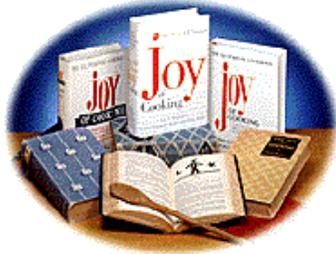


Cooking with Politics,  
Technology, and Culture:  
Book History and the *Joy of Cooking*



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Undergraduate Research Day 2000  
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For more information on this project, see:

<http://www.ece.umd.edu/~elainec/joc/>

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## 1943: World War II

- "Sugarless and Sugar-Saving Recipes for Cakes, Cookies and Desserts" chapter.
- "Meat Stretching, Meat Substitutes and Supplementary Dishes" chapter.
  - "Wartime Emergency Soups" (using dehydrated soups).
  - "Suggestions For the Use of Soybeans."
- War morale booster.

The war also introduced the *Joy* to new readers, such as army and concentration camp cooks who faced limited (and often very miscellaneous) ingredients and dozens of hungry soldiers. The *Joy* became a war morale booster, and American servicemen wrote to thank Irma:

“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.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Mendelson, Anne. Stand Facing the Stove: The Story of the Women who Gave America the Joy of Cooking. New York: Henry Holt, 1996.