

TABLE LANDS

FOOD IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE



**KARA K. KEELING
AND SCOTT T. POLLARD**

TABLE LANDS

FOOD IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

**KARA K. KEELING
AND SCOTT T. POLLARD**

UNIVERSITY PRESS OF MISSISSIPPI / JACKSON

CONTENTS

Acknowledgments

- VII -

Chapter 1

An Invitation to the Table

The Tastes of Children's Literature

- 3 -

Chapter 2

American Children's Cookbooks as Scenes of Instruction

Tracking Historical Shifts of Work, Play, Pleasure, and Memory

- 11 -

Chapter 3

Puddings and Pies

Meat Pastries in the Tales of Beatrix Potter

- 35 -

Chapter 4

"A Little Smackerel of Something"

Food and the *Künstlerroman* in the Winnie-the-Pooh Books

- 51 -

Chapter 5

Food of the Woods and Plains

Two Visions of Food, Culture, Land, and History in Laura Ingalls Wilder's

Little House Books and Louise Erdrich's Birchbark Series

- 64 -

*Chapter 6***“A Profound Love for Luscious Things”**Food as Symbolism and History in Maurice Sendak's *In the Night Kitchen*

- 90 -

*Chapter 7***Dangerous Angels: The Weetzie Bat Books**

Food, Place, and Sparkly Glam Slinkster Cool Vegetarianism in Los Angeles

- 106 -

*Chapter 8***Ratatouille and Restaurants**

A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Rat

- 122 -

*Chapter 9***“Beating Eggs Never Makes the Evening News”**Politics and Kitchens in Rita Williams-Garcia's *One Crazy Summer* and Its

Sequel

- 144 -

*Chapter 10***Refugee Narratives, Cuisine Clash**The Case of Thanhha Lai's *Inside Out & Back Again*

- 166 -

Notes

- 179 -

Works Cited

- 189 -

Index

- 203 -



Chapter 2

AMERICAN CHILDREN'S COOKBOOKS AS SCENES OF INSTRUCTION

Tracking Historical Shifts of Work, Play, Pleasure, and Memory

How do we in America teach our children about cooking, about food and the pleasures of the table? How do we transmit our culinary heritage?

—JAN LONGONE, “AS WORTHLESS AS SAVORLESS SALT”? TEACHING CHILDREN TO COOK, CLEAN AND (OFTENTIMES) CONFORM” (2003)

When thinking of children’s literature, most people are unlikely to think first of cookbooks for children. Such texts occupy a small niche in children’s culture, but they offer a window through which one can see how the culture shapes its ideological assumptions about children. Cookbooks are the most literal expression of texts constructed for children’s consumption, and they most directly address the relationship between children and food. In children’s cookbooks, food is not a mediating signifier between the child and culture; rather, food is meant to be the product of a real child’s efforts in the real world, a test of how the child has internalized and acted upon the cultural values inherent in the cookbook. However, cookbooks in general are not merely lists of recipes organized by meal, type of ingredient, or social function. In her pioneering *PMLA* article, Susan Leonardi argues that the term “recipe” itself in its Latin root (*recipere*) “implies an exchange, a giver and a receiver. Like a story, a recipe needs a recommendation, a context, a point, a reason to be. A recipe is, then, an embedded discourse” (340). Cookbooks are an outgrowth of recipes; they, too, make use of narrative structures as organizational methods that are “akin to literary discourse” (342). Such narrative structures are thus inherent to the cookbook genre, as Leonardi makes clear, opening it up to

literary analysis that treats cookbooks as literary objects. Replete with narratives, cookbooks for children are also literary objects, worthy of analysis as children's literature. Just as the narrative strategies of cookbooks allow us to follow signifying chains to the cultural and historical contexts that produced them, so, too, as Sherrie Inness notes, do "juvenile cookbooks . . . demonstrate to boys and girls the attitudes that society expects them to adopt toward cooking and cooking-related tasks" (38). In short, cookbooks for children are as complex in their ideological underpinnings as any other type of text for children.

Although Leonardi's 1988 article led to a boom in narratological analyses of cookbooks—an MLA search for "cookbooks" yields seventy-one entries, all published within the last three decades—a similar search produces only one entry for "children's cookbooks." Other fields have also done little with children's cookbooks: only three scholarly treatments have looked at the history of children's cookbooks within gender studies, food studies, or studies in children's culture. The first was the above-cited chapter in Sherrie Inness's feminist analysis of American cookbooks in *Dinner Roles: American Women and Culinary Culture* (2001), in which she explored the inherent gender orientation of cookbooks for children, primarily in twentieth-century cookbooks aimed at girls or at boys. In "As Worthless as Savorless Salt? Teaching Children to Cook, Clean and (Oftentimes) Conform," Jan Longone targeted her study of nineteenth-century children's cookbooks for a food studies audience in *Gastronomica* (2003). Carol Fisher offered a brief appraisal of nineteenth- and twentieth-century children's cookbooks in *The American Cookbook: A History* (2006), as part of a chapter titled "Cookbooks for Special Audiences." She reviewed twelve cookbooks from the late nineteenth to the late twentieth century, spending most of her time on two from the nineteenth (*Six Little Cooks* and *The Mary Frances Cook Book*) and two from the twentieth (*Betty Crocker's Cookbook for Boys and Girls* and *The Better Homes and Gardens Junior Cookbook*). Jodie Slothower and Jan Susina wrote the one literary study of children's cookbooks, focusing specifically on ones linked with popular literary texts (such as Georgeanne Brennan's *Green Eggs and Ham Cookbook: Recipes Inspired by Dr. Seuss* or Barbara M. Walker's *The Little House Cookbook: Frontier Foods from Laura Ingalls Wilder's Classic Stories*). They identified an astonishing number and assortment of books with recipes for fans of particular children's novels and picture books.

All of these sources offer useful surveys of the cookbooks that have been produced for American children; Longone and Fisher review several key texts worthy of further investigation. Slowthower and Susina's chapter

offers a well-done, comprehensive, and literature-based examination of a particular (and popular) type of cookbook, each example of which is aimed at a relatively small audience: fans of a book or author who are also interested in cooking. But the cookbooks that are aimed at teaching children how to cook in a systematic and wide-ranging manner need further examination. Longone notes the wider implications of such books: “American publications . . . offer insight into how we decide to feed our children and how we have taught them about cooking, food, and the pleasures of the table. But much more than practical cookery lies within the covers of children’s cookbooks” (110). Longone’s comments suggest that children’s cookbooks offer a particular intersection of discourses about both children and food, ripe for inquiry. Such analysis would fit Warren Belasco’s argument for the broader applications of any serious food study, which he makes in *Appetite for Change: How the Counterculture Took on the Food Industry* (2007): “It does seem that many food studies thus begin not out of intrinsic interest in the food but in what food can tell us about something else—gender, labor relations, class, ethnic identity, imperialism . . .” (x). This chapter will assess the ideological assumptions underlying children’s cookbooks—assumptions about both the nature of food and the nature of children as potential cooks—to reveal the complex social forces that create the child as an agent possessing skills and purpose. If recipes are embedded discourses, then analyzing the larger discourses that inform the books in which they are embedded reveals much about adult beliefs in children’s abilities and agency—or the lack thereof.

Nineteenth-century American cookbooks produced for children were an outgrowth of a literate middle class with few (if any) servants but sufficient economic means to purchase some books for children—and cookbooks offered some practical outcomes. A child who could cook had an independent skill that could help adults with a chore that occupied many hours of daily domestic labor. This fits the pattern noted by Jessamyn Neuhaus, in *Manly Meals and Mom’s Home Cooking: Cookbooks and Gender in Modern America*, that cookbooks grew in popularity because as “many families migrated west, the population became more widely dispersed. Consequently, fewer women could turn to mothers and grandmothers for advice and instruction about cookery” (16). Cookbooks for children could fill in for absent relatives or provide lessons for girls whose mothers lacked time to give them close instruction. Neuhaus also observes that “private collections of recipes, or ‘receipt books’” were popular at this time and provided a creative outlet for women (16).

Elizabeth Stansbury Kirkland's *Six Little Cooks, or, Aunt Jane's Cooking Class*, the first American cookbook published for children (Longone 107, Fisher 162), follows both patterns that Neuhaus identifies: it depicts six neighborhood girls (some of them cousins) who ask an older female relative (the eponymous Aunt Jane) to teach them to cook; she provides not only practical lessons but insists that each girl write down every recipe in a blank book to keep for her future use (Kirkland 8). The book consists of fourteen chapters that run through a variety of different cooking scenarios, from cooking each of the three normal daily meals, to preparing medicinal dishes for a mother who isn't feeling well one day, to improvising desserts as hospitality for unexpected guests. Aunt Jane sets up a particular cooking challenge for the girls to meet each day; the story does not merely provide the sample recipes that she gives them but also demonstrates the procedures in the various stages of preparing each dish; thus, it also shows their difficulties and triumphs as they work through the process, guided gently by Aunt Jane through conversation, anecdote, and advice. It thus models for its readers the kinds of instruction that older women traditionally provided for girls in the kitchen—albeit with an idealized, patient adult teacher who never loses her temper when the cooking goes wrong.

To create these scenes of instruction, Kirkland uses a series of narrative frames. The outermost frame is told by a heterodiegetic narrator, who speaks in the first person and tells the story of the girls and their aunt, commenting on the girls' motivations and actions. Within this frame, Aunt Jane often tells stories to the girls as they cook—frequently based on her own experience, sometimes even illustrative tales about mistakes that she made as a girl learning to cook—in order to caution them about proper kitchen procedures. The recipes are embedded within Aunt Jane's instruction: she dictates all 207 of them to the girls, apparently from a very capacious memory since no book of her own is mentioned. The book thus provides its readers with a set of recipes, detailed instructions, and advice that they can try if they are stimulated by the book to try cooking on their own. Such inspiration is what Kirkland claims in her "Afterthought" that she wants: "My object is only to excite such an interest in the pursuit of it as may induce little people of ten or twelve years old to make some playful attempts at a beginning, with the hope that in future years they may be inclined to follow it up in serious earnest" (232).

Kirkland represents such inspiration dramatically at the very beginning of her book with Grace, the oldest of the six girls and the first to become interested in cooking: "'Oh, Aunt Jane,' said Grace, looking up quickly

from the story-book she was reading. ‘I wish you would teach us all how to cook.’ . . . Grace was reading about a wonderful little girl who made such remarkable things in the way of cakes and puddings, that our young person was seized with a desire to do likewise without delay” (Kirkland 5–6). The little girl in the story fires Grace’s ambition; Grace admires her practical culinary skills, perhaps especially because of the girl’s ability to produce desserts. Less obviously but more importantly, the young cook of the storybook implicitly embodies the domestic ideology so popular in nineteenth-century America: her competence at baking suggests she is a young “angel of the house,” and Kirkland uses the storybook heroine to embed a larger cultural narrative within her cookbook. Kirkland’s intent, as stated in her afterword and implied in her characters’ enthusiasm for learning cooking, mirrors Catherine Beecher’s ideology in her popular *Mrs. Beecher’s Domestic Receipt Book* (1846), which “directly linked the activity of cooking to the glorified role of homemaker, insisting that the tedious and worrisome aspects of housekeeping paled in comparison to the rewards reaped by devoted homemakers” (Neuhaus 15). Kirkland portrays her six girls as inspired by the task of learning reasonably complex cooking procedures: they start relatively simply (baking easy fruit cake, custard, and popovers), gradually learn to cook more complicated dishes, and acquire a stock of recipes to draw on in the future. Aunt Jane helps them prepare a culminating tea party for their families, serving tea biscuits, tea cakes, Sally Lunns, breakfast puffs, baking powder biscuits, Dover cake with fruit, chocolate cake, sponge cake, macaroons, jelly cake, wine jelly, and chocolate meringue. As the girls choose the menu, Aunt Jane stresses the proper attitude toward cooking as a service: “To enjoy cooking you must never think of your own satisfaction in eating what you make, but of the pleasures you are going to give others” (224). The book somewhat undercuts this homily by providing a preponderance of sweet recipes—exactly what captured Grace’s imagination in the beginning. The desserts serve as a lure to the kitchen, where the girls initially want to please themselves but also come to understand the larger purpose of the skills they develop: serving others. Kirkland defines the “others” to be pleased as “our fathers and mothers and brothers” (224)—properly angelic service to the patriarchal structure of the family is thus clearly delineated for the girls. The story ends with adult approbation of the girls’ efforts and the long-term usefulness of the lessons:

You can imagine for yourselves that it was a proud and happy day for the mothers and fathers of our little friends when they had such convincing

proof of their children's progress as was afforded by the excellent supper prepared by them, and that the young people themselves, when they shall put in practice in future years the lessons of that happy time, will always look back with pleasure and gratification to the summer in which they were members of Aunt Jane's Cooking Class. (231)

In portraying the development of six young cooks, Kirkland addresses Longone's questions, cited as the epigraph for this chapter: how Americans pass on their cultural traditions of food between generations and the values that underlie that heritage. Kirkland creates a benevolent pedagogy that passes on complex knowledge and skills, situates the girls in the kitchen and dining room of the family home, gives them an incipient mastery of those spaces, and (through the receipt books that they begin to fill) sets them up as future housewives who will, like Aunt Jane, pass on their knowledge to their daughters, female relatives, and neighbors. One answer to Longone's second question from this chapter's epigraph is that America's culinary heritage in the nineteenth century was passed on through all the cookbooks authored by women; however, a better answer would ground itself in the everyday practice of women and girls of the period writing down recipes in their own receipt books, which they would pass on in turn. Given this multigenerational teaching tradition, such texts construct the girl child as a nascent autonomous being who has internalized women's skills and roles and then can act on them.

As Sherrie Inness notes, instructional cookbooks like *Six Little Cooks* "became more prevalent in the twentieth century, when the rising importance of the juvenile cookbook business helped ensure that children's cookbooks were broadly published and distributed" (38). An early twentieth-century example of such an instructional text is Clara Ingram Judson's *Cooking without Mother's Help* (1920), which embodies the desire to develop agency in its very title. Ten-year-old Alice tells her mother of her wish to cook independently: "Helping is helping, but it isn't cooking. I want to learn to cook all by my very self, with you not even in the kitchen to tell me when things are done,—that's what I want to do" (7), a plea seconded by her younger sister Mary. Like Kirkland's girl characters, Alice and Mary learn first to cook individual dishes and after a series of twelve lessons prepare a "graduation" dinner for the family and two guests. Like Aunt Jane, Alice's mother emphasizes cooking as service to others, warning her daughter that as a cook she must think beyond her own preferences: "a good cook has to consider many things,—the tastes of her family and the needs of their

bodies,—besides her own notions” (55). The angel of the house remains alive and well in this 1920s text.

Judson’s book has a homodiegetic narrator: there is no overt narratorial intervention. In contrast to Grace, whose desire to learn how to cook is catalyzed by the book she reads, Alice is inspired directly by watching her mother cook. The mother agrees to provide lessons, as long as Alice and her sister Mary “are willing to be careful and painstaking so that the food is not wasted” (8). Thus the mother begins her lessons by articulating the virtue of frugality.¹ Unlike *Six Little Cooks*, where the girls clamor for sweet dishes, the sisters in *Cooking without Mother’s Help* seem more mature, requesting instruction in the preparation of primarily savory dishes, with the mother offering just a few sweet dishes for special occasions, such as picnics in chapter 5, and to balance a meal plan at the “graduation” dinner in chapter 12. Judson is focused far more on practical cookery than Kirkland is. At the beginning of the book, the girls seem to have already internalized the traditional meal pattern of the middle-class American household. These idealized girls are not much interested in sweets, unlike Kirkland’s more believable apprentice cooks, nor do they need a storybook inspiration to motivate their mastery of kitchen and household skills—such desire seems built into them. Moreover, unlike Kirkland in her “Afterthought,” Judson does not intrude overtly into the narrative to tell readers her intentions. The “angel in the house” standard is simply a given, and thus essentially covert, like Judson’s narrator.

Despite the more than forty-year difference in the publishing dates of these two books, Aunt Jane and Mother both require the girls to begin their careers as cooks by fetching blank books that become the recipe books the girls themselves will author by collecting recipes as they learn them. Learning to cook is closely tied to the scribing of recipes in a personalized cookbook that reflects each girl’s cooking training. The act of writing connects those skills to a personal and family history that is handed down to them from their older female relatives; the books mark the girls’ entrance into an authorial community that extends across generations. The girls’ authorship within the story perfectly illustrates Janet Theophano’s observation in *Eating My Words: Reading Women’s Lives through the Cookbooks They Wrote*: in the nineteenth century the acts of writing and cooking were intimately intertwined. At a time when women’s public writing was often carefully circumscribed, cookbooks were a place where ordinary women could record their subjectivity and network it with other women in their families and communities to produce an alternative historical record. Theophano discusses her search for such texts,

noting how she privileged texts that “had been written out in longhand,” with particular focus on those in which “the creative process reflected more of a collage, with women creating their books out of bits and pieces assembled from various sources” (5)—in other words, texts just like Aunt Jane’s mother’s receipt book and those young Grace and Alice are beginning to construct. These books are valued as the repositories of generational memory and knowledge and are lovingly preserved across the generations. Aunt Jane shows the girls her mother’s “receipt book,” from which the girls copy one of the oldest and most elaborate recipes, for a “cheese-cake.” In becoming cooks with their own hand-copied recipe books, the girls in *Six Little Cooks* and *Cooking without Mother’s Help* go through a rite of passage to take their place as writer-cooks who preserve and pass on the family cooking traditions through skills and practice in service.

The differences between the two books in the style and nature of the dictation/writing relationship is worth noting. In *Six Little Cooks*, Aunt Jane is present in the kitchen throughout the lessons. The recipes she dictates are relatively short—usually just lists of ingredients. After the girls have finished writing them down, and they choose which recipes to prepare, Aunt Jane proceeds orally with further, often lengthy instructions and advice about cooking techniques, so that the girls can commit it all (and there is much) to memory. For example, near the end of the book, Aunt Jane dictates this recipe for a small sponge cake: “One teacup powdered sugar, one of flour, three eggs, half a teaspoonful cream tartar, a quarter of a teaspoonful soda” (176–77). In conversation with the girls, she follows the recipe with over two pages of further interactive instruction (177–79). In contrast, in *Cooking without Mother’s Help*, the ratio of dictation/oral instruction is reversed. Reflecting the book’s title and exemplifying its thesis, the mother’s interactions with her daughters are far more textual and much less verbal. While both Aunt Jane and the mother dictate recipes for their apprentices to copy down, the mother’s recipes are longer, more detailed, precise, and instructive, resembling the layout of recipes in contemporary cookbooks. After the recipes are written down, the mother asks her daughters if they have any questions, and after a few further oral instructions and clarifications the mother leaves the kitchen to her daughters. In a parallel example, from near the end of *Cooking without Mother’s Help*, the mother dictates a sponge cake recipe, which fills two pages in very small type. As with all the recipes in the book, this one is broken into three sections (utensils needed, ingredients needed, methods of work), the last of which includes lengthy instructions and advice (90–92); the recipe is followed by a half page, in larger type, of

a few questions and clarifications. Because their mother leaves the kitchen, the information Alice and Mary write down needs to be more complete in order for them to have the autonomy and agency they want. In both books, the expectations of mastery are similar, but the scenes of instruction differ. Both illuminate Longone's questions, demonstrating how children are taught cooking and the pleasures as well as the transmission and preservation of a culinary heritage.

This American culinary legacy changed significantly after World War II, for a variety of reasons that had a significant impact on cookbooks designed for adults, as well as those for children. According to Laura Shapiro, in *Something from the Oven: Reinventing Dinner in 1950s America*, the food industry during the war had invested deeply in technology to produce field rations for soldiers on the front lines, food that could be easily transported, accessed, and consumed, and that required little or no skill to prepare. Not surprisingly, they wanted a further return on that investment “to create a peacetime market for wartime foods” (8). Thus arose a culture of marketing that was intended to “persuade millions of Americans to develop a lasting taste for meals that were a lot like field rations” (8). Foods were dried, powdered, and boxed (mixes for cakes, biscuits, and other baked goods); frozen (orange juice, fish sticks, vegetables) to be stored in newly manufactured appliances such as deep freezers; and canned (meats like Spam, in addition to the long-established tradition of canned vegetables). According to Shapiro, food manufacturers envisioned “a day when all contact between the cook and the raw makings of dinner would be obsolete” (xvi-xvii). These changes began to sever longstanding American cooking traditions, particularly in urban and suburban areas, and the availability of industrialized foods fed a growing appetite for convenience. Old traditions did not die entirely or immediately, by any means: the women who had lived through the Depression and the war knew how to cook from scratch to manage a household frugally as well as to cook and bake social food (for parties and church dinners, for example) to demonstrate skills and impress family, friends, and neighbors. The period saw an explosion of cookbook publishing, first in reprints of older cookbooks from before World War II, representing the legacy of older traditions; second in new cookbooks that catered to the new foodways developing around the convenience foods being pushed by large-scale food corporations; and finally in a set of gourmet cookbooks by authors desiring to save older traditions (such as James Beard) or to expand horizons by introducing complex foods from other cultural traditions (such as Julia Child) (Shapiro 28–29, 222–25; Inness 166–67).

Just as the postwar food industry endeavored to modify the skills and agency of the adult homemaker, so was a parallel modification attempted with children. Neuhaus notes that “with the birth rate at an all time high, cookbooks turned renewed attention on the child eater” (173). Given that “throughout the twentieth century, cookbooks for children have mirrored the categories of adult offerings” (Fisher 166), one would expect that the same three kinds of cookbooks would have been marketed to children in the postwar era: traditional, convenience, and gourmet. But as Neuhaus claims, with the exception of just a few cookbooks like Irma Rombauer’s *Cooking for Boys and Girls* (1946, 1952), “the recipes in 1950s children’s cookbooks presented more novelty foods than real meals. In keeping with the overall trend in cookbook publishing for adults, juvenile cookery instruction tended to focus on combining or heating up canned, processed, and frozen ingredients” (174).² Rather than producing cookbooks designed to pass on the traditional knowledge of American cuisine and teach the skills of cooking it, publishers instead chose short, simple texts that emphasized convenience cooking, calibrating it as “fun food” for children and adolescents. Older cookbooks for children, like *Six Little Cooks* and *Cooking without Mother’s Help*, were about memory, training, skill development, and the preservation of familial/historical continuity through the dictation and writing of recipes. Those motivating ideas were lost in the postwar period, however, and replaced with the more socially isolating idea of a child or children simply having fun with food.

Annie North Bedford’s *Susie’s New Stove: The Little Chef’s Cookbook* (1950) is an exemplary text for the period. It is a Little Golden Book, and because of its low cost (25 cents, as were all Little Golden Books according to the website) and wide distribution it reached a broad audience. Although not explicitly an advertiser’s or manufacturer’s cookbook, like *Betty Crocker’s Cookbook for Boys and Girls* (1957) or the *Better Homes and Gardens Junior Cookbook: For the Hostess and Host of Tomorrow* (1955), *Susie’s New Stove* is marked by product placement. The title’s ambiguous reference hides this, but only slightly: although “The Little Chef” could refer to Susie, it is actually the name of the toy stove made by the Tacoma Metal Products company.³ Susie cooks actual food with her “really-truly” toy electric oven and stove whose elements heat up enough to warm up liquids on the burners and heat small items in the oven; she uses the miniature utensils that come with it to produce child-sized portions that fit child-sized plates and bowls. The “toy” thus surpasses most children’s playthings: it is not for merely imaginative

play but allows the child to do “real” cooking in the sense of combining some ingredients and heating them up to actually eat.

Although written thirty years after Judson’s and over seventy years after Kirkland’s cookbooks for girls, *Susie’s New Stove* shares with them a similar narrative structure. Bedford organizes the book around catalyzing scenes of instruction: Susie wants to learn to cook, and her mother volunteers to teach her; the lessons progress, leading to a culminating cooking experience that involves responsibility for a “complete” meal (preparing her father’s birthday dinner); the story is set within the house; and the recipes are detailed similarly to those in *Cooking without Mother’s Help* (equipment, ingredients, method). Like Grace and Alice, Susie experiences a moment of motivation to learn to cook as the story opens: “Susie likes to play house. She has a family of dolls. She has a little table and chairs. She has a set of little dishes. And she has a really-truly little electric stove, with a set of little pots and pans! ‘Now I must learn to cook,’ said Susie the first time she saw her new little stove” (Bedford). The narrative introduces Susie as a girl embedded in a constellation of domestic toys: the stove, with its accessories, is the culmination of the list; possession of the stove is what motivates Susie to learn to cook. Susie cooks first for herself and Mike (her brother), then for her friend Carol, who comes over to visit, then for her family (mother, father, and Mike) at the end.

One significant difference between *Susie’s New Stove* and the two earlier texts is how it develops the scenes of instruction and their narrative arc, and the relationship suggested between the adult woman who instructs and the girls she teaches. The interactions in *Six Little Cooks* and *Cooking without Mother’s Help* are rich with conversation and advice; Janet Theophano’s feminist lens suggests the process of writing recipes empowers the incipient cooks by positioning them within a discourse among women in the family across generations—a conversation to which they are now adding just as the adult women in their family have and which is further enriched by interactions with the teaching aunt or mother figure while preparing the dish. In *Susie’s New Stove*, the mother does not dictate the recipes she shares, and Susie does not write, does not preserve those recipes, perhaps because they are too generic and embody no family history. Consequently, the relationship between mother and daughter seems hollow. Susie’s mother says she will teach her what to do, but for the most part their only interaction is the recipe directions, with no extra elaboration on cooking techniques. Only once in the book does the mother actually teach technique to Susie,

and then it is only about timing: “‘First,’ said Mother, when Susie and Carol were both in aprons, ready to work, ‘we will fix the cold things. It will not hurt them to stand a while. Then when the soup is hot, and the crackers are toasted, you will be all ready to sit down and enjoy them. This is how we start’” (n.p.) For most of the lessons, the mother just says, “This is how” (or similar phrase), which Bedford follows with recipe directions. Bedford portrays this mother as very hands off, showing only minimal instruction and minimal generational interactions. The book also has a covert narrative voice that offers occasionally heterodiegetic commentary within the recipes. At the end of the recipe for cooking frozen mixed vegetables, the narrator intrudes parenthetically to comment on the mother’s actions: “Step 8. Serve half the vegetables and half the frankfurter on each plate. (Mother had second helpings ready for Susie and Mike.)” This comment clearly comes from an intrusive narrator—not the mother who is supposedly giving the recipe. Furthermore, this moment undermines whatever agency Susie might achieve by cooking: the comment makes clear that Susie can’t prepare the full meal on her toy stove and must be rescued by her mother. The concluding celebration meal undercuts Susie’s agency even further because the mother clarifies that Susie will have the opportunity to use the adult stove “just this once.” Susie may have become a “good enough” cook to be allowed to work on it, but clearly, she is not going to be contributing to the household meals regularly—unlike the girl protagonists of the earlier cookbooks.

Also, when the mother grants permission for Susie to use the big stove to cook the big meal, she once again acknowledges the limits of the toy stove. Given the commercial tie-in with the Little Chef stove, *Susie’s New Stove* is less a guide for the maturing girl child and more a promotion of the Little Chef. The book is an instructional guide for the toy stove and oven, not a girl’s guide to mastering household duties. Because of the small amount of heat the toy stove produces, it takes twenty minutes or more to cook three tablespoons of frozen mixed vegetables in a toy-sized pot; the long preparation time and the child-sized servings may work fine in Susie’s play world, but they do not make for efficient domestic planning. Yet, even given the limited aims of the book, it reflects the reduced agency inherent in both adult and juvenile cookbooks in the postwar era, as noted by both Inness and Neuhaus. In keeping with the children’s cookbooks of the era, Susie does have fun with food. To return to Longone’s questions: while *Susie’s Little Stove* may teach a little about the pleasures of food, it does much less to preserve culinary heritage. Granted, she is younger than the girl protagonists of the earlier books; the Little Golden Books are aimed at

a preschool to early elementary audience. But even given the age difference, and the difference in abilities that it inherently entails, *Susie's New Stove* undercuts its protagonist's abilities in ways that mirror other assumptions about children and women in the 1950s—ideological beliefs about women and food in general that underlie cookbooks for adults.

From its opening pages, the story perfectly fits the gender pattern of most postwar juvenile cookbooks, according to Inness: “The dominance of illustrations of girls cooking, not boys, conveyed one underlying message of these books: girls were the cooks and boys were the consumers. Girls and boys carried these messages into adulthood, assuring that the majority of women prepared and served food to men” (40–41). Mike supposedly helps Susie; however, he only “cooks” one item himself (lemonade—thus he never uses the toy stove), and he is never shown in the illustrations actually doing the cooking (although he does set the table at one point). Instead, Mike is usually depicted eating the food or sitting at the table waiting for apron-covered Susie to serve it to him. More insidiously, Bedford casts Mike rather than Susie as the idea man: he is the one who most frequently suggests what he wants to eat (for example, initiating the cocoa that is their first project, and having food rather than just cocoa for their second project); he is also the one who suggests the final birthday dinner for their father. Bedford also makes Mike the approver-in-chief: he is always the one who first endorses Mother’s decisions about the menu, after which Susie chimes in her agreement. Thus, despite suggesting that a boy can be involved in cooking, the visual narrative carefully excludes Mike from active kitchen roles, casting him as diner rather than cook. *Susie's New Stove* thus epitomizes Inness’s argument (quoted above) that cookbooks for children model for readers the gender-based roles that society expects them to play (37). The verbal and visual depiction of Mike, in particular, demonstrates Inness’s point that “[t]he first and most important lesson for boys was that cooking was not their responsibility” (46). While the girls in *Six Little Cooks* and *Cooking without Mother's Help* learn cooking skills that are, on one level, intended to teach them to serve households generally headed by men, these skills also give the girls a sense of competence and independence, providing them entrance to the kitchen where women have traditionally exercised power within the family and community. Susie, however, only learns to play at such skills. The book overtly suggests that she develops agency by learning to cook, but since she cooks on a toy stove rather than a real one, and cooks recipes that generally require only a modicum of mixing and heating prepackaged convenience foods, the book covertly undercuts the

agency she is supposedly developing—especially when compared with what the girls of the earlier generations achieved in their stories.

Jerrold Beim's *The First Book of Boys' Cooking* (1957), one of the rare cookbooks aimed specifically at boys, seems to suggest a desire to create gender equity in the kitchen, a particularly surprising approach in a cookbook from the 1950s. The dust jacket informs the readers that "Jerrold Beim and his two sons, Andy and Seth, run a completely masculine household, often without the help of a housekeeper. They had to learn to cook and, in the process, they learned how enjoyable it can be." This book clearly grows out of the experience of a single-parent male household in the 1950s. The book's rhetoric constantly reassures the boy reader and potential cook that cooking is an appropriately masculine activity: it equates the kitchen with a workshop full of tools and chooses "recipes . . . for the kinds of things boys like to eat most. No frills or fuss—just down-to-earth cooking with some fun ideas for good measure" (1). If the boy cook lacks "a man-type apron" he should just "get a clean dish towel and tuck it in the front of [his] belt" (6). In her discussion of *The First Book of Boys' Cooking*, Inness notes that Beim distinguishes the special preparations (salad) and places (outdoors) that are marked in the book as appropriately masculine. In her general assessment of this small subgenre of children's cookbooks, she notes that, "Clearly, the few boys' cookbooks that did exist conveyed to young men that cooking was a pursuit only in the right circumstances" (47). Thus, a boy cooking is not conceived of as a regular presence in the domestic order and is thus as disempowered and delimited—lacking agency—as much as a girl cook like Susie.

The same postwar ideology of convenience functions as much in *The First Book of Boys' Cooking* as much as it does in Susie's New Stove, for Beim freely recommends "frozen foods, ready mixes, all the modern methods of cooking" (1); thus many of the recipes depend on convenience foods—such as "Jiffy Stew," which requires boiling canned condensed vegetable soup, water, and half a pound of chopped beef. The book does teach basic skills, but the food preparation is kept simple. There is no progression toward a culminating meal, nor does the book imply a need to serve others, as the three girls' cookbooks suggest. This difference may result from the book's organization as a conventional cookbook rather than as a narrative about a child learning to cook: instead of providing a story of a child building skills and then using them in preparing a special meal, the book divides its recipes into conventional cookbook categories (beverages, bread and sandwiches, main dishes, vegetables and salads, desserts). Beim does constantly address

his boy readers, unlike the other texts, as a kind of substitution for the narratives that dominated the earlier story cookbooks: the book is self-consciously chatty in explaining techniques, often throwing in gender reassurance. This overt narrator parallels the “lively” narrator of the original edition of *The Joy of Cooking*, whose discourse Leonardi praises for creating a community of cooks across generations, classes, and races (342–43); in this case, however, the gender connection is inverted to welcome boys into a newly forming community of masculine cookery. The narrator does move the recipes toward some culminating complexity in the last chapter of the book, when the boys escape the female domestic sphere for outside: “Outdoors is where a man can really shine as a cook! When you cook inside, you have usually borrowed the use of the kitchen from your mother. But with outside cooking, boys or men take over completely. The world around you is your kitchen” (63). Here the boy is taught to build three different kinds of fires for different cooking purposes; additionally, he can scour the woods for natural ingredients to make wild salads of “dandelions, clover, deer grass, oxeye daisies, thistle, sorrel, and pepper grass” (79). In the initial illustration of the boy in the kitchen, he looks confused, although he later displays self-confidence in the illustrations as he becomes more competent. Outdoors, however, the boy’s supposedly instinctual interests in and knowledge of the natural world come to the fore to make him a fine and skilled cook, using natural resources in the proper masculine manner. Beim pushes the boys out of the kitchen (culturally considered a woman’s “natural” place, Inness notes [44]), to hone their skills and find themselves in the natural world outside, perhaps suggesting the value of masculine woodcraft from earlier generations. However, in so doing he ultimately deprecates the feminized domestic sphere. Add this to the rising influence of industrially made convenience food of the 1950s, and this book too joins in creating further cultural erosion of long-prized kitchen knowledge and skills.

Part of the attrition these two cookbooks show stems from their orientation toward play, rather than work. While Kirkland’s and Judson’s girl protagonists do find pleasure in their work, Bedford and Beim’s protagonists construct their cooking activities as play: they cook for their own pleasure. If in the two earlier books the pedagogy teaches girls to focus on service to others (family, friends, community), these two postwar books are much more focused on individual gratification and the creation of favorite foods for personal consumption. These books teach children to focus on egoistic pleasure; they treat children as insular beings who look only to pleasing

themselves, rather than pleasurable integrating them into a community with responsibilities for others. While individual pleasure in food remains important in turn-of-the-millennium cookbooks for children, contemporary chefs Molly Katzen's and Alice Waters's cookbooks for children offer a significant paradigm shift from the fifties' era cookbooks: a resurfacing of complexity, an increased valuation of child agency, and an ideology of fresh, sustainable, organic, healthy foods that are defined as attractive to children. Katzen's series of three books (*Pretend Soup and Other Real Recipes* [1994], *Salad People and More Real Recipes* [2005], *Honest Pretzels and 64 Other Amazing Recipes for Kids Who Love to Cook* [2009]) and Waters's two books (*Fanny at Chez Panisse* [1992], *Fanny in France* [2016]), restore both knowledge and capacity to child cooks.

Gourmet cooks and cookbook writers of the immediate postwar era, such as James Beard or Julia Child, neither addressed a child audience nor wrote cookbooks for children. But gourmet cooks of the next generation—who came out of what Warren Belasco calls the “countercuisine” (4)—have chosen to write cookbooks for children, perhaps because they see children as a viable audience for their visions of food and its power to achieve social justice. Alice Waters is the founder and owner of Chez Panisse, a globally famous restaurant in Berkeley, California; she is also a national and international activist who advocates for people’s engagement with and access to local and organic foods. Mollie Katzen was the founder of the Moosewood Restaurant and author of the influential vegetarian *Moosewood Cookbook* (1977). Like Waters, she has spent her life as an activist for access to local, organic foods and their ability to change both the physical and social landscape. Belasco notes that both Waters and Katzen are acutely aware of community and believe that food is inexorably part of it. From the Chez Panisse Foundation, Alice Waters initiated the Edible Schoolyard project “to expose public school children to the edible dynamic of community gardening” (249). Katzen’s community mindfulness initially developed through the Moosewood Restaurant, which was run as a “collective operation” in which all the employees participated and saw themselves as part of a “vital link in alternative food” (95); Katzen’s involvement with the Harvard School of Public Health as a charter member of the Nutrition Roundtable is also indicative of her focus on community (Ireland). Finally, her three cookbooks for children were developed in concert with her own children’s preschool teacher and fellow students.

Katzen’s and Waters’s contemporary, collective, hands-on engagement with food can best be illustrated by Luce Giard in *The Practice of Everyday*

Life, Volume 2: Living and Cooking (1998). Giard believes the traditional family-centered generational bestowal of cooking knowledge ceased to function in the late twentieth century:

In the past, one learned the recipes of one's mother or grandmother. Throughout the years my mother carefully preserved the manuscript notebook of recipes that her mother had written down for her at the time of her wedding; neither my mother nor I found it useful to continue this when my own wedding day came around. Times had changed and my sources for culinary information were more often in the media (recipes written in women's magazines, or explained on radio or TV shows) or my friends. (178)

And now in the second decade of the twenty-first century, such a network would include all the burgeoning social media sites and apps that give people access to cooking knowledge and practices. In such a rhizomatic knowledge matrix, Giard replaces family recipes with the act of *doing-cooking*:

I learned the anticipated joy of anticipated hospitality, when one prepares a meal to share with friends in the same way that one composes a party tune or draws: with moving hands, careful fingers, the whole body inhabited by the rhythm of working, and the mind awakening, freed from its ponderousness, flitting from idea to memory. . . . Thus, surreptitiously, and without suspecting it, I had been invested with the secret, tenacious pleasure of *doing-cooking* . . . [which] is the medium for a basic, humble and persistent practice that is repeated in time and space, rooted in the fabric of relationships to others and to one's self, marked by the "family saga" and the history of each, bound to childhood memory just like rhythms and seasons. (153, 157)

Giard uses "*doing-cooking*"—a creative, networking aesthetic that focuses on the joy of food preparation for oneself and others—to enrich a more linear, generational dissemination of cooking knowledge, as in *Six Little Cooks and Cooking without Mother's Help*. Katzen's and Waters's cookbooks are interesting, because they are neither about convenience nor tradition, neither easy self-satisfaction nor serving others, but the aesthetics of the food and its preparation. In the process, Katzen and Waters recover for children the kinds of abilities, skills and judgment overlooked by the postwar Bedford and Beim but fundamental to Judson and Kirkland. The difference between

Katzen and Waters is that the former's community is essentially local while the latter writes to a global stage.

Having made her reputation as a vegetarian cookbook writer in the 1970s and 1980s, Molly Katzen refocused her writing on children's cookbooks, discovering, one might say, her inner Aunt Jane when she realized how deeply interested her own son was in preparing food in his preschool class. As described in the "Greeting" at the beginning of *Pretend Soup and Other Real Recipes: A Cookbook for Preschoolers & Up*, Katzen worked in cooperation with his teacher, Ann Henderson, and the other children of the class to develop a series of recipes for them to make at school and at home. One striking feature of her cookbooks for children is their overt double address: some sections offer advice for adults, others for children. While Katzen speaks to adults and children, given the communal ethos that motivates these books, she also includes the voices of the children with whom she is working and cooking. In each book, next to a page of Safety Tips, there is a page entitled "Kids' Own Rules," with gems such as "Never touch a cookie when it is in the oven.—Nathan" (*Pretend Soup* 17), and preceding each recipe is set of comments from the children who made and tested the recipe, such as "I made the green bean into nine green beans with my knife—Charley" (*Salad People* 44). Taking into account as well everyone whom Katzen thanks in the Acknowledgments (the schools, teachers, children and parents involved in the project; Katzen's family; and editors and publishers), these books are in a broad sense coauthored; at the very least, they encompass a multiplicity of voices. These books are born out of a local community, and Katzen remains true to her communal ethos.

Katzen's initial motives are personal and familial, reminiscent of Theophano's discussion of recipes as touchstones of family history, tradition, and memory. In the preface to *Salad People*, Katzen discusses the special recipe her mother made, called "Faces," which was "a cheerful montage of cheese, fruit, and vegetables arranged to look like little people, one per plate. . . . Looking back, I now realize that it sparked my first realization of the visual and emotional power of colorful, fresh, lovingly prepared food" (10). This awakening is reminiscent of Grace's inspiring storybook in *Six Little Cooks* or Alice's appreciation of her mother's kitchen skills in *Cooking without Mother's Help*. Katzen, though, wants to empower children because of their "willingness . . . to approach cooking with an open mind and with the goodwill to effect something real" (*Salad People* 9), but without the familial, gender, and domestic value arcs that shaped those earlier books. Katzen makes clear her ideology and the connection between child agency and

cooking in the pedagogy, which she bulletts explicitly at the beginning of each book. This pedagogy is both experiential and integrative: reading and math skills, aesthetics, motor skills, personal and emotional development, food literacy, community and working with others, learning as a lifelong habit of mind. She envisions cooking as a heuristic to teach children a broad set of skills which allow them to function more autonomously and knowledgeably in a larger community (*Pretend Soup* 12, *Salad People* 13, *Honest Pretzels* x). In keeping with her dedication to vegetarian cuisine, Katzen also notes in *Pretend Soup*, “we didn’t want to fill the book with recipes for desserts or gimmicky ‘kid food.’ Instead, we hoped to get children downright excited about healthy ‘real’ food—food they might not have touched with a ten-foot pole if they hadn’t prepared it themselves. Judging from the responses (see ‘The Critics Rave’ section in each recipe), we have accomplished this goal, and we are thrilled!” (11). Katzen’s food ideology permeates her cookbook, but her thoroughly kid-tested recipe choices argue convincingly against the prevailing American cultural focus on convenience foods that are all too often full of fat and sugar. One key ingredient, as she sets up her argument, is giving even quite young children autonomy: choosing which recipes in the book to make and preparing the foods they have chosen.

Given Katzen’s language, community is not necessarily centered in or bounded by family: “We designed this book precisely for this purpose: to enable very young children to cook as independently as possible under the gentle guidance of an adult ‘partner.’ The traditional roles of adult-as-main-cook and child-as-miniature-sidekick are reversed. Your child, as head chef, gets to ‘read’ a pictorial version of a real recipe and do much of the preparation, with you, the attendant grown-up, as helper” (*Pretend Soup* 11). Note that Katzen does not use “parent,” much less “mother,” in this introduction. Nor is Katzen like Aunt Jane; she does not pursue the “angelic” domestic values that Kirkland and Judson, and even Bedford, did. In essence, Katzen reflects and manifests Giard’s philosophy of *doing-cooking*, when the preparation of food is a physical, emotional, intellectual, and communal act that will inevitably produce larger repercussions. In *Pretend Soup*, Katzen addresses “A Few Final Thoughts” to the adult audience: “As your child becomes more attuned to food and cooking, everything that goes on in and around the kitchen will become more interesting, including grocery shopping, setting the table, cleaning up, etc. . . . This might be a good time to look for some picture books about fruits and vegetables, to make field trips to bakeries and farmers’ markets, or to plant or visit a garden” (15). Katzen here explicitly urges the adult readers to engage with the children in their

local community: notably, she suggests local, independent vendors rather than supermarket chains. Further, the suggestion implies the importance of expanding the young cooks' knowledge of their community institutions, and she makes clear how learning in the domestic context can (and should) beget learning in a community context. Yet, at the end of the introduction of *Honest Pretzels*, Katzen does advocate for individual textual understanding of cooking on the part of young cooks:

- Buy your child a blank, bound journal so she can record her responses to the recipes, new ideas, and more. This can be the beginning of her own personal cookbook!
- Give your child a special pad of paper to make his own shopping lists, and give him a folder to store these in. He can keep track of what he's cooked and can refer to his own "files" the next time around. (xiv)

Like Aunt Jane or Alice's mother of a hundred years ago, Katzen believes that personal writing is important as a means of preserving cooking knowledge or the experience of cooking—now, however, for either gender, as her equal-opportunity pronouns reveal. However, children are not bound by the dictating voice of adult authority in her books but are free to write and reflect, create and preserve through their own agency. In fact, to give child cooks freer rein, Katzen reverses the traditional authority structure of adults and children: “the child is the executive chef and the adult is the sous chef” (*Honest Pretzels* xv). In these three cookbooks, Mollie Katzen defines herself as a teacher of children, one who would facilitate children learning about the pleasures of cooking and the community and culinary heritage that make such pleasures possible. She provides answers to Longone's questions about how to teach children culinary pleasure and skills, answers which are not bound by domestic family history but which depend on engaged communities and on the intrinsic agency and curiosity of children.

As an outgrowth of her long career as restaurateur and international activist for local, organic cuisine, Alice Waters has written two children's books—*Fanny at Chez Panisse* (1992) and *Fanny in France* (2016)—using a fictional representative of her daughter Fanny as the protagonist and narrator. In the first book, Fanny absorbs her mother's food ideology (local, organically grown food; produce eaten only in season) while growing up in her mother's famous restaurant. Throughout the text Fanny is involved in many of the aspects of food production, from picking bugs out of the

zucchini flowers before stuffing them, to creating an olive pizza in the shape of an olive oil bottle, to making a compost “cake” out of the leftover food scraps from the restaurant that will nourish the garden. But her most signal insight into the nature of food involves the restaurant’s extemporaneous menu choices depending on the availability of ingredients. Fanny notes that when their fish man cannot provide the expected halibut and offers crabs instead, or when beans are available but the mushroom man has no mushrooms because of lack of rain, the menu changes from the original plan, and she illustrates the creative nature of food preparation:

All the cooks—Paul, Jeff, Michael, Jerome, Alan, and Seen—change everything. They put the fresh crab in the pasta instead of the soup, and they put the beans in the soup instead of the salad, and they put the cheese in the salad where the beans were supposed to be. It gets really crazy but I like it this way because every dinner turns out to be a surprise. (14)

Fanny’s flexible attitude toward food may strike some adults as unlikely, but it is perfectly natural in a child who has developed a wide palate because she has been brought up with a wide range of menu selections, rather than boiled hot dogs and pudding made from a mix, à la Susie in the 1950s.⁴ Fanny shows the possibilities for children who are defined as food capable, just as the children were in *Six Little Cooks* and *Cooking Without Mother’s Help* a century and more ago.

The difference between *Fanny* and the earlier books is that it is not designed to be instructional: that is, with the expectation, real or otherwise, that Fanny is being prepared for domestic work. The book is not organized as a set of cumulative lessons. Rather, the book splits between an initial narrative section, which is then followed by a set of culinary practices and then recipes. The narrative section is organized as autobiographical and exploratory. Fanny narrates a series of experiences—being at the restaurant, driving around town with her mother, visiting one of the local farms that supplies Chez Panisse—all of which illustrate how she is enmeshed in the extended local community that centers on the restaurant. From the very beginning of the story, when her mother picks her up at school and then takes her around town on a series of restaurant errands, Fanny demonstrates how everyone around her is *doing* food, that food is at the center of everyone’s life. In essence, Fanny is learning just by being in this world—partaking and participating in it. She does not have to experience discrete lessons. Rather,

she accumulates knowledge osmotically. Unlike the earlier books, where the girl characters all cook, Fanny, as a singular cooking agent, does not. Rather, she is simply an active part of a large and dynamic food community and has the freedom to explore that community from within; unlike Grace or Alice or even Susie, Fanny is not someone who is being trained for a specific social role. The recipes are a result of that accrued experience, included for the pleasures they give rather than as knowledge necessary for a woman to be a successful housewife.

Alice Waters organizes her second Fanny book, *Fanny in France*, in a similar way: a narrative section followed by a set of food rules and recipes. The book documents trips Fanny took to France as a child. Like *Fanny at Chez Panisse*, the narrative of this book is organized experientially around the many foods, meals, and people Fanny encounters in her travels. In essence, to travel in France—to be with people in France—is to always be doing something with food, *doing cooking*. If in *Fanny at Chez Panisse* Fanny explores local food networks, in *Fanny in France* she experiences national food networks. Again, Fanny does not function as a singular cooking agent tasked with mastering a set of defined skills, but with every episode she becomes part of a community of people—men, women, girls, and boys (basically, everyone in each episode)—who prepare and eat food. Everywhere she goes in France, life centers on food. Inescapably involved and engaged by the world around her, Fanny opens up to new experiences (cleaning octopus, milking goats, making cheese). The narrative section does end with a cumulative experience, a national picnic, during which the mayor of Paris proclaims, “In France, eating is togetherness” (85).⁵ The recipes that follow are included for no other reason than the pleasure they afford Fanny. The two Alice Waters books use many of the same elements of the earlier books (utensils, ingredients, methods of preparation; setting the table; manners), but they lack scenes of instruction and the pedagogical intention to produce a woman who can manage a household. Rather, in both books, Fanny’s agency is developed through the pleasures of communities who cook and eat together. The way Waters structures Fanny’s experiences in the two books reflects what Warren Belasco notes about the countercuisine: “In the hip pastoreale, there was a middle ground that might be reached at once—a way to have fun and live conscientiously. . . . And the place to begin, [Gary] Snyder suggested, was the food” (66). To return to Longone’s questions once again, in these two books Fanny learns about food, the pleasures of the table, and a complex culinary heritage, and she does so without feeling constrained by conventional gender roles and expectations. For Alice Waters, a child’s

experience and knowledge of food is about liberation and an enriching cultural and culinary landscape.

Children's cookbooks stand apart from other genres of texts for children because they are part of a small group of texts that intend for the children who read them to act on that reading in the real world and produce actual physical objects (in this case prepared food).⁶ Cookbooks thus have a directed, practical performative end and, as a result, possess a more complex relationship among the various entities (author/narrator, child reader/narratee, adult reader/narratee) which compose the reading/performance nexus. Like many other texts for children, they are overtly didactic, but their didacticism differs from books meant to enact a simple authority and teach correct moral behavior. The reading/performance nexus of children's cookbooks reflects a complex relationship between the actions taught and the values and ideology which inform that teaching and are meant for the child reader/narratee (and even the adult reader/narratee) to internalize. The text embodies social values in its descriptions of and prescriptions for acts of cooking and food and meal preparation, as well as in its address to both children and adults; ideological tenets underlie ingredient choice and sourcing, as well as methods of serving and consuming the food produced. This chapter has analyzed cookbooks espousing three distinct sets of values—female domestic service (Kirkland, Judson), consumerist (Bedford, Beim), and communal (Katzen, Waters)—each of which is grounded in particular historical moments. Despite the differences between them, one distinguishing trait that unifies all these cookbooks as a genre is their use of double address,⁷ for the author of each writes to both child and adult readers. Adults have traditionally been gatekeepers of children's literature, controlling children's access to books, but they also safeguard the kitchen, which is full of dangers to the inexperienced child. Thus, the writers of children's cookbooks are constantly aware of the adult readers who will be looking over their children's shoulders as the children move into the kitchen to follow the recipes and make snacks or meals. These adults will inevitably stand in as teachers, guides, and authority figures to direct and facilitate the children's actions, in order to coordinate the instructional ends of the cookbook. Sometimes such adult address is overt. Kirkland writes an "Afterthought" which is aimed, she says, "not to my readers, precisely—but to their mothers and aunts" (232). Katzen specifically addresses the "Owner's Manual" sections of *Pretend Soup* and *Salad People* to adults, and each recipe begins with a section labeled "To the Grown-ups." Although the latter disappears in *Honest Pretzels*, because of its older child audience, the

book still includes an extensive section of advice titled “To the Adult” that follows the introductory “Hi Kids!” (viii-xiv). Other authors make the adult address more covert. Judson speaks through the mother figure, as a mask in which she embeds adult authority and voice, thus assuring adult readers that all the proper advice for child kitchen technique will be provided. Bedford offers covert clues to the mother-facilitators on how to make child-play more fulfilling and realistic—a “tiny” simulacrum of domestic bliss. Beim creates an adult male narrative voice who uses the language of an adult male to reassure boy readers that they can cook and still remain masculine. More radically, and in keeping with her broad sense of community, Waters decenters adult authority among a host of Fanny’s grownup acquaintances: farmers who provide produce for *Chez Panisse*, chefs who cook at the restaurant, family friends in France who host Fanny’s family for meals. All of them provide knowledge and instruction as Fanny helps them create the different dishes that she describes for readers.

Double address is genre-defining for children’s cookbooks and structures what Leonardi would characterize as their “embedded discourse.” Thus, the writers of cookbooks consciously construct narrators who embed the discourse of recipes (the directions of how to manufacture dishes at home) within a set of narratives (tidbits of story, anecdote, advice) in order to situate the recipes within a context that creates meaning for the readers. Within the sample texts examined above, Kirkland’s and Judson’s narrators discuss recipes as a means to teach the ideals of female domestic service to young girls through the authority of the adult women characters who instruct the girls in the kitchen; Bedford shifts cooking from work to play in her excessively simple recipes that simultaneously reinforce her readers’ attachment to the shortcuts of industrialized convenience foods; Beim uses “man-talk” to create a masculine space in and outside the kitchen where boys can feel comfortable about conventionally domestic food preparation; Katzen and Waters intend for their recipes to empower children in the kitchen and connect them to a larger local and global community that cooks together. To return to Jan Longone one last time: Americans have taught our children about cooking and the pleasures of the table in an amazing variety of ways over time, and children’s cookbooks have formed an important part of the discourse through which we have taught them. While some such texts have isolated child reader/cooks from their food heritage, most have more interestingly grappled with ways to empower children in the kitchen and beyond through teaching knowledge of ingredients, skills at the stove, and American culinary heritage as it has evolved through time.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Photo credit: Ben Leistensnider

KARA K. KEELING is a past president of the Children's Literature Association and serves as professor of English and the Dr. Tracey Schwarze Professor of Arts and Humanities at Christopher Newport University in Newport News, Virginia, where she teaches courses on children's and young adult literature. She coauthored, with Marsha Sprague, *Discovering Their Voices: Engaging Adolescent Girls with Young Adult Literature* (International Reading Association, 2007), and coedited, with Scott Pollard, *Critical Approaches to Food in Children's Literature* (Routledge, 2009). She and Pollard have written on food in children's literature in texts by a number of children's authors (including Neil Gaiman, Polly Horvath, Beatrix Potter, Pam Muñoz Ryan, Maurice Sendak, and Laura Ingalls Wilder).

SCOTT T. POLLARD is professor of English at Christopher Newport University. With Kara Keeling, he coedited *Critical Approaches to Food in Children's Literature* (Routledge 2009). Together they have written and published articles on food in children's literature in texts by a number of children's authors (including Neil Gaiman, Polly Horvath, Beatrix Potter, Pam Muñoz Ryan, Maurice Sendak, and Laura Ingalls Wilder). Pollard also coedited with Margarita Marinova her translation from the Russian of Mikhail Bulgakov's dramatic adaptation of *Don Quixote* (MLA 2014), and he edited a special volume of *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* on disability in 2013.