

Cooking with Politics, Economics, Science, and Technology

Book History and the Joy of Cooking

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Introduction

Who hasn't heard of the *Joy of Cooking*? Your mother, maybe even your grandmother, may have it on her shelf. You may have childhood memories of eating food cooked using recipes from this famous cookbook. The history of the *Joy of Cooking*¹ is a fascinating story that started in 1931 when Irma von Starkloff Rombauer, a midwestern housewife, first published this book. Since then, the *Joy* has gone through six major revisions. I will briefly describe these seven editions. We will then examine how the evolution of the *Joy* shows that book history both affects and is affected by a wide range of factors, including politics and economics; and science and technology.

Overview of the Joy and Editions

In 1930, the first year of the Great Depression, Irma von Starkloff Rombauer struck upon the idea to write a cookbook after her husband (who had a history of depression) committed suicide and left her without income. Although Irma's St. Louis meals were known more for their sparkling conversation than the food, Irma was as enthusiastic about this new project as she was in her St. Louis community activism. She collected her own recipes and those from family and friends and utilized the illustrating and design talents of her daughter, Marion Rombauer, and the typing and indexing skills of her husband's old secretary, Mary Josephine (Mazie) Whyte. Using a portion of the \$6000 estate left by her husband, Irma self-published *The Joy of Cooking: A Compilation of Reliable Recipes with a Casual Culinary Chat* through the A. C. Clayton Printing Company in 1931. As its title suggests, this book was noted for its engaging conversational style. Irma's voice presents itself throughout the text, especially in her recipes, which reflect her German-American heritage. Irma's specialty was desserts, and the *Joy* contains many recipes for traditional German pastries, cookies, and cakes.

After moderate success in selling a portion of the 3,000 copies printed (through friends, women's exchanges, gift-shops, booksellers, and department stores), Irma decided to revise *The Joy of Cooking* for commercial publication. Bobbs-Merrill published the revised *Joy* in 1936. The change from self-publication to commercial publication effected many design changes. In this second edition, Irma developed a new "Action Method" of writing recipes, in which she indicated each ingredient in bold print only at the point where the directions called for them. This method differed from the one used in most cookbooks of the day, which listed the ingredients at the top of the recipe before the directions. Recipes in all later editions of *The Joy of Cooking* follow this innovative style. The presence of a professional editor can also be seen in the much-improved index, which appeared in the usual place at the end of the book in the second edition; in the first edition, the index had appeared at the front of the book instead of a table of contents. The 1936 edition of *The Joy of Cooking* became a national best-seller, and between 1936 and 1942, it sold 52,151 copies.

In 1943, Irma finished writing the third edition. This edition of the *Joy* contained many new recipes that used up-to-date methods and modern ingredients, such as pressure cookers and processed ham. It also included additional information on subjects such as herbs, nutritional tallies for common foods, cooking terms, table settings, and wines. With the advent of World War II food rationing, Irma added information on new and traditional canning methods and included recipes that used alternatives to sugar and red meat. Demand for the book surged. In 1946, the 1943 edition was reprinted with the World War II rationing information deleted.

Irma and her daughter Marion (now Marion Rombauer Becker) collaborated to produce the fourth edition in 1951. This edition reflected developments in kitchen technology and nutrition studies. It also included recipes that catered to America's new taste for foreign cuisine.

¹ The first edition of the *Joy* includes the word "the." However, in the past several editions, the word "the" has been eliminated in favor of the more succinct title, "Joy of Cooking." In this paper, I will refer to all of the editions as the *Joy of Cooking* or simply the *Joy*.

The fifth edition was published in 1962, the same year as Irma's death. Marion was the main contributor for this edition, and her work transformed the *Joy of Cooking* into "the most exhaustive, far-ranging culinary teaching manual presented to the American public in her lifetime" (Mendelson 306). She managed to preserve "the sturdy original German elements and [make] at least a game attempt to retain the spontaneous charm that was her mother's unique contribution." Yet, she also "found a novel and challenging way to interweave concrete teaching through recipe formulas--at all levels from scrambled eggs to croquembouche--with enlightenment through painstaking descriptive forays into kinds of knowledge seldom found outside specialized manuals for food professionals" (Mendelson 343). This edition contained detailed instructions on a range of topics including how to beat eggs, identify a panoply of herbs and spices, purify contaminated water, melt chocolate, and make a host of basic preparations from soup stocks to cottage cheese to chili vinegar. Marion also improved the visual format by introducing several symbols: parentheses to denote optional ingredients, a snowflake to indicate freezing or the use of frozen ingredients, a triangle for high-altitude directions, a star for Christmas specialties, a backyard grill for outdoor cookery, a stylized pressure cooker and blender to indicate the use of those machines, and an arrow-shaped pointer to alert readers to particularly critical information in both descriptive text and recipes (Mendelson 309). However, the new text and symbols introduced major copyediting and typesetting problems, including inconsistencies in the use of symbols, a poorly referenced index (often the most important tool in any cookbook), and a lack of continuity in the text. Bobbs-Merrill had to reissue a corrected edition in 1963.

Marion finished writing the sixth edition in 1975. "The critical praise heaped on the 1975 *Joy* was virtually unanimous. Various reviewers approvingly noted Marion's sturdy skepticism about some of the wonders confronting modern consumers and her pleasure in championing older home methods and country skills. With its emphatic consumerist stance, the newest version struck many observers as representing homespun cloth in a polyester age" (Mendelson 398). Her belief in back-to-basics healthful eating made the 1975 edition such a great success that a revision was not required for over 20 years. Over 3.5 million copies were sold between 1975 and 1996, bringing total hardback sales of all editions of the *Joy* since 1931 to approximately 9.3 million (Mendelson 413).

Marion's son, Ethan Becker, joined the ranks of co-authors of the *Joy of Cooking* in 1997 with the sixth revision. Scribner, an imprint of Simon and Schuster, published this edition in 1997 (all previous revisions were published by Bobbs-Merrill, until the troubled publishing company went through a series of buy-outs and mergers). With Maria D. Guarnaschelli as editor, and contributions from dozens of well-known food authors, the latest edition was thoroughly revised, and every recipe retested. Recipes for ethnic dishes were brought "closer to their ethnic roots and not more 'American.'" This edition features a new system of organization within each chapter, beginning with easy recipes and proceeding gradually to more elaborate ones. Chapters on canning, preserving, and drying were eliminated to make room for new material, including chapters that reflect changing styles in American eating habits, in which sandwiches, burritos, pizzas, soups, or salads can form the basis of a meal. A new chapter on nutrition provides advice on healthful diets, and reduced-fat alternatives are included in many recipes. Continuing as the nation's most popular cookbook, this edition sold over 1 million copies in its first year.

This overview of the history of the seven major editions of the *Joy of Cooking* mainly describes the changes in the content and layout of the text. In the remainder of this paper, I will address the contextual reasons behind these revisions in detail, starting with the political and economic changes brought about by Prohibition, the Great Depression, World War II, and economic globalization. I will then show how the authors of the *Joy of Cooking* have reacted to developments in science and technology, such as new findings in food and nutrition science and the invention of the electric refrigerator, pressure cooker, microwave oven, and more.

History of Editions and Revisions of the *Joy of Cooking*

Irma Rombauer self-published the first *Joy of Cooking* in 1931. Her daughter, Marion Rombauer Becker, illustrated the first *Joy of Cooking* as well as the subsequent commercially-produced editions of 1936 and 1943. In 1953, Marion shifted focus of the *Joy of Cooking* from a personal, chatty book to a real teaching manual that included the latest information on techniques and ingredients. Forty years later, Ethan Becker takes his place alongside grandmother and mother as co-author of the *Joy of Cooking*, the sixth revision of this great American classic.

1931: First *Joy of Cooking*, self-published

Author: Irma Rombauer

Illustrator: Marion Rombauer

Pages: 396

1936: First revision, published by Bobbs-Merrill

Author: Irma Rombauer

Illustrator: Marion Rombauer Becker

Pages: 628

1941: Reprint of 1936 edition, Bobbs-Merrill

1942: Reprint of 1936 edition, Bobbs-Merrill

1943: Second revision, Published by Bobbs-Merrill

Author: Irma Rombauer

Illustrator: Marion Rombauer Becker

Pages: 884

1946: Reprint of 1943 edition, Bobbs-Merrill

(with World War II rationing information deleted)

1951: Third revision, published by Bobbs-Merrill

Authors: Irma Rombauer and Marion Rombauer Becker

Illustrator: Ginnie Hofmann

Pages: 1,013

1952: Reprint of 1951 edition, Bobbs-Merrill

1953: Reprint of 1951 edition, published by Bobbs-Merrill

Author: Irma Rombauer and Marion Rombauer Becker

Illustrator: Ginnie Hofmann

1962: Fourth revision, Bobbs-Merrill

Author: Irma Rombauer and Marion Rombauer Becker

Illustrators: Ginnie Hofmann and Beverly Warner

Pages: 849

1963: Reprint of 1962 edition, Bobbs-Merrill

(Published with Marion Rombauer Becker's corrections)

1975: Fifth revision: published by Bobbs-Merrill

Author: Irma Rombauer and Marion Rombauer Becker

Illustrators: Ikki Matsumoto and Ginnie Hofmann

Pages: 915

1997: Sixth revision, published by Scribner

Author: Irma Rombauer, Marion Rombauer Becker and Ethan Becker

Illustrator: Laura Hartman Maestro

Pages: 1,152

Figure 1: History of Editions and Revisions of the *Joy of Cooking*. Courtesy of www.joyofcooking.com.

Politics and Economics

The content of the early editions the *Joy of Cooking* was greatly affected by the political and economic environment in which Irma Rombauer lived, mainly the Prohibition and Great Depression eras. The *Joy of Cooking* was later revised to reflect the radical changes in daily American life during World War II. Finally, the most recent edition demonstrates how profoundly the advent of a global economy has changed the way Americans cook and eat today.

Prohibition

Prohibition in the United States began in 1919, and was repealed in 1933. The *Joy of Cooking* reflected the political environment of Prohibition. For example, the Cocktails chapter of the 1931 edition begins, “Most cocktails containing liquor are made today with gin and ingenuity. In brief, take an ample supply of the former and use your imagination.” This statement displays widespread acceptance that Prohibition was not being enforced by the end of this period. In the 1936 edition, this passage was changed to reflect the legalization of alcohol: “The day is past for cocktails made with gin and ingenuity only. We may now enjoy a multitude of more regular and less inspirational concoctions...” Both editions contain recipes for alcoholic drinks, even though the first edition was published before the repeal of Prohibition.

Even after the repeal of Prohibition, alcohol still had some social stigma, and the introduction to the Cocktails chapter in the 1936 edition stated, “To give this book the impression of sobriety and stability it deserves the alcoholic cocktails have been relegated to the chapter on Beverages. There they may blush unseen by those who disapprove of them and they may be readily found in the company of many other good drinks by those who do not.” When one turns to the last section of the Beverages chapter, “On the Serving of Wines,” there is a discussion that begins, “The repeal of prohibition has loosed a flood of literature on the subject of wines. Here are a few simple rules, but remember please, that they are suggestions to guide the inexperienced only—connoisseurs will kindly attack the bibliographies referred to, now being distributed generously by importers and business houses.” Prohibition not only affected the sale of alcohol, but also the distribution of literature related to alcohol. This is only one of many examples of how book history embodies the history of a society.

Serving alcohol in social situations soon became widely accepted, and the 1952 edition of the *Joy* has over 50 recipes for alcoholic drinks, many with colorful names, such as Pink Lady, Dry Manhattan, Stinger, and Hot Tom and Jerry. These names also reflect a colorful history. For example, the rum cocktails, which call for a “light-bodied Cuban rum only,” reflect the status of U.S. trade with Cuba during the 1950s before U.S. trade embargoes took hold later in the decade and continues to this day. A recipe for Cuba Libre in the 1952 edition reflects the changing political climate in Cuba and foretells the uprising of the Batista dictatorship and future additional upheavals in Cuban government and society.

The expanded section on cocktails in the 1975 edition is completely eliminated in the 1997 edition, and no recipes for any alcoholic drinks appear in this latest edition, even though there are currently no laws mandating another Prohibition era. In the 1997 edition, the “About Cocktail Parties” section begins:

The cocktail party is an estimable but endangered social institution. Its demise may be blamed on factors as various as the waning popularity of hard liquor, the regrettable decline of the sibling arts of conversation and flirtation, and the growing acceptance in this country of the European idea that dinner by itself is sufficient diversion for an evening. (The cocktail party, remember, is an American invention).

These are all examples of how book history reflects politics and is intertwined with the social acceptability of certain actions, including social drinking.

Great Depression

The beginning of the Great Depression was signaled by the stock market crash in October 1929. In the following years, stock prices fell, banks failed, spending and output dropped precipitously, and unemployment shot upwards. Many middle-class families had to let go of traditional household "domestics" hired to help with the cooking and cleaning. Irma Rombauer knew that "millions of women who might once have told the cook what to make for dinner now were their own cooks. It was to assure such people that their new responsibility really wasn't menial, that the social implications of cookery could now be enlarged to include 'joy,' a discreet rearrangement of necessity so as to make it not only a virtue but a delight" (Mendelson 3). This was the environment that spurred the birth of the *Joy of Cooking*.

Many recipes in the first edition of the *Joy of Cooking* (1931) reflect the economic situation of the Depression era. Canned goods were much cheaper than fresh foods, and many recipes reflect Irma's favorite way of saving both time and money. For example, several recipes use canned soup bases, and other canned ingredients include corn, tomatoes, pineapple, apricots, and cherries.

Frugality was of the utmost importance, and Irma includes many recipes to use leftover foods, such as Economy Soufflé and Left-Over Soup. Meat was expensive, which was reflected in the number of recipes for meatless soup. Other "left-over" recipes show how to stretch meat to last for many meals, including Mashed Potato Pie ("This is a very good way of using a small quantity of cold mashed potatoes and bits of meat and vegetables"), Bacon Left-Overs, Meat Pie Roll ("Here is an attractive way of serving a small amount of left-over meat"), and Left-Over Meat in Biscuit or Pie Dough. An entire section on "Recipes and Suggestions for Left-Over Food" shows cooks how to make the most of ingredients in the kitchen. Today, the *Joy* is aimed towards a more cosmopolitan audience, and the aforementioned recipes and sections are eliminated in the 1997 edition.

Another telling feature to note is the number of "Mock" recipes in the 1931 and 1936 editions, including the recipe for Mock Pistachio Ice Cream, which uses almond extract and extra vanilla extract instead of actual pistachio nuts. Mock Venison calls for a leg of lamb or mutton instead of venison. Mock Duck I substitutes flank steak or rump steak for duck, and Mock Duck II uses lamb instead. Mock Mince Meat uses tomatoes and suet instead of beef. There is even a recipe for Mock Paté de Foie Gras Spread, which calls for liver sausage. The *Joy of Cooking* aimed to provide instructions for making tasty, enjoyable meals without spending a large portion of the family income during the Great Depression. We especially see these economic constraints and differences in the poultry recipes.

The chicken market of the 1930s was vastly different from what exists today. Chicken was already expensive, and the Great Depression put it "further out of reach for many households than it had been at the time of Herbert Hoover's 1928 'chicken in every pot' campaign speech" (Mendelson 134). There is even a Mock Chicken Sandwich recipe, which uses canned tuna fish, and a Mock Chicken Drumstick (City Chicken) recipe, which uses less expensive veal and pork steak instead of chicken. In addition, no corporate giant was differentially breeding 'fryers,' 'broilers,' or 'roasters,' or selling packages of this or that part during the Great Depression. It should come as no surprise that the 1931 book has no recipes for chicken breasts or thighs (Mendelson 134). A recipe for "Breasts of Chicken" in the 1936 edition instructs the cook to "Remove the breasts from: 2 or 3 young chickens (Leave the wing bone attached)."

World War II provided the impetus for national economic revival after the Great Depression. By the time of the 1952 edition, all of these "Mock" dishes had disappeared and were replaced with recipes using authentic ingredients. In the 1931 recipe for Breaded Veal Slices, Irma notes, "The following Veal Slices are so delicate that they may be served as a company dish in preference to some more costly meat course." But in the 1952 edition, the wording of this comment changed from "costly meat course" to "elaborate meat course." In addition, the number of chicken recipes increases in later editions, as mass-produced chicken (hence neither raised nor slaughtered at home) in the years after the Second World War became more prevalent (Cowan 72). For example, in the 1952 edition, there is a recipe for Stuffed Chicken Legs requiring pre-cut chicken parts. By the time the 1964 edition is printed, the authors assume that chicken legs and breasts are readily available. Both the change in the

“mock” dishes and in the number of recipes calling for chicken parts reflect the shift from an emphasis on frugality during the time of the Great Depression to an emphasis on good cooking and eating during a time of economic revival, and later, prosperity.

World War II

The Great Depression led to the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt as president in 1932. With his New Deal, he introduced a number of major changes in the structure of the American economy, using increased government regulation and extensive public-works projects to promote a recovery. But despite this active intervention, mass unemployment and economic stagnation continued, though on a somewhat reduced scale, with about 15 percent of the work force still unemployed in 1939 at the outbreak of World War II. After that, unemployment dropped rapidly as American factories were flooded with orders from overseas for armaments and munitions. The depression ended completely soon after the United States' entry into World War II in 1941 (Britannica). However, there were other consequences to this war-induced economic revival, which greatly affected the history of the *Joy of Cooking*.

The U.S. Government established mandatory food rationing during World War II to avoid food shortages in the U.S. and to supply overseas U.S. and Allied troops with food. The social implications of food rationing were wide-ranging and affected all households. Homemakers had to find new ways of cooking with limited amounts of groceries, especially red meat and sugar, which were the most coveted food items that were rationed. Many cooks turned to the 1943 edition of the *Joy of Cooking*, published during World War II, for advice. New sections included "Sugarless and Sugar-Saving Recipes for Cakes, Cookies and Desserts," containing recipes using unrationed sweeteners like honey and corn syrup, and "Meat Stretching, Meat Substitutes and Supplementary Dishes," including "Wartime Emergency Soups" (using dehydrated soups) and "Suggestions For the Use of Soybeans." Since fresh food was scarce, homemakers turned to methods of preserving food grown or prepared at home. The home canning chapter was extensively rewritten for the 1943 edition and contained instructions for Open Kettle Canning, Cold Pack Canning, Hot Pack Canning, Hot Water Bath, Oven Steaming or Processing, and Pressure Canning.

The war also introduced the *Joy* to new readers such as army and internment camp cooks who faced limited (and often very miscellaneous) ingredients and dozens of hungry soldiers. The *Joy* became a morale booster, and American servicemen wrote to thank Irma. This excerpt from one such letter shows the *Joy*'s far-reaching effect on its audience:

To begin with may I introduce myself? Primarily, I am the surgeon aboard this aircraft carrier, the U.S.S. INDEPENDENCE.... Of no less importance is my collateral duty, that of chairman of the Wardroom Mess Committee, and it is in this regard that I beg to express to you, on behalf of the one-hundred and seventy-five officers, our thanks for your priceless guidance via your book, "The Joy of Cooking." When the latest committee took over six months ago, it was when the going was the toughest, when the men were most tense, the supplies at their meagerest, and the food routine. To make matters worse none of us knew anything about cooking and our early sincere attempts merely brought the improvements expected of a new broom. Not until someone found your book among the belongings of the Captain's Boy, did the remarkable happen. We thumbed hungrily through its pages bringing out, time after time, clusters of culinary gems. The criteria of a recipe's trial were just the presence of its ingredients in our larder, though some minor ones had to be imagined, the results were so perfect that before long even the pilots, who had always been thistles in our hair, were forced to admit the excellence of the cuisine. They soon learned to appreciate dishes never before tasted and to use the varied sauces that replaced the catsup, the vinegar, etc.; so that Lamb Terrapin or Bouillabaisse have become as familiar to them as have Croissants and Macédoine to the committee.

Thus, the *Joy of Cooking* united both families on the home front and servicemen on the war front through both food and text.

World War II had another effect on book history in the form of paper quotas, which limited the number and kinds of texts that publishers printed. "In the interest of national preparedness the federal government imposed quotas on paper supplies throughout World War II, driving the trade publishers to

frantic stratagems for buying enough to print their seasonal lists and keep up with the demand for particularly successful books. It is entirely possible, although not verifiable, that Little, Brown could not find the paper to manage competitive press runs of *The Boston Cooking-School Cook Book* in 1944, when Irma Rombauer first beat it out. Bobbs-Merrill was lucky enough to farm out some of the *Joy* printing for 1945 and 1946 to the Blakiston Company of Philadelphia, a Doubleday subsidiary that published medical titles and had an unusually large paper quota" (Mendelson 178). Once again, politics and economics play a role in the evolution of the history of the *Joy of Cooking*.

Global Economy

The phrase "global economy," which became popular in the early 1990s, refers to the increasing levels of international trade. With international trade comes international culture. Many aspects of the 1997 edition of the *Joy of Cooking* reflect the effects of globalization in the U.S., including a greater taste for international cuisine, higher availability of imported foods, and a greater awareness of the health benefits of other cultures' eating habits.

In the introduction of the 1997 edition, editor Maria Guarnaschelli writes:

I knew that the book must show America's fascination with food and its embrace of cuisines from many cultures...It also meant bringing *Joy's* recipes from other countries—which had been in the book from the start—closer to their ethnic roots and not more 'American'...New chapters reflect the new ways we eat. Today sandwiches, burritos, and pizzas can be the basis of a meal, and so they have their own chapter. So do Little Dishes, those piquant and often grain- or vegetable-based recipes, many of them from other countries like Mexico, China, and Thailand, which used to be thought of as side dishes. Separate chapters are now devoted to Beans and Tofu, Pasta and Noodles, and Grains, which all take a central role in our thinking of what makes a meal. Most of the recipes in the Soups and Salads chapters can be meals in themselves. All these chapters offer the option of using meat as a condiment rather than a main ingredient, in line with today's understanding of healthful eating.

The new edition of the *Joy* shows how greatly international cuisine has been incorporated into American eating habits as a result of globalization.

The "Condiments, Marinades & Dry Rubs" chapter contains a section which is only one example of how much effort has been put into making each recipe ethnically authentic. This section, "An International Sampler of Cold Sauces," includes recipes for American Horseradish Cream, Bavarian Apple and Horseradish Sauce, Mojo ("the national table sauce of Cuba"), Scandinavian Mustard-Dill Sauce, Chimichurri ("the Argentineans are enthusiastic meat eaters, and often serve grilled or roasted meat with this slightly spicy sauce on the side"), English Fresh Mint Sauce, Pistou ("the Provençal version of Italy's pesto"), Picada ("one of the 'secret ingredients' of the cooking of the Catalonia region of Spain"), Salsa Verde (a "classic Italian tart green sauce"), Avgolemono (a "favorite Greek sauce"), and Georgian Garlic and Walnut Sauce, Turkish Garlic and Hazelnut Sauce, Harissa (from North Africa), Raita ("Indian Yogurt Salad"), Nam Prik ("translates as 'pepper water'...the traditional table sauce of Thailand"), Southeast Asian Peanut Dipping Sauce, Nuoc Cham (from Vietnam), and Japanese Wasabi Soy Sauce. This emphasis on authenticity represents a drastic change from the supposedly ethnic recipes of the first and second editions of the *Joy*, which included recipes for ketchup-based "Italian" dishes and attempts to mimic the ever-popular haute couture of French cuisine. Today, rather than "Americanizing" popular dishes, the *Joy of Cooking* demonstrates a move toward sincere respect of the uniqueness other cultures and international cuisine.

The section on Citrus Fruits assumes that many of the listed fruits are readily available anywhere in the country. For example, it describes grapefruit and pomelos, which "ripen at different times in Texas, Florida, California, and Arizona." It later mentions that "kumquats are available in early winter, and the freshest supply will be at an Asian market." A subsection on limes mentions "Mexican limes, Key limes, and West Indian limes" and that "some believe Bearss is a separate type, and some regard it as a variety of Persian or Tahitian lime." The subsection on oranges mentions varieties from California, Florida, Washington, and Israel. Another sign of ethnic markets is mentioned in the discussion of oranges: "Sour oranges are not grown on a wide scale commercially, but in late winter and early spring they can be found in Hispanic markets and farmers' markets in citrus-growing country." The *Joy*

shows real evidence of a global marketplace. The suggestion for the general reader to try looking for ingredients at Asian and Hispanic markets is yet another example of the extent of the emphasis on authentic international cuisine in the U.S.

The first chapter, “Diet, Lifestyle & Health,” contains a discussion of the USDA Food Guide Pyramid: It should be noted, however, that not all nutritionists accept the Food Guide Pyramid as gospel. Some critics of the USDA maintain that the recommended servings of meat and dairy products are too high, perhaps because of intense lobbying by the concerned industries. Proponents of the ‘Mediterranean diet’—based originally on traditional consumption patterns in Greece and southern Italy (where heart disease and related ailments are comparatively rare)—argue for a greater amount of fat, in the form of olive oil, cheese, and yogurt, than the USDA would like and a smaller intake of red meat. To show other healthful ways of eating, Oldways Preservation & Exchange Trust, a non-profit educational organization based in Cambridge, Massachusetts, has developed alternative pyramids, including Asian, Latin American, and vegetarian.

The USDA was responsible for the “Basic Four Food Groups” that many of us adhered to in the last decades. Today, schoolchildren are instead indoctrinated with the “Food Guide Pyramid.” Here, the *Joy of Cooking* not only shows how much influence the USDA has in American eating habits, but also how it may be influenced by political and economic goals of other interested groups. Also evident in the text is the level of global exchange and relations that has enabled proponents of traditional ethnic diets to be heard in the U.S.

Irma’s German-American heritage and Midwestern background does not show through as much in this edition. Gone are nearly all of the assumptions that her upbringing caused her to include in the first several editions (including the curiously high number of oyster dishes that nearly outnumbered the other seafood dishes). There are now Jewish recipes, including several recipes for challah, a “traditional Jewish Sabbath bread, blessed and served before Friday-night dinner.” Right after the recipe for American Sponge Cake is a recipe for Passover Sponge Cake, which calls for matzo meal and potato starch instead of sifted cake flour. In the Fruits chapter, the Coconuts section begins with “If you live in coconut country...” and later mentions that “You will find the freshest coconuts in Asian and Hispanic groceries.” The Guavas section states, “There are a number of guavas in the world, but the common guava—the one most available here—resembles a pale smooth-skinned lemon...If you live in Florida or southern California, you may also find strawberry and lemon guavas at a farmers’ market.” The section on vegetarian diets, begins with: “Many of the world’s populations follow vegetarian diets, usually for religious reasons, or near-vegetarian ones, mandated by the scarcity of meat and other animal products in certain areas. In the United States, people may choose vegetarian diets of varying rigor (some American “vegetarians” happily consume fish and poultry, drawing the line only at the dreaded ‘red meat’) for reasons of religion, philosophy, or health.”

From these passages, it is evident that the global economy has consolidated the national economy and diversified U.S. culture. Imported fruits and vegetables are available in the neighborhood ethnic market in most places in the country. The standard “meat and potatoes” diet is gone and has been replaced with various vegetarian or other ethnic diets. The *Joy of Cooking* now reflects a truly global marketplace.

Science and Technology

Over the past 70 years, studies in nutrition have enabled Americans to choose healthier foods. Scientists and engineers have introduced inventions like the electric refrigerator, pressure cooker, and microwave oven. All of these discoveries and innovations have changed the way Americans cook and eat, and the editions of the *Joy of Cooking* have evolved to reflect these changes.

Science and Food

Scientists first discovered vitamins in 1912, and in 1926, thiamine (vitamin B1) became the first vitamin to be isolated in pure form. Many other vitamins were found and isolated in the 1920s and

1930s, including vitamins C, K, and E. Researchers discovered further information on the health effects of other important elements of food, including proteins, carbohydrates, fats, oils, and minerals. Housewives were expected "to have a basic understanding of food composition in order to serve their families meals that would promote good health" (Plante 246). For example, Irma's suggestions for preserving nutrients in the Vegetables chapter of the 1936 edition of the *Joy* reflected the nation's growing concern for healthy eating:

Wash vegetables, but do not soak them in water for any length of time...Cook vegetables in as little boiling salted water as possible, so that when they are tender they will have absorbed all of the moisture in the pan...This method will keep their mineral salts and vitamins from escaping. It is advisable to cook some vegetables covered...The use of soda is to be avoided. It will help retain the color of vegetables but it will destroy their vitamins...A steamer is a closed kettle with a perforated tray and a water container. Vegetables cooked by this method are delicious and their full flavor and food value are retained.

Although this passage conflicts with today's findings in food science, it does demonstrate how research in nutrition affected popular culinary literature.

Mendelson also notes that during this period, "most Americans genuinely did not understand the notion of cooking anything in oil. We can hardly appreciate how wedded the descendants of English settlers and northern European immigrants were to the solid animal fats (butter, lard, rendered suet) that could be made at home, or at least locally, by simple processes that everyone understood. The technology for turning vegetable sources into refined oil, on the other hand, was not compatible with home production or small-scale manufacture by a neighborhood butcher or dairy" (138). At first glance, over half of the recipes in the 1936 edition of the *Joy* call for cream, butter, or bacon drippings. One example, which today is a paradox in itself, is a recipe for eggplant. Irma notes, "The old-fashioned manner of dipping it in batter and frying it in deep fat has given way to newer ones, of which the baked eggplant recipe which follows is a good example. Besides being digestible, non-fattening and exceedingly good, it is very quickly prepared." She then advises to "spread the slices on both sides with Soft butter...and serve the eggplant while it is very hot with Lemon Butter" (195-196). This is quite different from the low-fat and vegetable oil-based recipes of today.

Irma had her own opinion about dieting fads and reflects upon this topic in several passages of the 1936 edition of the *Joy*. In the chapter on potatoes, she writes, "In recent years the mania for girth control has played havoc with the fair name of the potato--bringing 'insinuates' against it that are almost as damaging as the charges brought against the erstwhile virtue of bread" (Mendelson 160). Throughout each of its revisions, the *Joy of Cooking* has been updated to reflect new trends in healthy American eating but to avoid short-lived food fads.

A major change in the content of the *Joy of Cooking* appeared in the 1951 edition when Marion moved from her role as illustrator to collaborator with Irma on this fourth edition. Irma's congenial and conversational tone still appeared throughout the book, though supplemented by Marion's passages, which discuss the reasoning behind cooking methods. Marion included many more recipes to preserve the nutritive value of fruits and vegetables in the 1951 edition of the *Joy*. Marion's beliefs about food and health were probably shaped by her involvement with the organic-gardening movement starting around 1940 and her reading of Adelle Davis's 1947 cookbook *Let's Cook It Right*. Davis was a supporter of proper cooking to conserve natural nutrients and emphasized this in her book. In the 1951 edition of the *Joy*, "nearly every reference to cooking vegetables in salted water had been deleted because of Marion's Davis-inspired concern over vitamin loss" (Mendelson 263). However, Irma's strong-willed opinion prevailed in other areas, including this passage on fish:

My conscience—or is it Marion?—compels me to make this statement: From the nutritional standpoint the boiling of fish is objectionable, for, unless watched carefully and never permitted to go beyond the simmering point, it destroys flavors and nutritional values that are less apt to be lost in the steaming of fish. The latter is a highly recommended method. Sorry, "boiled" fish is one of my favorites.

Although the *Joy of Cooking* now included much more information on healthful cooking techniques, emphasis still remained on the "joy" in both cooking and eating.

Because of Marion's influence, the 1951 edition contains a separate chapter on Herbs. However, the last "herb" reflects the knowledge of both the general public and Irma:

Monosodium glutamate, the mysterious "white powder" of the Orient, which by stimulating the taste buds, intensifies the basic flavors of many foods except sweets and egg dishes... 'M. S. G.,' as it is nicknamed by its devotees, may be added at any time to stews, sauces and vegetables, but it is usually rubbed into meats before boiling, roasting or sautéing them. This is now available under trade names or at the druggist under its own.

However, in the 1964 edition, Marion inserts a new, all-encompassing "Know Your Ingredients" chapter, which covers many basic recipe ingredients in details. Monosodium glutamate now appears in the subsection on salts with an entry that describes it as "a concentrated form of sodium, which is usually extracted from grains or beets." Improvements in the *Joy of Cooking* appeared as international trade increased and the general public became more knowledgeable about these exotic ingredients.²

In the 1950s, Marion had not foreseen the effects of the 1970s, when "college students and other young adults who'd risen to the cause of the civil rights movement and the feminist movement, and protested the Vietnam War, were looking to alternative life-styles. Communes sprang up across the country where groups of people...farmed the land and prepared simple, wholesome dishes without food additives, relying on natural grains, beans, legumes, fruits and vegetables as staples. The concept of communal living didn't last but the diets and eating habits of this younger generation during the 1970s resulted in a growing awareness of the health benefits associated with a vegetarian diet" (Plante). The 1975 edition lasted for over 20 years of changing food fads without being revised because of Marion's emphasis on healthful cooking.

In the 1960s-70s, scientists discovered protein complexes associated with cholesterol, including HDL (high-density lipoprotein) and LDL (low-density lipoprotein). By the 1980s, researchers had confirmed the link between HDL, LDL, cholesterol, and heart disease (especially atherosclerosis), and they soon recommended new low-cholesterol, low-fat, low-salt, and high-fiber diets. Scientists during this period also discovered the cancer-fighting properties of vitamins in fresh vegetables and fruits, such as the beta-carotene (vitamin A) agents in found in carrots, sweet potatoes, spinach, broccoli, apricots, cantaloupes and peaches. The 1997 edition of the *Joy* adapts to these findings. For example, it includes reduced-fat alternatives and separate new chapters on "Grains", "Beans and Tofu", and "Pasta, Dumplings and Noodles." It also contains instructions for making vegetarian versions of dishes whose original recipes call for meat. It is almost certain that the next revision of the *Joy*, when it occurs, will reflect the latest research in nutrition and good eating habits. This is also an example of how book history is affected as scientific findings are incorporated into popular literature, and how books affect how people live and eat.

Technology and the Kitchen

While scientists have been discovering new connections between nutrition and health, engineers have been busy creating new tools to save time in the kitchen. Many people may think of the microwave oven when asked to name an important invention in cooking technology of the 20th century. However, cooking, as is any other activity, is not an entity unto itself. Cooking is a part of a vast, interconnected system of supply, storage, and distribution, to name a few of the processes involved. According to Cowan, "cooking...involves the procurement of those foodstuffs (by buying them or raising them), and their storage and prior preparation (by canning, salting, freezing, refrigerating, et cetera), the maintenance of the energy source (stoking the hearth, damping the stove, adding the coal) that is used to do the cooking, the maintenance and cleaning of the tools that are used to do the cooking, and the disposal of the waste that results from the process" (11-12). Each edition of the *Joy of Cooking*

² On a side note, recent research confirms the existence of a fifth taste in addition to sweet, sour, salty, and bitter. In 1908, Kikunae Ikeda, a scientist at the Tokyo Imperial University, isolated the molecule responsible for the distinctive taste of Japanese seaweed broth, and named it *umami*, which means "savory" in Japanese. Recently, researchers at the University of Miami identified receptors on the tongue for glutamate, specifically the taste of monosodium glutamate. Tomatoes, meats, and cheese, especially Parmesan, naturally contain a lot of glutamate.

reflects improvements in the state of cooking technology, which includes anything from refrigeration, freezing, food availability and delivery, mixing, baking, and microwaving.

Background

It is easy to take for granted modern conveniences that we use everyday. We expect that we can buy prepackaged goods at the grocery store, that the utility companies will supply electricity and water to our homes, and that our refrigerators and other electric appliances will continue to run smoothly. However, much of this technology was just being introduced to middle-class American homes at the time the first edition was published in 1931. Most important were the popularity of canned goods, changes in food distribution due to transportation technology, and the electrification of American homes.

Prior to the 19th century, standard preservation techniques included salting, smoking, and preserving in brine. In order to solve the problem of preserving food for the army and navy, Nicolas Appert, a French inventor, patented the canning process in 1809. This canning process involved placing raw foodstuffs in glass containers and cooking them in water baths, was later improved through the introduction of vacuum cookers and tin (Cowan 72). By the turn of the century, canned goods were a standard feature of the American diet. According to Cowan,

Women's magazines contained advertisements for them on nearly every page, standard recipes routinely called for them, and the weekly food expenditures of even the poorest urban families regularly included them. The average household consumption of plain flour decreased, while the use of factory-made and bakery-made breads, biscuits, and cakes increased. Indeed, by the end of the century, processed foods of all kinds—packaged dry cereals, pancake mixes, crackers and cookies machine-wrapped in paper containers, canned hams, and bottled corned beef [was purchased on a regular basis from the neighborhood grocery].

However, the beginning of the 20th century witnessed a change in how grocery stores operated.

During the 19th century, many household goods and services were delivered virtually to the doorsteps of the people who had purchased them or were sold at stores located only a short walk away from home. Milk, ice, and coal were regularly delivered directly to the kitchen and basement of middle-class urban dwellers and often to the homes or curbsides of the poor. Butchers, greengrocers, coffee merchants, and bakers employed delivery boys to take orders from and then carry purchases back to the homes of their more prosperous customers. Smoked, dried, and pickled fish, fruits and vegetables, second-hand clothing, and linens were routinely sold from pushcarts that lined the curbs and traveled the back alleys of poor neighborhoods (Cowan 79-80). However, the automobile was beginning to change this. By 1910, Henry Ford was already manufacturing the Model T, in a determined effort to lower the cost and thus increase the diffusion rate of the motor car to all classes of the population—and twenty years afterward, just at the onset of the Depression, he had virtually succeeded in making the automobile an integral part of daily life in America. Many people forget the last phrase in Hoover's 1928 campaign slogan: "A chicken in every pot and a car in every garage." By 1930, there were roughly 30 million households in the US and 26 million registered automobiles (Cowan 82). Delivery services started disappearing during the Depression, as grocery shops and butcher's markets fired delivery boys to lower prices and compete with the chain stores and supermarkets that were cropping up throughout the land, which were easily accessible by automobile. Ironically enough, these stores were increasingly *only* accessible by automobile.

Automobiles were not the only kind of technology to permeate American households and change daily life forever. By the end of the 19th century, "running water" was a standard convenience in urban households, even those of the very poor, where tenements might have had a water tap in the courtyard or water closet at the end of the communal hall, although rarely in individual apartments. Between 1900-1930, small electric and gasoline motors became available to run water pumps in rural homes; gas and electric companies promoted the sale of and lowered the price of self-sufficient hot-water heaters (Cowan 86-87). By the end of the 1920s, hot and cold running water had become the norm for middle-class American housing in urban areas. However, these amenities were not brought to the rural and urban poor after the post-World War II construction boom (Cowan 87).

In the 1920s, power companies began to supply more homes with electricity, and demand for household electrical appliances increased. Electric cake mixers (essentially old-fashioned eggbeaters attached to electric motors) and food grinders became popular during this period. By 1930 electric stoves were beginning to compete effectively with gas ranges, because electromechanical thermostats had been introduced during the 1920s; these thermostats also increased the popularity of electric toasters, irons (and waffle irons), and hot water and space heaters (and coffee percolators).

The first electric refrigerators were manufactured between 1916 and 1920. However, these were little more than toys for the very rich—as they tended to be either extremely expensive or extremely unreliable. During the 1920s, the reliability of the refrigerator increased as new designs crowded each other on the market. The electric refrigerator caught the serious interest of the public in 1926, when General Motors introduced the steel cabinet Frigidaire. In 1927, General Electric presented the GE Monitor Top model, which was the first hermetically sealed refrigerator. Ice boxes had previously dominated American kitchens, and housewives always had to keep an eye out for drips from melting ice and remember when to ask the ice man for more ice. Suddenly, "where none existed ten years earlier, by 1928 there were...one-and-a-quarter million [electric] refrigerators in the nation's households. The number of electrically wired homes rose in the same decade from seven to 19 million..." (qtd. in Plante 251). During the 1930s the price of electric refrigerators plunged—partly because of the introduction of mass production in this section of the industry, and also partly because of stiff competition for sales during the Depression" (Cowan 94). In 1941, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, about 50% of the housekeeping families in the United States had [electric] refrigerators (Cowan 94).

Electric Gadgets and the *Joy of Cooking*

Just as the *Joy of Cooking* has reflected the latest findings in nutrition research, it has also contained recipes to use the latest in cooking technology. An examination of each of the editions reveals how cooking, technology, and book history are intertwined.

The first edition of the *Joy of Cooking* reveals a snapshot of the many of the eating habits of this period, including the widespread consumption of canned goods and the growing technological changes that were helping to shape those habits. By the 1930s, grocers' shelves were filled with low-cost canned goods. During the Depression years, food cost became very important to families. Irma was a great fan of inexpensive canned soup (which she considered a wonderful, time-saving ingredient), and she included many recipes using canned soup bases like tomato, pea, celery, and beef and chicken bouillon. Other recipes call for canned corn, spinach, and other vegetables.

Technology always goes hand-in-hand with business. Corporate marketing throughout the decades was also often the cause of changing food habits. In the 1920s-30s, companies began to mass-produce uniformly colored and flavored "convenience foods." This "ushered in widely shared new standards of both taste and appearance by which the products of home cooking from scratch might appear odd or dull...Manufacturers had swiftly understood that unless one batch of a product was exactly like every other batch, it was scarcely worth putting their names on it. The public lessons of uniformity were profound. After a time, millions of people genuinely did not know that homemade beef consommé or tomato soup or mayonnaise, with all their built-in potential for differing from other people's versions, could be anything but clumsy imitations of more successful commercial models. Hence additions [in recipes in the first edition of the *Joy*] such as the salty, aggressive Savita, catsup, or bouillon cubes" (Mendelson 132). Marketing directly affected book history then as it does now. In the more modern version of this, today we see our favorite actors and actresses drinking their favorite brand of soda in the latest movies.

The rising popularity of the electric refrigerator was also reflected in the 1931 edition of the *Joy*. Irma provided instructions for making ice cream with both hand-cranked freezers and "mechanical refrigerators," which shows she realized that not all households had replaced their iceboxes with electric refrigerators. "Mechanically frozen ice creams and ices have not the light consistency characteristic of churned ice creams and ices, but in the case of mousses and bombes, excellent results are obtained...the length of time for freezing ices and ice creams depends upon the refrigerator used.

Companies manufacturing refrigerators issue time charts for freezing desserts. The period varies but is usually from four to six hours.” In addition to capturing the latest in refrigeration technology, the *Joy of Cooking* reveals the kinds of literature being published by the manufacturers of this technology.

The electric range, which was a better alternative to the gas range or wood-burning stove, also became available during the 1920s-1930s. However, gas ranges continued to outsell electric ranges until the late 1940s. An important advancement in cooking technology occurred in 1925, when the American Stove Company of St. Louis started manufacturing ovens that came with built-in thermostats. The *Joy* has always reflected the latest developments in cooking technology, and even in the 1931 edition of the *Joy*, Irma provided oven thermostat settings in the baking recipes, while most other cookbooks of the time only used "low", "moderate", and "hot" settings. Cooks no longer had to test oven temperatures with scraps of paper, and cooking required less guesswork. Perhaps Irma took her thermostat-controlled oven for granted—the 1931 edition does not contain the following passage, which appeared as the introduction to the Breads chapter in the 1936 edition:

For Those Who Have No Thermometer:

Sprinkle flour on a pan and place it in a heated oven.

If it turns a *delicate* brown in five minutes the oven is *slow*—250° to 325°.

If it turns a *medium golden* brown in five minutes the oven is *moderate*—325° to 400°.

If it turns a *deep dark brown* in five minutes the oven is *hot*—400° to 450°.

If it turns a *deep dark brown* in three minutes the oven is *very hot*—450° to 500°.

A piece of white tissue-paper may be used in place of the flour.

These instructions were eliminated in later editions of the *Joy*, as thermometers became standard in all ovens.

Large, all-purpose mixers, such as the Sunbeam Mixmaster, also became available in the 1930s. The rising popularity of these and other smaller electric appliances can be seen in both the first and second editions of the *Joy of Cooking*. A recipe in the first edition for Bacon Cornmeal Waffles states, “An electric waffle iron may be used.” The Pies and Cakes chapters in the first edition assume that the cook mixes everything by hand, such as beating the eggs or mixing the dough and batter ingredients. The Cakes chapter in the second edition also has sections labeled, “Rule for Mixing Sponge Cake with an Electrical Mixer” and “Rule for Mixing Butter Cakes with an Electrical Mixer.” Many of the other cake recipes, including angel cake and yellow loaf cake are followed by special instructions for the “Electrical Mixer.” Many of the recipes for icings state whether beating with an electrical mixer is appropriate. The “Puddings and Desserts” chapter lists electric mixer settings for various ingredients and recipes. This is yet another example of how the *Joy* has evolved to adapt to changing technology.

The technology introduced in the early part of the century made cooking *easier*. However, as American life became more fast-paced, American housewives looked to methods of making cooking *quicker*. One of Irma's other books, *Streamlined Cooking: New and delightful recipes for canned, packaged and frosted foods and rapid recipes for fresh foods*, published in 1939, reflected this new lifestyle. As evident from the title, the recipes in this book used many of the shortcut ingredients and convenience foods introduced over the last decade. The 1943 edition of the *Joy* included many of the recipes from *Streamlined Cooking*. This may be why the *Joy of Cooking* was so popular during the World War II food shortages, especially since canned, boxed, and frozen foods were often more readily available than fresh food during this period.

During the 1940s, refrigerators became a household necessity, and manufacturers began to offer larger freezer compartments and two-door models with the freezer on top (such as the 1949 Frigidaire) (Plante 271). In the "Streamlined Cooking (Kitchenette Cooking)" chapter of the 1946 edition of the *Joy*, Irma instructs cooks to "keep several cans of fish on hand" and includes advice for freezing (or "frosting") everything from sea food, vegetables, meats, poultry, and fruits. The *Joy of Cooking* reflects this new American lifestyle and enables the reader to spend less time cooking and more time doing other activities.

The 1952 edition reveals the authors' fascination with the latest development in cooking technology—the electric blender. This edition devotes an entire chapter to this food preparation wonder:

Throw away your tamis cloth and hair sieve, if you still have these relics of a by-gone age, and replace them with the piece of equipment that makes them obsolete, the electric blender. Only the ghost of an old-time medicine man could do justice to its usefulness and fascination, so please give it a chance to speak for itself. Besides, it is so much better than its reputation, that of making an A-1 alcoholic drink.

What else will a blender do? It will crush, blend and purée food in a few seconds with a better result than you could possibly achieve by any other means in a very much longer time. An electric mixer needs special attachments to do a similar job. A blender will liquefy fruits and vegetables and some blenders will grind nut meats, raisins, citron, meat, lentils, etc.

There are several makes of blender on the market, one of them invented by a bandmaster. If your budget permits, buy a blender by all means; if it does not, pinch, scrape and sacrifice to be the possessor of this kitchen marvel. In the long run it is an economy, for it is ready to utilize refrigerator scraps and to make them into palatable dishes.

Various recipes for hot blender soups, blender vegetable dishes, custard, and quick blender tricks followed the introduction. Irma was not only a big fan of the electric blender; she also was a great admirer of the pressure cooker.

Pressure Cookers and Microwave Ovens

Initially, pressure cookers were primarily used for canning, both commercial and domestic. At the 1939 World's Fair, the National Pressure Cooker Company, one of the largest manufacturers of pressure canning products, introduced the first saucepan-style pressure cooker and gave it the trade name "Presto." This model, designed for household use, popularized pressure cooking, which represented to the American housewife a method of cooking in one third the time while maintaining the vitamin and mineral content of foods and saving both food flavor and color (Presto, detnews.com).

World War II, however, brought a temporary end to the manufacture of pressure cookers as well as other cast aluminum cooking utensils, since most of the nation's metal resources were needed for armament production. Quick to cooperate in the war effort, the company converted almost all of its production facilities into war work, manufacturing artillery fuses, aerial bombs, and rocket fuses. Throughout the period of World War II, the company continued to manufacture canners for the extremely important victory garden and canning programs. With victory in sight in 1945, the company resumed a portion of its civilian production. The pent-up demand for pressure cookers was tremendous and, in an industry that included eleven other manufacturers, consumers purchased more Presto® pressure cookers than all other brands combined (Presto).

Irma writes about the pressure cooker in the 1946 edition:

There is a gadget on the market that permits a cook to scoff at time...Meats, fish and cereals are good cooked in this way and they are ready in an unbelievably short time. Flavor and vitamins remain intact. The hurry-up cook in possession of this steamer may serve many dishes denied her by any other method.

It is evident in this passage that the goal of the *Joy of Cooking* is to provide the reader with a manual using the latest technology to cook healthful food with minimal effort and time.

However, pressure cookers were dangerous, with imprecise mechanisms, and if left untended could result in the proverbial pea-soup-all-over-the-ceiling. As the 1950s went on, times — and food fashions — changed. And with the greater availability of frozen foods and TV dinners, interest in the pressure cooker gradually fell off. When whole meals, including dessert, could be cooked on metal foil trays in the oven, there was less need for a potentially dangerous heavy pot that produced one food — even a one-dish meal (detnews.com). The reorganization of the 1964 edition resulted in an elimination of the chapter on "Pressure Cookery." However, this edition does feature several recipes that have pressure cooker instructions, indicated by a stylized pressure cooker symbol (a result of the

addition of the chart of symbols in this new edition). Today, the pressure cooker has been nearly replaced by the epitome of time-saving cooking appliances—the microwave oven.

First introduced in the early 1970s, the countertop microwave oven became most popular in the 1980s. Suddenly, food could be cooked in mere seconds and minutes. The 1997 edition of the *Joy* includes recipes that use this efficient device. This newest edition also includes recipes for state-of-the-art food processors and bread machines that first appeared in the 1980s.

CD-ROM

Technology has not only changed the *Joy*'s content; it has also changed its format. The most radical change occurred in 1998, when Simon & Schuster Interactive and CompuWorks, a division of GT Interactive Software, released the CD-ROM version of the *Joy of Cooking*. Based on the 1997 edition, this CD-ROM contains more than 2,000 hyperlinks to "seamlessly connect the user to a wealth of related information and recipes, including a glossary of more than 400 culinary terms and 100 illustrated, step-by-step techniques that every cook should know." Other features include a search engine to find the perfect recipe based on course, ingredients, ethnicity, dietary preferences, time limits, or cooking method. The scaling feature can automatically adjust recipes to serve smaller or larger parties. The Recipe Exchange allows users to send personal recipes by e-mail, and a Menu Planner helps cooks to design entire meals, create menus, and shopping lists for ingredients. The program is also compatible with 3Com's PalmPilot (personal organizer). Designed for downloading recipes and shopping lists, the program automatically sorts the ingredients for easy reference while shopping (Press Release).

Perhaps as in previous editions of the print form of the *Joy*, the publishers have been a bit too hasty in releasing the next edition. Many of the comments posted on the joyofcooking.com and amazon.com websites showed that most users were not satisfied with the program, especially the speed.

Well, I'm running a 450 MHz Win98 PC with 96M of RAM and *Joy* is still dog slow. Who wrote this piece of junk? It doesn't follow any conventions for PC program standards, nor for food programs. Shouldn't it interact with Master Cook or other "standard" programs? The interface is kludgy and non-intuitive. I'm shocked that someone would try to foist this off on the buying public in 1999, when programming has advanced to the point where this should have been a totally cool program.

The electronic format could have a very promising future and many advantages over the print form that users would enjoy. Currently, name recognition of the original cookbook has apparently been the main reason why people have purchased the CD-ROM version. However, fewer people will have interest in buying the program as more users recommend against it. It is hoped that Simon and Schuster will release an updated version of the *Joy of Cooking* CD-ROM that will run faster on standard PCs, among other improvements. The CD-ROM version may become even more popular than the paper version if its programmers invest the same amount of care and time that Irma and Marion spent working on the *Joy of Cooking*.

Conclusion

Over the past 70 years in which the *Joy of Cooking* has been in print, American households have witnessed many changes. The political and economic effects of Prohibition, the Great Depression, World War II, and the advent of the global economy have affected how American cooking and eating habits. Research in food science and the benefits of a well-balanced and healthy diet have also changed how Americans eat. New developments in cooking technology have enabled Americans to cook more efficiently and quickly. Each edition of the *Joy of Cooking* has reflected the political and economic environment of its time and has included recipes and instructions to use the latest electrical appliances and knowledge of healthful cooking. The *Joy* has evolved as a result of these changes, but it has also affected American life through its engaging and helpful tips for modern cooking.

Today's children are probably more unskilled cooking-wise than the brides of the 1930s who looked to the *Joy* to learn to cook for their new husbands. During recent years, family mealtimes have declined, and prepared meals from Boston Chicken and other fast-food places have grown in popularity. Frozen microwaveable dinners and pasta mixes are widespread and can be cooked by anyone who can push a few buttons and wait for five minutes. Consequently, children have not grown up cooking in the kitchen, unlike the daughters of a century ago who learned to cook by doing. Future generations will rely on the *Joy* and other cookbooks to learn to cook by reading. Perhaps they will even use electronic versions of this ever-popular cookbook.

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³ I was able to obtain a copy of the first edition through the Interlibrary Loan Office at the University of Maryland, which borrowed it from the University of Iowa Chef Louis Szathmary II Collection of Culinary Arts: <http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/spec-coll/rarebks.htm>.

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