplistic and peculiar. The subsequent intellectual conclusion, therefore, was that American nationalism was itself unworthy of praise and wholly beneath and incomparable to its European counterparts.

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[360] Hoffman, *Viator, or, A Peep into My Notebook*, 106.

A number of Americans rejected this assertion and responded to such claims with what they considered to be descriptions of a laudable national culture. But it is undeniable that the onslaught of negative depictions of American cuisine loomed heavy over the efforts to develop a national American identity. It became abundantly clear to American citizens that European authors—those unable or unwilling to recognize the United States as a legitimate nation—continued to be a determinant to any efforts to develop a sustainable and well-defined national culinary culture. Due to this fact, the people of the United States would have to wholly ignore such outside influence and look inward toward their own domestic and public spheres in order to establish any semblance of a cogent unified national cuisine.

CHAPTER 4:
Barbecues and Pepperpots - The Politics of Commensality and Exclusion

In 1830, a man known only as "Dr. Black" gave a lengthy sermon to the Liverpool Mechanics' Institution titled, "Lecture on the Moral Influence of National Associations, exemplified in the Culinary Art of different Countries."[361] When transcribed, the talk filled eighty-eight pages of the Institutes' yearly review, a significant portion of the publication's length.[362] In his complex narrative, Black presented an extraordinarily detailed summation of the link between foodstuffs, cooking techniques, and national character.

The lecture was in many ways the culmination of decades of scientific and philosophical thought on the nature of cuisine and nationalism, beginning with the climatological arguments laid out by Comte de Buffon in *Histoire Naturelle* and his peers and propagated by the countless European travellers who commented on and published accounts of the association between society, civilization, and the culinary arts.[363] "In all nations," Black asserted, "and in all ages, proverbs and national dishes have been held in high estimation…and any particular modification of human victual attain[s] the consideration of a wise national dish."[364] When viewed in its historical context, Dr. Black's treatise represents perhaps one of the most compelling arguments for the correlation between cuisine and national character.

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[361] Dr. Black, *Lecture on the Moral Influence of National Associations, exemplified in the Culinary Art of different Countries* (Liverpool, UK: Liverpool Mechanics' Institution, 1830).

[362] Unfortunately, the original copy of the speech is lost and only survives as excerpts in other volumes. The publications that did reprint portions of the text, however, described the impressive length of the lecture as well as its influence within the Liverpool community.

[363] Dr. Black was indeed not alone in his singular focus and obsession with what defined a "national character." This fact is evident in numerous essays and publications of the era that addressed this matter, including: Richard Chenevix, *An Essay Upon National Character: Being an Inquiry into Some of the Principal Causes which Contribute to Form and Modify the Characters of Nations in the State of Civilization* (London, UK: James Duncan, Paternoster-Row, 1814).

The thesis of the lecture—as well as the subsequent responses to its claims by American authors—revealed both the intricate intellectual linkage between food culture and national identity and the complexities and difficulties inherent in developing what seemed on the surface to be a unifying cultural construct. Indeed, by the 1830s, attempts to define a national cuisine (particularly in the United States) had become firmly established in public discourse. But such constructs often exposed divided, unequal, and exclusionary societies more so than they served to reinforce any notion of national cohesion. Nevertheless, the concept of a national cuisine itself, and the particular components that made up the concept, remained powerful symbols of cultural identity formation in the early-nineteenth century.

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For a man who so efficiently presented such an influential concept as that of a national cuisine, it is unfortunate that very little is known about Dr. Black. We know he was of Scottish descent, as he often referred to the Scots as "my countrymen" and frequently exposed a certain bias for the country's dishes. "[The Scots] have invented three distinct and excellent kinds of soup," he asserted in one section, "what better reason can be assigned for the intensity of our nationality?"[365] We also know from an American reprint of the lecture (that described him as a "most patriotic Scotsman") that Black was a student of Louis Eustache Ude, the world-renowned French chef.[366] Ude was the author of *The French Cook*—one of the most significant gastronomic works on nineteenth century French cuisine—and the personal chef to a number of English noblemen, including the Duke of York.[367] Thus, Black was seemingly well-credentialed to speak as an expert in the philosophy of the culinary arts, enough so to impress upon his audience in Liverpool his deep knowledge of the subject matter.[368]

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[364] Dr. Black, "Lecture on the Moral Influence of National Associations, exemplified in the Culinary Art of different Countries," excerpted in "The Philosophy of Pottery," James Anthony Froude, ed. *Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country*, vol. 1 (London, UK: James Fraser, 1830), 287.

The venue itself was similarly well-suited for Dr. Black's presentation. The Mechanics' Institute was founded in 1825 to serve the growing middle-class urban communities around the industrial centers in Liverpool. Like other similar event spaces in the early-nineteenth century, the Institute promoted itself as a civic center and forum aimed at educating and enlightening bourgeois citizenry through a variety of public talks and courses.[369] In laying the foundation stone of the Institute in 1825, British statesman Henry Lord Brougham stressed the importance and novelty of the endeavour. "Nothing can exceed the importance of this pursuit in which we are now engaged," he remarked,

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[365] Black, "Lecture on the Moral Influence of National Associations," *Fraser's Magazine*, 288.

[366] "National Cookery and Character," *The Journal of Health, Conducted by an Association of Physicians* 2, no.18 (Philadelphia, May 25, 1831): 275.

[367] Louis Eustache Ude, *The French Cook* (Philadelphia, PA: Carey, Lea and Carey, 1828), iii-iv.

[368] It is unknown, however, what Dr. Black's first name was, or what he received a doctorate in. The title of "Dr." may very well have been honorific and emblematic of his influence and importance on the field, as there were no official doctorates in the culinary sciences in the United Kingdom at the time.

[369] For more information on the development of Mechanics' Institutes and other civic centers in the first half of the nineteenth century, see: Wallace Kirsop, "Museums, Lyceums, Athenaeums and Mechanics' Institutes," *Script & Print* 30, no. 4 (2006).

"it is to diffuse the blessings of knowledge amongst all classes of the community; to afford the means of instruction in the most useful arts to by far the most useful members of the community."[370]

Similar organizations and institutions (such as lyceums and athenaeums) appeared throughout Western Europe and the United States in the first three decades of the nineteenth century, all with similarly grandiose motives to inform and engage members of the growing social and demographic classes concentrated in urban industrial centers.[371] Delivered by an expert in gastronomy and presented in a newly-developed civic venue to a growing class of society, the "Lecture on the Moral Influence of National Associations, exemplified in the Culinary Art of different Countries" was therefore an extremely important and influential presentation deeply ensconced (both in subject matter and style) in the evolving cultural conditions present in Western European industrial centers.

Dr. Black began his address to the audience with a discourse on soup and puddings and argued the "insufficiency of all the different sorts of soup to constitute either or any of them a national dish."[372] Soups, according to Black, were too dependent on a multitude of variables to be considered symbolic of an entire nation. Instead, it was the slight differences in seasoning, temperature control and overall "skill of a cook" that dictated a palatable soup dish.[373] Black placed an interesting constraint on his definition of a national dish in this statement: if too many variations are needed to cook the dish, they cannot be replicated with enough consistency to be emblematic of an entire nation. This distinction exposed to the nuanced justifications the lecturer had placed on his definition: a national dish was not simply a dish cooked in a specific political boundary—as was evident in earlier definitions of national cuisines such as Jean François Tourcaty's *Carte Gastronomique de la France*—but a dish that could be easily reproduced and recognized by the intended population as being emblematic of their society. As Black continued,

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[370] Henry Lord Brougham, "Speech on Laying the Foundation Stone," *Speeches of Henry Lord Brougham upon Question Relating to Public Rights, Duties, and Interests; with Historical Introductions*, vol. 2 (Philadelphia, PA: Lea and Blanchard, 1841), 361.

[371] Martyn Walker, *The Development of the Mechanics' Institute Movement in Britain and Beyond: Supporting Further Education for the Adult Working Classes* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2016), 5-7.

[372] Black, "Lecture on the Moral Influence of National Associations," *Fraser's Magazine*, 287.

[373] Ibid.

> A national dish is not a combination of the things most easily attained, but rather an aggregation of ingredients brought together by industry, research, and commerce, mingled with skill, and treated in their connexion [*sic*] with caloric according to certain prefereminded principals.[374]

It is evident in this passage that Dr. Black saw cuisine as an amalgamation of societal customs and techniques that were separate from the basic ingredients and components of a meal. Developing a national dish took a certain communal skill set and could only be achieved through industrious work and agreed-upon customs and traditions. With this assertion, Black elevated his discourse from a description of cooking practices to an observation on civilization and culture. As he concluded, "Gentlemen are distinguished from the vulgar by many peculiarities; but by nothing more than by the variety and delicacy of their food."[375]

The lecture then turned to specific examples of national dishes emblematic of their nation's populations. Dr. Black continued to be complementary to his native

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[374] Black, "Lecture on the Moral Influence of National Associations," *Fraser's Magazine*, 289.
[375] Ibid., 290.

Scotland, at times even evoking Robert Burns and his *Address to a Haggis* to describe Scots as “great chieftains o’ the puddin race.”[376] In other passages, he remained rather neutral in his assessment of national character. Black argued that the simplicity of roast beef, for instance, added to the “plain downright character of the Englishmen,” and the perchange for frogs and soup-maigre dictated a “cooling and sedative…process of digestion” for the French.[377] He was harsher in his assessment of the Welsh, however, stating their “red complexion” and “irascible” disposition stemmed from their consumption of bread, cheeses, and leeks that were “mountainous and primitive in nature.”[378]

Black was particularly negative in his assessment of the Irish, arguing that they “are a single-minded, simple people…they boil their potatoes in a pot, because they have no other utensil, and, with a little salt in a saucer, they dip and eat.”[379] The assessments in these sections indicate Black’s prejudicial nature and subsequently biased conclusions. It is rather obvious that Black had a worldview that prioritized his native country over all others, which in turn delegitimized portions of his lecture. Nevertheless, Black’s review of European nations exposed a compelling worldview that blended jingoism with scientific methodologies to define a hierarchy of civilized societies.

Dr. Black left his greatest culinary and national disdain, however, for the United States. According to the lecturer, American cuisine was:

> A vile democracy of sasses [*sic*]: the peach preserved by molasses or maple sugar, is reduced to an equality with the potato; with only this distinction, that the peach

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[376] Black, “Lecture on the Moral Influence of National Associations,” *Fraser’s Magazine*, 287.
[377] Ibid.
[378] Ibid., 290.
[379] Ibid.

> is long sass, and the potato short. Cucumbers are also federal in this union—so is pickled cabbage, and eggs that have been fried with ham. Upon the whole, the attempt to make sasses of such things must be regarded as a republican innovation, and the use of them is probably the stimulus which makes the Americans so sharpset.[380]

There are a number of intriguing components of Black's assessment of the United States and its cuisine. At first glance, his comments are similar to other critics of American food and American society who denounced American food and eating habits, and in turn dismissed any attempts at considering the United States a civilized people comparable to other European nations. Where Dr. Black differed from his contemporaries, however, was in his deep connection between American food and cooking habits and American political culture. The "vile democracy of sasses"[381] he referred to has a double meaning: "vile" described both a culinary product and the American democratic process. Dr. Black also placed American cuisine in political terms by referencing pickling practices as "federal" and sauce production in general as a wholly "republican innovation." The lecturer clearly perceived an intriguing connection between the concept of American democratic egalitarianism and the American culinary customs of saucing and pickling. By combining disparate ingredients together, the end product became a concoction that exposed items once considered estimable to lower, incomparable entities that ultimately rendered the end product into a tainted, unsavory mush. In Dr. Black's assessment, there was no distinction between a food product and a national identity: both American sauces and American society were created equally, and both were equally vile.

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[380] Black, "Lecture on the Moral Influence of National Associations," *Fraser's Magazine*, 291.

[381] "Sasses" is a phonetic pronunciation of "sauces," deliberately intended by Dr. Black to further mock American society by mimicking an American accent.

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As has been addressed in previous sections, the fact that Dr. Black used food and cuisine to expose supposed flaws and inequities in the burgeoning national American society was not without precedent. By the 1830s, European authors had used food to elevate and diminish nations for decades. For instance, Antonin Carême's "mother sauces" were developed in the early 1800s specifically to expose the cultural and civic superiority of French society. Even the method of using sauces to negatively describe American nationalism in particular was first devised decades earlier. For instance, in 1808, an unnamed French author published a satirical essay titled, "Memoir on Cranberry Sauce."[382] For years, the memoir was accessible only in France, until arriving in American bookshelves in 1821.[383]

After residing in Boston for many months, the author penned a scathing indictment on American society using cranberry sauce as a metaphor for Americans' unrefined tastes. "Cranberry sauce," the author wrote, "vulgarly called cramberry sauce from the voracious manner in which they eat it…is stewed slowly with nearly their weight of sugar…the sugar made use of differs in quality according to the wealth of those by whom the sauce is used."[384] The author's judgemental reference to the vernacular term "cramberry" as indicative of America's rapacious eating habits (similar to Black's vernacular pronunciation of sauces as "sassess") exposed his negative perception of American society. Further, his reference to the quality of the dish being dependent on the financial means of those who use it revealed the author's attitude toward class and character: only those with wealth in the United States were able to afford a "quality" sauce.

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[382] "Memoir on Cranberry Sauce: From the Anthology, October 1808," *Miscellanies,* William Tudor, ed. (Boston, MA: Wells and Lilly, 1821), 19-25.

[383] "Memoir on Cranberry Sauce" was accompanied by a similar satirical French essay, "Memoir on the consumption of Toast in the United States," that also declared America to be a barbaric and unrefined nation based on the method with which its citizens toasted bread. The author declared that Americans burned their toast too heavily, thus ingesting too great an amount of carbon at every meal and negatively affecting their disposition. "It tends also to give a stiff, dry, crusty manner," the author wrote, "which would not exist if this did not form such a prevailing article of food… This is demonstrated by the difference of those Americans who travel in Europe, where, being deprived for some time of this article, they become much freer from local prejudice and of more open manners." "Memoir on the Consumption of Toast in the United States, and its Effects on the National Character, *Miscellanies,* William Tudor, ed. (Boston, MA: Wells and Lilly, 1821), 26-35.

In an even more damning statement on the correlation between America's societal ills and its people's taste for cranberry sauce, the author concluded that the dish's "universal use, processing a mixture of sweetness and acidity, stimulates [Americans'] appetite, prevents them from perceiving the insipidity and staleness of their dishes, and makes them insensible to the advantages of our various rich sauces."[385] Like in Dr. Black's assessment, "sauces" were culinary representations of the social structures and nations they represented: the acidic staleness of American sauces precluded its citizens from comparing themselves favorably with the more refined, richer sauces (and cultures) of Europe.

Sauces as metaphor were particularly effective means to describe nations and societies. Like a dish of salmagundi, sauces are concoctions of disparate ingredients bundled together to form a singular unit. Yet unlike salmagundi, the cooking methods inherent to create a sauce inevitably combines ingredients at a deeper molecular level. Heat melts the sugar and cranberries together to form a completely new meal, one where the characteristics of a single ingredient are fused together with the characteristics of the others. One can still recognize the taste of a single berry in a cranberry sauce, but the traits of that berry have been irreversibly altered and the berry is now infused with a new set of attributes. So too—according to Black and the anonymous French author—are the different persons of a society fundamentally affected by their environment and their interactions with other peoples. For these authors, sauces provided ample poetic license to describe a nation. Therefore, the association between sauce and society leaves no doubt that Dr. Black's description of American sauces as "vile" represented his own disdain for America and its political institutions.

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[384] "Memoir on Cranberry Sauce," 22.
[385] Ibid., 24.

Dr. Black's controversial metaphorical statements on food and American national identity in turn elicited impassioned responses in the press. Understandably, English papers praised Black's lecture and his conclusions. *Fraser's Magazine*, for instance, remaked that "Altogether, this Lecture of Dr. Black's reflects great credits on his intelligence and tact."[386] The editors heaved further lofty praise on the author, concluding that "The opinion of Dr. Black, that the national dish indicates the habits, and in a measure, the genius of a people, shows an original mind, and places him far beyond Hippocrates or Montesquieu."[387]

American papers, however, were not as impressed with Dr. Black and were rightfully incensed with his assessment of American cuisine. *The Journal of Health*—a

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[386] Black, "Lecture on the Moral Influence of National Associations," *Fraser's Magazine*, 291.
[387] Ibid., 297.

Philadelphia medical journal edited by physicians and sold to the general public—was particularly critical of Black's lecture. "We can readily imagine," the editors described, "what a capital picture would be made of the group of his auditors, with eyes strained and mouths distended, swallowing all the choice *morçeaux* of fun, foolery, and fricasseed philosophy, which he, the master of spirit, the Apican orator of the meeting, is so prodigally serving out to them."[388] The authors' contempt and ridicule of both the lecturer (with his "fricasseed philosophy") and his audience (with "eyes strained" and "mouths distended") is striking. American responses to European claims of inferiority often remained cordial and respectful, yet the editors of *The Journal of Health* were quick to deride and mock the lecture, the lecturer, and those in attendance.

In a similar manner to *Fraser's Magazine*, *The Journal of Health* reprinted portions of Dr. Black's lecture and followed them with detailed commentary. Other than the introductory retort, most of these responses are explanatory and rather benign. When they quoted Black's assessment of the United States and its "vile democracy of sassess" however, the authors became indignant. Their response to Black's accusations and descriptions strongly encapsulated the important mindsets and attitudes of American writers regarding their national cuisine and identity in the early American Republic.[389] The editors argued:

> We pity, from our very palates, the ignorance of the lecturer on the subject of American cookery: and we trust that, before he publishes another edition of his

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[388] "National Cookery and Character," *The Journal of Health, Conducted by an Association of Physicians*, vol. 2, 18 (Philadelphia, PA, 1831), 275.

[389] As the following descriptions are very detailed, use important loaded language, and are integral to an understanding of the trajectory of American cuisine and identity formation in the era, the following passages from this source are reprinted in their entirety with analysis interjected at certain intervals.

> address, he will visit these States, and judge for himself of the excellence of such dishes as roasted possum, the rich savour of which as far surpasses the succulence of the famed roast pig of 'Elia,'[390] as the climbing animal itself is superior in active cunning to the grovelling grunter; and then our apple butter, and our cranberry *sass*, and our alligator steaks, and our squirrel, and terrapin, and clam soups, and our chowder, and Indian pudding, and pumpkin pie.[391]

It is noteworthy in this passage that the authors define American cookery as a collection of animals and plants native to the continent. In doing so, the authors evoke the strong nationalist tendencies of earlier Americans who saw the bounty of the country as one of its strongest natural assets. In defiance of degeneration theory, the authors conclude that American meats—due in part to the creatures' "active cunning"—are superior to any Old World equivalents. Further, the inclusion of Indian pudding and pumpkin pie denoted an understanding and reverence for the adoption of European cooking methods with indigenous American staple foods. The statement harkens back to Barlow's *Hasty Pudding* and Rumford's description of apple pudding as hybridized and distinct American dishes, born of the American continent, and worthy of praise.

The authors continued their analysis as follows:

> National cookery indeed! Why we have more of it brought out at a fourth of July barbacue [*sic*], than all the Aldermen's feasts, and Lord Provost's dinners, with every appliance that roast beef, and plum pudding, and hotch potch, and singed sheep's head, could give in the course of a century, to the liege subjects of his Britannic Majesty.[392]

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[390] "Elia" is a reference to British essayist and humorist Charles Lamb's "A Dissertation on Roast Pig." In the essay, Lamb mythologized the invention of roasting a pig—a dish he found to be extraordinarily delicious—with a mock folk tale from ancient China. Charles Lamb, "A Dissertation on Roast Pig," *Elia: Essays which have Appeared under that Signature in the London Magazine* (London, UK: Taylor and Hessey, 1823), 276-288.

[391] "National Cookery and Character," *The Journal of Health*, 279.

[392] Ibid.

This passage is significant for its braggadocious tone. The authors had mostly remained defensive of American cuisine (with only occasional comparisons to other nation's cooking practices) but had yet to outright proclaim American culinary celebrations as superior to other comparable European events. Indeed, the inclusion of not only foodstuffs, but also feasts that represented American society was an important distinction. In the years following ratification of the Constitution, the prevailing defense of American cuisine consisted mainly of positive descriptions of specific food items or cooking techniques. Such writings rarely specified the celebrations associated with American eating habits, and almost never described such gatherings as superior to their European equivalents.

Further, that the authors used the Fourth of July as an example of such a veritable celebration of American food culture solidified the connection between American politics and American food culture. The "barbecues" that the authors reference were renowned through the country as prime examples of America's political and cultural strength, and the foods presented to those in attendance reflected the pride some Americans felt on the holiday. It is also of note that the authors compare such barbecues favorably against "Lord Provost dinners" where stereotypical British foodstuffs were served: a clear indication that American society and American food culture had (in the minds of these authors) completely separated itself from its previous British colonial influence.

In their concluding statement, the authors added a final intriguing component to their argument in defense of American cuisine:

> The 'pepper pot,' for which our own fair city of Philadelphia has been so long celebrated, is, in itself, so happy a union of vegetable and flesh; and is, withal, so scientifically besprinkled with that condiment from which the dish obtains its

> name, and is so gustful a blending of soup and solid as must place it immeasurably, that is, past all taste, above the Scotch hotch potch or Spanish Olla Podrada, or any other dish of which the older nations of the world are wont to make such boast. Of the powers of pepper-pot, for quickening the intellect to all kinds of curious inquiry, we cannot give a better proof, than simply to state, that it is no unusual thing to see, in our streets, a tin or board, on which, in full round letters, and sometimes, also, in strange ethnography, are to be seen this announcement: "Pepper-pot—Intelligence office." We defy Dr. Black to give a parallel instance of such an intimate connection, we may say, philosophical association, between cookery and letters; between a national dish and national curiosity.[393]

The reference to pepperpot—a meat stew comprised of chunks of beef and vegetables and liberally spiced with pepper—is an intriguing inclusion.[394] It is clear that the authors attempted to mimic Dr. Black's correlation between sauces and political philosophy by describing the dish as a "happy union of vegetable and flesh," one that is "scientifically besprinked" with spices. Further, that the authors considered the dish in higher esteem than other dishes of Scotland and Spain helped build upon their previous argument that American cuisine is superior to other national cuisines. Most importantly, however, the authors' claim of pepperpot "quickening the intellect" and curiosity of those who consume it is a powerful statement on the connections between food and national character. Pepperpot's prevalence at "Intelligence offices" (the nineteenth century equivalent to employment centers where local businesses would post advertisements for jobs) implies the dish's association to the supposedly robust American economy and the drive of American workers. Indeed, as the authors attest, there may not be a better

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[393] "National Cookery and Character," *The Journal of Health*, 279-280.

[394] Dr. Black's dismissal of soups as adequate representations of national dishes appears to have been lost on the authors of *The Journal of Health*. Or perhaps, pepperpot's inclusion here was in direct defiance of Dr. Black's statements. The authors' motives are not clear, unfortunately.

"intimate connection" between a foodstuff and a positive description of American national character than pepperpot served at Philadelphia's intelligence offices.

Dr. Black's lecture and the American response to his claims represent a further complication in the trajectory of the development of a national American cuisine. The association between food and identity had become so deeply ensconced in Western political philosophies that the concept itself helped to bolster and reaffirm the legitimacy of specific nations and their nationalistic claim. Rather than being a novel approach to the subject matter as some had suggested, Black's statements were built upon decades of scientific and sociological developments in Europe and the United States. His thesis is the culmination of previous mentalities, not the beginning of a new approach. And many respects, the American response to Dr. Black was equally dependent and influenced by previous methods and ideologies. The authors praised the natural resources of the continent and focused on the American people's ability to fuse European cooking practices with native ingredients, arguments made numerous times throughout the previous decades.

The editors of *The Journal of Health*'s novel contribution to the development of American cuisine, however, lay in the introduction of public feasts like the Fourth of July barbecues into the debate. Associating such public events and social meals with positive components of American national character became a principal component of defining the food of the United States, and in turn the country's identity. As the philosopher of gastronomy Brillat-Savarin opined,

> Gourmandism is one of the most important influences on social life; it gradually spreads the spirit of conviviality, which brings together from day to day differing kinds of people, melts them into a whole, animates their conversation, and softens the sharp corners of the conventional inequalities of position and breeding.[395]

Nowhere is this statement more apparent than in the public feasts and celebrations of the early American Republic. The communal nature of these events and the shared consumption and celebration of food became acts of cultural culinary patriotism; testing-grounds for hypotheses of American nationalism. Therefore, as Americans began to look inward for inspiration—dismissing or even ignoring the previous denouncements of their food and eating habits by European travellers and authors—such conscious cultural celebrations would become the cornerstone of the development of an American cuisine in the early American Republic.

While public celebrations like barbecues, clambakes, and food festivals often attempted to connect a national American cuisine with positive attributes such as commensality (the practice of eating a meal together), conviviality, patriotism, and communal wealth, such events also exposed glaring inequities in American society. For instance, *The Journal of Health's* focus on pepperpot—while well articulated and effective for their specific argument—is rather strange, as pepperpot was not a dish of American invention. The stew originated in the West Indies and was developed by African slaves using the scraps of meat afforded to them, meats that they heavily spiced to hide the low quality of the dish's ingredients. Pepperpot travelled to the United States with the Atlantic slave trade, continuing to be cooked and consumed almost exclusively by African American communities into the early-nineteenth century. It was only appropriated and accepted by white Americans after years of existence on the edges of American society. Thus, this single dish meant to represent the positive attributes of the United States was only absorbed into intellectual debate and public consciousness by way of the nation's reprehensible institution of slavery. Pepperpot (as will become apparent later in this chapter) represented the dark side of American cuisine; one of exclusion and forced assimilation. African Americans, working class Americans, and immigrants all had to contend with tactics meant to to exclude and vilify them in the American public sphere, and food often became a symbolic representation of their oppression.

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[395] Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, *The Physiology of Taste: Or, Transcendental Gastronomy* (Philadelphia, PA: Lindsay & Blakiston, 1854), 179.

These two competing ideologies—commensality and exclusion—remained defining contracitory components of American political and social food culture in the early decades of the nineteenth century. As Americans attempted to determine and establish their own national cuisine and identity from within, the nation was forced to confront its inherent inequities and contradictions. Even seemingly benign and celebratory communal events exposed the institutional problems of American nationhood. As food scholar Alice P. Julier argues, "connecting activities or 'commensality' to larger social arrangements that stratify people demonstrates how choices about food and sociality are guided and constructed within a range of opportunities and constraints."[396] Such constraints on food and culture included the exclusion of certain peoples from positions at the communal national table, and its effect ranged from isolation from social resources, to at times starvation and death.[397] Therefore, as American cuisine matured during this era, the pangs of its formation exposed glaring injustices that ultimately rendered its continued existence as a unifying cultural construct unsustainable.

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[396] Alice P. Julier, *Eating Together: Food, Friendship and Inequality* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2013), 4.

While the food culture of the era often exposed inequities in American society, this fact was often lost on some contemporaries who used food to celebrate and praise the supposed populist nature of American politics. And in post-Revolutionary America, white male citizens of the middling class often found good reason to celebrate. After declaring independence and forming a centralized federal government, the country further solidified its postcolonial character and identity through a less violent—though nevertheless equally impactful—revolution in the cultural and political sphere. Particularly with the ascendency of Thomas Jefferson to the presidency in 1801 and the increased influence of the Democratic-Republican party, non-elite white males felt a renewed sense of empowerment at the start of the nineteenth century.

With this "second revolution" came a dramatic shift in the conception of republicanism and postcolonial identity, and as historian Peter Onuf contends, this era ultimately saw the concepts of "libertarianism and nationalism in the United States inextricably linked, defining and qualifying one another."[398] In many regards, the nationalism that later stemmed from Democratic-Republican ideologies at the turn of the nineteenth century exemplified the sociological arguments laid out by Benedict Anderson in *Imagined Communities*, in that Americans began to espouse and champion connections beyond their insular social settings and pride themselves in shared ideological concepts and associations.[399] This change was evident in the development of urban agricultural societies that lauded the romanticized concept of the yeoman farmer, even if those members of the society rarely interacted with the farmers they praised.

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[397] Julier, *Eating Together*, 4.

[398] Peter S. Onuf, *Jefferson's Empire: The Language of American Nationhood* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2000), 92.

In comparison to their Federalist counterparts, Democratic-Republicans stood for (in theory) a more democratic system that—rather than attempt to elevate citizens to a more intellectual form of nationalism—reveled in that classes' unpretentious and grounded simplicity. Although Democratic-Republicans declared their support of democratic ideals, the championing of those ideals itself was mostly instigated and influenced by elites within the party system. In essence, Democratic-Republicans elevated the ordinary to a position of national pride, even if they themselves were not of the class they promoted. Thus, this shift in national identity formation was not the wholly populist event it ascribed to be. Nevertheless, it is without question that a different yet somewhat contradictory nationalism emerged during the era, one whose focus was centered primarily on the acceptance of non-elites in American society.

Historian Carolyn Eastman examines this shift in focus in her work *A Nation of Speechifiers: Making an American Public After the Revolution.* She argues that the same institutionalization that purported to codify national character "created serious impediments to national identification by non-elite Americans."[400] Citizens looked instead for other forms of association that better suited their understanding of a national identity. "They learned," she continues, "to grant new civic and political valences to older forms of community affiliation."[401] Imagined or not, these communities were the basis of a very different concept of American nationalism than previously described.

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[399] See: "Chapter 1: 'A Federal Diet' As Symbol - Food and the Foundations of a Postcolonial Identity" for more information on Anderson's theories on nationalism and culture.

Ironically enough, scholars argue that Americans of the era formed a stronger sense of their national identity within small, insular groups of like-minded individuals. Unlike the associations promoted by elites—whose goals were to spread their characteristics as widely as possible—non-elite associations took pleasure in narrow and specialized factions. As historian Albrecht Koschnik states, "A focus on the public sphere's concrete manifestation in associations, rather than its character as a disembodied 'imagined community,' brings the tensions surrounding the early American Republic's self conscious preoccupation with defining the contours of public life…to stark relief."[402] Historian Kristen Foster gives an example of such an association. Master craftsman—saddled with the complexities of a developing market revolution—were forced to alter their guilds in order to survive. In the process, their associations grew in strength as they tapered in number. "Changes in the city and the nation had created a cultural divide between Philadelphia's craftsmen." Foster describes, "as part of a development adversarial relationship, the city's master cordwainers, at least, explained their motives more as businessmen and less as craftsman."[403] Therefore, extenuating circumstances forced certain groups to alter the perceptions of their identity. In the process, they redefined not only their specific roles, but also their positions and morals within society. A more business-oriented mentality became synonymous with a new American nationalism, and the virtues associated with this system became important aspects of what it meant to be an American. It was paradoxically more individualistic than communal in nature, but nevertheless, this individualism came to characterize the nation as a whole.

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[400] Carolyn Eastman, *A Nation of Speechifiers: Making an American Public after the Revolution* (University of Chicago Press, 2009), 4.

[401] Ibid.

[402] Albrecht Koschnik, *"Let a Common Interest Bind Us Together": Associations, Partisanship, and Culture in Philadelphia, 1775-1840* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2007), 6.

Nationalism also became a method of asserting a sense of self in less tangible and more theoretical social systems. As Eastman states, before mandated schooling and other institutionalized endeavors attempted to instill nationalism, "elocution provided a common training and vocabulary to non-elites across the social spectrum, providing one means for them to imagine themselves as members of a public."[404] The systematic nature of education—advocated by elites as a method of improving the conditions of a national citizenry—were ultimately nowhere near as effective as an agreed upon set of words, associations, and ceremonies that non-elites began to associate with their personal morality and their national character. And even within systems formed specifically to foster elite notions of nationalism, non-elite participants altered and controlled the arc of their narratives. Koschnik describes how even within literary societies and art academies, "The overwhelming majority of the directors and subscribers…were laymen."[405] Their majority ownership in these societies distorted their initial goals, promoting far more democratic nationalistic ideals. This phenomenon was similar to the promotion and makeup of Mechanics Institutes, lyceums, and athenaeums in Great Britain that hosted presentations such as Dr. Black's "Lecture on the Moral Influence of National Associations." Even if the intellectual and elite leaders had attempted to institute their own systems for the populace, the rising tide and preponderance of non-elites ultimately had a far greater impact on defining nationalism.

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[403] A. Kristen Foster, *Moral Visions and Material Ambitions: Philadelphia Struggles to Define the Republic, 1776-1836* (New York, NY: Lexington Books, 2009), 69.

[404] Eastman, *A Nation of Speechifiers,* 51.

[405] Koschnik, *Let a Common Interest Bind Us Together*, 207.

Perhaps the most effective example of this abrupt social and demographic shift in American politics and society resides in the peculiar story of the "Mammoth Cheese." To celebrate the election of Thomas Jefferson as president in 1801, the town of Cheshire, Massachusetts created a enormous drum of cheese over four feet in diameter, fifteen inches thick, and weighing over 1200 pounds. According to Jefferson himself, the large drum of dairy was "an ebullition of the passion of republicanism in a state where it has been under heavy persecution."[406] The cheese was met with great fanfare at local festivals throughout the northeast, ultimately arriving in Washington in time for Jefferson's inauguration where it was celebrated as both an enormous feat of collective ingenuity as well as a symbol of the creativity of the young American nation.

The decision to create the Mammoth Cheese was wrought with political and religious symbolism, as well as a good deal of controversy and derision from Federalists authors.[407] While the town itself was undoubtedly proud of the cheese—and by all accounts Jefferson and the recipients were grateful for the gift—Federalist papers saw the cheese as a silly, uncouth creation that fetishized the myth of the backwoods Massachusetts yeoman farmer. The cheese represented the invasion of populist culture into American politics and was therefore constantly ridiculed in the Federalist press. *The Centinel of Freedom*, for instance, mockingly proclaimed the cheese to be both a Republican plot akin to the Whiskey Rebellion, and an attack on the American economy. "The Cheshire Cheese has not yet been seriously represented to be in itself a violation of the constitution," the paper wrote, "but presenting to the President is thought to be inconsistent with the monopoly of a federal market, and consequently a crime nearly related to that of taking the daily bread away from meritorious federal officers."[408] Even the use of "mammoth" to describe the cheese was itself derisive. The word invoked the woolly mammoth fossils that had recently been unearthed and put on display in Peale's

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[406] Thomas Jefferson, "Thomas Jefferson to Thomas Mann Randolph, January 1, 1802," *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, The National Archives. https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-36-02-0156

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[407] For a detailed review of the development of the cheese, as well as its religious and political implications, see: Jeffrey L. Pasley, "The Cheese and the Words: Popular Political Culture and Participatory Democracy in the Early American Republic," *Beyond the Founders: New Approaches to the Political History of the Early American Republic,* Jeffrey L. Pasley, Andrew W. Robertson, and David Waldstreicher, eds. (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 34.

Pasley's work explores the motives of John Leland and Darius Brown, the Baptist ministers in Cheshire who delivered the cheese to Washington. Of note is Pasely's assertion that "making a partial exception for a few works on the church state issue, neither the Mammoth Cheese nor the ideas and emotions behind it have been taken very seriously." Pasley, "The Cheese and the Words," *Beyond the Founders*, 34.

Therefore, until very recently, the derision and mockery present in Federalist writings surrounding the cheese have remained the predominant scholarly narrative of this intriguing item.

[408] "The 'Mammoth' Cheese," *The Centinel of Freedom* (Newark, NJ) December 22, 1801, 3.

American Museum in Philadelphia which had equally been lambasted by Federalists authors as sensationalist.[409]

Nearly six months after the cheese's arrival in the Federal City, *The Republican; or Anti-Democrat* continued to deride the Mammoth Cheese and remarked that it had become overrun with maggots. "Would to heaven that the Maggots in the heads of certain executive officers were as little detrimental to the public as those in the Cheese," the paper exclaimed.[410] Clearly, the sensational present was an easy target for Federalist authors to lambast the supposed inadequacies and failings of their Democratic colleagues.

However, the Mammoth Cheese was received with open arms by Jefferson and his administration. The foodstuff was praised by Democratic newspapers and congressmen across the nation, and even authors and poets sang the praise of the Mammoth Cheese. One of the more striking examples in favor of the cheese and its makers was written by Thomas Kennedy, a member of the Maryland House of Delegates and amateur poet. Upon the cheese's arrival in Washington, Kennedy penned *An Ode to the Mammoth Cheese.* Filled with hyperbolic statements and grandiose descriptions, the ode was nevertheless a sincere proclamation of both the cheese and the people who created it.

The poem began as follows:

> Most Excellent—far fam'd and far fetch'd CHEESE
> Superior far in smell, taste, weight, and size,
> To any ever form'd 'neath foreign skies
> And highly honur'd—thou wert [*sic*] made to please,

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[409] Dumas Malone, *Jefferson the President: First Term, 1801-1805* (Charlottesville, VA: The University of Virginia Press, 1970), 170.

[410] "Mammoth Cheese Maggots," *The Republican or, Anti-Democrat* (Baltimore, MD) June 14, 1802, 3.

The man belov'd by all[411]

The author's reference to "foreign skies" in the opening stanza is noteworthy. As has been shown previously, the need to compare American foodstuffs to their European counterparts was an continual and problematic intellectual practice of Americans in the early Republic. As this stanza reveals, cheese in particular was a foodstuff often used to symbolize American national identity and promote a certain level of patriotic pride. Effective cheese production relied on both quality local dairy resources and a knowledge of highly specialized production methods, making good cheese a product comparable to and representative of the land it came from and the people who made it. Logically, prized cheeses could therefore only come from high quality regions and peoples, making a superior cheese an object of immense pride.

Examples of the correlation between cheese production and nationalistic praise are strewn about the pages of American newspapers of the era. For instance, an article in 1801 from the *Massachusetts Mercury* (subsequently reprinted in numerous papers around the country) proudly proclaimed the fact that American cheese was currently being sold throughout England. An American physician on holiday commented that when he offered his English guests examples of cheeses from Boston, "I should hardly convince some of my guests that the cheese was any other than English… They all agreed that they would have done credit to the finest dairies in England."[412] That such a situation warranted publication in multiple newspapers exemplifies how quality cheese production was associated with feelings of national honor throughout the United States.

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[411] Thomas Kennedy, *Ode to the Mammoth Cheese Presented to Thomas Jefferson, President of the United States, By the Inhabitants of Cheshire, Massachusetts*, broadside, January 1802, Williamsport, Maryland, Thomas Jefferson Foundation at Monticello.

[412] A Physician, "American Cheese in England!" *The Massachusetts Mercury* (Boston, MA), November 24, 1801, 2.

Therefore, Kennedy's proclamation of the cheese as superior to other nations' dairy products represented a continued desire to bolster the quality of American society using domestic foodstuffs as examples. Further, that Kennedy equated Jefferson in this stanza ("thou wert made to please") with the superior nature of the cheese solidified the connection between American foodstuffs and the superiority of the American political system.

Kennedy's ode continued to compare the Americans with their European counterparts. In the fourth stanza, he wrote:

> For cent'ries past--in Europe--sometime here,
> Placemen[413] were said to share the *loaves* and *fishes*,
> But now Americans have better cheer,
> And to their worthy servants 'stead of these,
> They've wisely substituted—LOAVES and CHEESE[414]

Kennedy's passage directly compared European political society with that of the United States, and made allusions to the corrupt nature of European politics (in particular, the appointment of unscrupulous men to public offices and monetary hand-outs to political supporters). Even in America, Kennedy lamented, such actions had become commonplace. But for the author, the Mammoth Cheese symbolically represented a turn away from the debased politics of Europe and previous American Federalist administrations. Rather than dividing the riches between political cronies, Jefferson's meritocratic administration would share the wealth with the masses. Like the cheese itself, there was enough wealth and prosperity in the Jefferson government for all to equally partake.

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[413] A "placemen" is a derogatory term for a government appointee whose position was a reward for political support.

[414] Kennedy, *Ode to the Mammoth Cheese*.

Kennedy further defined the important symbolism of cheese in the subsequent passages. “Cheese is the attendant of a New-Year’s day, Cheese is the Blithe-meat when a bairn is born,” he wrote, detailing the cultural importance of cheese as a metaphor for communal wealth and good-cheer.[415] Using phrases that evoked Joel Barlow’s *The Hasty Pudding*, Kennedy asserted that cheese (rather than hasty pudding) is “nature’s purest, plain and simple food.”[416] Thus, if the people of the United States created such an impressive example of a pure foodstuff, they were by association as equally pure as the food they produced. The Mammoth Cheese was an important symbol of a nascent American nation; a society superior to its European counterparts and able to produce unblemished and laudable people who strove to equally share in the wealth of their nation, rather than selfishly horde its riches for a select few. In essence, the Mammoth Cheese represented the promise of a democratic America: strong, abundant, unadulterated, and large enough for all to break off a piece.

Kennedy was not alone in his praise of the Mammoth Cheese, nor in his association of the cheese with American nationalism. The poet Moses Guest also penned an ode to the foodstuff, titled *The Mammoth Cheese; or The Wonderful Patriot*. The poem is also wrought with nationalist symbolism, from descriptions of the flags and patriotic sayings on the rind of the cheese, to a detailed argument for the cheese's ability to feed the American army if the capital city were to be attacked (again). Interspersed with a patriotic tone, Guest's poem also took jabs at political opponents. As the following stanza conveyed:

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[415] Kennedy, *Ode to the Mammoth Cheese*.

[416] Ibid.

> This Mammoth Cheese, a sight for all
> True patriots, both great and small,
> This priest attended day and night,
> Lest fed'ral rats should get a bite.[417]

The descriptor of a biting rat was a deliberate affront to the mocking tone Federalist authors had used in their descriptions of the cheese. And while Guest's poem has numerous similarly light-hearted allusions, he ended the poem with a powerful statement on the connection between the cheese and American nationalism. "Millions unborn shall catch the flame," he wrote, "That raised to honour Leland's name; From east to west, from north to south, Each patriot's offering shall come forth."[418] Guest's final appeal denoted the desire for Americans throughout the nation to unite behind the symbolic concepts the cheese represented: the "flame" of American patriotism stretching throughout its expanding political borders and embracing all in its path.

Although lampooned by the Federalist press, the creation of the Mammoth Cheese was an important symbolic gesture and manifestation of an idealized communal American political system. Newly empowered and enfranchised Americans saw in the cheese a form of democratization heretofore unrepresented in the national discourse. The cheese was forged from collective effort, with hundreds of citizens working together to milk local Cheshire cows, press the thousand-pound curds in gigantic cheesecloths, and shape and mold the final product. The cheese travelled throughout the nation on public display as it made its way towards Washington, and when it arrived in the city it was consumed collectively in a physical example and manifestation of social egalitarianism. The cheese became emblematic of the democratic ideals of the nation itself: a symbol of the country's abundant resources, collective ingenuity, and—at least as perceived by those citizens who sang its praises and benefited from its laws and customs—equal opportunity.

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[417] Moses Guest, "The Mammoth Cheese; or The Wonderful Patriot," *Poems on Several Occasions, to which are annexed, Extracts from a Journal Kept by the Author* (Cincinnati, OH: Looker & Reynolds, Printers, 1824), 34.

[418] Ibid., 36. "Leland's name" was a reference to one of the creators of the Mammoth Cheese, John Leland.

Surprisingly enough, although the story of the Mammoth Cheese seemed initially to be an isolated symbolic example of early national conviviality, its popularity spawned numerous copycats. In 1803, the Congressional Record detailed a similar culinary celebration that occurred in the Senate. To commemorate the opening of a new session of Congress, the official baker of the United States Navy baked an enormous bread loaf.[419] According to the Senate proceedings, the "Mammoth-Loaf" as it was called caused an massive disruption in the chambers. "Mr. Jefferson took his jack knife from his pocket and cut and ate…[the] bread and drank of liquors," a New Hampshire Senator commentented, "this motley collection made so much noise and uproar as to disturb the Senate."[420] Like the story of the Mammoth Cheese, the Mammoth Loaf exposed cultural and social divisions in the authors who described the item: those more elitist and prone to maintain decorum were inclined to view the celebration as raucous and uncivilized, while those leaning more populous and democratic saw the event as a commemoration of American political egalitarianism.

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[419] Unlike Jefferson's "Mammoth Cheese" in 1801, the particular size and dimensions of the "Massive Loaf" were unfortunately not recorded. It was large enough, however, to feed all the members of the Senate, as well as members of the public who had wandered into the Senate Chambers (no doubt intrigued by the commotion and smell of the massive loaf of bread.)

[420] Everett Somerville Brown, ed. *William Pumber's Memorandum of Proceedings in the United States Senate; 1803-1807* (New York, NY: The Macmillan Company, 1923), 179.

Furthermore, one eyewitness described contemptuously how the chamber, "was crouded [*sic*] with people of all classes and colors from the President of the United States to the meanest vilest Virginia slave."[421] Such a collection of peoples exemplified the convivial nature of the event and the supposed symbolic egalitarianism present in the loaf's baking and subsequent public consumption. Yet the author's bias toward members of the lower and middling classes—and importantly, his bias toward African slaves—is highlighted strongly in this passage. Others in attendance, however, positively compared the drunken frivolity of the event to the Lord's supper.[422] Whether one viewed the eating of the Massive Loaf as a positive example of the peculiarities of American national identity or as a barbarous uncivilized occurrence of an American mob depended almost entirely on the political and social morés of the witness.

Another Mammoth Cheese would surface decades later during Andrew Jackson's presidency. Jackson's tenure came over thirty years after the wave of Jefferson's democratic populism swept over American political and social life. However, like Jefferson, Jackson represented a rebirth of democratic ideals. These ideals included claims for greater enfranchisement of white male citizens and desires to ennoble populist conceptions of Americans nationalism. And also like Jefferson, Jackson received a massive drum of cheese to commemorate and celebrate his popular political ascendancy and message. The *Niles' Register* journal commented that this new Mammoth Cheese was "highly ornamented with painting upon the belts and coverings around them, interlaced with appropriate historical extracts and statistics of state and national character."[423] Weighing over 1,400 pounds, the cheese exceeded the size and weight of Jefferson's early drum, and the celebration around the arrival of the cheese was also much larger and grandiose than the earlier example.

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[421] Brown, ed. *William Pumber's Memorandum of Proceedings in the United States Senate*, 179.
[422] Ibid.

As biographer James Parton remarked in his *Life of Andrew Jackson*:

> The President, after giving away large masses of his cheese to his friends, found that he had still more cheese than he could consume. At his last public reception he caused a piece of the cheese to be presented to all who chose to receive one, an operation that filled the White House with an odor that is pleasant only when there is not too much of it.[424]

The grand farewell party that Parton mentioned exemplifies the populist message of Jackson's administration. The public was welcome to the event, free to share in the communal meal sitting in the White House banquet hall. Although emblematic of the egalitarianism advocated by Jackson, the cheese nevertheless became a logistical problem for the White House staff. As Parton remarked, the stench of the rotting cheese became so overpowering that Martin Van Buren (Jackson's rival and successor) needed to replace the rug and wallpaper in the room to try and remove the smell.[425] For Jackson's political opponents, the stench of the cheese became emblematic of the populist stain his administration had left on American politics and society.

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[423] "The Jackson Cheese," *Niles Register* (Baltimore, MD) November 28, 1835, vol. 49 212-213.
[424] James Parton, *Life of Andrew Jackson*, vol. III (New York, NY: Mason Brothers, 1860), 626.
[425] Ibid.

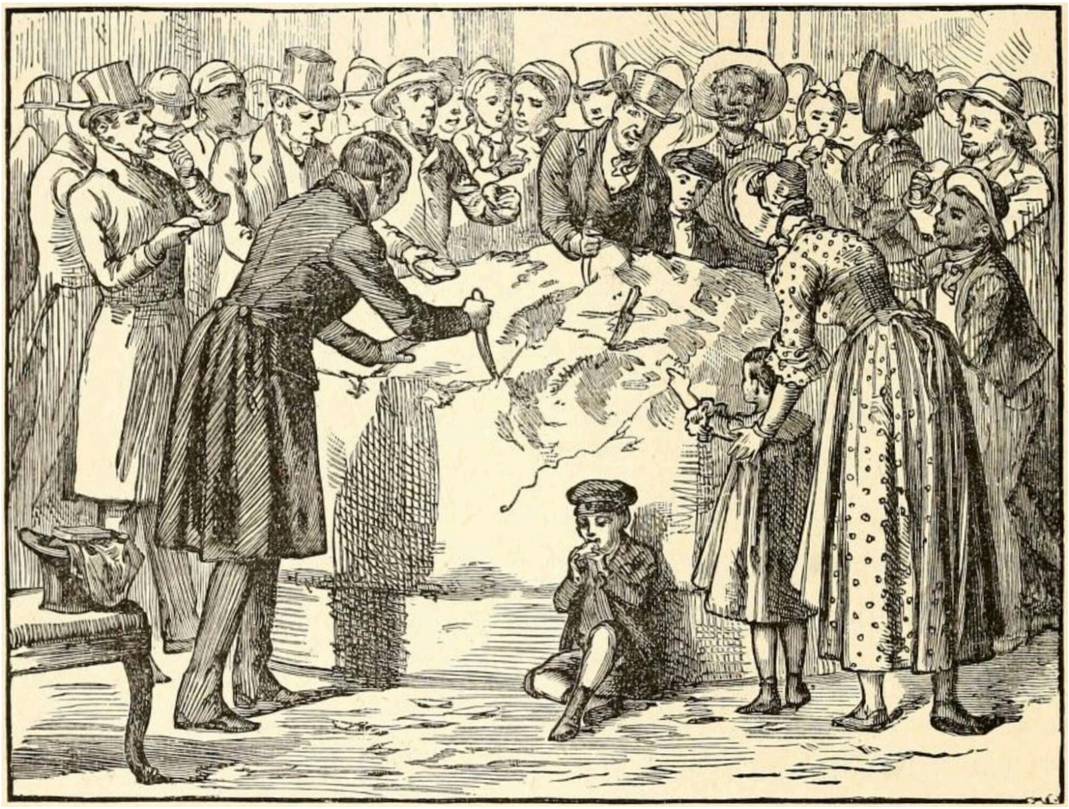

Figure 6: *The Great Cheese Levee (a sketch of Jackson's Mammoth Cheese at his final White House reception, February 22, 1837),* woodcut, in Benjamin Perley Poole, *Perley's Reminiscences of Sixty Years in the National Metropolis* (Philadelphia, PA: Hubbard Brothers, Publishers, 1886), 196.

These examples of symbolic communal foodstuffs created to exemplify the ideals of the flourishing American nation-state highlight the internal conflicts present in the development of a national American character. None of the foodstuffs were accepted and praised wholesale by the American people: indeed, in many instances, the symbolic gestures were mocked and ridiculed as populist nonsense. The foodstuffs exposed internal political divisions almost as effectively as did their attempts to unify the populace through collective dining. And while the cheeses and loaf purported to manifest America's vast national bounty and political and social egalitarianism, it is evident that only a select few inhabitants of the United States partook in the celebrations. For all the laudations of equality associated with the mammoth foods, it is clear that on the whole, mostly white middle-class men consumed the communal meals. When African Americans revelled and rejoiced in the festivities, for instance, they were described by eyewitnesses as "vile." Ironically, this was the same descriptor used by Dr. Black to illustrate the cuisine and culture of the United States writ large. Therefore, even when participating in peculiar communal events such as the Mammoth Cheeses and Loaf, the social class divisions and the exclusionary tactics of American political society remained prevalent.

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The Mammoth Cheeses and Loaf were only a few of the multitude of public events that used food and cuisine to define and celebrate American national identity in the early Republic. In the public sphere, white male non-elites held perhaps their greatest agency to define and dictate nationhood through such cultural celebrations. One of the more effective examples of this cultural interplay is present in historian David Waldstreicher's *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes*. Waldstreicher examines the impact of political parades, celebrations, and holidays on the creation of national identity and argues that "celebrations, oratory, and the printed discourse that surrounded [Americans formed] a system of celebration and publicity [that] constituted the true political public sphere of the early Republic."[426]

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[426] David Waldstreicher, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776-1820* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 293.

In regard to the development of a national cuisine, there are two important components of Waldstreicher's argument. First, rather than focusing on intellectual resources such as literature, poetry, and the arts, Waldstreicher uses descriptions of popular events, ultimately finding power and agency in more grass-roots efforts even if those efforts are supported by the intellectual elite. Second, Waldstreicher's conclusions highlight a far more intricate power system, one that originates from the bottom-up and ultimately leads to alterations in all classes of society. Historian Trish Loughran concurs with Waldstericher's assertions on the impact of cultural celebrations and nationalism, arguing that, "The parades, feasts, and fireworks Waldstreicher describes all involve moments in which local public space is mobilized for political purposes even as the work of official politics is being done behind closed doors in rooming houses and Senate hallways."[427]

Therefore, in the early American Republic, such parades and festivals became an effective conduit for nation building. The events bought together like-minded individuals under the representations of their imagined sense of self. Flags, banners, and of course foodstuffs and feasts became symbols and tools used to create popular national identities. And while such symbols stood as the antithesis of the more sophisticated and enlightened practices of the elite, they were—in the case of Democratic-Republicans and Jacksonian Democrats—fostered and supported by some members of the upper classes. This combination of populism and elitism proved to be profoundly influential in the process of nation-building in the era.

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[427] Trish Loughran, *The Republic in Print: Print Culture in the Age of U.S. Nation Building, 1770-1870* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2009), 211.

As referenced in *The Journal of Health*'s response to Dr. Black's "Lecture on the Moral Influence of National Associations," Fourth of July barbecues were important cultural celebrations that highlighted the young nation's attempts to form a communal identity. The obvious correlation between patriotic acts and the celebration of national independence aside, Fourth of July celebrations also instilled the concept of a shared American identity through the incorporation of large, festive, and lavish feasts to commemorate the occasion. Primarily in the Southern and Western states, a community barbecue became the symbol of the supposed abundance and convivial nature of American society. Yet these celebrations also ironically exposed deep-seated cultural hierarchies that ultimately revealed a nation divided and at odds with its own celebrations of unity and independence.

The American minister Charles A. Goodrich detailed the cultural significance of barbecue and American nationalism in his travelogue, *The Universal Traveller.* "Among the amusements of the people of the Southern States," he wrote, "we find the Barbecue, and it is generally…an act of hospitality."[428] Goodrich described how gentlemen from throughout the region would chose to "unite for the purpose" of roasting "some savoury animal whole…after the manner of the ancients."[429] The spirit of unity and community inclusiveness was evident in Goodrich's review of the event, but more importantly, so too was the connotation and connection of the barbecue to American Indian society. His passing reference to the "manner of the ancients" alluded to the origins of the practice of barbecuing: a practice first observed and recorded by European authors in America as early as the sixteenth century.[430]

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[428] Charles A. Goodrich, *The Universal Traveller, Designed to Introduce Readers at Home to an Acquaintance with the Arts, Customs, and Manners, of the Principal Modern Nations on the Globe* (Hartford, CT: Canfield & Robbins, 1836), 39.

[429] Ibid.

Open-flame roasting was of course a cooking technique almost universally practiced, but the specific spit-roasted, whole-animal methods of native peoples were of great interest to European colonizers. By the early-nineteenth century, the practice had become deeply ensconced in American society even as the word "barbecue" itself remained associated with native populations and cultures.[431] A slow process of dissociation from American Indian cultures and appropriation into European society began early, however, and ultimately would distance barbecues from their supposed native origins. Goodrich's passing reference exemplifies the evolution of the cooking practice away from its provenance and toward a supposedly unique American style.

American author and explorer Charles Lanman reiterated this dissociation in 1850 when he asserted that the word "barbecue" was in fact not American Indian in origin, but rather "derived from a combination of two French words signifying *"from the head to the tail,* or rather according to the moderns, *the whole figure, or the whole hog*."[432] Lanman conceded that, "By some, this species of entertainment is thought to have originated in the West India Islands."[433] However, he concluded it to be "quite certain that [barbecue] was first introduced into this country by the early settlers of Virginia; and…is commonly looked upon as a *pleasant invention* of the Old Dominion."[434] Thus, Europeans and later Americans desperately tried to culturally remove themselves from the people whose cooking styles and methods they had adopted, even inventing false origin stories to bolster their arguments.

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[430] For a detailed description and observations of early barbecuing in North America, see: Andrew Warnes, *Savage Barbecue: Race, Culture, and the Invention of America's First Food* (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 2008).

[431] Andrew Warnes details the complex history of the concept of barbecue, including its associations with American Indians and savagery, and also describes the inability to easily ascertain the etymology of the word itself. Often the word is attributed to the Arawakan phrase *barbacoa,* meaning "a roasted animal." But there is also a connection to the general concept of *barbarism* that European colonizers associated with native peoples. "Barbecue mythology arose," Warnes writes, "neither from actual Arawakan life nor from any other indigenous culture, but from loaded and fraught colonial representations that sought to present those cultures as barbaric antithesis of European achievement." Warnes, *Savage Barbecue*, xxii.

[432] Charles Lanman, *Haw-Ho-Noo; or, Records of a Tourist* (Philadelphia, PA: Lippincott, Grambo, and Co., 1850), 94.

In subsequent passages, Lanman contended that a review of the practice of barbecuing "deserves more praise than censure, as we know of none which affords the stranger a better opportunity of studying the character of the yeomanry of the Southern States."[435] Thus, over the course of a couple generations, barbecue went from being an exotic American Indian cooking practice to a peculiar "Old Dominion" invention, one that defined the specific identity of white Americans in the American South. As had been the case with countless other foodstuffs and culinary practices (from maple-sugaring to Indian corn), Americans in the nineteenth century systematically removed the cultural impact of indigenous peoples from the American national narrative and blatantly disassociated themselves from the native populations. Even in the instance of barbecue—a culinary method initially considered to be emblematic of the supposedly barbarous nature and savagery of American Indians—white Americans appropriated the practice and made it an example of the civilized, unified nature of their own communities.

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[433] Lanman, *Haw-Ho-Noo*, 94.
[434] Ibid.
[435] Ibid., 97.

This cultural appropriation was partly due to the appealing nature of barbecues both as a savory meal and an effective means of community building and political electorate wrangling. Following the War of 1812, Democrats seized upon the practice of large-scale celebratory barbecues as means to unite the people and sway elections. As Andrew Jackson biographer Robert Remini describes, "Nothing beats food and drink to capture the interest of the American electorate. Even when the Democrats lost elections they seemed to think a barbecue was in order."[436] The irony of celebrating Andrew Jackson—a infamous opponent of American Indian peoples—with a culinary tradition originating from American Indian nations was seemingly lost on the populace.

Regardless of the origin of barbecuing and the motives of its participants, the practice had become fundamentally associated with American society and nationalism by the 1820s. Descriptions of barbecues were filled with hyperbolic statements and weighty prose that spoke to the supposed grandeur and beauty of American society highlighted in these communal feasts. In his journal, the famed American naturalist John James Audubon detailed a barbecue in Kentucky in such a manner. "As the youth of Kentucky lightly and gayly advanced towards to barbecue," he wrote, "they resembled a procession of nymphs and disguised divinities. Fathers and mothers smiled upon them as they followed the brilliant cortége."[437] The barbecue in question was a celebration of

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[436] Robert Remini, *Andrew Jackson: The Course of American Freedom, 1822-1832* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), 382-383.

[437] John James Audubon, "A Kentucky Barbecue," *Audubon and His Journals*, Maria Audubon, ed. (London, UK: John C. Nimmo Press, 1843), 488.

Independence Day, and on this day, Audubon felt "Columbia's sons and daughters seemed to have grown younger that morning."[438]

Audubon's description of the Kentucky Independence barbecue addressed a number of tropes that had come to define the positive qualities of American national character. The event was an egalitarian affair, full of great energy, optimism, and a sense of communal pride. "The whole neighborhood joined with one consent," he described, "no personal invitation was required where everyone was welcomed by his neighbor, and from the governor to the guider of the plough all met with light hearts and merry faces." [439] That all members of society (from "the governor" to the "guider of the plough") were gathered at the event was an important component of Audubon's description of American social egalitarianism. Further, the need to define community through nationalism in his passages was uniquely required in the Western states, as questions regarding the ability of the nation to remain unified as its boundaries expanded remained an ever-present concern of the era. Audubon addressed these concerns by describing these "bold, erect" Kentuckians as "proud of their Virginia descent," and pleased to "make arrangements for celebrating the day of his country's independence."[440] Even out west, Americans remained united through their shared political and cultural heritage.

The food at the event was varied and plentiful. Audubon described how each participant in the barbecue "had freely given his ox, his ham, his venison, his Turkeys [for the event, as well as] melons of all sorts, peaches, plums, and pears [that] would have sufficed to stock a market. In a word, Kentucky, the land of abundance, had supplied a feast for her children."[441] The author's depiction of great natural abundance mimics previous descriptions of America's natural bounty dating back to the sixteenth century.

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[438] Audubon, "A Kentucky Barbecue," 487.
[439] Ibid.
[440] Ibid.

As they ate their meals, the participants sang the praises of their founders, further connecting the convivial meal with the American nation. The speeches, according to Audubon, "served to remind every Kentuckian present of the glorious name, the patriotism, the courage, and the virtue of our immortal [George] Washington."[442] As was customary in many large feasts of the era, toasts were also made to similar American political figures and national sources of pride. "Many a national toast was offered and accepted," Audubon wrote, "many speeches were delivered, and many essays in amicable reply."[443] As the event came to a close, Audubon revelled in the scene he had witnessed. The barbecue had such a profound effect on the author, he concluded his "spirit to be refreshed every Fourth of July by the recollection of that day's merriment."[444]

Audubon's description of a Fourth of July barbecue was far from unique. As early as 1803, *The Hornet* newspaper publicized a "Republican Barbecue" to be held outside of Woodsburgh, Maryland. "It would be unnecessary," the paper argued, "to describe the satisfaction, peace, and friendly intercourse that subsisted at this numerous and respectable meeting."[445] The paper continued by describing the event as a meeting of a "Band of Brothers," with members "old and young—rich and poor—a meeting of freemen," further exemplifying the supposed egalitarianism of American society.[446] The event also included a toast to numerous patriotic people and ideas, including the President of the United States, the political concept of republicanism, and a toast against traitors such as Benedict Arnold and—not surprisingly for a Democratic-Republican event—John Adams.[447]

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[441] Audubon, "A Kentucky Barbecue," 488.
[442] Ibid.
[443] Ibid.
[444] Ibid., 490.
[445] "A Republican Barbecue," *The Hornet* (Frederick, MD) October 25, 1803, 1.

However, barbecues were not relegated only to the southern states. A Fourth of July barbecue was planned for Madison, Wisconsin in 1843 and described by the local paper as "evidence of the taste, beauty, good cheer, and patriotic ardor" of the town.[448] After the usual set of toasts and patriotic songs, the paper proclaimed the attendees would "partake of the numerous excellent viands, rarities, and delicacies…prepared by the united liberality of the citizens of Madison."[449] Although the festival occurred in one of the northernmost towns in the country, the Madison Fourth of July barbecue remained surprisingly similar in tone and procedure to its southern equivalents. The unifying nature of such celebrations was seemingly easy to replicate throughout the nation.

Other public feasts also combined communal eating with a similar patriotic fervor. A "Union Barbecue," for instance, was held in Savannah Georgia wherein attendees sat at a one-hundred-forty foot table. "Over one end," the paper noted, "the 'Stars and Stripes' floated to the breeze," a nod to the association between the communal table and the nation.[450] Unlike the other barbecues mentioned, however, the Union Barbecue celebrated another equally patriotic holiday of the early American Republic: Election Day.

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[446] "A Republican Barbecue," *The Hornet*, 1.
[447] Ibid.
[448] "Fourth of July," *The Wisconsin Democrat* (Madison, WI), June 22, 1843, 2.
[449] Ibid.
[450] "The Union Barbecue," *Macon Weekly Telegraph* (Macon, GA) September 11, 1834, 2.

Election Day celebrations of the era often rivaled Fourth of July barbecues in their revelry and positive associations with national character and identity. As scholar Mark Brewin writes, "Election Day, already becoming a national ritual in the early Republic, turned ever more so as the nineteenth century wore on, taking place over the entire country at more or less the same time."[451] Election Days were raucous, lively events; festivals created to commemorate a shared national identity and an evolving national political culture. And food played an important role in these celebrations of enfranchisement. For instance, the famed cookbook author Lydia Maria Child included an "election cake" in her work, with slices to be served by women to the men who had voted in the day's election.[452] It was described as "old-fashioned" in her book, as the dessert had been a staple of American cookbooks dating back to the second edition of Amelia Simmons' *American Cookery.*[453] The revised edition of Simmons' work also included recipes for Independence Cake and a Federal Pan Cake [*sic*], all foodstuffs meant to be served on Election Day and other patriotic occasions.[454]

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[451] Mark W. Brewin, *Celebrating Democracy: The Mass-Mediated Ritual of Election Day* (New York, NY: Peter Lang Publishing, 2008), 74.

[452] Lydia Maria Child, *The American Frugal Housewife: Dedicated to Those Who Are Not Ashamed of Economy*, 2nd ed. (Boston, MA: Published by Carter and Hendee, 1830), 71.

[453] 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 Plumb to Plain Cake. Adapted in this Country, and All Grades of Life*, 2nd ed. (Albany, NY: Printed by the Author, 1796), 44.

[454] Baking cakes for political purposes was a popular custom in the early Republic. For instance, the Harrison Cake—a molasses and currant pastry named for President William Henry Harrison—was promoted and sold during his election campaign in 1840. The simple ingredients and frugality of the cake was meant to evoke Harrison's homespun, populist message as "the log cabin and hard cider" candidate. An 1846 cookbook described the Harrison Cake as an "excellent

While barbecues and Election Day feasts were the most common patriotic communal meals, other similar culinary celebrations were practiced throughout the country. *The Daily Atlas* of Boston described a "Clam-Bake" in Rhode Island of equally patriotic sentiment, for instance.[455] Chowder cook-offs throughout New England were also considered collective communal events steeped in undertones of egalitarianism. Returning fisherman would place portions of their catch in enormous cauldrons placed on the docks, slowly developing one large shared chowder meal for the town to consume. Once the chowders were ready, the people held jubilant celebrations to feast on the fishermen's abundant catch. One traveller described such a chowder meal in Marblehead, Massachusetts as "excellent in quality and abundant in quantity [that] refreshed us all. The gentlemen, truly *democratic* as they styled themselves, reposed upon the grass and feasted at their leisure… Being truly patriotic, the whigs and democrats both claimed [the event]."[456] Indeed throughout the nation, large-scale shared meals served the dual purpose of bringing people together in mutual celebration, and reinforcing national political and social ideologies.

However, barbecues remained the quintessential celebration of the early Republic, fusing the burgeoning American national cuisine with the ideals of the developing American political and social culture. Regardless of the barbecue's perceived inclusive nature, these celebrations of freedom through commensality remained stolen from the

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cake, far better than some which is [*sic*] more costly." Mary Cornelius, *The Young Housekeeper's Friend; or, A Guide to Domestic Economy and Comfort* (Boston, MA: Published by Charles Tappan, 1846), 148.

[455] "The Rhode Island Clam-Bake," *The Daily Atlas* (Boston, MA) August 9, 1842, 2.

[456] Ester, "A Trip to Marblehead," *The Universalist and Ladies' Repository*, vol. 10 (Boston, MA: Published by A. Tompkins, 1842), 195.

practices of an oppressed native population, and—equally disturbing— often prepared in the southern states by the enslaved. For instance, in engraving accompanying a description of Virginia barbecues, Samuel Goodrich's travelogue alluded to the fact that black slaves lit the barbecue pits and cooked the meals for their white masters. In the visual, a black man and woman are seen turning a whole hog on a spit, while another young black man stirred a pot near the fire. White men dressed in formal attire relax under a tree and played cards, while a group of white women and children danced in the background.[457] The master/servant relationship was in full effect in the visual, yet Goodrich did not mention this fact in his written account. In contrast, Audubon did at least mention black slaves in the description of the Kentucky barbecue he witnessed. In passing, Audubon wrote that "for a whole week or more many servants and some masters had been busily engaged in clearing an area [for the barbecue]."[458] But beyond this observation, Audubon never returned to discuss the further actions and impact that slaves had on the day's festivities.

Regardless of the lack of references in these accounts, it is clear that slaves held important roles and responsibilities in southern barbecues. Slaves often served in culinary roles as food cultivators and chefs, and it is logical to assume that they took their knowledge and practices in daily meal preparation and applied it to barbecue festivals.[459]

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[457] Goodrich, "Barbecue," engraving, *The Universal Traveller*, 39.

[458] Audubon, "A Kentucky Barbecue," 487.

[459] For example, historian Peter Wood argues that rice plantation owners in colonial South Carolina knowingly abducted and purchased slaves from specific regions in Africa known for their efficient rice cultivation methods. For a detailed description of Wood's theory, see: Peter Wood, *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 through the Stono Rebellion* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974). This analysis further asserts that African

Louis Hughes, a former slave who recounted his life as a slave in Virginia in his memoir *Thirty Years a Slave*, described in detail the intricate barbecue cooking practices of enslaved cooks:

> The method of cooking the meat was to dig a trench in the ground about six feet long and eighteen inches deep. This trench was filled with wood and bark which was set on fire, and, when it was burned to a great bed of coals, the hog was split through the back bone, and laid on poles which had been placed across the trench. The sheep were treated in the same way, and both were turned from side to side as they cooked. During the process of roasting the cooks basted the carcasses with a preparation furnished from the great house, consisting of butter, pepper, salt and vinegar, and this was continued until the meat was ready to serve.[460]

The barbecue style was indeed a complicated process, one that took many years to master and came with a generous amount of admiration within the slave community. Beyond the slave quarters, this cooking practice was also often well-respected as well. Hughes described how it was common knowledge in the southern states that "slaves could barbecue meats best," and consequently, "when the whites had barbecues, slaves always did the cooking."[461] Nevertheless, the power dynamics and social structure of slavery were certainly not forgotten during a barbecue, and even if there was a short moment of levity and celebration during the feast itself, it was merely, as Hughes wrote, only "a ray of sunlight in [our] darkened lives."[462]

The juxtaposition of Independence Day celebrations being cooked by enslaved peoples represented one of the starkest cultural contrasts inherent in food culture in the

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slaves were well-known culinary experts with valued skill sets for their white masters, a theory that could subsequently be applied to their expertise with barbecue.

[460] Louis Hughes, *Thirty Years a Slave: From Bondage to Freedom* (Milwaukee, WI: South Side Printing Company, 1897), 49.

[461] Ibid., 50.

[462] Ibid., 51.

early American Republic. In most respects, the convivial nature of these and other public feasts was undercut by their ability to expose underlying injustices in American society. The inability to reconcile—and at times even to acknowledge—these issues in certain written descriptions spoke to the fundamental prejudice and inequality that pervaded American society. Foodways and cuisine—often considered benign symbols of national traditions—in fact effectively exposed such inequities.

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When no official holidays or feasts were being celebrated, Americans still continued to connect foodstuffs and cooking habits with their national identity. Perhaps the strongest example—and their most constant daily reminder— of the relationship between American food and society in the early Republic is found in the countless city marketplaces dotted throughout the country. Marketplaces were critical centers of commerce and culture in American cities; communal public spaces that served as constant reminders of a town's prosperity, egalitarianism, and abundance.[463] It was in these markets that all Americans—regardless of race, class, or gender—intermingled with one another, all in pursuit of their daily bread and sustenance.

The marketplaces were symbols of the wealth and prosperity of the nation as well, and they served as important physical reminders of the ideals and goals of American society. As the famed butcher and author Thomas DeVoe recounted in his memoir *The*

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[463] For a detailed description of the growth of public markets in American cities as it pertained to notions of American political idealism and civic pride, see: Helen Tangires, *Public Markets and Civic Culture in Nineteenth-Century America* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003). For a description of the evolution of market culture in New York City, see: Cindy R. Lobel, *Urban Appetites: Food and Culture in Nineteenth-Century New York* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2014).

Market Book, this symbolism at times manifested itself rather directly. Following the American Revolution, DeVoe described how the Crown Market in New York—named for a neighboring statue with the "emblem of royalty" on its head—"was altered to suit an 'emblem of the Republic' known as the Goddess of Liberty…which had the more democratic appearance."[464] The statue itself was altered to appeal to the changing political beliefs of the nation, a physical manifestation of the ideals of the republic conveyed to the public at the marketplace.

From an intellectual and theoretical perspective, markets of the era represented a shift towards a more democratic and egalitarian society. The German traveller Francis Lieber remarked that Americans "have very small churches and exceedingly large markets."[465] The reason, according to Lieber, was that "food is the only thing upon which poor mankind can agree. The Presbyterian, the Quaker…the federalist, the democrat, the anti-mason, the abolitionist and colonization-man, the nullifier and the union-man—all meet peaceably at the same butcher's stall and take meat of the same ox."[466] A similar sentiment came from the writer Thomas Easton, who in 1814 penned a sardonic ode to his local market grocers. "[The grocers] sell at great advance of price, and all grow wealthy in a trice," he wrote, "they pass for useful citizens, and such as benefit poor people much."[467] Thus, the concept that all members of society could meet in peace and share in the bounty of the nation's resources at the market spoke to the idealized vision of a free and equal American society so adamantly envisioned in the literature of the early Republic.

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[464] Thomas DeVoe, *The Market Book: Containing a Historical Account of the Public Markets in the Cities of New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Brooklyn*, vol. 1 (New York, NY: Printed for the Author, 1862), 328-329.

[465] Francis Lieber, *The Stranger in America; or, Letter to a Gentleman in Germany* (Philadelphia, PA: Carey, Lea & Blanchard, 1835), 139.

[466] Ibid.

[467] Thomas Easton, *Review of New-York, Or Rambles Through the City* (New York, NY: Printed and Published by John Low, 1814), 53.

By the nineteenth century, markets had grown from small collections of stalls at the outskirts of cities into massive, sprawling, lively city centers. As they grew and overran local city streets, towns began passing ordinances and controlling access to the market stalls within. These actions were mostly necessary to control overpopulation and crowding, but as was the case with other local government agencies, there soon became opportunities for corruption and favoritism. According to economist James Mayo, the creation of permanent markethouses lead to the development of powerful public market committees, organizations that "established rent rates, reviewed and decided upon complaints made by market occupants…assessed fines and reassigned empty stalls."[468] All such actions and ordinances were completed, according to Mayo, to ensure revenues for the city, making the committee extremely influential in city affairs.

Ordinances soon began to limit the number and types of stalls made available to vendors, and farmers and businesses were at the mercy of the laws and ordinances passed by the city council. Without collective action, grocers, cheese-mongers, and butchers were unable to comfortably secure space to earn a living in their chosen professions. Butchers in particular were susceptible to strict regulations on spaces, sanitary conditions, and licensing. In response, many butchers who were denied stalls in the city markets began selling their meats illegally outside of the market, creating even more regulations against their industry.

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[468] James M. Mayo, "The American Public Market," *Journal of Architectural Education* 45, no. 1 (November, 1991): 42.

With such regulations and restrictions in mind, an assembly of butchers met in Philadelphia in 1820 to devise a public display of their goods. The group, headed by a butcher named "Mr. White," conceived of a grand display and celebration in the city, one that invoked the federalist marches and parades of the Fourth of July and Election Day celebrations. On March 13, 1820, the organized collective proceeded down Market Street in Philadelphia to awaiting crowds of onlookers. *The Evening Post* in New York described the "victualler's exhibition and procession in Philadelphia" as "splendid beyond any thing which has ever appeared in the city."[469]

The Procession of Victuallers (as the event became known) was in essence a display of the butchers' collective labor power. Clad in their whitest aprons to showcase their cleanliness and professionalism, dozens of butchers marched throughout the city like warriors returning from battle. They waved American flags alongside banners of well-fed cows and sheep and marched their most prized animals down the street in large carriages. The association between American nationalism and patriotism and the abundance and variety of American foodstuffs was extremely evident at the march, as the following song dedicated to the event showcased:

> Let England still boast of her roast beef and pudding
> Their country, their mutton, and all their parades:
> But all their fine boasting falls now into nothing,
> Compared with what Yankees this day have displayed,
> A sight that's heart-cheering to each patriot bosom,

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[469] "The Victuallers Procession: From the Village Record," *The Evening Post* (New York, NY) March 23, 1821, 2.

Success to our Victuallers, Farmers, Free Trade![470]

The song highlighted not only the pride inherent in the butchers' display in Philadelphia, but also the continued desire to compare American food and culture with its European counterparts. Still wounded by the continued negative comparison between American and English foodstuffs, the author of the song used this opportunity to slight the "roast beef and pudding" of England and proclaim American foods as superior. Further, the final call for "Success to our Victuallers, Farmers, Free Trade!" alluded to the butcher organization's desire to ease the trade regulations imposed on them by city market commissions, a demand forcefully exhibited in the day's procession.[471] At the end of the march the butchers dispersed to their slaughterhouses, later returning to the city market with "sixty seven beeves [*sic*], together with the finest lot of meat ever seen at one time."[472] The procession was such a success that German-American genre painter John Lewis Krimmel chose to memorialize with a painting titled, *Procession of the Victuallers*.

Yet more than a simple spectacle and celebration, the Procession of Victuallers represented one of the earliest examples of large-scale organized labor action in the early American Republic. In the process, the butchers in essence formed a proto-union, using their combined power and public presence to assert their agency over city commissioners and their supposedly restrictive ordinances.

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[470] *Song Dedicated to the Victuallers of Philadelphia, Occasioned by the Procession and Fine Show of Beef, on Monday, March 13, 1820*, broadside, (Philadelphia, PA, 1820). Courtesy of the Library Company of Philadelphia. Gift of Alan Smith.

[471] For more information on the battles between city officials and food vendors in nineteenth century America, see: Michelle Branch, *Just Provisions: Food, Identity, and Contested Space in Urban America, 1800-1875*, Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2012.

[472] *Song Dedicated to the Victuallers of Philadelphia*.

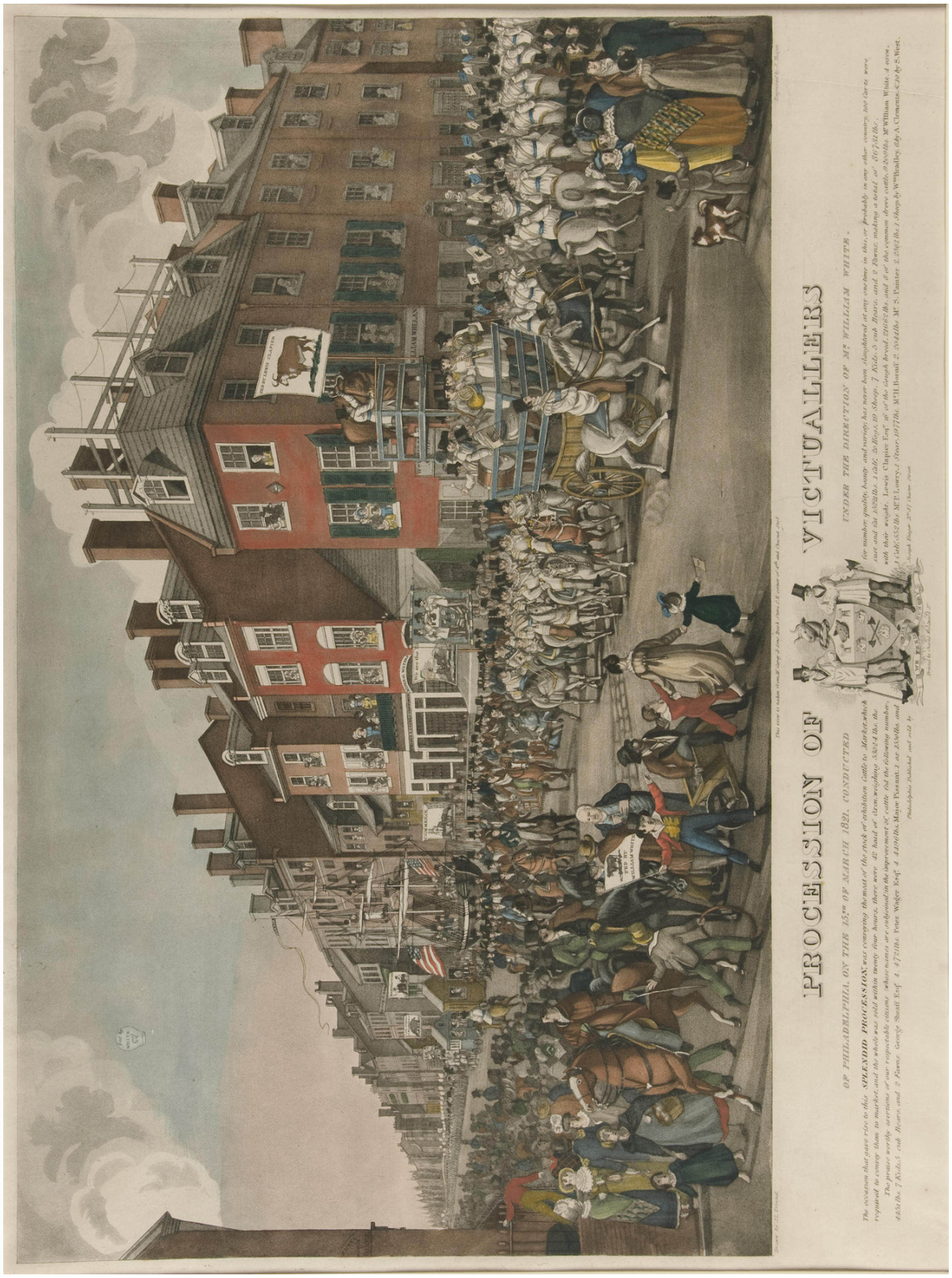
PROCESSION OF VICTUALLERS
OF PHILADELPHIA, ON THE 15TH OF MARCH 1821, CONDUCTED
UNDER THE DIRECTION OF MR WILLIAM WHITE.

Figure 7: *Procession of the Victuallers,* hand-colored aquatint by Joseph Yeager, by John Lewis Krimmel, artist (Philadelphia, PA: Published by A. Clement, c. 1821). Courtesy of the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

As working class professionals grew in number in industrialized Americans cities, the Procession of the Victuallers represented the possible impact that public marches could have in their communities to effect change. Draping the march in patriotic undertones further solidified their credibility and favor with the populace and ensured that butchers in Philadelphia could not be too heavily regulated and their numbers greatly diminished by government officials. Therefore, the Procession of the Victuallers represented not only the association between food and national identity in the early American Republic, but also the growing tensions and obstacles present for working class Americans attempting to assert their agency in a rapidly growing industrialized society.

If butchers in Philadelphia considered themselves pressured and constrained by market ordinances, African American food suppliers in the city felt downright oppressed. As early as 1792, the city government had passed regulations meant specifically to stifle black merchants' ability to sell their goods in public markets. A city ordinance proclaimed that due to the "riotous and disorderly practices" of persons selling foodstuffs outside of the market stalls, "no person or persons whatsoever shall at any time…sell or expose to sale either on the shambles of stalls of the market, or on the pavements within or surrounding the same, any soup or soups under the description of pepperpot…or boiled Indian corn, pickled oysters, or other dressed victuals."[473]

While the ordinance does not specify race, it was clear to the city inhabitants that the new regulations were meant specifically to target African Americans, who were the majority of sellers of Indian corn, oysters, and pepperpot. That they were even forbidden to sell their goods on the pavement outside the market was a further attack on members of the African American community and their ability to earn a living in the city. Without the collective power and influence of organizations like the butchers, black food vendors in Philadelphia were forced to comply with the laws without recourse. Although the restrictions were ultimately eased, the message was clear: Philadelphia officials disapproved of black food sellers and were willing to flex their power to block their businesses.

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[473] Philadelphia Common Council, "An Ordinance for the Regulation of the Market, held in High Street in the City of Philadelphia, on the fourth a seventh days of the Week, called Wednesdays and Saturdays," *The General Advertiser* (Philadelphia, PA) December 8, 1792, 2.

As evident in these city regulations, pepperpot soup was deeply associated with the African American community in Philadelphia. The spicy meat stew was an amalgamation of Caribbean spices with African cooking methods, served almost exclusively by freed black women in the city. An 1810 Philadelphia city guide titled, *The Cries of Philadelphia* described this deep interrelation as follows: "Strangers who visit cannot but be amused with the cries of the numerous black women who sit in the market house and at the corners, selling a soup they call pepperpot… It is sold very cheap, so that a hungry man may get a hearty meal for a few cents."[474] The description was accompanied by a drawing of a black women serving the soup to a group of other black men and women, with the caption, "Pepper Pot, Smoking Hot!"[475]

While the meal was initially associated entirely with the African American community, the cheap and flavorful meal soon caught the attention of white

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[474] "Pepper Pot," *The Cries of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, PA: 1810). Courtesy of the Historical Society of Philadelphia.
[475] Ibid.

Philadelphians as well. Only one year after the publication of *The Cries of Philadelphia*, John Lewis Krimmel painted a scene in the Philadelphia market. The painting consisted of an sparse market stall occupied by a young African American women. The woman was ladeling pepperpot into bowls, which were being handed out to a small group of white women and children. In the far right corner, an older white gentleman—a veteran of the American Revolution as noted by his Continental Army coat—sat sipping a bowl of pepperpot.[476]

The painting is notable for two reasons. First, like other paintings by the artist, the scene purported is of an everyday occurrence. Few paintings exist of the early Republic that depict events considered at the time to be mundane and therefore not worthy of recording for posterity. In this instance, Krimmel's work mirrored the still life paintings of Raphael Peale: two artists subverting their genres and depicting common life in the early national period. Second, Krimmel's painting depicted a cultural transition away from pepperpot's association with the African American community and toward a broader and more heterogeneous audience. The dish was still served by a black woman, but notably, the recipients of the soup were white.

Twenty years after Krimmel's painting, the editors at *The Journal of Health* were confident enough to declare pepperpot a "happy a union of vegetable and flesh" representative of America's superior national cuisine.[477] The dish had become completely absorbed and accepted into the broader American society and consequently removed from African American culture. The dissociation was so complete that some twentieth century texts cited a wholly fabricated pepperpot origin story. In 1960, *The American Mercury* stated that pepperpot “is truly an American dish,” and instead of being developed by slaves in the West Indies, the dish “was created at Valley Forge out of necessity.”[478] The story continued to describe how General George Washington sent his cook to “make ends meet with nothing but odds and ends which met just before the starvation line.”[479] When the cook returned with the soup, Washington himself christened the meal and named it pepperpot. The dish, according to legend, was thereafter identified with saving the Continental Army from starvation.

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[476] John Lewis Krimmel, *Pepper-Pot: A Scene in the Philadelphia Market,* oil on canvas, 1811. Courtesy of the Philadelphia Museum of Art.
[477] "National Cookery and Character," *The Journal of Health*, 279-280.

The American Mercury was not the first to describe this false origin story, nor was it alone in disseminating such inaccuracies. Numerous other sources—and surprisingly, even some contemporary websites and blogs—claimed that George Washington’s chef at Valley Forge invented pepperpot. Unfortunately, it is difficult to ascertain the origin of this folktale. More important that its provenance, however, is the story of pepperpot’s false origins and the course and devolution of the African American community’s cultural influence over the dish. The dish was born from necessity and ingenuity, consumed by African American freedpeople, and banished from the Philadelphia marketplace only to be slowly absorbed into white society, becoming emblematic of national pride while its origins were whitewashed by stories of false patriotism. Therefore, there is perhaps no better example of the inequities and injustice inherent in the study of American national cuisine and food culture in the early Republic than that of the story of pepperpot.

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[478] Jo Hindman, “Pepperpot Patriots,” *The American Mercury*, March 1960, 90.

[479] Ibid.

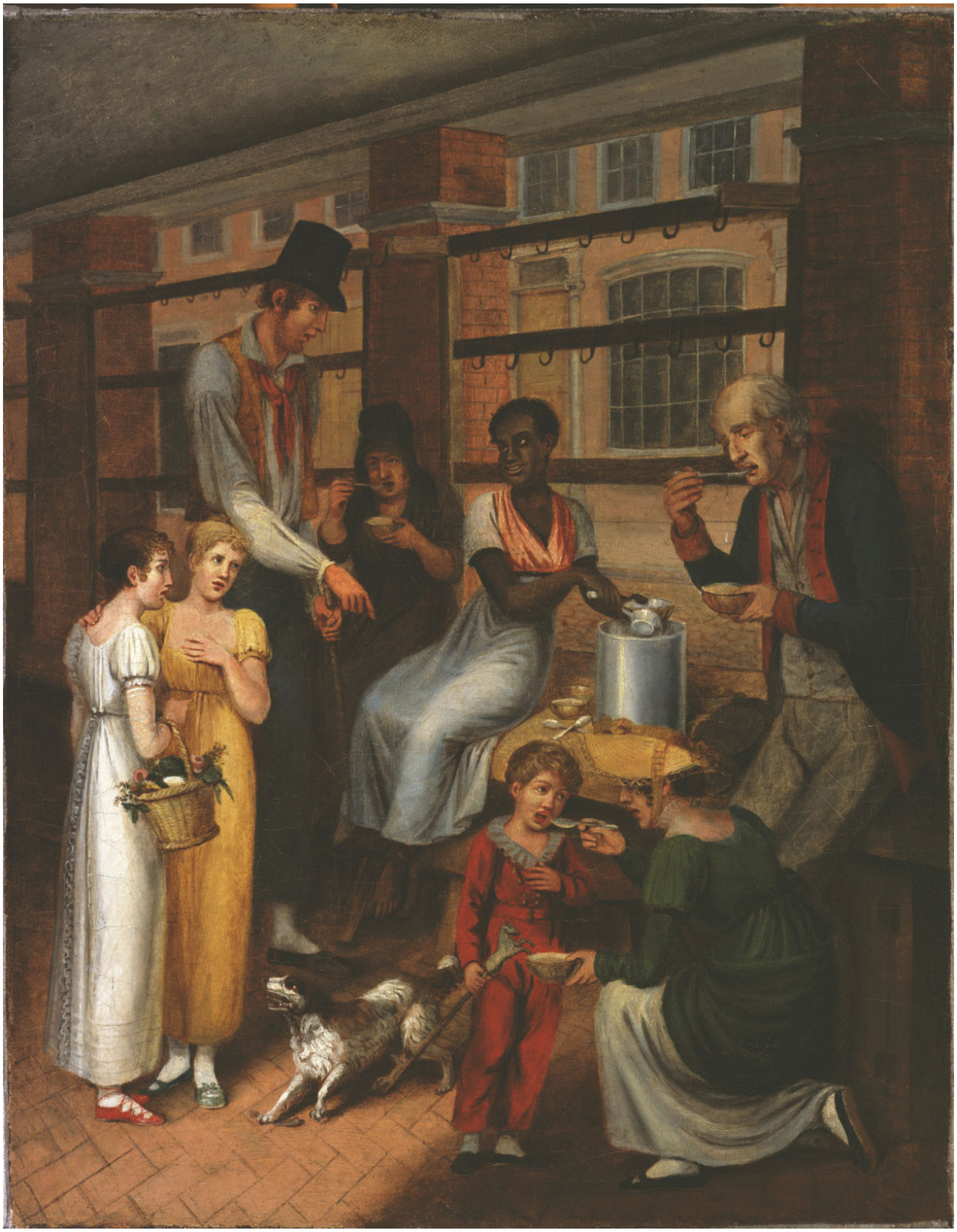

Figure 8: *Pepper-Pot: A Scene in the Philadelphia Market,* John Lewis Krimmel, oil on canvas, 1811. Courtesy of the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Paramount to an understanding of the cultural evolution of pepperpot from an African American dish to an object of white American culture is the inherent differentiation between the concepts of creolization and appropriation. In essence, creolization practices retain cultural agency while appropriation tactics dominate certain cultural traditions. In the case of the pepperpot and numerous other African American foodstuffs, white America appropriated black cuisine as a form of cultural dominance, a process emblematic of the power struggles and suffering of black society in America as a whole.

Alternatively, however, these shared hardships also helped form the basis of traditional soul food in African American culture. As historian Frederick Douglass Opie argues in his work *Hog and Hominy: Soul Food From Africa To America*, "Soul is black spirituality and experiential wisdom. And soul is putting a premium on suffering, endurance, and surviving with dignity… [Soul food] is therefore the intellectual invention and property of African Americans."[480] While African American soul food is certainly a combination of multiple cultures, ranging from African to English, French, and American Indian food practices, the combination of all these factors had generated a singular, definable culinary culture by the early-nineteenth century. And soul food is, as Opie argues, a form of intellectual and cultural property, a creolization based on an amalgamation of cultures.

While creolization is an effective tool in examining certain global cultural phenomena, it does not fully answer questions of cultural hybridization and power relations in other societies and nations. In *Home Cooking in the Global Village: Caribbean Food from Buccaneers to Ecotourists,* anthropologist Richard Wilk further examines this cultural interplay and differentiates the more benign acculturation of creolization and the more power-based concept of appropriation. As he writes, "*appropriation* is a reversal of globalization. Instead of absorbing and destroying local cultures, through appropriation a local culture absorbs and then neutralizes the invader by transforming it into something that 'fits' its own history."[481] Further, Wilk contends, "For some people, this argument comes down to an issue of power; only the dominant cultures in the global area are capable of choosing and appropriating whatever they want from the cultures of the world."[482] Thus, the whitewashing of pepperpot's African American origins was one of cultural appropriation, which spoke to the power dynamic and exclusionary nature of food culture in the early American Republic in general.

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[480] Frederick Douglass Opie, *Hog and Hominy: Soul Food from Africa to America* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2010), xii.

Through an anthropological lens, one can ascertain the difference between absorbing components of other cultures into another (as is the case of the creolization and creation of pepperpot from a variety of West Indian, African, and English cooking methods into African American cuisine) and the domineering, power-based practice of appropriation (exemplified in white American society's gradual destruction of the history and association of pepperpot with African American culture). That the editors of *The Journal of Health* could claim pepperpot as the one true example of an American dish while ignoring those who cooked and served it highlights this method of absorbing foodstuffs while dismissing their cultural origins. Furthermore, when reviewed in context, Fourth of July barbecues (another of *The Journal of Health*'s examples of a positive American food ritual) reveal similar methods of social and racial exclusion. These problematic exclusionary tactics—exemplified not only in the appropriated origins of pepperpot, but also in the political celebrations, parades, and marketplace debates of the era—became a fundamental impediment to the purported unifying and egalitarian nature of American national cuisine in the early Republic.

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[481] Richard Wilk, *Home Cooking in the Global Village: Caribbean Food from Buccaneers to Ecotourists* (New York, NY: Berg Publishers, 2006), 6-7

[482] Ibid., 7.

In 1847, at the height of the Great Hunger in Ireland, representatives of the Choctaw Nation met to collect funds and aide the starving Irish people. They raised only $170 dollars, but their gesture was far more powerful and generous than the sum of money would suggest. As historian Christine Kinealy writes, "The Choctaw Indians were familiar with suffering and marginalisation, having been compelled to move from their land in 1831 and forced to resettle in Oklahoma."[483] Thus, members of the Choctaw Nation empathized with the plight of the Irish people: a group equally oppressed by a colonial power. In both instances, famine and starvation tactics were used to ostracise and expel a civilization. The Choctaw understood how food (both in the literal sense in regards to famine and starvation and as a symbolic manifestation of culture and identity) could be used as a tool to exclude and erase certain peoples and their histories.

Equally, the seemingly small-scale and benign events detailed in the food culture of the early Republic were often emblematic of larger societal issues. By the turn of the nineteenth century, Americans had shed their postcolonial identity in favor of a stronger national sense of self. But what Americans implemented nationally in its stead exposed inherent complications and contradictions in their society. In this new system, food and cuisine remained a symbolic representation of the American people, both for good or ill. The Mammoth Cheeses exposed deep-seated political arguments; barbecue festivals celebrated the nation's independence but ignored the practice's traditional American Indian origins; the Procession of the Victuallers brought to light the growing labor concerns in a rapidly urbanizing and industrial society; and published descriptions of pepperpot's supposed patriotic attributes ignored the dish's history and removed African Americans from the national conversation.

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[483] Christine Kinealy, *A Death-Dealing Famine: The Great Hunger in Ireland* (London, UK: Pluto Press, 1997), 111.

Indeed, the colorful nationalistic language and calls for unity that accompanied the descriptions of communal feasts and festivities of the era often rang hollow. Such events and practices were meant to define a singular American character through food culture, but instead exposed far more social divisiveness and racial injustice than national unity. Ultimately, the inability to formulate and codify a united American cuisine in the early Republic lay not in the United States' inability to compete with the cuisines and cultures of European nations, but instead in the American people's inability to acknowledge and confront their own internal social and cultural inequities.

CHAPTER 5:
"The Permanency and Unity of our Great American Festival" - What Became of American Cookery

In November, 1837, as an anxious nation reeled from the effects of an economic crisis, *Godey's Lady's Book*—a popular antebellum American women's magazine—published an opinion piece by the recently-hired general editor Sarah Josepha Hale.[484] In the years following publication, the article would help launch an extraordinary campaign that would culminate in the first nationally-recognized celebration of the Thanksgiving holiday, fundamentally affecting how American cuisine and traditions regarding food and conviviality were understood and recognized throughout the country. What began as a seemingly benign opinion piece in a trade publication would have enormous ramifications on the manner in which Americans responded to national fears and anxieties, and subsequently formulated and constructed their identity in the early Republic writ large.

The editorial began with a condemnation. "In 'Britain's Isle,'" Hale wrote, "this is accounted the month of gloom and discomfort."[485] Like other American authors of the period, Hale described the climate in the United Kingdom negatively as a reaction to similar attacks by British authors describing the supposed degenerative conditions of North America. Subsequently, the "gloom and discomfort" of the British climate in

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[484] Sarah Josepha Hale was born in 1788 in Newport, New Hampshire. A prolific author, editor, and social reformer, Hale published numerous books and articles throughout her life on a range of topics, but mostly centered her work on the role of women in American society. For more information on Hale's life and her publishing career, see: Patricia Okker, *Our Sister Editors: Sarah J. Hale and the Tradition of Nineteenth-Century American Women Editors* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1995).

[485] Sarah Josepha Hale, "Editor's Table," *Godey's Lady's Book*, November, 1837, 238.

November—the “cheerless and sunless face of Nature” as she continued in the article—made “the heart of man sad, and his race stern and sullen.”[486] Conversely, according to Hale, the “chill” of such characteristics did not cross the Atlantic to alter the United States or “pervade our young country.” November in America was in fact “one of the brightest and best months in the year.”[487]

On the surface, Hale’s comparison between English and American climates and the subsequent effect these conditions had on the native populations mirror several other such editorials written by a number of early-nineteenth century authors. This reactionary argument could be placed on a continuum dating back nearly a century to the writings of the Comte de Buffon and Cornelius de Pauw (who argued the degenerative nature of North America led to an inferior population of people inhabiting the continent) and continued well into the 1830s with dozens of European travellers vilifying American society in print.

Hale’s response to such claims was to reverse the characters and use such theories to vilify Europeans and boost American nationalism. In this instance, Hale was certainly not alone.[488] But where Hale differed from earlier writers was in her solution to the problem of degeneration. American society held back the gloom of late autumn not with a warm, sunny climate or by an abundance of indigenous foodstuffs alone, but by the celebrations that Americans partook in during the season. According to Hale, the annual holiday of Thanksgiving was the most important and influential celebration in the United States. "The moral effect of this simple festival is essentially good," she wrote, "it is a season of grateful joy in the view of the rich blessings of Providence, which has thus crowned the year with its goodness."[489] Hale's association of Thanksgiving with the moral character of the people of the United States is an effective and novel approach to the issue of American character and American nationalism in the early Republic. Through a description of the positive attributes of a specific holiday centered on food and dining, Hale associated the bounty of American crops with the character and morality of the American people.

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[486] Hale, “Editor’s Table,” November, 1837, 238.

[487] Ibid.

[488] See the letters on degeneration theory by Thomas Jefferson, the poetry of Joel Barlow, the drawings and descriptions of apples by William Coxe, and Amelia Simmons’ introduction to her cookbook *American Cookery* (all referenced in “Chapter 2: As American as Apple Pudding - A Distinct Culinary Culture Emerges”) as examples of Americans who reversed the theory of degeneration and applied it to European society.

Other celebrations in the era—most notably the Fourth of July barbecues and Election Day bakings—also combined American foodstuffs with positive aspects of American society and nationalism. But Sarah Hale's depiction of Thanksgiving was the first attempt to develop a national celebration that intricately connected the foods grown and harvested with the integrity and morality of the American populace. As Hale continued in her essay,

> [Thanksgiving] is a festival which will never become obsolete, for it cherishes the best affections of the heart: the social and domestic ties. It calls together the dispersed members of the family circle, and brings plenty, joy and gladness to the dwelling of the poor and lowly. None are left to pine in that most abject state of physical want, hunger, on the Thanksgiving; even the poor prisoner is cheered in his solitary cell, not so much by the thought that a good dinner awaits him on that day, as that he finds he is not forgotten by his more fortunate fellow beings—that love and charity still watch over him.[490]

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[489] Hale, "Editor's Table," November, 1837, 239.

[490] Ibid.

Therefore, the effects of Thanksgiving celebrations went far beyond a simple family dinner. For Hale, the holiday symbolized the most revered components of American society, notably the charitable nature of its citizens. The great bounty of the American harvest provided ample opportunity for its people to share their resources with those in need, including as she mentioned those imprisoned throughout the country. Thus, even those who society had deemed guilty of illegal or immoral crimes were granted a pardon on Thanksgiving in order to momentarily relieve their suffering with a shared meal.

The association that Hale made between the bounty of resources available during harvest days and the charitable nature of American citizens introduces an integral component of Hale's perception of the holiday. Thanksgiving was foundationally linked with judgment and morality, concepts themselves associated with organized religion and spirituality. In fact, Hale proposed in her 1837 editorial that the specific day for celebrating Thanksgiving should follow the Feast of the Pentecost, a Jewish celebration she claimed was observed on the last Thursday of the month of November every year.[491]

It is clear, therefore, that Hale saw the celebration of Thanksgiving as a multifaceted and extremely important holiday for the United States. Thanksgiving represented the great bounty of American agriculture, the importance of family and moral obligations to all peoples, and a spiritual equivalence with high holy days and traditions. The day was capable of representing and exposing important aspects of the laudable character and manners of American citizens, and thus its celebration was of such a high priority that Hale felt compelled to argue for its adoption in a national publication.

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[491] Hale, "Editor's Table," November, 1837, 239.

For nearly thirty years, Hale would continually promote her national Thanksgiving cause in the pages of *Godey's Lady's Book* and in numerous other publications. Her crusade highlighted the strong linkage between American national identity and celebrations of its food culture, but also exposed growing rifts in American society. Indeed, Sarah Josepha Hale's campaign to implement a national Thanksgiving holiday acted as a lodestar for the direction American food culture and society would take in the years leading up to the Civil War. The observance of Thanksgiving became a framing device that encompassed the major concerns and apprehensions regarding American identity prevalent in the antebellum period: fear of domestic and social disunion, loss of traditions and shared pasts, and worry over the general immorality and impurity pervading aspects of modern American life.

In Hale's calculation, Thanksgiving celebrations would help to combat these anxieties by setting aside one day a year for all Americans to remember their shared past, be thankful for their domestic bounty, and revel in the humble traditions of family. At the center of all of these celebrations was the family table, a singular representation of the ability for food to symbolize the hopes and fears of private and public life. The meals consumed on the holiday would serve to unite the nation under a singular (yet predominantly New England and middle-class) set of morals, redefining what it meant to be an American through detailing what and how Americans ate. As Hale wrote in yet another appeal for the adoption of Thanksgiving as a national holiday in 1849:

> Our great nation, by its States and families, from the St. John's to the Rio Grande, from the Atlantic to the Pacific,[492] [must] all gather to a Feast, in which there

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[492] It is of note that Hale referenced the Rio Grande in the 1849 edition of her editorial, as the War with Mexico (in which the United States acquired land from Mexico bordered by the Rio Grande)

> would be abundance for all, and where all might rejoice in peace and safety! Will not [we] lend aid to establish unity of time as well as design in this great Festival, thus making it a National Jubilee?[493]

However, while the Thanksgiving holiday encompassed all of these wants and desires, it was not the only attempt to use food to cure the ills of an increasingly divided and anxious nation. Throughout the decades prior to the Civil War, American authors and reformers like Hale increasingly looked to food and food culture as both a symbol of the degenerative nature of the current American society and as a panacea for its continued survival. While of course no American believed food could necessarily solve all the problems the nation faced in the era, it is certain that their fixation on the development of a unified national cuisine was viewed as a component of a cultural shift that eventually might aide in the preservation of the republic. American food culture's intricate link to nationalism in the era would ultimately be its downfall, however, as this close association would crumble as the nation itself was driven toward disunion.

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Hale was not alone in her assessment of modern society and its need to reinforce morality through national celebrations. For instance, less than five years after Hale's initial appeal for a national Thanksgiving celebration, the British author Charles Dickens published *A Christmas Carol*, an allegory of the necessity to rekindle fundamental English values, especially those that had been eroded by the modern industrial urban city-centers in the United Kingdom. Although Dickens used Christmas as his holiday of

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had ended only one year earlier. As she had done with the 1837 financial panic—as well as later with the Civil War—Hale's Thanksgiving campaign was presented as a cure for the set of national fears and anxieties of the times.

[493] Sarah Josepha Hale, "Thanksgiving Day," *Godey's Lady's Book*, October, 1849, 292.

choice (and was commenting on English rather than American society) the manner in which he advocated for its national adoption as a festival of charity and benevolence is extremely similar to Sarah Hale's calls for a national Thanksgiving holiday in America.[494] As English historian Ronald Hutton contends, "Dickens succeeded in turing Christmas celebration into a moral reply to avarice…[and] linked worship and feasting with a context of social reconciliation. The story owed much of its power to the way in which it explored nostalgia for the past and anxiety about the present, and presented Christmas as a palliative to both."[495] Like Dickens, Sarah Hale presented an argument in the pages of *Godey's Lady's Book* for the salvation of the modern American nation through a return to the humble family harvest festivals. Food, family, nostalgia, and community were interwoven into a day that highlighted the core values and morality of the American people.

But Hale's enthusiasm for Thanksgiving as a representation of important American ideals was not accepted by a majority of contemporary American citizens. A year before Hale's editorial in 1837, minister and traveller Charles Goodrich argued, "it would be difficult to name any single festival or diversion which is a special favorite within the nation, or which is observed with equal zest throughout the Union."[496] He admitted that there was "no want of pastimes and festivals both civil and religious" in the country, there was not a single holiday that all Americans could claim as their own.[497] And although Goodrich commented that Thanksgiving celebrations embraced "infancy, youth, and old age—and all ranks, degrees, sexes, and complexions," (an obvious call to the inclusivity of the holiday as well as those American citizens who practiced it) he reported that Thanksgiving was only celebrated in the New England states, and only "dear to the heart of every son and daughter of that favored region."[498] The holiday was a celebration of inclusivity, yet one only celebrated by a specific area of the nation and therefore was not inclusive enough to be recognized throughout the country.

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[494] Dickens had previously commented on the negative effects of modern society in his travels throughout the United States. See: Charles Dickens, *American Notes for General Circulation* (Paris, FR: Baudry's European Library, 1842). It is of note that *A Christmas Carol* was published in London less than one year after the publication of his *American Notes for General Circulation*. Dickens' concern for American society's transgressions could have influenced his similar concerns for English society. Further, as noted in "Chapter 3: The Empires Strike Back - Europeans in America and the Creation of National Cuisine," Dickens' denunciation of American culture relied heavily on his disdain for certain eating habits, a topic that is broached several times in his other works.

[495] Ronald Hutton, *Stations of the Sun: A History of Ritual Year in Britain* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1996), 113-114.

Nevertheless, the foodstuffs and symbols associated with Thanksgiving were employed to cast a regional holiday in a more national unifying light. Indeed, the type of foods consumed by the family was a central and integral component of the national adoption of this regional holiday. For instance, the turkey—long associated with the exceptional bounty and variety of American foodstuffs[499]—became the centerpiece of all of Hale's Thanksgiving descriptions. Nearly ten years before her first editorial in *Godey's Lady's Book*, Hale published *Northwood*, a novel that devoted nearly an entire chapter to Thanksgiving celebrations. The chapter went into great detail describing the particulars of the feast not only, as Hale wrote, "as a kind of literary treat," but in order to emulate "those profound and popular writers, who make a good stomach the criterion of good taste."[500] Hale described the Thanksgiving dinner of her protagonists as exceedingly large, for "every farmer in the country being, at this season of the year, plentifully supplied, and every one [*sic*] proud of displaying his abundance and prosperity."[501] An enormous turkey "took precedence on this occasion," and was flanked with pork and mutton, and "innumerable bowls of gravy and plates of vegetables."[502] Pumpkin pie—another staple of New England meals and symbol of American cuisine—completed the meal, "an indispensable part of a good and true Yankee Thanksgiving," she wrote.[503]

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[496] Charles A. Goodrich, *The Universal Traveller, Designed to Introduce Readers at Home to an Acquaintance with the Arts, Customs, and Manners, of the Principal Modern Nations on the Globe* (Hartford, CT: Canfield & Robbins, 1836), 36.

[497] Ibid.

[498] Ibid.

[499] See Brillat-Savarin's praise for the turkey in "Chapter 3: The Empires Strike Back - Europeans in America and the Creation of National Cuisine" as an example of the national pride and prestige associated with the North American bird.

That the meal presented in the pages of *Northwood* was New England in style and substance was certainly not lost on Hale. In the 1852 reprint of the book (as the increasing ubiquity of sectionalism inched the country even closer to civil war) Hale's publishers revised the 1827 subtitle from "A Tale of New England" to "Life North and South, Showing the True Character of Both."[504] Thus, what began as a story describing a specific regional family had therefore been transformed into a national narrative, one that acknowledged regional differences yet remained devoted to advancing New England culture in order to unify the entire nation.

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[500] Sarah Josepha Hale, *Northwood: A Tale of New England* (Boston, MA: Published by Bowles & Dearborn, 1827), 107.

[501] Ibid., 109.

[502] Ibid.

[503] Ibid.

[504] Sarah Josepha Hale, *Northwood: Or, Life North and South: Showing the True Character of Both* (New York, NY: H. Long & Brother, 1852).

Hale recognized the cultural shift in an addendum to the new edition, explaining that "*Northwood* was written when what is now known as 'Abolitionism' first began seriously to disturb the harmony between the South and the North."[505] Additions in the 1852 print, she continued, were " made to the original work only to show more plainly how the principles [originally] advocated may be effectually carried out."[506] Hale's confirmation of slavery as the impetus of national divide is of note, a concept that numerous other reformers of the era also argued and examined in detail. Further, Hale's insistence that the only changes to the work were to "show more plainly" the original purpose of the 1827 edition revealed her desire to promote New England regional culture—rather than southern culture—as the dominant, unifying system for national identity construction.

Attempts at New England "Yankee" cultural dominance did not go unchecked in the early American Republic, however. Sarah Gilman, an American author born in New England who moved to Charleston, South Carolina as a young adult, published a fictional memoir in 1838 titled *Recollections of a Southern Matron*.[507] The work detailed the daily lives of upper-class southern families—often in comparison to their northern counterparts—and frequently used food as a comparative cultural tool.[508] In one section,

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[505] Hale, *Northwood: Or, Life North and South*, iv.
[506] Ibid.
[507] Hale's 1852 edition of *Northwood* contained a new character named Lydia Brainard, a women who was born in New England and moved to Charleston, South Carolina in a surprisingly similar manner to the real life Gilman. Whether this comparison was intentional in Hale's work is unknown. However, Gilman's work became well known nationally in the years between Hale's first and second edition, so it is possible that Hale modeled her character after Sarah Gilman.
[508] For more information on Gilman and her writing, see: Michael O'Brien, *Conjectures of Order: Intellectual Life and the American South, 1810-1860*, vol. 2 (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 764-771.

Gilman described the convivial nature of Christmas celebrations throughout the South. "Warm punch or egg-nogg circulated freely," she wrote, "and at least a dozen large clothes-baskets of gingerbread were produced for each plantation… The New-Yorkers on the Newyears [*sic*] are not more hospitable than these light-hearted communities on this occasion."[509] Southern society's deep communal connection to food and festivities were well represented in this passage, as was the desire to declare southern life as superior to its northern counterpart. Notably, however, (and probably to the chagrin of Sarah Hale) Gilman never mentioned Thanksgiving as a holiday celebrated with such zeal in the South.

Nevertheless, Hale continued to try and designate a national day of thanksgiving based upon a sporadic New England regional festival. This fact alone spoke to the novel campaign that she and her supporters embarked upon. Although regional in its origins, Hale's call for a Thanksgiving holiday was ultimately a call for national unity; an attempt to intrically link the food and dining experiences of all Americans under a singular celebration of the national harvest. And Hale was rather transparent with her motive. In her first official call for the holiday, Hale argued that Thanksgiving should be "observed on the same day in November…throughout all New England," and further, that "if our sister states…engrafted it upon *their* social system, it would then have a national character, which would, eventually, induce all the states to join in the commemoration of 'In-gathering,' which it celebrates."[510]

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[509] Caroline Gilman, *Recollections of a Southern Matron* (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers, 1838), 102.

[510] Hale, "Editor's Table," November, 1837, 239.

Hale's use of the term "sister states" evoked a sense of unity and familial relations that the celebration of Thanksgiving itself attempted to emulate. That the disparate members of a family should all gather together on this day for "In-gathering" to celebrate their bond mirrored the sense of unity that the disparate United States needed to reinforce by adopting this festival. However, the celebration chosen to highlight such national unity remained at its core a regional festival, and thus emblematic of an attempt to force a dominate New England narrative upon the entirety of the nation.

Indeed, Hale's assertion that Thanksgiving would have a positive effect on the "national character" is evidence that she and her supporters saw an important linkage between the culinary practices and celebrations of a particular portion of the nation and the character and morality of all of its citizens, including those in the southern states. But Thanksgiving's regional roots remained detrimental to the ability of the holiday to represent the United States as a whole. Undeterred by such realities—and like numerous authors before her—Hale nevertheless viewed American cuisine and the formation of American identity as cultural concepts inextricably tied to one another, and believed her campaign would ultimately be effective in securing such a correlation throughout the nation.

Hale concluded her first public call for a national day of thanksgiving by asserting the amount with which the festival would effect positive change on American national identity. "This spirit has gone out over our whole country," she remarked, "and has fashioned and modified the American character."[511] In her later campaigns, Hale would continually assert similar claims. In an 1852 editorial, she wrote that Thanksgiving should be placed on equal footing as the Fourth of July: the latter would remain a celebration of the "civil freedom" enjoyed by Americans, while the former would become its moral equivalent. "The American people have two peculiar festivals," she wrote, "each concerned with their history, and therefore of great importance in giving power and distinctiveness to their nationality."[512] And while the Fourth of July was nationally celebrated at the time—and an ever-growing number of states were acknowledging a national day of thanksgiving—the two dates were yet to be universally viewed as equally important. In her concluding plea for that year, Hale wrote that if the nation would see fit to unite around a celebration of Thanksgiving in late November, "this festival, like the Fourth of July, will bring every American heart into harmony with his home and his country."[513] Hale's association with both "home" and "country" is of note. That she understood the two spheres to be so intricately linked speaks to Hale's belief that familial and domestic health positively affected public, political unity.

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[511] Hale, "Editor's Table," November, 1837, 239.

Even at the eve of the American Civil War, Hale continued to promote the adoption of a national Thanksgiving holiday as the savior of both American families and the republic. In describing the growing influence of Thanksgiving celebrations throughout the country in 1860, Hale quoted Reverend Charles Wadsworth's Thanksgiving sermon in which he said:

> Never were the bonds of our beloved brotherhood so revealed in their strength! Never before did so many sister States keep lovingly together this feast of harvest.

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[512] Sarah Josepha Hale, "Editor's Table," *Godey's Lady's Book*, November, 1852, 388.

[513] Goodrich, *The Universal Traveller,* 36.

> It is the gathering of one great household with offerings of praise to the one common temple—the central Salem of peace—the God of love.[514]

In retrospect, Wadsworth may have been too optimistic in his assessment of national unity. Nevertheless, his association between harvest festivals, religious piety, domestic unity, and national pride echoed Hale's arguments nearly verbatim. Wadsworth's use of the phrase "sister States" particularly called to mind Hale's earlier use of the same phrase: if a family could sit around a table united to dine as one, so too could the sister states of the nation promote similar brotherly love. To further articulate this point, Hale concluded the 1860 address by reminding readers that the editorial board of *Godey's Lady's Book* "believe our Thanksgiving Day, if fixed and perpetrated, will be a great and sanctifying promoter of this national spirit."[515] Less than a year later, however, the southern states seceded from the Union and this "national spirit" was lost.

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Throughout her written campaign, Hale continually—and at times reluctantly—conceded that Thanksgiving was not a universally-adopted holiday throughout the United States. Even with her optimistic viewpoints, the celebrations remained regionally recognized in several states—mostly in New England—well into the 1850s. Further, there was no single day set aside for its celebration. According to Charles Goodrich, "the governors of the States appoint the day [of thanksgiving] and issue a proclamation to that effect."[516] Indeed, throughout the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, numerous proclamations of thanksgiving throughout the late autumn months were declared in New England for a variety of reasons and purposes. No unified Thanksgiving celebration like Hale's version had ever been practiced historically.

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[514] Reverend Charles Wadsworth, "The New National Holiday," *Godey's Lady's Book*, November, 1860, 175.

[515] Sarah Josepha Hale, "Editor's Table," *Godey's Lady's Book*, November, 1860, 175.

[516] Ibid.

Indeed, as early as 1787, John Hancock (as Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts) issued a proclamation in observance of "Publick [*sic*] Thanksgiving" throughout his state.[517] Hancock's proclamation had motifs echoed in Hale's later descriptions of Thanksgiving. Most notably, his decree called for an acknowledgment of "the manifold Bounties of Divine Providence conferred upon us," and "unfeigned Thanks to Almighty GOD," exaltations comparable to Hale's references to pious morality and gratitude.[518] However, unlike Hale's holiday, Hancock's was not meant to be a national celebration to be repeated annually.

Further, the 1787 Massachusetts Thanksgiving proclamation was conferred for a specific purpose: to give thanks and prayers that God would "give all needed wisdom to the Delegates…of the late Continental Conventions, —and that the Result of their Deliberations, may be the Happy Establishment of such a Government as may be adopted to the common Safety and Happiness."[519] Hancock used the spiritual component of a celebration of thanks to promote his federalist political agenda, proclaiming a statewide holiday to issue prayers and well-wishes to the passage and adoption of the United States Constitution. Thus, the day of thanksgiving served a very specific political purpose and give thanks to very specific events—often during periods of drastic social change, anxiety, and/or crisis—rather than serve as a general perennial celebration of community and gratitude.

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[517] John Hancock, "A Proclamation for a Day of Publick Thanksgiving," *The Cumberland Gazette* (Portland, ME), November 15, 1787, 2.
[518] Ibid.
[519] Ibid.

Hancock was not alone in his adoption of thanksgiving proclamations designed solely for political ends. Throughout the early national period, numerous governors throughout the northern states issued similar decrees. In 1810, John Langdon, the Governor of New Hampshire, proclaimed a day of "Public Thanksgiving, Praise and Prayer" that referred to the spiritual nature of the event by giving thanks and "gratitude to the most high God," yet ended with a political message that the same God would "continue his guardian care and direction to our National Government, in these times of difficulty and peril; and dispose those nations with whom we have been more immediately connected by commercial interest, to manifest towards us a spirit of justices and conciliation."[520] Therefore, Langdon invoked the growing tensions with Great Britain (that ultimately would lead to war) in his proclamation in an effort to bolster the political and commercial power of the federal government to regulate trade with the hostile nation.

New York Governor DeWitt Clinton issued a similar Thanksgiving proclamation of "social expressions of public gratitude" not only for what he called "the dispensations of Divine Providence" but also for the "blessings of liberty, plenty, and peace," generated by "the benefits of great internal improvements" to the state.[521] Clinton, an advocate of transportation initiatives throughout New York, had officially opened the Erie Canal less than two years earlier. His Thanksgiving message regarding the "great internal improvements" in New York was assuredly a reference to his political victory regarding construction of the canal. Therefore, throughout the early national period, proclamations of thanksgiving were often sporadically recognized, and meant to celebrate and express gratitude for a specific political purpose. These events were cloaked in general verbiage of thanks for the bounties afforded to their citizens, and were at times overtly religious in tone. However, the purpose remained political in nature, and the proclamations spoke little about the private, domestic observances later associated with the holiday.[522]

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[520] John Langdon, "State of New-Hampshire, by the Governor. A Proclamation for a day of Public Thanksgiving, Praise and Prayer," *The Weekly Visitor* (Kennebunk, ME), October 13, 1810, 1.

[521] DeWitt Clinton, "Proclamation," *The Albany Argus* (Albany, NY), November 16, 1827, 3.

While Hale's version of Thanksgiving was arguably also politically motivated (the desire to equate a sense of republican charity and American morality with the celebration could in some respect be considered political in nature) her celebration differed from previous iterations that were directly rooted in a specific political action or event. Rather, Hale's holiday would become a general day of thanks required in a increasingly anxious and constantly fearful society. To this end, the date of the holiday was not to deviate every year—an 1847 editorial concluded that "the last Thursday in November would be the day best suited for the Annual Thanksgiving holiday"—and the festivities would primarily consist of domestic and familial celebrations centered around a shared dinner feast.[523] Hale's published campaign to alter the traditions and meaning of Thanksgiving spoke to an evolving sense of American identity in the early Republic, an identity that espoused a more reflective, private style affirmed by celebrations focused on the consumption of food at home.

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[522] For a detailed description of Thanksgiving celebrations in the early American Republic, see: James W. Baker, *Thanksgiving: The Biography of an American Holiday* (Durham, NH: The University of New Hampshire Press, 2009), specifically "Chapter 2: The Traditional New England Thanksgiving," which details the political nature of these festivals.

[523] Sarah Josepha Hale, "Thanksgiving Day," *Godey's Lady's Book*, March 1847, 174.

Indeed, Hale's insistence on the primacy of the private sphere's influence on Thanksgiving celebrations, noting that the day "cherishes the best of the the heart—the social and domestic ties," would remain a prevailing component of the campaign to alter the meaning and structure of the holiday throughout the country.[524] An 1858 wood engraving by American artist Winslow Homer similarly illustrated the primacy of domestic affairs for modern Thanksgiving celebrations. Homer was commissioned by the New York-based *Harper's Weekly* political magazine to illustrate the celebration of Thanksgiving throughout the country.[525] In a diptych format, Homer detailed two major components of the holiday: the procurement of a turkey, and the return of distant family members to the old homestead.

The first image, satirically titled "Ways and Means," connected the purchasing of food items for the Thanksgiving meal with the complex financial decisions of the congressional Ways and Means Committee. While men choose their turkeys in the foreground of this image, a large wheat harvest is visible in the background, serving as a symbol of the bountiful national harvest.[526] The second image, titled, "Arrival at the Old

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[524] Hale, "Editor's Table," November, 1837, 238.

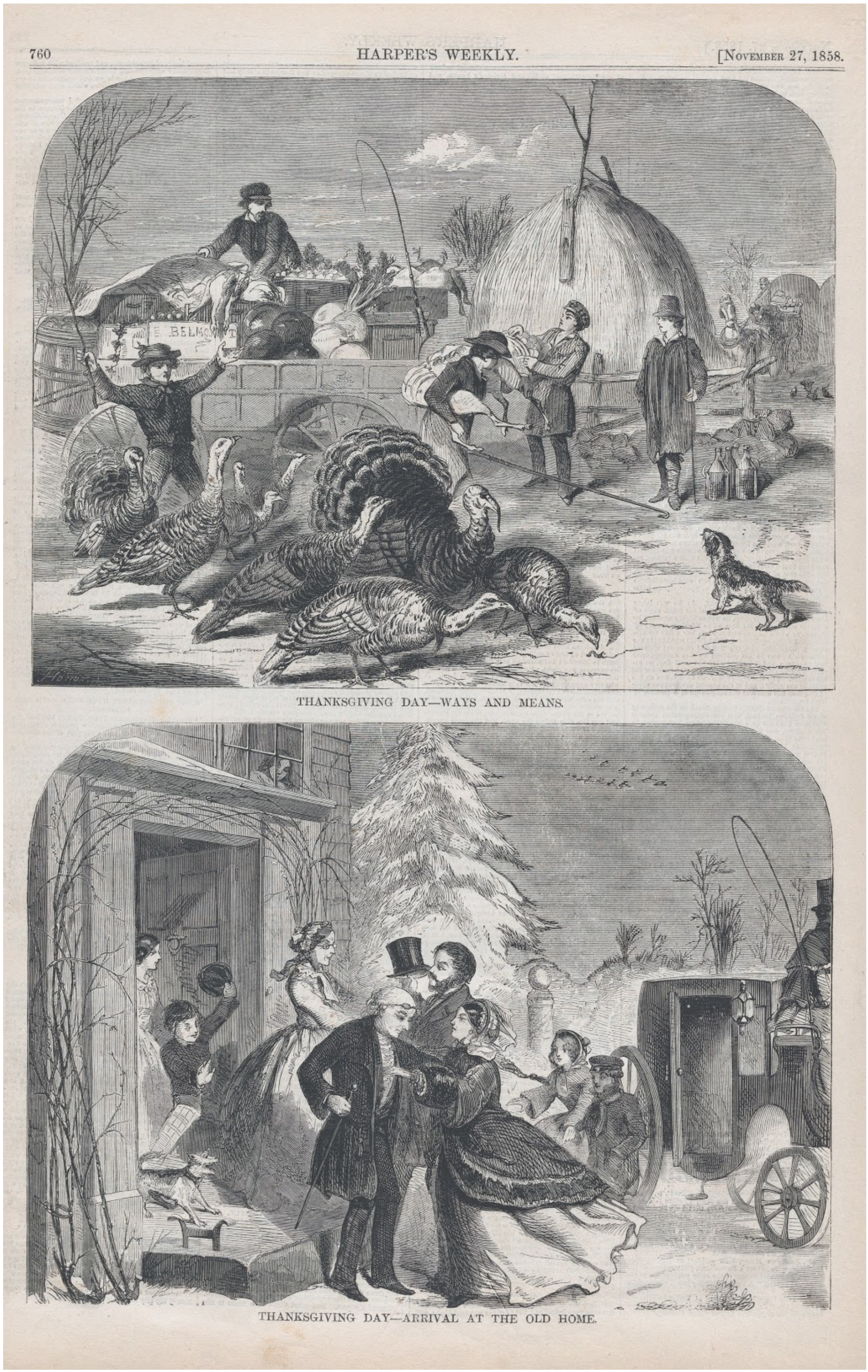
[525] For more information on Winslow Homer's wood engravings and his depictions of antebellum American society, see: David Tatham, *Winslow Homer and the Pictorial Press* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2003).

[526] Homer's use of harvest imagery to depict nationalist themes continued throughout his career. In describing "The Veteran in a New Field"—an 1865 painting of a Civil War veteran tending to a wheat field—art historian Christopher Wilson writes that Homer "distills the images that had pervaded the nation's attempts to justify and concrete the losses of the war, and in a single, powerful image affirms the 'new birth of freedom' others had described." Christopher Kent

Home" depicted an elderly man greeting a younger woman (possibly his daughter) at his home as children peered out from the doorway and window. These complimentary images—one of bountiful foodstuffs and the other of domestic reconciliation—effectively represented the ideals and attitudes of Sarah Hale's campaign for a national Thanksgiving holiday. Created over twenty years after Hale's initial plea, Homer's illustrations presented the shared symbolism and meaning that Thanksgiving would come to represent for Americans of the period. Yet far from an organic manifestation of national ideals, Hale and Homer's vision of Thanksgiving was a conscious creation of a national narrative, designed with specific goals and developed for specific purposes.

Homer's decision to label the second image "Arrival at the Old Home" may very well have been a deliberate decision to invoke the concept of returning to an earlier time. The revered patriarch at the center of the image—an allusion to earlier generations of Americans—greets the younger, contemporary and modern family members. It is of interest that Homer chose the older man to greet the younger family members at the doorway, accepting the younger generation back into "the old home" for the holiday. The image can be read as an argument that modern American celebrants of Thanksgiving needed to appreciate and accept the embrace of older generations into their lives: to respect traditional historic norms (the old man) into their home (the country) once more during the season.

Wilson, "Winslow Homer's 'The Veteran in a New Field': A Study of the Harvest Metaphor and Popular Culture," *American Art Journal* 17, no. 4 (1985): 4.



760 HARPER'S WEEKLY. [November 27, 1858.

THANKSGIVING DAY—WAYS AND MEANS.

THANKSGIVING DAY—ARRIVAL AT THE OLD HOME.

Figure 9: Winslow Homer, *Thanksgiving Day – Ways and Means Arrival At the Old Home*, November 27, 1858, wood engraving, 16 x 11 1/4 in. Courtesy of The Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Hale's published Thanksgiving campaign editorials similarly invoked reverence for the past as an important component of the holiday. In her 1837 plea, Hale wrote that the holiday "is a part of the noble patrimony of our Puritan Fathers."[527] She continued,

> Blessed be their memories! May their stern, uncompromising integrity—their deep piety which pervaded all their thoughts, feelings and actions, running through all their institutions: their simplicity of character—their devoted love of country—their fearless support of religious liberty: may these virtues ever be the inheritance, the guard, the guide, and guerdon of their descendants.[528]

In associating the New England harvest festival with Puritan forefathers, Hale constructed an important historical credibility for her Thanksgiving holiday. Unfortunately, she did not give a specific date or any further evidence of the Puritan traditions for the holiday. However, there are several early examples of European colonial harvest festivals in the New World that are considered to be the originators of these nineteenth century Thanksgiving traditions. Possibly the most famous example was not from the Puritans as Hale described but from the Pilgrims at Plymouth Plantation in 1621. A 1622 booklet by English colonist Edward Winslow described a similar festival complete with turkey dinner and American Indian guests from neighboring settlements. Winslow wrote that at the end of the harvest season, "our Governour sent foure [*sic*] men on fowling, that so we might after a more special manner reijoyce [*sic*] together, after we had gathered the fruit of our labours…we exercised our Armes, [and] many of the *Indians* coming amongst us…we entertained and feasted."[529]

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[527] Sarah Josepha Hale, "Editor's Table," November, 1837, 238.

[528] Ibid.

[529] Edward Winslow, *Mourt's Relation or Journal of the Plantation of Plymouth,* Henry Martyn Dexter, ed. (Boston, MA: John Kimball Wiggin, 1865), 133.

By associating the origin story of the celebration with Puritan forefathers, Hale created a shared (yet culturally New England dominant) narrative that could act as a unifier for contemporary nineteenth century Americans. Using some of the first European settlers in the New World in her origin story, and dating the events to well over a century before American independence from Great Britain grounded Hale's Thanksgiving in an almost primordial narrative that referenced the genesis of the concept of America itself. Thus, by celebrating Thanksgiving, Americans were returning to the "old home" of their shared ancestral forefathers.

In both Homer's image and Hale's writings, the Thanksgiving meal symbolized a manifestation of the variety, bounty, and ideals that all Americans should partake in and abide by: a representation of the national character and identity that food—and the celebration thereof—symbolized for a nascent American society struggling with the growing pains of its young nationhood. Therefore, Thanksgiving was emblematic of lost traditional values, domestic and familial bliss, conviviality and unity, and a bountiful harvest. It was conceived as salvation for the defects and deficiencies of sectionalist modern American society; an appeal to the better angels of our nature, as it were. During the antebellum period, numerous other authors and reformers would employ similar approaches and use food and food culture as an example of both the dangers and promises inherent in American society of the era. Of course, Hale's campaign was a success (as Thanksgiving remains a federal holiday even today) but the unity and national cohesion Thanksgiving and other similarly reform-minded culinary ideas and systems of the era promised ultimately faltered. By the mid-nineteenth century, it was clear that national cuisine alone could not save an irrevocably damaged union.

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Descriptions of the influence and role of women in domestic life were central components in the promotion of a national Thanksgiving holiday. Indeed, Sarah Hale understood and promoted this correlation frequently in her published campaigns. Hale, a prolific author even before earning her position at *Godey's*, published a collection of stories titled *Traits of American Life* in 1835. At the conclusion of one of her chapters, Hale's fictional protagonist Mrs. Lowe reflected on a successful dinner she recently served to her houseguests. One of these guests, Lieutenant Cummings, commented that for Mrs. Lowe, "It will be a real Thanksgiving of the Heart to them, or to her."[530] When pressed to explain his assertion, Cummings said:

> Because she [Mrs. Lowe] has sought her happiness in the performance of her duties—in the cultivation of the benevolent affection—in making others happy. When such exertions are crowned with success, I cannot think earth has a more perfect felicity for the human heart.[531]

True to her commitment and goal to promote the adoption of Thanksgiving nationally, Hale followed Cummings' statement with her own concluding remarks. "Would that all who celebrate our annual festival," she wrote, "might enjoy such felicity. And who that has ever *sought*, has failed to obtain it?"[532]

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[530] Sarah Josepha Hale, *Traits of American Life* (Philadelphia, PA: E.L. Carey & A. Hart, 1835), 225.

[531] Ibid.

[532] Ibid.

The "duties" that Cummings referenced—the ability to please all members of a homestead and achieve domestic bliss—were cultural constructs integral in the development of female gender roles in the early national period. The concept of "Republican Motherhood"—the idealized and romanticized notion that women in the new nation served to nurture strong, morally-upright citizens through their actions at home—loomed heavy over female authors like Hale.[533] Through their mannerisms and actions in the domestic private sphere, women of the era became personifications of purity and virtue, traits that they alone were able impress upon their male counterparts. In this regard, as historian Jan Lewis argues, "the potential for beneficial female influence was almost unlimited."[534] While men remained the primary influencers in the public sphere, women could claim emotional and moral superiority over men as embodiments of and gatekeepers to republican idealism.

Therefore, the happiness of Hale's protagonist being intricately linked to her ability to cultivate the "benevolent affection" of her family and guests during dinner reinforced this gendered power structure. While the description of such "duties" sounded rather derogatory and limiting, arguments regarding domestic supremacy served to bolster female influence in a society that placed enormous constraints on women's rights.

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[533] For a description of the "Republican Motherhood" model, see: Linda K. Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1980). Such a notion proved effective for women to assert political agency, even as their civic rights remained fundamentally inhibited. As Kerber argues, "The language of Republican Motherhood provided the justification of women's political behavior; it bridged the gap between idiocy and the polis. The woman now claimed a significant political role, though she claimed it at home." Kerber, *Women of the Republic*, 11-12.

[534] Jan Lewis, "The Republican Wife: Virtue and Seduction in the Early Republic," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 44, no. 4 (October, 1987): 701.

The pleasing preparation of food at Hale's fictional dinner party, therefore, was a symbolic representation of the authority her character held over her family and guests both in the home and vicariously in society at large.[535]

This phenomenon was not limited to the United States in the early national period, however. Food and food preparation have been fundamentally linked with women and power struggles in societies for millennia around the world. As food scholar Warren Belasco writes, "Even when women [were] restricted to feeding just their own immediate family, they [found] leverage through cooking… Control of the kitchen often translates into control of domestic consumption."[536] Whereas such gendered domestic roles often had negative consequences for the scope of women's influence, in regards to depictions of American cuisine in the early-nineteenth century, writers like Hale were able to subvert these expectations to sway public opinion and turn the tables against the attempted confines of domestic life.

Nevertheless, gender roles remained an extremely problematic cultural construct in the development of American nationalism during this era. As women were deemed by most influential men as incapable or unwilling to participate public debates (their roles as leaders of the domestic private sphere precluding this participation), women's opinions were often ignored in discussions regarding what it meant to be a "proper" American citizen in the new nation.[537] When attempts to include women in such a discussion occurred, they were met with vehement denials and dismissive attitudes. As historian Carroll Smith-Rosenberg argues, "we see that all who threatened the new American's delicate psychological and ideological balance—effeminate men, transgressive women, Native Americans—became objects of rage and violence…[and served] only to further undermine the new American and his national identity."[538] Smith-Rosenberg's assertion that effeminate characteristics were threatening to American nationalism is particularly of note. Characteristics associated with masculinity (valor, bravery, etc.) were part of a handful of acceptable attributes used to define American nationalism. That such "masculine" tendencies were unrepresentative of the greater populace spoke to the underlying contradictions that ultimately led to an inability to effectively and uniformly define American nationhood itself.

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[535] A more light-hearted (yet nevertheless useful) example of the connection between domestic cookery, public life, and the important role of women in this equation came from *The Boston Medical Intelligencer* in October, 1826. "The American lady," the paper wrote, "who shall teach her sex how to boil a potatoe [*sic*] will deserve public honors and a civic crown." Quoted in: William A. Alcott, *The Young House-Keeper: Thoughts on Food and Cookery* (Boston, MA: George W. Light, 1839), 156.

[536] Warren Belasco, *Food: The Key Concepts* (New York, NY: Berg Publishers, 2008), 37-38.

The result of such mentalities, according to historian Catherine O'Donnell Kaplan, was that participants often recast their "cultural activities in manly political and commercial garb and [denied] that women helped to sustain early national culture."[539] Combined with the deliberate attempts to reduce the influence of other important cultures, identities, and communities in the development of American nationalism—such as African American, working class, and American Indian societies—this denial of women's contributions to nationalism generated an inaccurate and incomplete description of what it meant to be a American citizen. Additionally, the angry and indignant responses against inclusivity further complicated this process to such an extent that the reactions themselves became defining characteristics of American nationhood. As Smith-Rosenberg concludes, "Few national identities are as particularly constructed [as that of America's]…and few are as renowned for their proclivity for violence."[540]

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[537] Notable exceptions to this concept can be found in: Rosemarie Zagarri, *Revolutionary Backlash: Women and Politics in the Early American Republic* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), which details the enhanced public role women asserted in politics following the American Revolution.

[538] Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, *This Violent Empire: The Birth of an American National Identity* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 205.

[539] Catherine O'Donnell Kaplan, *Men of Letters in the Early Republic* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 41.

Regardless of the veracity of the nation's supposedly exceptional inclinations toward brutality, American women authors like Hale still needed to tread carefully and use inventive methods to assert their influence in the public sphere. Using their dominance over the particulars of domestic life to effect change beyond the confines of the home (such as Hale's use of her protagonists' dinner in *Traits of American Life* to advocate for a national Thanksgiving holiday) was one such approach.[541] Yet Hale was certainly not alone in using food and domestic life in such a manner.

Further evidence of these methods and female assertions of influence in the national discourse can be found in the numerous cookbooks and recipe guides written by women in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries.[542] America's first native cookbook author, Amelia Simmons, employed a similar method in the preface to her work, *American Cookery.* "As this treatise is calculated for the improvement of the rising generation of *Females* in America," she wrote, "[the reader] will not be displeased, if many hints are suggested for the more general and universal knowledge of those females in this country."[543] Simmons introduced early on that her work was written for a primarily female audience, and further, that the application of certain suggestions in her recipes should be applied to situations beyond the kitchen. These suggestions that are of "more general and universal knowledge" highlight Simmon's desire to produce a publication applicable to women in both private and public life; food preparation in this instance became a conduit to a greater purpose for women of the new nation. Simmons reinforced her position by asserting that "by having [such] an opinion and determination, [we will] not be understood to mean an obstinate perseverance in trifles."[544] Instead, her purpose in presenting "rules and maxims which have flood [*sic*] the test of ages" was to "establish the *female character*, a virtuous character" in the United States.[545]

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[540] Smith-Rosenberg, *This Violent Empire*, 1-2.

[541] For a detailed description of women authors of the era who used their influence in the private sphere to effect change in public life, see: Nicole Tonkovich, *Domesticity with a Difference: The Nonfiction of Catharine Beecher, Sarah J. Hale, Fanny Fern, and Margaret Fuller* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 1997).

[542] For information on the influence of cookbooks on American culture, see: Sarah W. Walden, *Tasteful Domesticity: Women's Rhetoric and the American Cookbook, 1790-1940* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2018) and: Megan J. Elias, *Food on the Page: Cookbooks and American Culture* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017).

In these passages, Simmons asserted her role as an advocate for women's rights in the early American Republic. Her recipes were not to be considered trifling bits of information, as they were affirmations of the moral superiority of women both in and out of the home. Thus, the "female character" that she described was vital to the development of American national character and identity as a whole.

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[543] 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 Plumb to Plain Cake. Adapted in this Country, and All Grades of Life* (Hartford, CT: Hudson & Goodwin, 1796), iii.

[544] Ibid., iii-iv.

[545] Ibid., iv.

Other female authors followed Simmons' lead with cookbooks and treatises that detailed the associations between the duties of the domestic private sphere and those of national public life. For instance, Mary Randolph, author of *The Virginia Housewife*, wrote "The government of a family bears a Lilliputian resemblance to the government of a nation."[546] Furthermore, the anonymous author of *The Cook Not Mad, or Rational Cookery*, prefaced the work with a similar thesis on the importance of "domestick [*sic*] economy, especially that division which treats of culinary or kitchen duties" in relation to the character of a nation.[547] "Every nation has its *peculiar dishes*," the author wrote, "and every family its own *mode of cooking* them."[548] Therefore, the woman of a household reigned supreme over the family and revealed her individuality in her particular meal preparations, just as a nation asserts its distinctiveness by revealing its own particular dishes. As such, the author argued that "a Work on Cookery should be adapted to the meridian in which it is intended to circulate," and it would be improper to "introduce a work intended for *American Publick* [with] *English, French* and *Italian* methods of rendering things indigestible."[549] So too, therefore, would it be improper for a cookbook to include recipes and preparations that would be impractical for families of varying means. "These evils are attempted to be avoided," the author concluded, "Good

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[546] Mary Randolph, *The Virginia Housewife: or Methodical Cook* (Baltimore, MD: Published by John Plaskitt, 1836), ix.

[547] *The Cook Not Mad, or Rational Cookery; being a collection of original and selected receipts embracing not only the art of curing various kinds of meats and vegetables for future use, but of Cooking, in its general acceptance, to the taste, habits, and degrees of luxury, prevalent with the American Publick in Town and Country* (Watertown, NY: Published by Knowlton & Rice, 1831), iii.

[548] Ibid.

[549] Ibid.

republican dishes and garnishing, proper to fill an every day bill of fare, from the condition of the poorest to the richest individual," was the aim of the cookbook.[550]

The Cook Not Mad's focus on "republican dishes" further highlighted the association between home cooking practices and nationalism. By foregoing recipes too delicate and expensive (and subsequently too "European") the author advanced the theory that the United States should remain egalitarian. Even if the financial means of certain individuals varied, the meals that they ate could remain simple and similar enough to be prepared and consumed by all Americans. To accomplish this goal, American meals had to remain relatively cheap and simple to make. This insistence on frugality as a positive character trait of American society became, therefore, the underlying thesis of *The Cook Not Mad* and other similar cookbooks.

The ability to use the private sphere to champion nationalistic identity formation was echoed in other similar works of domestic economy. Lydia Maria Child's *The Frugal Housewife* also focused primarily on developing economically feasible practices that all American women could master. Interspersed between recipes for buffalo's tongue, cod's head, and other singularly "American" dishes, Child provided cost-saving domestic advice on everything from restoring faded carpets (dip them in salt and water)[551] to prolonging the life of tortoise shell combs (rub oil on them "once in a while").[552] Indeed, the entire dominion of domestic life was reviewed and addressed in her work, and with nearly every entry, Child remained dedicated to finding the most cost-effective practices that all Americans could utilize.

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[550] *The Cook Not Mad*, iii.

[551] Lydia Maria Child, *The Frugal Housewife: Dedicated to those who are not ashamed of economy*, 2nd ed. (Boston, MA: Published by Carter and Hendee, 1830), 10.

[552] Ibid., 11.

The primary concern and impetus for Child's cookbook and domestic guide lay in the perceived necessity to instill virtue and morality on all American citizens in order to preserve the republic. "Nations do not plunge *at once* into ruin," she argued, "the causes which bring about the final blow…press harder and harder upon the energies and virtue of a people… A republic without industry, economy, and integrity, is Samson shorn of his locks."[553] At first glance, it may seem out of place for Child to devout extensive space in her work to the rise and fall of nation-states, as her publication was mostly a collection of recipes and domestic advice for young women. But for Child and other authors of the era, the health of the home and the prosperity of the nation were fundamentally connected to one another. And proper food preparation—however benign it may seem on the surface—played a central role in this philosophical argument. As Sarah Josepha Hale wrote in her own cookbook, *The Good Housekeeper*, "our bodily health, and, of consequence, our happiness and usefulness in domestic and social life, depend very much on the proper quantity of food we eat, and the time and circumstances under which it is taken."[554]

In Child's mind, the bulwark protecting the American nation from ruin was a well educated class of female domestics capable of instilling the necessary virtues onto their relatives. In turn, those family members would spread their learned morality throughout the country. As Child argued, "There is no subject so much connected with individual happiness and national prosperity as the education of daughters."[555] Without the needed tools to run an efficient home (of which frugal cooking methods were chiefly valued) the nation itself could fall into the "ruin" Child feared. "The difficulty is," according to Child,

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[553] Child, *The Frugal Housewife,* 104-105.

[554] Sarah Josepha Hale, *The Good Housekeeper, or the Way to Live Well and to Be Well While We Live* (Boston, MA: Weeks, Jordan and Company, 1839), 2.

> education does not usually point the female heart to its only true resting place. That dear English word *'home,'* is not half so powerful a talisman as *'the world.'* Instead of the salutary truth, that happiness is *in* duty, they are taught to consider the two things totally distinct; and whoever seeks one must sacrifice the other.[556]

Yet again, Child linked fundamentally the private and public spheres in her assessment of American society. In this evaluation, home as the "true resting place" of American women did not preclude them from effecting change in the outside world. Of note is her argument that viewing these worlds as distinct from one another is in itself indicative of a societal ill. To Child, these worlds are so deeply interconnected that a women's role in the home does not in any way negate her greater agency in public life.

Control over familial and domestic life was of course not the only realm in which women of the early American Republic wielded power, yet options remained limited. As Hale commented in 1837, there were "very few employments in which females can engage with any hope of profit, and my own constitution and pursuits, made literature appear my best resource."[557] So too did Amelia Simmons, Mary Randolph, Lydia Maria

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[555] Child, *The Frugal Housewife,* 95.

[556] Ibid., 101.

[557] Sarah Josepha Hale, *The Ladies' Wreath; A Selection from the Female Poetic Writers of England and America* (Boston, MA: Marsh, Capen & Lyon, 1837), 388.

Child, and other female authors find their greatest social impact and most lucrative careers in publications detailing American domestic life.

However, there were women of the era who ventured out of the limitations of the private sphere and held equal sway over the formation of a distinctly American food culture and national identity. Ann Poppleton, an acclaimed New York baker and early restaurateur, was an example of a woman who defied the gender roles of the early Republic and influenced conversations in the public sphere directly. Mrs. Poppleton (as the newspapers called her) opened her pastry shop on Broadway in Manhattan at the turn of the nineteenth century. By 1815, her business had become so successful that she advertised an expanded location "for *general accomodation* [*sic*] where families may be supplied."[558] Poppleton served a variety of dishes, from "Chicken, Eel, and Game Pies" to "sweet and savory Jellies" to her eager public.[559] That her shop served such a variety of meals specifically supplied to "families" denoted a new type of establishment in early-nineteenth century New York City. Separate from taverns and inns that served alcohol and often catered to raucous adult males, Poppleton's eatery mimicked the accommodations of and audience more likely associated with domestic life. This hybrid storefront was a novel approach to dining that fused a public business with the sensibilities and values of the home.

Poppleton's concept restaurant and pastry shop was a financial success, and the dishes she served made her a household name throughout New York. For instance, her "New-Year mammoth plumb cake"—weighing three hundred pounds—was a staple of the holiday season in the city. No doubt referencing the "mammoth" cheese and loaf sent to Jefferson to celebrate his presidential inauguration, Poppleton's cake was both a public spectacle and a celebration of the community that allowed her to prosper during the year. According to *The National Advocate* newspaper that ran an article in 1819 about Mrs. Poppleton, unlike the earlier "mammoth" foodstuffs devised by patriotic Americans for public consumption, Poppleton had the business acumen to charge for slices of her cake after January 1.[560]

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[558] "Advertisement," *The New-York Courier*, October 28, 1815, 1.
[559] Ibid.

Poppleton was so popular that she was immortalized in a poem published in *The New York Evening Post* in 1819. The ode (written to praise the expanding food culture of the city) included the following lines:

> Taught by thy art, we closely follow
> And ape the English lords and misses—
> [But] for music we've the black Apollo,
> And Mrs. Poppleton—for kisses.[561]

Of note is the reference to Americans who "ape" English fashion, an oft-repeated accusation that Americans had little national culture of their own and simply (and poorly) mimicked European societies. But according to the author of this poem, Mrs. Poppleton's "kisses"—a term for small, delicate confections she was famous for—were distinctly American inventions worthy of praise. Therefore, Mrs. Poppleton's local acclaim as an exceptional baker and inventive restaurateur served as an example of the influence women could have outside the limits of domestic life in the early American Republic.

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[560] "Another Mammoth Cake," *The National Advocate (New York, NY),* December 29, 1819, 3.

[561] "Amusement from the New York Evening Post," *City of Washington Gazette*, April 23, 1819, 3.

Mrs. Poppleton was an impressive early champion of American food culture, but she nevertheless was not indicative of the conventional role women held in society at the time. The prevailing narrative of the era continued to enforce women's roles as virtuous "Republican Mothers" who only held sway over domestic life. However, in the later years of the early American Republic (as abrupt technological, industrial, and demographic changes shook the perceived foundations of American society), such positions as gatekeepers and nurturers of an idyllic moral American character became increasingly influential in civic life as well. Women authors and activists like Hale, Child, and others used their domestic influence to dictate the direction that American culture and society writ large would take. Often, they quelled the growing anxieties, expanding sectionalism, and overriding fear of change prevalent in the era by advocating a return to simpler, more wholesome, purer practices. And the production and consumption of certain types of foods remained a central component in reaffirming the ideal form of a revised American national identity.

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Lydia Maria Child detailed the supposed growing degradation of American society in the editorial sections of *The Frugal Housewife*. She wrote:

> And are not *we* [Americans] becoming luxurious and idle? Look at our steamboats, and stages, and taverns! There you will find mechanics, who have left debts and employment to take care of themselves, while they go to take a peep at the great canal, or the opera-dancers. There you will find domestics all agog for their wages-worth of travelling; why should they look out for 'a rainy day?' There are hospitals enough to provide for them in sickness; and as for marrying, they have no idea of that, [until] they can find a man who will support them genteelly.[562]

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[562] Child, *The Frugal Housewife,* 99.

Child's connection between the pitfalls of American character and the technological improvements of the era is particularly intriguing. For Child, the "luxurious and idle" nature of current generations of Americans was exemplified in their actions on modern transportation systems like steamboats, wherein debt-ridden citizens would waste their time and money on the "great canal." According to Child, these improvements in society were more detrimental than beneficial, as they both revealed and enabled dishonorable and unethical practices. In essence, the overwhelming and rapid progress of modern society—its technical improvements and entertainments—distracted Americans from their virtuous stations at work and at home and caused them to be wasteful with their time and money. For an author so interested in frugality, these actions represented one of the primary problems of American society in the antebellum era.

It is further of note that Child also referenced the sicknesses that befell such distracted citizens. The travelling domestics she referred to—so wasteful with their finances—also seem to have a proclivity toward illness, as evident in the increase in the number of available hospitals around the country. Indeed, for authors such as Child who espoused the virtuous life devoted to domestic simplisticity and frugality, societal ills brought on by increased industrialization and urbanization became intricately linked to the personal health and illnesses of the American people themselves.

Child was not alone is her assessment of the negative effects of modern American society on the body. In 1849, an Ohioan medical doctor named Philip Harvey argued that "contaminated air, filth, ill clothing, cold, damp, mental depression, fatigue, [and] the passions" were all "doubtless frequent causes of disease."[563] Such conditions—most notably "contaminated air" and "filth" were major concerns for Americans living in communities affected by industrialization and modernization. Yet while environmental factors such as these were certainly the cause of numerous physical and emotional deficiencies, according to Harvey, "they yield in efficiency to erroneous diet."[564] In fact, "errors in diet," according to the doctor, "have at all times been considered the most fertile sources of sickness."[565] The conditions of modern American society (including the deficiencies of diet that the doctor addressed) had created a hazardous situation that led to an inordinate amount of sickness across the country.

Harvey believed the greatest examples of such abuses were found in the American South. While the South was certainly not as affected by industrialized, urban progress as the North, the region nevertheless possessed its own harmful environmental and social ills that generated a languorous populace unwilling to consume a healthy diet. These different yet equally harmful conditions led Harvey to surmise that life expectancy in the South was far shorter than in the North "on account of the more inappropriate dietetic usages observed" in that region.[566] He continued,

> This state of things so unfavorable to prosperity and improvement, is attributed to errors in diet, both in eating and drinking, that it calls aloud for reformation. To most our southern states nature has been prodigal in all the gifts of soil and climate, and of every thing needful to the welfare of man; but used inappropriately, the greatest blessing always become the greatest evils.[567]

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[563] Philip Harvey, *Food and Climate, Considered in Reference to Each Other, an Attempt to Solve the Problem of the Natural and Proper Food of Man* (Zanesville, OH: Printed by Edwin C. Church, 1849), 53.

[564] Harvey, *Food and Climate*, 53.

[565] Ibid.

[566] Ibid., 75.

[567] Ibid.

Harvey's statement on the nature of food, health, and society in the southern states is consequential for a number of reasons. First, like Child, Harvey equated the current state of southern society with being "unfavorable to prosperity and improvement." The degradation of society remained intricately linked to abuses of diet, and a community adverse to practicing effective eating habits—even when "all the gifts of soil and climate" were afforded to them—would in turn deteriorate and die prematurely.

Second, Harvey's focus on a specific region of the United States represented a concession that the practices and customs of particular part of the country may not be applicable to the nation at large. The growing sectionalism of the antebellum area afforded authors the opportunity to divide regions within the United States in more direct and "scientific" methods, a style of writing and analysis that had been heretofore reserved only to differences between distinct nations. Nevertheless, Harvey's prevailing argument remained applicable to American society at large: overindulgence, brought on either by technical advancements or other social wrongdoings, fostered an abuse of foodstuffs that ultimately led to the degradation of the entire nation's health and national character. The cure, according to the author and other like-minded activists, was the reformation of American eating habits through a return to the wholesome, frugal eating practices of the past.

Furthermore, Harvey's conclusion that a bountiful harvest (when used inappropriately) could expose society's "greatest evils" spoke to the necessity for temperance and frugality mentioned in other similar works on food culture. There was no doubt that the United States—and the southern states in particular—had a climate that produced an abundance of foodstuffs. But sickness and a shortened lifespan followed this "blessing," leading to overabundance and the people's inability to regulate and curtail their temptations. As Dr. Daniel Drake, another Ohioan physician of the era, argued, "As a general fact, the inhabitants of America…live on a fuller diet than the masses of Europe. [However] unskillfully cooked, indiscriminate minced, imperfectly masticated, and rapidly swallowed, [meals] constitute our nation feedings."[568] Ultimately, this process led to a "crudeness of diet through successive generations…and tendencies to some forms of disease."[569] The livelihood of American nationalism itself, it seemed, was contingent on its ability to curtail the gluttony and overindulgence that plagued a majority of its citizens.

There was doubtless an overarching concern in both domestic treatises and medical books of the early American Republic that the future prosperity and health of United States depended on the people's ability to consume the appropriate amount and type of foodstuffs. However, while the causes of the problem were well defined and universally agreed upon, the solutions (beyond a generalized call for moderation and frugality) were often complex and contradictory. Some, including Drake, advocated lessening the amount of animal products Americans consumed. Others, like Hale and Child, made no mention of the dangers of meat consumption, but instead advocated better domestic education for women and young girls to be able to cook more wholesome dishes.[570] Still others, like physician Thomas H. Hoskins, argued in favor of government regulation of certain foodstuffs. In a treatise detailing the hazards of "adulterating" milk with dirty water—a common practice of milkmen in American cities to dilute their milk supply and sell greater quantities—Hoskins wrote, "no believer in the principles upon which the American theory of government is based, has a right to say that there is no use in trying to regulate these matters by law. European governments do it, and do it effectually."[571] Hoskins' plea and comparison to European governments may very well have fallen on deaf ears, however, as the author himself admitted,

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[568] Daniel Drake, *A Systematic Treatise, Historical, Etiological and Practical, on the Principal Diseases of the Interior Valley of North America: as they Appear in the Caucasian, African, Indian and Esquimaux Varieties of its Population* (Cincinnati, OH: W.B. Smith, 1850), 648.
[569] Ibid., 648.

> While the public have an unquestionable right to demand the protection of the government from frauds of the adulterations of food, it is characteristic of the American people, which particularly distinguishes them from European nations, that what they can properly do for themselves, they do not wait for the government to take the lead in.[572]

Americans were indeed distinct from their European counterparts (as so many Americans and Europeans had argued), even in their attempts to save their citizens from unhealthy lifestyles.[573] Nevertheless, the prosperity of the American nation was in direct correlation with the health of its citizens, and action of some form of another needed to be taken in order to ensure the continued survival of the republic. The association between these two factors: personal food consumption and national health at large, remained one of the few constants of activist writings of the era, and drove numerous authors to devise more and more radical solutions to the problem.

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[570] A number of such works also advocated abstinence from drinking alcohol. As this dissertation focuses almost exclusively on foodstuffs rather than drink, however, such arguments have been removed from this context. The topic of alcohol consumption and temperance in the nineteenth century is so complex—and the existing research into the topic so well-trodden—that the decision was made to add any mention of temperance in an annotation. For more information on alcohol consumption and the temperance movement in the early national period, begin with: W.J. Rorabaugh, *The Alcoholic Republic: An American Tradition* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1979).

[571] Thomas H. Hoskins, *What We Eat: An Account of the Most Common Adulterations of Food and Drink* (Boston, MA: T.O.H.P. Burnham, 1851), 208.

[572] Ibid., iv.

[573] Hoskins was correct to question whether Americans would accept federal regulation and quality control for food items. It would take fifty-five years after the publication of *What We Eat* before the government passed the first nationwide food regulations, the 1906 Food and Drug Act.

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One of these more radical solutions to the supposed underlying issues plaguing American food culture came from the writings of Sylvester Graham. Graham, a Presbyterian minister and social activist, advanced a system of bread production that would fundamentally alter the style in which Americans thought about and consumed wheat products. At the core of his thesis and subsequent social movement lay the prevailing fear that the United States was quickly devolving into an unhealthy and immoral society.[574] Like Hale, Child, Harvey, and countless others, Graham's cure for this ailment further revealed the correlation between food, domesticity, personal and national virtue, and identity formation evident in the writings of the era.

Graham's 1837 work, *A Treatise on Bread, and Bread-Making*, explained his concerns with American society in the early national period. "The people of our country," he wrote, "are so entirely given up as they are at present, to gross and promiscuous feed on the dead carcasses of animals, and to the untiring pursuits of wealth."[575] Like Drake, Graham believed that the ethical and health-related dangers of meat consumption outweighed any benefits. But unlike Drake, Graham moved away from mere moderation of animal products to advocate complete abstinence. Indeed, vegetarianism and veganism would become major tenets of multiple movements and social reformers of the era, Graham being one of the more vocal.[576] More importantly, Graham's correlation between the "promiscuous" feeding on dead carcasses with the "pursuits of wealth" highlighted his judgments against and associations between immoral foods and immoral social pursuits. For Graham, meat-eating and greed were equal scourges on American society—one begetting the other—and both serving to destroy the virtues and health of the American people. However, the American people themselves were not mere victims of this immoral behavior; they were its perpetrators. "The people generally," he wrote, "are contented to gratify their depraved appetite on whatever comes before them, without pausing to inquire whether their indulgences are adapted to preserve or to destroy their health and life."[577]

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[574] For more information on Graham himself, as well as the particulars of his system (specifically its association with his religious beliefs), see: Stephen Nissenbaum, *Sex, Diet, and Debility in Jacksonian America: Sylvester Graham and Health Reform* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1980).

[575] Sylvester Graham, *A Treatise on Bread, and Bread-Making* (Boston, MA: Light & Stearns, 1837), 35.

The judgments and wording Graham used in his treatise are telling. Graham's work did not purport to be a scientific survey or medical article, and subsequently he did not feel the need to reserve moral judgments or use neutral, reserved language.[578]

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[576] For a detailed description of vegetarianism in the early national period and its associations with national and civic culture, see: Adam D. Shprintzen, *The Vegetarian Crusade: The Rise of an American Reform Movement, 1817-1921* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2013).

[577] Graham, *A Treatise on Bread, and Bread-Making,* 35.

[578] Followers of Graham, however, did use more reserved, scientific phrases and methods to restate Graham's initial thesis against consuming meat. For instance, an article titled "National Dietetics" in a contemporary health journal referenced the research of Englishman George Warren, a surgeon who studied the health effects of non-indigenous animal meat consumption on native peoples, societies, and nations. "Among the native Indians of America," he said, "the connexion [*sic*] of pork eating and glandular diseases is, from mere experience, known and admitted." George Warren, "National Dietetics," *The Graham Journal of Health and Longevity* 3, no. 20 (September 28, 1839): 314-315.

American appetites were “depraved,” their “indulgences” destructive, and the national character itself “gross” and “promiscuous.” His passionate analysis in these pages mirrored other Christian pastors and reformers of the era, whose powerful sermons riled their congregations and compelled them to action. But unlike preaching about God and faith, Graham’s message concerned the very real and tangible food culture of the early national era, merely cloaked in the passionate phraseology of a church revival.

While the meat industry was initially Graham’s primary source of frustration, it was not the only immoral food-related community supposedly tainting American society. “The public bakers,” his treatise continued, “ like other men, who serve the public more for the sake of securing their own emolument than for the public good, have always had recourse to various expedients in order to increase the lucrativeness of their business.”[579] Yet again, the association was made between immoral food consumption and greed: the public bakers aided in the destruction of American life by selling cheap, less nutritious breads in order to make a personal profit, regardless of consequences for the people’s health and wellbeing.

For Graham, the advent of industrialized milling and flour production in the early-nineteenth century had not only made baked goods cheaper to produce, but also had lessened their nutritive value by pulverizing the wheat germs by bleaching the flour to preserve its lifespan. Like Lydia Maria Child in *The Frugal Housewife*, Graham saw this progress of industrialization as negatively affecting not only American diets, but America's overall character.[580] As Graham argued,

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[579] Graham, *A Treatise on Bread, and Bread-Making*, 43.

> The process of mechanical analysis is, at the present day, carried to the full extent of possibility, and the farina, and gluten, and accaharine matter of the wheat are almost perfectly concentrated in the form of superfine flour. Nor is this all—these concentrate nutrient properties of the wheat are mixed and complicated in ways innumerable with other concentrated substances, to pamper the depraved appetite of man, with kinds of food which always and inevitably tend to impair his health and to abbreviate his life.[581]

The mechanical, industrial methods Graham detailed were by their very nature destructive to nutrients and morality alike. The superfine, white flour produced by modern machinery—and fortified with chemicals and other "concentrated substances"—catered to a "depraved" popular appetite and robbed the whole grain of its healthy nutrients. Graham's association with nutrition and wholesomeness in this passage is rather telling: he perceived very little difference between the purity of the foodstuff produced and the purity in character of those that consumed it.

Although the "public bakers" Graham mentioned were the greatest culprits promulgating such debased grains, Graham reported that such methods pervaded all aspects of American society. It did not matter, he argued, "whether our bread is of domestic manufacture or made by the public baker, that which is made of superfine flour is always far less wholesome, in any and every station of life, than that which is made of wheaten meal."[582] That such breads were produced in the home—the sanctified realm of women and republican virtue—was far more dangerous to American society than those breads sold in the public markets. If domestic wholesomeness could not be protected from the onslaught of modern immoral society, then the nation as a whole could falter. "Until the agriculture of our country is conducted in strict accordance with physiological truth," Graham believed, "it is not possible for us to realize those physical, and intellectual, and moral, and social, and civil blessings for which the human constitution and our soil and climate are naturally capacitated."[583]

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[580] Child's insistence on frugality would have made cheaper, more accessible flour a very tempting proposition for domestic women, however.
[581] Graham, *A Treatise on Bread, and Bread-Making*, 41-42.
[582] Ibid., 43.

Graham's critiques in this essay are similar to many arguments made by European travellers in America during the early national era. Like these writers, Graham saw American food culture as depraved and its people lazy, greedy, and unscrupulous. The foods Americans ate were unwholesome and produced for the greatest yield without regard for quality. And the American people themselves were affected by the foods they consumed, foods that produced citizens unworthy of national accolades and acclaim. Yet unlike those European travellers who merely judged American food culture and American society as inferior, Graham insisted in his writings that there was a cure. By returning to simpler, wholesome, whole-grain breads baked at home, Americans could reclaim their virtuous characteristics and ensure a prolonged and healthy life for both the individual and the nation.[584]

Graham's conclusions and solutions were extremely appealing to a number of Americans. In fact, his treatise and methods of bread-making proved so popular that followers of his system labelled themselves "Grahamites," sold flour produced under his specifications as “Graham flour” (and baked crackers from this flour called graham crackers), and published a journal promoting his lifestyle called *The Graham Journal of Health and Longevity*. The articles in the journal were straightforward and accessible to a general audience, and almost all had the explicit goal of promoting Graham’s bread-making thesis. “Home-made, leavened bread, of a day or two old” one article proclaimed, “is very easy of digestion, wholesome and nutritious; but we cannot speak in favorable terms of bakers bread, and new breed of any sort is of difficult digestion and unwholesome.”[585] In the journal essays, Graham’s bread served dual purposes: it promoted easy digestion and better health while simultaneously infusing the consumer with a more wholesome disposition. The innate relation between foodstuffs and character traits, therefore, became the primary tenet of Graham and his followers.

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[583] Graham, *A Treatise on Bread, and Bread-Making*, 36.

[584] Karen Iacobbo and Michael Iacobbo, *Vegetarian America: A History* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishing, 2004), 25-27.

Such edible solutions to America’s ills were attractive to people and organizations outside of Graham’s sphere of influence. The November 9, 1839 edition of *The Graham Journal of Health and Longevity*, for instance, detailed the editors’ recent acquisition of a similar journal, *The Library of Health*. In describing the absorption of his *Library of Health* publication into *The Graham Journal*, editor William A. Alcott wrote, “I cannot but entertain the hope that with the friendly and prompt aid of those contributors who are in the possession of facts…I shall be able to satisfy, in some good measure, the wishes of the subscribers of both works, in regard to the great subject to which I have long ago consecrated my labors and my life."[586] Alcott, a prolific writer and social reformer, wrote extensively on the associations between diet, health, and virtue in the United States. At times more radical than Graham and his followers, Alcott and his supporters took relatively drastic steps to follow the tenets of dietary and moral purity, simplicity, and wholesomeness in an effort to rid themselves and American society of its perceived maladies.

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[585] “Sure Methods of Improving Health and Prolonging Life, or a Treatise on the Art of Living Long and Comfortably by Regulating the Diet and Regimen,” *The Graham Journal of Health and Longevity* 3 no. 17 (August 17, 1839): 267.

One year after Graham's treatise on bread-making was published, Alcott wrote his own account of the problems inherent in American food culture, and proposed his own set of solutions. In *Vegetable Diet: As Sanctioned by Medical Men, and by Experience in All Ages*, Alcott wrote, "it is the simple habits of some, whether we speak of nations, families, or individuals, which have preserved the world from utter decay."[587] Simplicity was indeed an important recurring concept throughout much of Alcott's works, as was the conviction that the actions and character of a nation were comparable to the actions and characters of a person. As Alcott argued, "Nations are made of individuals…whatever is best, in the end, for the one, must also be the best, as a general rule, for the other."[588]

This practice of associating human qualities with the character of nations was not particularly novel concept, as numerous authors of the era made similar arguments.[589] Indeed, Alcott's use of the linkage between personal and national virtue was also comparable to contemporaries like Hale and Graham. Where Alcott stood out from his peers, however, was in the severe and all-encompassing nature of his proposed solution. In Alcott's view, the only manner in which both a person and a nation could be saved from moral and physical decay was to abstain completely from the consumption of meat or any other animal product. "A flesh-eating nation may retain the supremacy of the world a short time," he wrote, "but the triumph of both the nation and the individual must be short, and the debility which follows proportional."[590] And if the United States' continued strength and influence seemed "to form an exception to the truth of this remark," he concluded, "it is only because the stage of debility has not yet arrived. Let us be patient, however, for it is not far off."[591]

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[586] William A. Alcott, "Dr. Alcott's Notice to the Readers of the Graham Journal," *The Graham Journal of Health and Longevity* 3 no. 23 (November 9, 1839): 371.

[587] William A. Alcott, *Vegetable Diet: As Sanctioned by Medical Men, and by Experience in All Ages* (Boston, MA: Marsh, Capen & Lyon, 1838), 262.

[588] Ibid., 256.

[589] See the review of John Lambert's introduction to *Salmagundi* in "Chapter 3: The Empires Strike Back - Europeans in America and the Creation of National Cuisine" for a similar use of civic anthropomorphism.

The severity and dread inherent in William Alcott's assessment of the state of American food and society would have profound effects on his readers. In 1841, Amos Bronson Alcott—a neighbor and distant relative of William—took such dire warnings to heart, and along with a group of like-minded social reformers and transcendentalists, conceived of the utopian farming community named "Fruitlands." The farm, nestled on a 200 acre estate in Western Massachusetts, proved to be a testing ground for the feasibility of such strict dietary and moral doctrines proposed by antebellum American social reformers.

Moving beyond the already strict tenets of William Alcott, the people at Fruitlands placed substantial limitations on their diets. One member of the community recalled the conditions at Fruitlands as follows:

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[590] Alcott, *Vegetable Diet*, 262.

[591] Ibid.

> No animal substances, neither flesh, butter, cheese, eggs, milk pollute our table, or corrupt our bodies, neither tea, coffee, molasses, nor rice tempts us beyond the bounds of indigenous productions. Our sole beverages [were] pure fountain water. The native grains, fruits, herbs, and roots, [were] dressed in the utmost cleanliness and regard to their purpose of edifying a healthful body… The field, the orchard, the garden, in their bounteous products…yield an ample store for human nutrition, without dependence on foreign climes, or the degeneration of shipping and trade.[592]

The uncompromising regimen was impressive. Beyond abstaining from meat and animal products or milling one's own flour, Fruitlands residents abided by a diet designed wholly from indigenous, native plants. Of note is the writer's concern for "foreign climes" and degenerative "shipping and trade" that could taint their lifestyle, a concept similar in nature and style to the "federal diet" editorials of the late-eighteenth century. At Fruitlands, pure, wholesome, native, and simple foodstuffs were to become a bulwark against the outside evils of society, both foreign and domestic.

As a collective, the group felt empowered by such restrictions and saw their adherence to the program as the beginning of a virtuous reformation throughout the country and beyond. As Robert Carter, a community member of both Fruitlands and an earlier utopian farmstead called Brook Farms, described, "Here we gathered the men and women who based their hopes of reforming the world and making all things new on dress and on diet. They revived the Pythagorean, the Essenian, and the Monkish notions of Asceticism with some variations and improvements peculiarly American."[593] The unusualness of these communities, therefore, lay in their strict adherence to pious culinary practices reproduced from ancient philosophies, but with what they considered a "peculiarly American" character supposedly unseen in any other modern nation.

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[592] A. Brooke, "The Consociate Family Life," *Herald of Freedom* (Boston, MA) September 8, 1843. Quoted in: Clara Edincott Sears, ed. *Bronson Alcott's Fruitlands* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1915), 49.

[593] Robert Carter, "The Newness," *The Pioneer,* 1843. Quoted in: Clara Edincott Sears, ed. *Bronson Alcott's Fruitlands* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1915), 37.

In practical application, however, Fruitlands was a complete failure. The urbane intellectuals who followed Alcott to the bucolic farmstead had unfortunately little experience tending crops, and the community—unable to obtain enough food for its members—was abandoned after one season. Nevertheless, as historian Adam D. Shprintzen argues, Fruitlands remains a symbol "of the challenges and contradictions at play among dietary reformers in the early 1840s."[594] While not all solutions were ultimately feasible, the continued anxiety regarding the state of American society—exposed through the negative attributes of its food culture—persisted in the minds of social reformers and facilitated their continued attempts to right America's social ills through drastic culinary and other lifestyle changes.

Whether it was Lydia Maria Child's fear of wastefulness, Philip Harvey's connections between climate and longevity, Sylvester Graham's antagonism toward mechanised milling, or William and Amos Alcott's adherence to strict diets, reform-minded authors of the antebellum period shared similar concerns for the present and future prosperity of the American nation. Modernity and technical advancements had rendered the people of the United States lazy and gluttonous, and without an intervention, the country would suffer the same illness and degradation of character that a growing number of its citizens fell victim to. Calls for a return to simple and wholesome domestic virtues—whether they consisted of learning frugal cooking methods, baking whole grain brown breads, or forming a remote farming collective—all shared in the hope of reforming American society by reviving the principled eating and cooking practices of the past.

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[594] Shprintzen, *The Vegetarian Crusade*, 54.

It is apparent that many culinary reformers of the mid-nineteenth century believed an earlier, healthier, idyllic American society had been lost to them. Cultural critic Sacvan Bercovitch details this concept in his seminal work, *The American Jeremiad*, when he contends that "American writers have tended to see themselves as outcasts and isolates, prophets crying in the wilderness. So they have been, as a rule: *American* Jeremiahs, simultaneously lamenting a declension and celebrating a national dream."[595] Indeed, this sense of loss—these jeremiads—permeated the writings of authors such as Hale, Child, and scores of others. The nineteenth century theologian and author Horace Bushnell described a similar situation in his famous "Age of Homespun" essay in 1851. In regard to the foods consumed by earlier generations, Bushnell wrote that an American housewife used to "bring out her choice stock of home-grown exotics, gathered from three realms—doughnuts from the pantry, hickory-nuts from the chamber, and the nicest, smoothest apples from the cellar" whenever company arrived.[596] By the 1850s, however, this "homespun mode of life" Bushnell detailed was supposedly met by modern generations "only with contempt."[597]

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[595] Sacvan Bercovitch, *The American Jeremiad* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1978), 180.

[596] Horace Bushnell, "Discourse," in *Centennial Celebration, Held at Litchfield, Conn.* (Hartford, CT: Published by Edwin Hunt, 1851), 116.

[597] Ibid., 125.

Author and physician John Wakefield Francis also echoed this sentiment of loss in his memoir *Old New York; Or, Reminiscences of the Past Sixty Years*. In detailing the changes he perceived on the island of Manhattan, he wrote of the once "well-known Kip's Farm" and similar "gardens famous for their exquisite fruit, the plum and the peach."[598] Equally revered were "Newtown and Blackwell's Island for the apple," he wrote, "known to all horticulturists, abroad and at home, as the Newtown Pippin."[599] It was the Newtown Pippin that the famed pomologist William Coxe had proudly proclaimed decades earlier as "the finest apple of our country, and probably of the world," a moniker that helped distinguish American fruits and foodstuffs as both distinct and superior to their European counterparts.[600] But by the time Francis wrote his memoir, the orchards that produced the exquisite apple and other prized foodstuffs had been lost. Francis concluded, "Such [as] things were. No traces are now to be found of the scenes of those once gratifying sights; the havoc of progressive improvement has left nought of these once fertile garden."[601] Industrial American society had destroyed the fertile lands of Francis' youth, and only his memory of such simpler and more wholesome times remained.

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[598] John Wakefield Francis, *Old New York; Or, Reminiscences of the Past Sixty Years. Being an enlarged and revised edition of the anniversary discourse delivered before The New York Historical Society-November 17, 1857* (New York, NY: Charles Roe, 1858), 21.

[599] Ibid., 21.

[600] William Coxe, *A View of the Cultivation of Fruit Trees, and the Management of Orchards and Cider: With Accurate Descriptions of the Most Estimable Varieties of Native and Foreign Apples, Pears, Peaches, Plums, and Cherries, Cultivated in the Middle States of America* (Philadelphia, PA: M. Carey and Son, 1817), 142. A review of Coxe's work can be found in "Chapter 2: As American as Apple Pudding - A Distinct Culinary Culture Emerges."

[601] Francis, *Old New York*, 21.

As Francis' lamentation reveals, the concept of memory—particularly in regard to notions of communal loss—can have a profound impact on the development of social and personal belief systems. In its basic form, memory and food are connected in what anthropologist Jon Holtzman describes as "the sensuality of eating [transmitted by] powerful mnemonic cues, principally through smells and tastes."[602] Food moves beyond the tangible and into the cerebral through such linkage. Holtzman continued by stating that this connection occurs when "food intricately traverses the public and the intimate… One might consider then the significance of this rather unique movement between the most intimate and the most public in fostering food's symbolic power, in general, and in relation to memory, in particular."[603] It is in this delicate interplay that food serves as an integral bond in both the personal and the public spheres.

Therefore, like commensality and conviviality, memory can be extremely influential in the development of personal and communal culinary identity. In his seminal work, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, Pierre Bourdieu further argues that food and food culture elicit strong cognitive and cultural responses that influence a person's judgments and sense of morality. "The native world is, "he argues, "above all, the material world, the world of primordial tastes and basic foods, of the archetypal relation to the archetypal cultural good."[604] The formation of this "cultural good" through food consumption is fundamentally associated with the development of both individual and collective memory. However, the process itself cannot be trusted to formulate accurate depictions of earlier food cultures and experiences. As was the case with certain authors of the early American Republic, when one begins to intellectually associate the material world of food with the intangible world of memory, the result is often the creation of nostalgia, a romanticized and distorted representation of the past.

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[602] Jon D. Holtzman, "Food and Memory," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 35, no. 1 (2006): 373.
[603] Ibid., 373.
[604] Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984), 79.

Such nostalgia warps perceptions and alters past realities, and in the end can be more destructive than constructive. As anthropologist Richard Wilk contends, "culture can be seen as explicit, self-conscious, symbolic and performative… [This] offers a useful way to think about the relationship between food and culture…[as] fundamentally and deeply symbolic at a visceral level."[605] Thus, while remembrances of past generations conjured through descriptions of food may be an effective tool to promote identity formation, it ultimately confuses the subject matter further due to its proclivity to blur the lines between the material and the intangible.

Holtzman gives one of the more succinct descriptions of the influence food culture on both memory and identity. "It is an intricately multilayered and multidimensional subject," he writes, "authors construct and construe the object of food in often very different ways, ranging from the strictly materialist to the ethereal gourmand. And memory is much thornier…often referring to an array of very different processes…everything from monumental public architecture to the nostalgia evoked by a tea-soaked biscuit."[606] For all of its indescribability, memory is one of the more formidable components of identity formation. Humans define who they are with multiple tools and classifications, from gender to class and race. A collective memory in the form of national heritage and traditions—such as those espoused by culinary authors and reformers of the early American Republic—equally affected how and what the individual and society "remembered." In each one of those variables, identity forms out of a seemingly natural, indisputable structure. But ultimately, national memory is a deliberately constructed notion of the past, a past which is reinforced by collective traditions warped by nostalgia.

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[605] Richard Wilk, *Home Cooking in the Global Village: Caribbean Food from Buccaneers to Ecotourists* (New York, NY: Berg Publishers, 2006), 105-106.
[606] Holtzman, "Food and Memory," 362.

Lydia Maria Child exemplified the feelings of national loss and the transmorphic nature of collective memory and nostalgia when she wrote in *The Frugal Housewife*, "The good old home habits of our ancestors are breaking up. It will be well if our virtue and our freedom do not follow them!"[607] Child's call for a return to domestic simplicity—while similar to other references in previously-mentioned works from Simmons, Graham, and others—differed by evoking the habits of the "ancestors" of American history. She did not specify a date or generation in her description because ultimately she did not need to: the mere mention of the ancestors was enough to evoke images of the supposed righteous, pious men and women of early America. Child continued, "let any reflecting mind inquire how decay has begun in all republics, and then let them calmly ask themselves whether we are in no danger in departing thus rapidly from the simplicity and industry of our forefathers."[608] Yet again, by referencing the nation's ancestors and describing them as simple and industrious served both to evoke a collective nostalgia in her audience as well as caution them that modern society could not adequately compare to their predecessors. Therefore, according to Child, if modern society did not heed her warning and revive the virtues of previous generations, nothing short of the American republic itself could fall into ruin.

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[607] Child, *The Frugal Housewife*, 99.

[608] Ibid.

Another example of the impact of food, memory, and nostalgia on national identity formation can found in the writings of Thomas Robinson Hazard. Hazard, an American author and reformer known colloquially as "Shepard Tom," penned a number of short recollections on his childhood and young adult life in the early national period. Collectively named *The Jonnny-Cake Papers*, Shepard Tom's essays revealed a similar sense of loss and a romanticized version of American society at the turn of the nineteenth century, a society supposedly lost to history. The eponymous jonnny-cake—a native New England dish comprised of a cornmeal patty fried in a skillet—served as the symbol of a bygone era in Hazard's life. In his first chapter, called the "First Baking," Hazard described how to make a jonnny-cake, and why subsequent generations of Americans could not replicate the meal. "With proper materials and care, a decent jonnny-cake can be baked on a coal stove," Hazard opined, "though by no means equal to the old-time genuine article, for the simple reason that wood fires in open fireplaces have become, as a general rule, things of the past, and good, careful, painstaking cooks extinct."[609] As countless other authors had argued, the advent of certain technological marvels (in this instance, the invention of coal stoves) prohibited Americans from experiencing the more wholesome pleasures of a simpler time. That Hazard argued jonnny-cakes could no longer be properly made due to the disappearance of "good, careful, painstaking cooks" also exposed his bias toward earlier generations and the positive characteristics they personified. Alone, Shepard Tom's remembrances could be dismissed as the pining of an older man longing for his youth. But when read in context with the myriad other similar statements published, Hazard's inability to acquire a respectable johnny-cake highlighted the overall sense of loss that pervaded food writing of the mid-nineteenth century.

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[609] Thomas Robinson Hazard, *The Jonnny-Cake Paper of "Shepard Tom" Together with Reminiscences of Narragansett Schools of Former Days* (Boston, MA: The Merrymount Press, 1915), 30.

In the visual culture of the era as well there existed similar references to the virtuous and noble lifestyles of the past. Often, these images served to remind viewers of the superior nature of early America, and how adherence to "the old ways" could serve as a remedy for current social ills. Numerous genre paintings and woodcuts—the most prolific and influential of which from the artists Nathaniel Currier and James Merritt Ives—portrayed Americans in bucolic natural environments that kindled a level of sentimentality in the viewers of a shared idyllic past. Currier's 1856 lithograph *American Forest Scene, Maple Sugaring* is an example of such a work that used romanticized imagery of a rustic American pastime to invoke a bygone simpler American lifestyle.

The wooded wintry scene portrayed groups of men, women, and children gathered around a makeshift wooden cabin preparing syrup from the surrounding maple trees.[610] To highlight the positive national and communal characteristics inherent in the image, Currier and Ives' catalogue described the lithograph as "an agreeable picture of a peculiarly American character."[611] In the forefront of the image, the blurb described "two ladies with a male companion, apparently city folks come out to taste the sweets of the country."[612]

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[610] As referenced in "Chapter 1: "A Federal Diet" As Symbol - Food and the Foundations of a Postcolonial Identity" this method of maple sugaring—using boiling pots to reduce the sap into an edible sugar—in itself was seen as a singularly American activity, one that revealed the American people's ingenuity and independence from foreign foodstuffs.

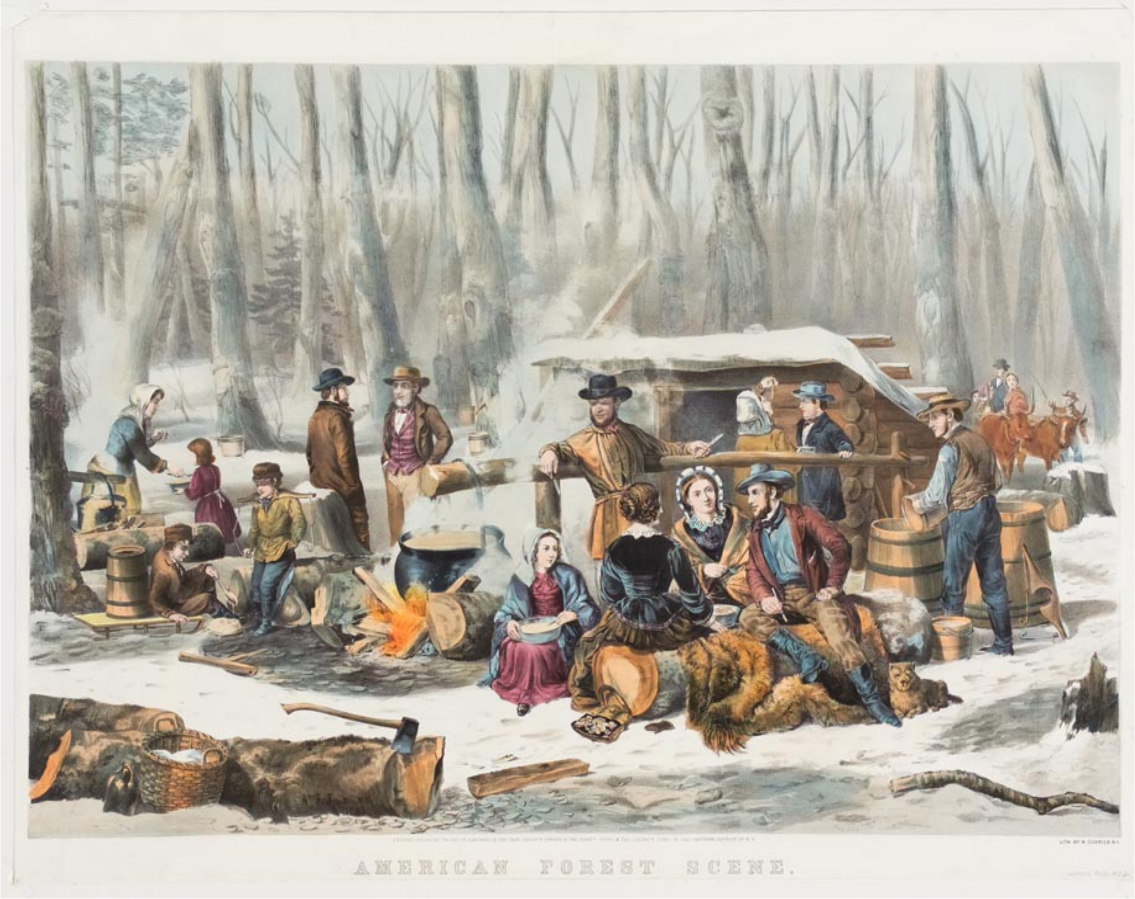
AMERICAN FOREST SCENE.

Figure 10: Nathaniel Currier, *American Forest Scene, Maple Sugaring,* 1856, hand-colored lithograph, 27 1/2 x 20 3/4 in. Courtesy of the D'Amour Museum of Fine Arts, 2004.D03.488.

Like John Wakefield Francis' description of the loss of the Newtown Pippin apple in New York, Currier's lithograph revealed the ill-effects of urbanization and industrialization on American character. With no maple trees left in northeastern urban areas, residents needed to travel away from their homes to experience the idyllic ways of America's past. Americans needed to return to the wilderness—to go back home—to experience the communal virtues and "sweets of the country." In a manner similar to Sarah Hale's dominant New England regional narrative, however, Currier's imagery evoked a rather specific "shared" past, one known only to those in colder, northern climates where such maple sugaring techniques were commonplace. Southern audiences were uninitiated in this cultural process, and thus the effect of this work ultimately remained more divisive than unifying.

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[611] Nathaniel Currier, *American Forest Scene, Maple Sugaring,* 1856, hand-colored lithograph, 27 1/2 x 20 3/4 in. Courtesy of the D'Amour Museum of Fine Arts, 2004.D03.488.

[612] Ibid.

Similar images of quintessentially idyllic and pastoral American scenes were commonplace in the visual arts of the era. Another earlier example of such agrarian landscapes was William Sidney Mount's *Cider Making*, painted in 1840-41.[613] Like Currier's work, Mount's image depicted a serene rural community engaged in old-fashioned food preparation techniques. Rather than maple sugaring, however, Mount chose the pressing, barrelling, and tapping of cider apples as the subject of his work.

Mount's painting was similar to Currier's lithograph in that it also had an underlying and subtle political message. The 1840 presidential election of William Henry Harrison (nicknamed the "log cabin and hard cider candidate") was surely a motivating factor for the artist to present this scene. Regardless of the specific subject matter or political message, however, the final result of each image was the same: the visualization of such ancestral and traditional agrarian food preparations represented a national ideal, a simple remedy steeped in history in contrast to the complications of modern industrial American society.

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[613] William Sidney Mount, *Cider Making*, 1840-41, oil on canvas, 27 x 34 1/8 in. Courtesy of Charles Allen The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

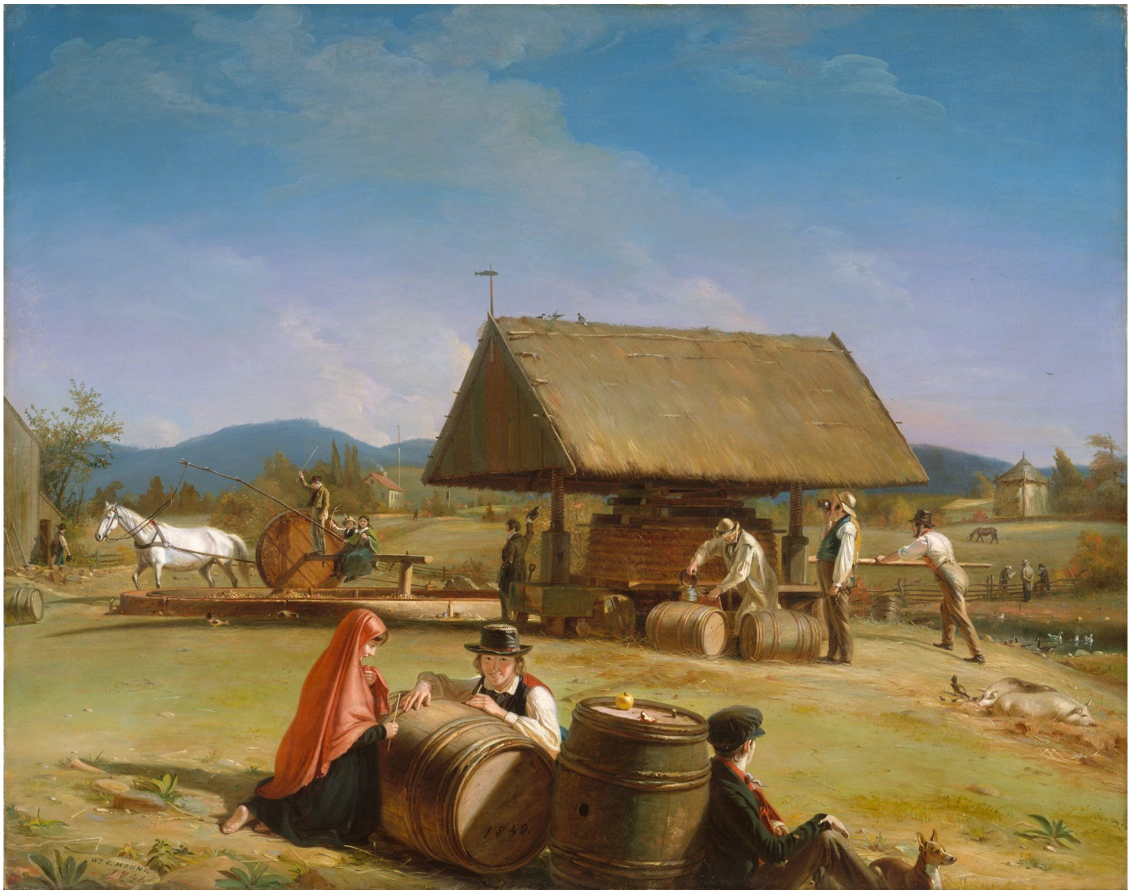

Figure 11: William Sidney Mount, *Cider Making*, 1840-41, oil on canvas, 27 x 34 1/8 in. Courtesy of Charles Allen The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Sarah Josepha Hale also conjured a halcyon, virtuous past in her decades-long campaign to create a federal Thanksgiving holiday. In a similar vein to Child, Hale referenced America's forefathers as exemplars of national virtue. "Our good ancestors were wise, even in their mirth," she wrote, "we have standing proof of this in the season they chose for the celebration of our annual festival, the Thanksgiving."[614] The fact that

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[614] Hale, *Traits of American Life*, 209.

Hale focused on the harvest festivals of early English settlers for her national holiday was in itself a reference to the shared national collective memory meant to evoke nostalgia for a simpler time. “There is a deep moral influence in these periodical seasons of rejoicing, in which a whole community participate,” she argued, “[T]hey bring out, and together, as it were, the best sympathies of our nature.”[615] Ancient communal and familial festivals extolling the bounty of American food affected what Hale called “deep moral influence” on its participants. The whole nation could come together in such a celebration and promote “the best sympathies of our nature” to heal the wounds of an increasingly broken American society. For writers and reformers like Hale, Child, Graham, Currier, and many others, it was the memory and practices of a wholesome past, reaffirmed and celebrated by the families and communities of the present, that would ultimately unite, heal, and protect the nation’s future.

After fifteen years and dozens of editorials in *Godey’s Lady’s Book*, Hale’s long campaign to create a federally recognized Thanksgiving celebration ultimately succeeded. In her final appeal, Hale reiterated the need for national recognition of this “American custom and institution.”[616] She concluded her letter by asking that by decree of the President of the United States, “the permanency and unity of our Great American Festival of Thanksgiving would be forever secured.”[617] Less than one week later, President Abraham Lincoln issued a proclamation for the first national Thanksgiving celebration to be held annually on the last Thursday in November. However, it was a tainted victory for Hale: the first national Thanksgiving was to be held in November, 1863 in the midst of the American Civil War. The campaign for a holiday to unite the nation in celebration of a shared past, a bountiful harvest, and communal and domestic bliss was finally achieved during the greatest era of disunion and internal strife in United States history.

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[615] Hale, *Traits of American Life*, 209.

[616] Sarah Josepha Hale, “Letter to Abraham Lincoln,” September 28, 1863, A*braham Lincoln Papers: Series 1. General Correspondence, 1833-1916*. Manuscript/Mixed Material, The Library of Congress.

[617] Ibid.

Four years before the American Civil War, Democratic Congressmen George Washington Jones was pressured on the floor of the House of Representatives by fellow congressmen to reaffirm his party affiliations and disclose who he planned to vote for in the 1856 elections. Jones responded by saying, "I am as independent of the Democratic party as they are of me… I do not care whether they invite me to their table or not."[618] Jones' concluding remarks on the matter were as follows:

> Thank God, I have a table of my own. I have the table of my country, and all can feed at that table—food enough for every generous American heart—food enough for me, food enough for all. As for your sectional party tables, if you think there is any honor in sitting at them, sit at them. I choose to sit at the great national table, and to do my duty to my country as I understand, leaving the results to Heaven and the country.[619]

Like numerous Americans before him, Jones used food as a symbolic representation of the core character traits and virtues he wished to personally emulate and publically encourage. The "great national table" he referenced was a metaphor for the bountiful, inclusive, idealized identity of the United States itself, with “food enough” for all people, unlike the “sectional party tables” that served only to dissuade its members from unity and national prosperity. Jones’ speech encapsulated the manner with which Americans in the early Republic employed food culture to represent their hopes and desire to establish a singular national identity. And his speech also ultimately revealed the obstacles and futility in such an endeavour. George Washington Jones would later vote to secede from the union and serve as a Tennessee representative in the Confederate States Congress during the American Civil War, effectively nullifying his rhetoric regarding the “great national table” he praised only a few short years earlier.

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[618] "George Washington Jones," in *The Congressional Globe: Containing the Debates, Proceedings, Laws, etc. of the First and Second Session, Thirty-Fourth Congress*, vol. 25, John C. Rives, ed. (City of Washington: Printed at the Office of John C. Rives, 1856), 2015.

[619] Ibid.

Furthermore, the attempts by authors and social reformers to use food and cuisine to highlight the growing list of misfortunes inherent in American society during the antebellum era also ultimately proved infructuous. The regional, gendered, class, and racial issues in the United States were simply too complex and substantial to be cured or deeply influenced by appeals for a revitalized national food culture and improved culinary identity. Nevertheless, the efforts of these reformers revealed cultural morés and attitudes regarding domesticity, health, morality, community, memory, and nostalgia in the early Republic that fundamentally shaped the American people’s perception of who they were as a nation. A singular, codified national cuisine was not a panacea to right the wrongs plaguing American society, but the attempts to formulate such a unified culinary system did serve to reveal the influential and innate customs, priorities, and contradictions of the American people themselves.

CONCLUSION:

On July 31, 1874 the *Philadelphia Press* published an editorial that described a series of conversations between the Grand Duke of Russia and American hotel owners. Grand Duke Alexis was touring the United States and, like so many other Europeans had done throughout the early American Republic, was curious about the manners, character, and customs of American citizens and their institutions. According to the *Philadelphia Press*, the Grand Duke's conversations quickly turned to the matter of American cuisine. "When [Grand Duke Alexis] asked about American dishes," the paper wrote, "hotel proprietors declared 'we *had* no American dishes,' and that even our best cooks 'were all *French*.'"[620] Confounded by this statement, and "convinced that injustice was done to our country in these replies," the *Philadelphia Press* planned a rebuttal.[621]

To present their counterargument the editors contacted James W. Parkinson, a famous confectioner and caterer in the city (the nineteenth century equivalent of a modern celebrity chef) who often championed the bounty and beauty of American cuisine. Parkinson had worked as a chef in Philadelphia for nearly forty years, and had operated a highly successful restaurant on Chestnut Street frequented by scores of influential Philadelphians and their national and international guests. One of Parkinson's most well-received and celebrated meals was the "Thousand Dollar Dinner" of 1851.[622] As part of a friendly competition with Delmonico's restaurant in New York City,

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[620] "Editorial," *Philadelphia Press,* July 31, 1874. Quoted in: James W. Parkinson, *American Dishes at the Centennial* (Philadelphia, PA: King & Baird, Printers, 1874), 3 .

[621] Ibid.

[622] For more information on the dinner, see: Becky Libourel Diamond, *The Thousand Dollar Dinner: America's First Great Cookery Challenge* (Yardley, PA: Westholme, 2015).

Parkinson had prepared an extraordinary dinner meant to rival the meals at the famed eatery and proclaim Philadelphia the culinary center of the United States.[623] By all accounts of those in attendance, Parkinson succeeded. As one reporter described the seventeen-course dinner, it was an event "such as Apicius never dreamed of in his most delirious moments… Combined, the entertainment [was] the most remarkable ever given in this country."[624] The dinner—that served items ranging from oysters to turtle steaks and ice cream—revealed the complex and mature nature of American meals in the mid-nineteenth century and elevated Parkinson to national renown. It was only fitting, therefore, that nearly a quarter-century after he entered the national lexicon, the culinary sage would be asked to pen a review and defense of American cuisine.

The *Philadelphia Press* published his rebuttal on the same day as their editorial. According to Parkinson, however, the current state of American cookery was not as sanguine as the editors of the *Philadelphia Press* had hoped. "The gifts of Providence in the way of food are infinitely various and infinitely bountiful," Parkinson began his essay, *American Cookery: A Prevailing National Want*, "but, as these are served up by those who are ignorant both of American dishes and American cookery, they reflect disgrace on our civilization."[625] It was an oft-mentioned critique of American food culture that the bounty of the continent was wasted on a citizenry unable to properly prepare meals, but coming from one of the preeminent chefs in the United States, the critique held great leverage. As he succinctly stated, "God sends America food, but the very devil sends us cooks."[626] Parkinson ended his review of the current state of American cooking by bemoaning the fact that—because of Americans' inability to cook decent meals—French remained the primary language and style of cooking in America, yet another observation suggestive of the problems facing the development of a strong national food culture in the United States.

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[623] Delmonico's was considered one of the first modern fine dining establishments in the United States. Opened as a full service restaurant in 1837, Delmonico's quickly became revered for its elaborate meals and inventive dining experience. Restaurants like Delmonico's and Parkinson's establishment in Philadelphia were rare businesses that catered to the very wealthy and did not become centers of national culinary influence until after the Civil War, however. As this dissertation focuses primarily on the cuisine of the early American Republic, discussions on this topic were limited to smaller taverns, hotels, or other dining houses that were influential in the development of a widespread national cuisine. For more information on the growth and ascendancy of American restaurants, see: Paul Freedman, "American Restaurants and Cuisine in the Mid-Nineteenth Century," *The New England Quarterly* 84, no. 1 (March, 2011).

[624] Charles C. Leland, "A Thousand Dollar Dinner," *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, April 1851. Quoted in: James W. Parkinson, *American Dishes at the Centennial* (Philadelphia, PA: King & Baird, Printers, 1874), 22.

However, Parkinson did not believe the current abysmal state of American cuisine was hopeless. As he argued, "I take it upon me to assert that our country has its own specialities in food, and dishes and styles of cookery percularily our own, which no American need be ashamed of, and which indeed every American should be proud of and thankful for."[627] Parkinson continued by detailing an impressive list of foodstuffs and preparation techniques uniquely American in nature. "[L]et American viands and American cookery be brought properly to the front" he began, "our American dishes, served up in genuine American style, will bear their American names, and be printed in plan American English. The current will be reversed; the tables will be turned."[628]

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[625] James W. Parkinson, "American Cookery: A Prevailing National Want," in *American Dishes at the Centennial* (Philadelphia, PA: King & Baird, Printers, 1874), 6.

[626] Ibid.

[627] Ibid.

[628] Ibid., 8.

Parkinson catalogued dozens of distinct and praiseworthy foodstuffs that combined to form an impressive and coherent American national cuisine. He wrote of “delicious Delaware shad” and “Mackinaw trout” as well as “glorious American oysters” prepared in a variety of ways, but “all equally and thoroughly American in style and growth.”[629] Parkinson mused on the succulent nature of terrapin, bison, woodchuck, canvasback duck, and “the Thanksgiving turkey” and revealed in “our New England chowder,” the preparation of which, according to Parkinson, “the great Daniel Webster was as proud as of his knowledge of the Constitution.”[630]

There was also much to appreciate regarding American cheese, a product that Parkinson believed had “its own distinctive excellencies, evident from the fact that while hundreds of tons of it are annually imported into Europe, there are Englishmen who prefer some American cheeses to the cheese of their own Cheshire and Gloucester.”[631] That Europeans would prize American foodstuffs was in itself a source of great pride for Parkinson and numerous other nineteenth century American authors. As he asserted, even the “‘greenings’ and ‘pippins,’ [apples] from America, are accounted among the most highly prized daintes at the feasts of kings, queens, and emperors in Europe.”[632]

Combined, these descriptions of foods and cooking styles produced what Parkinson considered to be national cuisine of distinction and merit in the United States. He concluded that his purpose in listing such dishes was twofold: to prove that America’s abundance and bounty of foodstuffs could be used to develop sound cooking practices, and "to show that there are scores and scores of dishes which are distinctively and exclusively American" already in existence.[633] The latter fact persuaded Parkinson to argue that the United States should prominently display its cuisine at the upcoming Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia, an event to commemorate the one-hundred year anniversary of American independence. "By establishing and equipping an American restaurant at the International Exposition," he argued, "many important and all-prevalent mistakes, both among our own people and other countries, may be corrected."[634] Parkinson's essay was indeed persuasive. The multitude of foods and dishes presented in his thesis certainly argued effectively that the United States had its own distinct cuisine, and that the American people could (in time and with practice) develop a unified and national identity through their cooking to rival those of other nations.

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[629] Parkinson, “American Cookery: A Prevailing National Want,” 9.
[630] Ibid., 10-13.
[631] Ibid., 13.
[632] Ibid., 16.

Yet the fact that the esteemed chef and gastronome felt compelled to even make such a statement as late as 1874 was itself indicative of the deficiencies and problems inherent in the development of an American culinary culture. Parkinson looked back at the previous one-hundred years of American history, and while he found some dishes and foodstuffs to be proud of, he concluded that American culinary practices continued to be lacking, and a unified national food identity remained non-existent. Throughout the course of the early American Republic, it would seem that very little had changed from the similar call for the development of a "federal diet" in the October 8, 1788 edition of *The Philadelphia Gazette* to Parkinson's "prevailing national want" for an American cookery in the July 31, 1874 edition of the *Philadelphia Press*. Eighty-six years later,

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[633] Parkinson, "American Cookery: A Prevailing National Want," 17.
[634] Ibid.

America continued to grapple with the shape and existence of its culinary national identity.

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Regardless of the difficulties inherent in cataloging a distinct American cuisine, the *desire* to define and describe such a cultural phenomenon remained a constant pursuit of nineteenth century American authors. An example of this can be found in the growing popularity of the phrase "American cuisine" in works published after the Civil War. For instance, in an 1893 investigation of the state of American hotels written for the *The North American Review*, author William Fanning described not only the accommodations of American hotels as being superior to those of Europe, but that the meals presented were also of higher quality. "Until quite recently it was an admitted fact," he wrote, "that the American *cuisine* was inferior to that of Europe. This is no longer true… On the contrary they now excel the hotels of Europe in the variety and, in many instances, in the quality of the viands."[635] Fanning's need to compare elements of American society with their European counterparts was rather common practice that had begun well over a century earlier, but his use of the phrase "American cuisine" in particular was evident of a cultural shift in the second half of the nineteenth century.

American cookbooks also saw an increase of the use of the term "American cuisine" during this era. Published in 1886, *The Unrivaled Cook-book and Housekeeper's Guide* was written in a similar vein to cookbooks and domestic publications of the early national period such as Amelia Simmons' *American Cookery* and Mary Randolph's *The Virginia Housewife*. However, *The Unrivaled Cook-book* differed from previous works in that its author (called only "Mrs. Washington") and her editor specifically defined her recipes as deliberately forming an "American cuisine." In the preface of the cookbook, the editor wrote, "A long residence in foreign countries has convinced [me] that the American cuisine, where it is good, is, as is the American market, the best in the world."[636] This sentiment—that American food was superior to the foods of other comparables nations—was echoed for decades by other authors, but the deliberate use of the phrase "American cuisine" in the literature represented a further evolution in the development of a national cuisine, a development that was mostly absent from published works prior to the Civil War.

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[635] William J. Fanning, "The American Hotel of Today," ed. Lloyd Bryce, *The North American Review* 157, no. 461 (August 1893): 205-206.

Indeed, Americans of the early Republic did not use the phrase "American cuisine" to describe their culinary culture, often using similar terms such as "American cookery" or "national dishes" when referring to what modern readers would describe as a national cuisine. This is due in part to the fact that the term "cuisine" itself (implemented to portray food and eating habits of a particular people or region) was not in regular use in the United States until after the Civil War. But there were instances of the word "cuisine" being applied to describe the national character of America in the early Republic, so the lack of its use prior to this time period was not entirely due to evolving linguistic trends. As referenced in "Chapter 3: The Empires Strike Back - Europeans in America and the Creation of National Cuisine," the European author Fanny Elssler wrote in her 1845 memoir of her desire "to see something of the mystery of an American

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[636] Mrs. Washington, *The Unrivaled Cook-book and Housekeepers Guide* (New York, NY: Harper & Brothers, 1886), iv.

cuisine."[637] Essler was an outsider looking in on American character, however, and her pseudo-anthropological inquiry did not represent the prevailing manner in which Americans described their own culinary identity. Indeed, prior to the Civil War, there is no verified reference of an American author describing American food culture as a "cuisine." This fact leads to two essential questions: first, what changed in the ensuing decades for Americans to begin referencing their food culture as a cuisine, and second, if no American authors of the early Republic described their national cookery as a cuisine, was it even possible for an American national cuisine to exist?

The answers to the first question go beyond the scope of this dissertation, but the accepted narrative states that the second half of the nineteenth century saw a paradigmatic shift in American demographics and society that necessitated the reaffirmation of a distinctly American cuisine.[638] The influx of Irish, German, Eastern and Southern European, and Chinese immigrants into the country left an indelible mark on American food culture, one that brought the debate over what could be considered "American cuisine" to the public forefront in ways unparalleled in previous generations. Further, a seismic increase in restaurant dining by the middle and upper classes, combined with commercial and industrial advances in transportation, refrigeration, canning, marketing, etc., made American food culture nearly unrecognizable to Americans of a generation earlier. The colorful "Shephard Tom" detailed this sea change in his *Jonny-Cake Papers* when, in describing the impossibility of finding a decent jonny-cake similar to the type he had prepared and consumed in his youth, he wrote, "But alas, since the introduction of coal fires, cooking stoves, common schools, and French and Irish be-deviling cooks, the making and baking of jonny-cake has become one of the lost arts."[639] American food had became global, capitalist, and industrial in the second half of the nineteenth century in ways that fundamentally altered national culture—which in turn made the food systems of the early Republic a relic—and forced Americans to deliberately articulate and redefine what it meant to have an "American cuisine."

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[637] Fanny Elssler, *The Letters and Journal of Fanny Ellsler: Written Before and After Her Operatic Campaign in the United States* (New York, NY: H. G. Daggers, 1845), 38.

[638] For an excellent overview of the origins of modern American food culture, see the work of food historian Helen Zoe Veit, including: Helen Zoe Veit, *Food in the American Gilded Age* (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 2017), and: Helen Zoe Veit, *Modern Food, Moral Food: Self-Control, Science, and the Rise of Modern American Eating in the Early Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2013). For information regarding the increasing influence of restaurants and dining out on American urban food culture in the Gilded Age, see the second half of: Cindy R. Lobel, *Urban Appetites: Food and Culture in Nineteenth-Century New York* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2014). For more information on the effect of immigrant society on the development of American cuisine in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, see: Hasia Diner, *Hungering for America: Italian, Irish, and Jewish Foodways in the Age of Migration* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003).

The second question regarding the existence of a national cuisine in the early Republic has been a major component of this dissertation and is a topic that does not have a clear consensus answer. In 1937, anthropologist Ralph Linton wrote an essay for *The American Mercury* that outlined some of the inherent issues in defining the concept of an "American citizen." Included in his famous assessment was a comprehensive and sardonic description of "American" foods and eating habits. Linton wrote,

> If our patriot is old-fashioned enough to adhere to the so-called American breakfast, his coffee will be accompanied by an orange, domesticated in the Mediterranean region, a cantaloupe domesticated in Persia, or grapes domesticated in Asia Minor. He will follow this with a bowl of cereal made from grain domesticated in the Near East and prepared by methods also invented there.

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[639] Thomas Robinson Hazard, *The Jonnny-Cake Paper of "Shepard Tom" Together with Reminiscences of Narragansett Schools of Former Days* (Boston, MA: The Merrymount Press, 1915), 18.

> From this he will go on to waffles, a Scandinavian invention with plenty of butter, originally a Near Eastern cosmetic. As a side dish he may have the egg of a bird domesticated in Southeastern Asia or strips of the flesh of an animal domesticated in the same region, which has been salted and smoked by a process invented in Northern Europe.[640]

In prose surprisingly similar to the "federal diet" editorials printed throughout the United States in 1788, Linton detailed one of the fundamental problems with defining a national culture through its cuisine: food does not restrict itself to man-made political boundaries. Meals native to a specific region are not regulated in perpetuity to that region. In regard to the United States, Americans can drink coffee from the Mediterranean and cereal from the Near East while still considering their foods and eating habits distinctly American. The calls for removing "foreign" influences from American eating habits in order to reaffirm a distinct national identity (as numerous authors proposed during the early national era) were moot: for all practical purposes, a cuisine without the influence of outside factors was impractical and infeasible.

Furthermore, scholars such as Sidney Mintz have argued that ultimately—by nature of its unique construction—the United States simply cannot have a national cuisine. According to Mintz, unlike other important cultural institutions, the nation's complex history and the continued influence of multiple internal and external cultures impedes Americans from defining a singular culinary system. "It seems important to make clear that not having a cuisine is *not* like not having a literature;" he wrote, "indeed, not having a cuisine…might be a price we should be happily prepared to pay for 'what's great about America.'"[641] Thus, unlike other, more homogenous nations, America's multicultural heterogeneous nature prevents, according to Mintz, a unique and dominant national cuisine from effectively forming.

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[640] Ralph Linton, "One Hundred Per-Cent American," *The American Mercury* 40 (1937): 429.

But perhaps the greatest obstacle to the development of American nationalism (and subsequently to the development of a national cuisine) is the sheer size of the country itself. As Mintz writes, "The United States is extremely large in area and population," and thus the nation's vast expanses—combined with the relative difficulty of transmitting materials and ideas across it—has historically made regionalism a more dominant force for identity formation.[642] Indeed, it can be argued that in the early Republic, regional differences and local associations often stood in the way of national unity and therefore became a hindrance to the development of a national identity. Historian Merle Curti articulates this concept when he writes, "The fact that a marked development of nationalism and patriotism in thought and feeling is apparent [in the early Republic] should not obscure the counter tendencies of the period… Sectionalism, state pride, especially in the Atlantic seaboard, continued to be a vigorous sentiment."[643]

Authors of the era recognized this issue as well, particularly as it related to American food culture. The editors of *Harper's Weekly* pondered in 1854 whether it was possible for the United States to have a national food culture. "It is certainly quite time that we employed this distinction in common with other and older nations," they wrote.[644]

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[641] Sidney W. Mintz, *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom: Excursions Into Eating, Culture, and the Past* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1997), 108.

[642] Ibid., 108-112.

[643] Merle Curti, *American Paradox: The Conflict of Thought and Action* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1956), 387.

[644] "Have We a National Dish?," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 8, no. 44 (January 1854): 124.

And while the editors "observed the relation between national character and the national dish" in other nations, they found it difficult to designate one dish to symbolize the United States.[645] "The Yankee says Indian corn is near the mark," they argued, "the Southerner sends a bag of hominy and rice, and the Western man invites you to hear his porkers celebrate their own praise. But they are not quite right yet."[646] The regional associations throughout areas of the United States seemed to prohibit the authors from finding one portion of the nation to speak for all others. Without a homogeneous population, a national dish—and in turn a national food culture—became almost impossible to define.[647]

Even when specific appeals to national unity (such as Sarah Josepha Hale's editorials in *Godey's Lady's Magazine* for a national Thanksgiving holiday) were published, they too were prone to exposing the power of cultural regionalism over nationalism. As historian Trish Loughran argues, "Contrary to unionist truisms that link the spread of print culture to a more nationalist consciousness, the print campaigns of the 1830's cultivated a sense of material simultaneity across national space that, paradoxically, produced an enhanced sense of regional difference."[648] So too were patriotic celebrations in the era indicative at times of deeper national divisions. In *Celebrating the Fourth: Independence Day and the Rites of Nationalism in the Early*

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[645] Have We a National Dish?," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, 124.

[646] Ibid.

[647] The editors of *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* did eventually propose beef-steaks as a possible example of a singular American national dish. Sylvester Graham, William Alcott, and other vegetarians and vegans of the era probably would have disagreed with this proposition, however.

[648] Trish Loughran, *The Republic in Print: Print Culture in the Age of U.S. Nation Building, 1770-1870* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2009), 345.

Republic, historian Len Travers argues that, while some Americans (including examples in this dissertation)[649] regarded Independence Day celebrations and barbecues as strong manifestations of American nationalism, the "variety of ways they were celebrated, and the different companies they kept, suggests that 'nationalism' may also have been differently understood between regions, and among the people within a region."[650] These nationalistic events were, as he contends, "localism writ large,"[651] a concept that is wholly opposed to the sense of unity and nationalism promoted by many of the authors of the early American Republic previously reviewed in this dissertation.

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As these scholars and historical authors have asserted, the ability to accurately define an American national and culinary identity was steeped in issues encompassing both practical application and conflicting ideologies. Articulating American nationhood and American cuisine becomes, therefore, rather enigmatic. As Carroll Smith-Rosenberg writes in *This Violent Empire: The Birth of an American National Identity*, "The analysis of nationalism remains elusive. So many basic questions continue unanswered, so few scholars are prepared to agree even on first principles."[652] In his own attempt to define nationalism, British historian Eric J. Hobsbawm concurs. "The criteria used for this purpose—language, ethnicity or whatever—are themselves fuzzy, shifting, and ambiguous," he writes, "and as useless for the purposes of the traveler's orientation as cloud-shapes are compared to landmarks."[653]

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[649] See the descriptions of Fourth of July barbecues in: "Chapter 4: Barbecues and Pepperpots - The Politics of Commensality and Exclusion."

[650] Len Travers, *Celebrating the Fourth: Independence Day and the Rites of Nationalism in the Early Republic* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997), 152.

[651] Ibid.

[652] Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, *This Violent Empire: The Birth of an American National Identity* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), xi.

However, Travers may have an answer to this persistent issue. In his conclusion on the cultural effects of celebrations and nationalism in the early Republic, he confesses that, "Orators, newspaper editors, and politicians were rarely very clear about just what 'the national character' was; its qualities, imperatives, and its extent."[654] Nevertheless, he continues by asserting, "as with many such terms, its strength lay in its ambiguity."[655] Indeed, the construction of nationalism and national identity can be ascribed to the complicated, intangible, yet influential potential of culture itself. Authors of the early American Republic wielded such influence through intellectual constructions of identity, including the development of an amorphous, ambiguous, and ultimately impractical notion of a singular American food culture. Thus, in analyzing and studying such methods, one can generate a more robust understanding of the subjects of research regardless of any definitive answers and real-world applications of their intentions. The composition and motives of people and society have no simple, concrete answers, and consequently nor do the cultures such people create. A collective community of people residing in the arbitrary political boundaries of a nation remains an abstraction equally elusive and difficult to measure, but such complications do not diminish the influence such cultural constructions can induce in actuality.

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[653] Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 6.

[654] Travers, *Celebrating the Fourth*, 207.

[655] Ibid.

Anthropologist Carole Counihan posits that “in every culture, foodways constitute an organized system, a language that—through its structure and components—conveys meaning and contributes to the organization of the natural and social world.”[656] Like nationalism, the cultural influence of foodways derives from its structural nature and ability to generate meaning, to procure for its adherents an identity and sense of self. In the early American Republic, such methods were employed to develop a deliberate and cohesive national identity through descriptions of the production and consumption of food. Whether or not the efforts produced an actual “American cuisine,” therefore, is essentially irrelevant: what this dissertation has presented are the actions and ideologies of Americans that attempted to construct such an identity, and in this process of contrivance, fundamentally affected the course and development of their national history.

Prior to independence, colonial Americans were well versed with food culture’s ability to effect social and political change. The early settlers had envisioned the continent as containing an almost endless supply of rich natural resources. Native crops in particular represented the promise of significant bounty, and harvests were often viewed as indicative of the land’s generous supply and possibilities. However, cultural conflicts quickly arose that pitted the European foodstuffs and cooking methods of colonial settlers with the native North American crops they were consuming. By separating certain foods and preparation techniques as “acceptable” additions to their culinary system and rejecting other items as incompatible with their cultural and social traditions, early settlers originated the intellectual methodologies that utilized food to develop a hybridized American identity.

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[656] Carole M. Counihan, *The Anthropology of Food and Body: Gender, Meaning, and Power* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1999), 19.

Food as a political and social symbol continued to be a frequently utilized cultural concept in the early national period. The classification of foods and cooking methods as exhibiting characteristics either indicative of or in contrast to developed notions of “Americaness” helped to differentiate the food culture of the United States from other cultures. A process that initially was used to compare “savage” American Indian foodstuffs to “civilized” practices of European settlers was—after the American Revolution—used to distinguish “native” American food culture from any “foreign” European influence. The attempts to label certain foods as exceptional and unique to the United States mirrored the urge to separate American politics from its British colonial origins, and consequently Americans who harvested and cooked such distinct foods were viewed as fundamentally different from their European counterparts. The correlation was made between the quality of these foodstuffs and the virtuous nature of the Americans who consumed them, further distancing themselves from other cultures and countries and defining their own social systems—represented by the types of foods they produced and consumed—as superior to others.

Americans were not alone in such practices, and theories regarding the association between climate, health, and national character became influential ideologies in the intellectual exchange known as the Republic of Letters. European and American authors described differences between regions and peoples as influenced by the foods they grew and consumed, and in turn promoted the characteristics of their own communities while denigrating the features of others. Environmental and culinary factors—as well as personal preferences and practices—were seen as important details employed for the creation and formation of distinctly nationalistic societies. This transformative period saw the shift away from a postcolonial republican cultural ethos and toward the development of a nationalistic identity in the United States. Indeed, throughout North America and Europe, the modern concepts of nationalism and cuisine developed during the era simultaneously, with one affecting and influencing the other. For instance, the conceptualization of a singular and unified national French cuisine—even if the areas that composed this nation were historically and regionally distinct—is evidence of the intersectionality between deliberate national identity construction and food culture.

European authors promoted these associations between national cuisine and national character in the print culture of the early-nineteenth century. Negative depictions of American food and eating habits in European travelogues, for instance, were used to exemplify deficiencies in American society writ large. Americans responded to such derogatory depictions by equating decidedly American foods and cooking practices with positive attributes of their national character. Public festivals and celebrations stressed the egalitarian nature of American commensality, and promoted national virtue with symbolic feasts and foodstuffs. Yet however inclusive the American food culture of the early Republic purported to be, underlying divisions and social inequities often were exposed whenever a national food culture was broached. The contributions of African Americans, working class Americans, American Indians, immigrants, and women were predominantly excluded from the public sphere and characterizations of national culinary culture. In the process, what was construed as American cuisine was often associated with only white, elitist, male culture, and not indicative of the actual food culture of the early American Republic.

In the antebellum era, further sectional and ideological differences regarding gender, health, and the future direction of the country caused many Americans to feel divided and anxious. Americans increasingly turned inward to the domestic sphere and earlier, romanticized traditions to relieve the stresses of modern life. Attempts to combat societal ills by reaffirming and reexamining the influence a national food culture had on the health of persons and communities became ubiquitous. But ultimately, such actions proved ineffective as attempts to assert extreme and/or regionally-specific systems and cultures on a national scale were not as influential as its proponents had wished for. At the end of the era, it was clear that the the deep-seated problems Americans faced could not be solved by a reevaluation of national culinary culture alone.

However, the desire to symbolically equate the food and eating habits of the United States with the national characteristics of its people—and to use food culture as a method to assess the state of American society—remained an underlying and foundational social construct of the early American Republic. The style and methods in which Americans constructed their sense of self evolved throughout the period, often in contradictory and paradoxical manners. American food was referred to in equal measure as both bountiful and unhealthy, distinct but inferior, egalitarian yet exclusionary, simultaneously unifying and divergent. Nevertheless, the manipulation of food culture and cuisine to develop whatever form of a national identity Americans wished to advance remained an effective and influential cultural framing device throughout the era.

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In his "Letter on Cookery and Eating" for the 1814 edition of *The Port Folio* literary magazine, the author known as Epicuri de Grege Porcus wrote, "I confess myself decidedly hostile to the ancient mode of writing history. The details of battles, the harangues of generals to their armies, the bloody pages of eternal warfare, afford little instruction, but inspire me with great disgust."[657] For the author, his interest in the past lay in the "comfort [of] the individuals composing the nation…and in what way can their good and bad qualities be made use of to present advantage."[658] To that end, Epicui de Grege Porcus found "inquiries…into the domestic comforts, manners, customs, and modes of living…and into their modes of cooking too, [to be] investigations of far more interest, than to trace the course of Hannibal over the Alps."[659]

This dissertation and its author share similar sentiments with Epicui de Grege Porcus. The mundane, daily, base necessities of life often effect social and political change in far more meaningful ways than the exceptional events and actions that comprise more conventional historical studies. Moreover, a study that details what people ate, how they procured this sustenance, and the manner in which they envisioned their relationship with food might initially be viewed as a quaint recollection of an earlier time. But as this work has addressed, such methods of inquiry reveal a complex system of intellectual and cultural identity construction that ultimately transforms personal, communal, and national perceptions of self in profound ways.

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[657] Epicui de Grege Porcus, "Letter on Cookery and Eating," *The Port Folio*, July-December, 1814, vol. 4 (New York, NY: Bradford & Abraham H. Irtskeep, 1815), 541.

[658] Ibid., 540.

[659] Ibid.

A review of the American people's relationship with food culture reveals an intriguing examination of the development and formation of national identity. In the early American Republic, factual and conceptual depictions of a unified, singular American cuisine melded together to define a representational embodiment of the prevailing conventions and perspectives that constituted a national character. In editorials, essays, visual representations, public and private celebrations, and a host of other resources and methods, Americans enveloped their goals, anxieties, and morals into descriptions and depictions of food culture and cuisine. The era did indeed have a distinct culinary culture because the contemporary perception that such a construct can and should exist was in itself a powerful proposition that affected how Americans formed their own personal, and subsequently national, identity.

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