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The Religionization of American Jewish Cookbooks

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The Religionization of American Jewish Cookbooks

Jews living in the United States today have a complicated relationship with *kashrut*. Some grew up in a home that abided by kosher dietary guidelines and have since abandoned them, some grew up with pork and shellfish in the home and enjoy going out to a "Jewish" deli for a Reuben sandwich and others have grown up keeping kosher, and have stuck with it. According to the 2021 Pew Report, 17% U.S. Jews say they keep kosher in their home, including 14% who say they separate meat and dairy, and 3% who say they are vegetarian or vegan.[1] The denominations break down as follows: 95% of American Jews who identify as Orthodox say they keep kosher, as do 24% of Conservative Jews, 5% of Reform Jews, and 6% of those who are not affiliated with a particular branch of Judaism.[2] Jewish cookbooks published in the U.S. in the last 150 years can provide a good idea of the development and trajectories of these habits, loyalties, and rejections of Jewish dietary laws. American Jewish cookbooks published since the advent of Reform Judaism in the US have been pivotal in enabling American Jews to think about tradition, while as Eileen Solomon writes, at the same time, "recognizing and adapting to cultural shifts."[3] These cookbooks expose the tensions between assimilation and individualization.

The present study looks at how Jewish cookbooks published in the United States between 1860 and 2022 were used both as descriptive snapshots of American Jewish religious observance and prescriptive attempts to modify (that is, introduce, increase or decrease) halakhic practice in Jewish homes. I examine the best selling cookbooks that were published in the United States in English. Included in the cookbooks that I have chosen are those that exhibit strict

[1] Pew Research Center, *Jewish Americans in 2020*, (Washington, D.C.: Pew Research Center, 2021), https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2021/05/11/jewish-practices-and-customs/
[2] *Ibid*, Pew Research Center.
[3] Eileen Solomon, "More Than Recipes: Kosher Cookbooks as Historical Texts." *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 104, no. 1 (2014): 28.

dietary observance of *kashrut*, those that demonstrate "kosher style," and those that include recipes with explicit *treyf*. I show how Jewish cookbooks have both taught and influenced Americans–both Jewish and non-Jewish–about *kashrut*. What do I mean by "kosher style?" While this type of ritual dietary observance implies that the food does not achieve the same standard as strictly kosher, the meaning of "kosher style" is somewhat ambiguous.[4] In this paper, I will be defining "kosher style" as meals that do not include pork, shellfish, or the mixing of milk and meat.

In focusing on how Jewish immigrant communities shifted their approach to *kashrut* from their countries of origin, I will look at the differences between Jews of Eastern and Central European origin as well as trace how denominational differences impacted dietary law observance. One avenue of investigation will focus on Jewish cookbooks that were published by Reform Jewish women's groups who tended to express their Jewishness through philanthropy. The Women of Reform Judaism, formerly the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods, was founded in 1913, and has raised significant funding for Reform Jewish organizations such as Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR), National Federation of Temple Youth (NFTY), World Union for Progressive Judaism, and other organizations and projects that play a pivotal role in the movement.[5] A tool that these communities, as well as Hadassah and other, denominational aligned Sisterhood groups, used to raise money was selling cookbooks. The content of those cookbooks–many of which included recipes with non-kosher ingredients–showcase the changing ways Jews understood their Jewishness in the United States.

While historically men were in positions that were responsible for verifying the ritual purity of a product because of their positions of clerical authority, the responsibility of ensuring

[4] "What is Kosher Style?." *My Jewish Learning*, https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/what-is-kosher-style/.
[5] "Our History," *Women of Reform Judaism*, https://wrj.org/our-community/about-wrj/our-history

that dietary restrictions and regulations were followed in the kitchen often fell to women. In 1893, Jewish Women's Congress member Mary Cohen preached that a Jewish woman represented morality and was responsible for the "purity of the domestic altar."[6] I believe this to be her classist understanding of what middle class women wanted the "female" role to be. It seems to me that Cohen believed this role was under "threat" by immigrant women who needed to work in order to make ends meet and new notions of modern "womanhood" that eschewed marriage and children when so many hours of the day were spent at one's workplace instead of home making.

Cookbooks throughout the ages highlight what was important to the Jewish cook. Post World War II, there was concern for nutritional value. Cookbook authors and nutritionists were asking themselves how Jewish cooks could increase the nutritional value of the food that Jewish immigrants were eating without condemning the foods that they loved and violating the laws of *kashrut*. Additionally, a lot of earlier cookbooks placed an emphasis on the importance of aesthetics, that is, both what the meal looked like and how the place where it was served appeared. It was not only important for a woman to feed her family but, additionally, there was much emphasis placed on keeping a tidy, Jewish home. In addition to recipes, many cookbooks of this era held house-making tips including how to set the table, how to best entertain and what dishes to serve for different occasions.

I determined that a cookbook is "Jewish" based on the following criteria: the author has to be Jewish, the author is intentional about claiming the cuisine is Jewish or of Jewish origin, and/or the author makes it clear the cookbook is intended for a Jewish audience, as in the case of *Aunt Babette's Cook Book, Foreign and Domestic Recipes For the Household*, written by Bertha

[6] Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, "Kitchen Judaism," in *Getting Comfortable in New York: The Jewish Home, 1880-1950*, ed. Susan Braunstein and Jenna Weissman Joselit, (New York: The Jewish Museum, 1990), 77

F. Kramer and published first in 1889. Though a chapter in Kramer's book included "Easter Dishes," which instructed the reader on how to set the table for Passover *seder* and how to prepare Passover dishes, the book itself had a *magen david,* the insignia of Bloch Publishing Company, on its title page.

The research unfolds chronologically and each chapter focuses on a different time period. The first chapter covers the age antebellum era from 1860-1880 and the early part of the immigration period of 1880-1900. The second chapter investigates the period after the turn of the century, 1900-1924, and the Interwar period from 1924-1939. The third chapter examines cookbooks published during World War II as well as postwar from 1940-1960 and emergence of the *ba'al teshuva* movement from 1960-1980. The final chapter will include the First and Second Intifadas and 9/11 from 1980-2001, and the 21st century, from 2001 to present day.

In each of these time periods, I review a best selling Jewish cookbook. I look at each cookbook author's approach to *kashrut*, whether that author abides by ritual laws entirely, mentions the ritual laws and also includes recipes with *treyf,* and additionally, cookbooks that make no mention of Jewish dietary laws. Additionally, I look at how dietary observance remains the same or changes in later editions of a cookbook. For example, the first edition of the *Settlement Cookbook* by Lizzie Black Kander published in 1901 includes Jewish dietary laws and also features recipes containing shellfish and the mixing of meat and milk, but interestingly, no pork. The 1930 edition includes recipes containing pork which indicates changing norms and feelings about what was acceptable and what was not. Additionally, for each cookbook I look to see how holiday observance may or may not have changed over time.

Throughout my thesis, I ask how American Jewish cookbooks navigate tradition and secularization, how cookbook authors address religion or religiosity, and how the authors balance the tensions between adhering to *Kashrut* and each cookbook's intended audience.

Chapter 1: Antebellum to the Turn of the Century: Cookbooks from 1860-1880 and 1880-1900

Esther Levy published the first edition of *The Jewish Cookery Book* in Philadelphia in 1871. This cookbook has widely been accepted as the first kosher cookbook printed in the United States.[7] Not much is known about Mrs. Levy's life. Nearly every reference to her book, including a 1988 reprint of *The Jewish Cookery Book*, is accompanied by the statement "not much is known about the book's author."[8]

Yet, the 1982 New Facsimile Edition's introduction written by Josephine Bacon notes that Mrs. Levy herself registered her work at the Library of Congress and was solely responsible for it. Based on her mastery of the English language, Bacon makes the conclusion that English was her mother tongue and her facility with Hebrew appears to be non-existent.[9] In her work, Levy uses some highly original translations of Hebrew names, which may conclude that the translations were not her own. She was long thought to be a Philadelphia native because her recipes show a strong German influence, which may have been due to her own origins as much as to the culinary example of her fellow Pennsylvanians and contemporary cookery experts. However, author Claudia Roden of *The Book of Jewish Food* seems to believe that Levy was likely from an English and German background.[10] This is likely due to the fact that she gives many Victorian recipes like mulligatawny soup, Yorkshire and Cumberland pudding, chicken curry, and a few Sephardi recipes popular in the Jewish community in England at the time.[11]

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[7] *Ibid,* Solomon, "More Than Recipes: Kosher Cookbooks as Historical Texts," 24.
[8] Esther Levy, *Jewish Cookery Book*, (Philadelphia: Applewood Books, 1988) 1.
[9] Esther Levy, *Jewish Cookery Book*, (Philadelphia: Applewood Books, 1982) Introduction.
[10] Claudia Roden, *The Book of Jewish Food*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf Inc., 1996), 78.
[11] Esther Levy, *Jewish Cookery Book*, (Philadelphia: Applewood Books, 1871) 102.

Included in the title page is the sentence, "מלאכת הבישול בדרך נכון וכפי מצות דתנו הקדושה" translated as "A cookery book with properly explained instructions, and in accordance with the rules of the Jewish religion," by the author.[12] Based on the text of the title page, which reads "adapted for Jewish housekeepers with the addition of many useful medicinal recipes, and other valuable information relative to the housekeeper and domestic management,"[13] it may be possible to conjecture that the cookbook was intended for those living a middle-class, urban lifestyle. In between the years 1870 and 1910, there was a dramatic increase in the number of female domestic servants in the United States.[14] David Katzman explains that this increase was a result of "the rapid industrialization and accompanying urbanization" of the population and the growing middle class.[15] Faye Dudden observes that this dramatic increase was combined with a new concern for "status."[16] An increase in domestic assistance meant that families were beginning to be more financially successful. With this newfound success, there became a desire of approval from non-immigrant or other immigrant groups, as well as the willingness to show off one's accumulated wealth. Additionally, for context, an 1890 survey of Jewish families indicated that six out of 10 had domestic help.[17] Many of the domestic servants that were found in Jewish homes were likely to have been immigrants from Ireland, Central Europe, and Scandinavia.[18] In turn, Levy's cookbook was not only meant for the housewife, but additionally

[12] *Ibid*, *Jewish Cookery Book*, 1
[13] *Ibid*, *Jewish Cookery Book* 1
[14] David M. Katzen, *Seven Days a Week: Women and Domestic Service in Industrializing America*, (Urbana, Illinois: 1978) 46.
[15] *Ibid*, David M. Katzen, *Seven Days a Week: Women and Domestic Service in Industrializing America*, 46.
[16] Faye E. Dudden, *Household Service in Nineteenth-Century America* (Middletown, Connecticut:Wesleyan University Press, 1983) 108-109.
[17] "The Jew and the Economy, 1861-1895," in *The Jew in the American World: A Sourcebook*, ed. J. R. Marcus (Detroit, 1996), 219.
[18] *Ibid* Katzman, *Seven Days a Week*, 67.

it was a tool to teach the domestic worker how to cook the different foods that show off the status of the woman of the house.

The cookbook begins with a preface that explains how it is possible to keep a kosher home while still caring deeply about the way a meal is presented. I came from a family that did not observe *kashrut*, and had often deemed kosher food as lacking flavor and presentation. It seems that Levy was aware of this stereotype in her book, and prefaces her concerns as well as those she wanted to address in order to debunk this myth of the aesthetics of kosher food. Levy then explains that a love for cooking and homemaking is in Jewish women's blood, because according to the Bible, when Sarah was asked by her husband Abraham to "make cakes,"[19] she was able to do so well. Levy additionally quotes a line from Proverbs to prove that women are innately able to "cook well."[20] Levy assumed that her 19th century audience would be kosher-observant women, despite the reality that early Reform Jewish leaders were just a few years from declaring *kashrut* unnecessary.

Regarding dietary observance, Levy acknowledges that not everyone's practices are the same. As she notes about the religious observance of her readership, "...those also will be heeded which we have offered regarding the observance of some of our practices, we trust that our efforts will redound to the spiritual welfare of our co-religionists, and secure for ourselves their kind approbation."[21] While her message is certainly difficult to interpret, I believe she is speaking to the intentionality that should be included in one's religious observance, and additionally her push for a communal approach. Yet, the introduction additionally includes, "information as to the manner of strictly keeping a Jewish house."[22] Her choice of words here

[19] Genesis 18:6
[20] *Ibid, Jewish Cookery Book* 4
[21] *Ibid, Jewish Cookery Book* 4
[22] *Ibid, Jewish Cookery Book* 5

are interesting, because one may believe that her instructions were more specific on how to keep not only a Jewish home, but a home that abided by *kashrut*. The introduction then goes on to quote biblical verses and explain the basics of *kashrut*.

Author Sue Fishkoff points out that *kashrut* standards themselves were more relaxed in early America than they are today. The *Jewish Cookery Book* advises rubbing a Scarlet Fever patient's entire body with bacon fat, which would be anathema today, but she did not suggest eating it.[23] *Treyf* was also a sore-throat cure, with Levy advising her audience to wrap salt pork around the neck of the person suffering. These recommendations most likely would have been unlikely in the Old World, and would be unthinkable in a kosher cookbook today. Additionally, she included in her cookbook a recipe for mutton leg, a part of the animal that is not considered kosher today.[24]

Levy's introduction goes on to explain how one must best accomplish one's wifely duties, which she urges women to think about prior to their weddings. Her introduction begins with what reads to me as a *kallah* class: she explains to women who are soon to wed, as well as their mothers, how to learn and also to teach their daughters how to properly manage a Jewish family. She includes instructions on how to prepare for Shabbat, make and take challah, light Shabbat candles, prepare the meal, etc. She then writes about the trend of hiring housekeepers to lighten the burden, and the importance of good time management when trying to manage a household.[25]

While Levy's introduction teaches her reader how to keep a kosher household and how to properly clear one's house of *chametz* during Passover, her recipes themselves seldom mention Jewish dietary laws. Yet she assumes some level of observance about the culinary rhythms of the

[23] *Ibid*, *Jewish Cookery Book*, 178–179
[24] *Ibid*, *Jewish Cookery Book*, 178-179
[25] *Ibid*, *Jewish Cookery Book*, 7.

Jewish year. In her soup section, for instance, the Jewish aspect of the book is notable when the recipe for a "Nice Butter Soup" is parenthetically described as for the "nine days of lamentations"[26] (the nine days that precede the fast of Tisha B'av). During this period, observant Jews consume no meat except on Shabbat. It seems that Levy was confident that her readers had full knowledge of this dietary regulation, which most certainly can not be assumed in 2022.

Her prose is always instructive. In Levy's introduction, she devotes a section to how to arrange the table for breakfast, for luncheon, for dinner and, additionally, she explains how to place dishes on the table. For breakfast, she describes in great detail the placement of tea and coffee cups, as well as where to place each pot.[27] Why might Mrs. Levy care so much that her readers know how to set a table properly? I believe it is because to her, proper aesthetics show status and indicate one's class. This is a trend that began way back in the medieval era, when dining became a sign of social status.[28]

In addition to how to set the table, Mrs. Levy explains what one might serve at such an event, and directs her audience to place a salt-cellar at each guest's seat. After reading her introduction, I wondered if it was common back then to under-salt each dish, or if that generation had a deep affinity for salt. Upon researching, I learned that during this time period, salt was more than a condiment. In an article titled, "Setting the Table," Evangeline Holland writes, "to sit above the salt was to sit in the place of honor, and until the salt was put upon the table, no one could know which seat would be allotted to him or her."[29]

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[26] *Ibid*, *Jewish Cookery Book*, 31.
[27] *Ibid*, *Jewish Cookery Book* 11.
[28] Evangeline Holland, "Setting the Table," *Edwardian Promenade*, May 4, 2009, https://www.edwardianpromenade.com/etiquette/setting-the-table-2/
[29] *Ibid*, Evangeline Holland, "Setting the Table"

For a luncheon, in addition to explaining what belongs at each guest's table setting Levy explains what she thinks constitutes an appropriate meal. She writes that the dishes generally served for lunch are "the remains of cold meat, fish or poultry, neatly trimmed or garnished, or sweetmeats, or fruit, or plainly cooked cutlets, chops or steaks, or in fact anything does for lunch; cheese or eggs, or bread and butter and pickles."[30] She encourages her readers to always have something to provide guests because one never knows when one may be called upon to host someone.

Dinner is when the hostess should bring out their finest China. This is implying that she expects her readership to own fine China! From this, we can gather that she is not writing for the recent immigrant that arrived with pennies and a suitcase, but instead her intended readership is individuals with wealth. She does not include what should be served at this meal, rather how and on what the meal should be served. Levy suggests the use of place cards, with not only the name of the guest, but additionally the rank in order to "prevent confusion and jealousy."[31] She did not specify what she meant by "rank," but I would assume that rank had to do with someone's gender, profession, and familial generation. She further suggests what to use as centerpieces, and she warns her reader that "particular attention must be paid to the cleanliness of the plate and glasses…. Nothing looks so bad as dirty, greasy looking silver and glasses."[32] She did not believe in leaving dirty dishes on the table, but instead recommended that dishes should be hurried away as soon as the guest is finished eating. One should not have to reach for anything, but should instead have access to food and drink from wherever one is seated.

[30]*Ibid, Jewish Cookery Book* 11-12.
[31]*Ibid, Jewish Cookery Book,* 13
[32]*Ibid, Jewish Cookery Book,* 13

Levy's cookbook includes a section she called a "miscellaneous" which offered tutorials on household tasks such as cleaning paint, cleaning carpets, taking stains out of marble, cementing broken China, preserving blankets, getting rid of ants, amid many other tasks. One that I found to be particularly perplexing were instructions on how to wash a black lace veil. Levy writes:

> mix beef's gall with water hot enough to bear your hands in; do not rub the veil, but squeeze it thorough, then rinse in two or three cold waters; in the last put a little indigo and dry it; scald a small piece of glue, put the veil in to stiffen it; squeeze it out and clap it; lay it on a linen cloth, and make it perfectly smooth, then iron it on the wrong side. [33]

Not only do these directions sound incredibly complicated and counterintuitive, but additionally, when was one to wear such a thing, and how often would this problem arise? Upon researching, I identified that a "black lace veil" was part of a highly structured, 19th century mourning ritual. To demonstrate that a woman was in mourning, she would wear a full-length black veil anytime she left the house.[34] This was part of a two and a half year mourning process, in which the individual went through three stages of grieving: deep mourning, full or second mourning, and half mourning, each with its own fashion requirements and restrictions on a woman's behavior.[35]

Unsurprisingly, this cookbook has almost no resemblance to present day cookbooks. Each recipe has scarce units of measurement and instead uses the weight of the protein for a recipe. This was of course due to the fact that the internationally adopted metric standards were only adopted internationally in 1893, years after the cookbook was published.[36] Recipes include

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[33] *Ibid*, *Jewish Cookery Book,* 160

[34] Jocelyn Sears, "Wearing a19th Century Mourning Veil Could Result in-Twist-Death," *Racked*, March 29, 2018, https://www.racked.com/2018/3/29/17156818/19th-century-mourning-veil.

[35] *Ibid*, Jocelyn Sears, "Wearing a19th Century Mourning Veil Could Result in-Twist-Death."

[36] "Origin of the Metric System," *United States Metric Association*, https://usma.org/origin-of-the-metric-system.

cooking time, but no exact cooking temperature. This was due to the fact that electric ovens were not introduced until the end of the 19th century and temperature control was still an issue.[37] The trouble with oven temperature control was solved beginning in the 20th century with the invention of thermostats for ovens.[38] Levy's recipes instead may call for "enough" of one ingredient or "good size pieces." The cookbook includes instructions such as "let the onions cook to take the strength out of them," or "the addition of a piece of beef would improve the flavor."[39] Instead of oven temperature or stove heat, recipes instead tell the cook to put the fish into a "gentle oven" or a "good oven."[40] It seems that many of Levy's recipes are not for the beginner cook, but instead are for somebody that has good intuition in the kitchen.

In her cookbook, Levy is balancing the concern that parents are not adequately passing down Jewish customs and that American born Jewish children are not being given a proper Jewish education. Her cookbook additionally serves as a "How To" manual, not only explaining and directing the proper use of food in a Jewish home, but detailing specific food rituals for holiday celebrations. At the same time, she spent many pages explaining to immigrants how to integrate Jewish dietary laws with the global foodways they encountered in America's melting pot. Through her introduction and many of her recipes, she provided immigrants and their offsprings with crucial links to their ancestral food practices. In addition to being a "How To" manual, Levy's cookbook contained many stories and tales of cultural vibrancy.

Yet, Levy's cookbook included recipes that definition did not come from European Jewish foodways. Her soup recipes include tweaked recipes for gumbo with okra, Mulligatawny,

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[37] "The History of the Oven-a Timeline," *Food Crumbles*, December 8, 2016, https://foodcrumbles.com/oven-history/.
[38] *Ibid*, "The History of the Oven-a Timeline"
[39] *Ibid*, *Jewish Cookery Book*, 30.
[40] *Ibid*, *Jewish Cookery Book*, 21.

and Philadelphia Pepper Pot soup (though without the traditional tripe). In promoting the idea to her readers that one can have it all, she promised her readers that they can enjoy new culinary traditions while simultaneously preserving their heritage. She skillfully was able to neutralize the temptation of American foods that were considered *treyf* by creating kosher versions of American classics, even creating a Charlotte-style dessert with matzah. "Charlottes" were invented in England in the late 18th century, named for Queen Charlotte, the wife of George III. The dessert could be composed of many layers of custard flavored with mace, vanilla beans, almonds, peach leaves, or cinnamon, all mixed with lemon and brandy whipped cream. It was then layered with almond cake, frosted, and decorated with strawberry slices or white grapes.[41] Levy's recipe uses matzah instead of almond cake.

Another interesting feature of Levy's work is her way of teaching different baking and cooking techniques by including repetition. Included in the *Jewish Cookery Book* are 40 recipes for pudding alone. It seems that Mrs. Levy intended for the reader to begin to learn the basics components of pudding, get a feel for the right texture, and internalize the methodologies by reading every single recipe. This is coupled with the fact that puddings were very popular during this era, as well as easy to digest. In addition, they were convenient for using up ingredients that otherwise would have gone bad, and additionally, it was simple enough to make them visually appealing.[42]

Levy also includes towards the end of the cookbook foods that are in season during each month of the calendar year. She includes different categories such as meats, poultry, fish, vegetables and fruits. What seems to be peculiar is the lack of variety regarding the proteins.

[41]Sara Lohman, "Esther Levy's Sweet Passover Solution," *American Jewish Historical Society*, April 2, 2020, https://ajhs.org/esther-levys-sweet-passover-solution/
[42] "What is Pudding," *Food Timeline Library*, https://www.foodtimeline.org/foodpuddings.html.

Every month of the year, the same four meats are available "beef, mutton, veal, house lamb."[43] Additionally, there is little to no variety in the monthly fish and poultry offerings. This was surprising because of the roll that the two proteins play on the Shabbat dinner table. What once was a long-standing practice for many Eastern-European Jewish families, no longer seemed like such a luxury after immigrating to the United States.

A chapter in Levy's book that is most certainly unique to today's standards and practices is titled "Hints to Housekeepers." Included in the hints are what to serve during each meal time every day of the week. Levy begins the chapter by recommending that housekeepers keep things simple on Mondays because there is a lot of housework to catch up on. Levy writes, "It may be that there is one servant, and she, perhaps, not very competent; and then the lady of the house may be too delicate to see to the arrangement of the table, it would be impossible to have a hot dinner properly cooked."[44] While this language is obviously offensive today, it seems that Levy is trying to advise the homemaker on how best to find domestic assistance in order to stay on top of one's household tasks.

Aunt Babette's Cook Book was published in 1889 by Bertha F. Kramer who went by the pseudonym "Aunt Babette." Barbara Kirschenblatt-Gimblett conjectures that she used a pen name most likely in order to keep with her persona as devoted mother, wife, and accomplished housewife and hostess.[45] The cook book was published by Bloch Publishing Company in Cincinnati, which was associated with the Reform Movement, and subsequently went through several editions in its first year. A founder of the publishing company, Edward Bloch's sister was

[43]*Ibid, Jewish Cookery Book,* 165
[44]*Ibid, Jewish Cookery Book,* 171
[45]*Ibid,* Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, "Kitchen Judaism," 78.

married to Isaac Mayer Wise. The title page of the cookbook includes a dedication that states, "To the young housekeepers of America: This book is respectfully dedicated."[46] Kramer encouraged her audience to treat their servants kindly, and first learn how to be a manager of their own household.

Unlike in Mrs. Levy's *Jewish Cookery*, Aunt Babette's recipes do not adhere to Jewish dietary laws, and include recipes for shellfish, rabbit, dishes that mix milk and meat, and ham. Babette was not trying to hide her lack of adherence Jewish dietary laws and included in the book's index is an entry for "Trefa," which reads, "NOTHING is 'Trefa' that is healthy and clean."[47] Therefore, it is fair to assume that she gives priority to hygiene over ritual purity and warn the reader to proceed accordingly. This privileging follows the Pittsburgh Platform, signed four years earlier by many Reform rabbis around the United States, that stated that "We hold that all such Mosaic and rabbinical laws as regulate diet, priestly purity and dress originated in ages and under the influence of ideas entirely foreign to our present mental and spiritual state."[48] The early rabbis no longer saw this practice as spiritually uplifting, but instead something that got in the way of spirituality.

At the same time, Kramer was cognisant of her readers that may keep Jewish dietary laws. Her pie crust recipe, for example, called for drippings of poultry fat to enhance flavor, but she also gave her readers the option to include a meat-free fat instead if they intended for this dairy dessert to accompany a dairy meal. A "special notice to the reader" cautioned that

[46]Bertha F. Kramer, *Aunt Babette's Cook Book***,** (Cincinnati, Ohio: Bloch Publishing Company, 1889), 1.
[47] *Ibid*, Kramer, *Aunt Babette's Cook Book*, 12.
[48] James G. Heller, *Isaac M Wise: His Life, Work and Thought* (New York: The Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1965) pp. 464-465.

"wherever the word 'lard' occurs it refers specifically to 'cotton seed lard,' which is entirely free from hog fat, and is strictly kosher, pure and wholesome and economical as well."[49]

In her introduction, Bertha Kramer writes that the recipes included in her book were only intended for her own daughters and granddaughters, and she never intended for them to be published. In 1888, *The American Israelite*, Wise's newspaper and a major publication for American Jews, published a rave review about the cookbook. Wise states, "From a typographical point of view it is the finest book they have ever issued, and its appearance is such that any publisher might be proud of."[50] The article also explains how Babette contributed a series of articles and recipes to the publication in recent years, and how her work was finally composed into a cookbook for all to enjoy.

Included in Kramer's introduction were economical tips for both the housewife and the housekeeper. Kramer stressed the importance of not wasting food, by writing, "it is the wife's duty to see that nothing goes to waste, and food improperly prepared is a waste."[51] Additionally, Kramer adds a lot of humor to her introduction. She tells the story of an anonymous newlywed, who prior to getting married, did not even know how to boil a cup of tea. After a bit of time, she began to feel more confident in the kitchen and would even consider herself a "good cook and housekeeper now."[52] However, her sudden confidence was not acquired overnight, but instead, it happened because she spent a lot of time pressuring herself to do better. Then, one night her husband Henry told her that his mother was coming into town, and he wanted her to prepare one of her favorite recipes. Having just begun to feel comfortable with the basics, she began to panic. The story abruptly ends with Kramer's pointer:

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[49] *Ibid, Aunt Babette's Cookbook*, 261.
[50] Edward Bloch and Isaac Mayer Wise, "Cookbook Review, " *The American Israelite*, April 27, 1888.
[51] *Ibid*, Kramer, *Aunt Babette's Cook Book*, 5
[52] *Ibid*, Kramer, *Aunt Babette's Cook Book*, 6.

> I hope I have not worked in vain; try and learn from me through practicing the following recipes, and if I have succeeded in eliciting Henry's praises about his dear wife's meals and making you look all smiles and happy, I shall feel fully repaid for my labor.[53]

This anecdote shows the pressure that was placed on Jewish housewives in this generation to deliver when it came to taking care of their children, their husbands and their homes.

Kramer's cookbook was reviewed as authentic, and read like a cookbook composed of family recipes. Throughout the book she wrote in a personal tone and shared her experiences derived from a lifetime as head of her household. To her reader, she wrote, "And pray don't get discouraged if your first attempt is a failure, but try again, and never be ashamed to ask your neighbor, or any friend, to show you how to mix a cake."[54] Her helpful hints included graphically describing what was required for recipes like goose that required the reader to singe feathers off of the animal. She believed this process to be so complicated that Aunt Babette as quoted by Kirschenblatt-Gimblet, "I wish I could show you this personally, for I am afraid my young housekeepers will not understand just how," in reference to removing the skin from the goose in one piece."[55]

While Kramer's cookbook included shellfish to allow her audience to assimilate into bourgeois culture, her recipes simultaneously featured many Ashkenazi Jewish recipes that were most certainly brought from countries of origin in Europe. The *American Israelite* article reads, "Most of the recipes appeared in print for the first time, and are so peculiarly Jewish that they give the book a unique character."[56] These recipes include noodle *schalet* (an older, German

[53] *Ibid,* Kramer, *Aunt Babette's Cook Book,* 6-7.
[54] *Ibid,* Kramer, *Aunt Babette's Cook Book,* 270
[55] *Ibid,* Kramer, *Aunt Babette's Cook Book,* 271
[56] *Ibid,* Edward Bloch and Isaac Mayer Wise, "Cookbook Review."

name for cholent), gefilte fish, kugel, many Passover specialties and many more.[57] Additionally, I am classifying Kramer's book as a Jewish cookbook because a Star of David, the insignia of Bloch publishing, appeared on the title page. On top of this, the back pages of the cookbook included an advertisement for *The Sabbath Visitor*, a distinctively Jewish publication intended for youth.

The Bloch Publishing Company, with its connection to Wise, was closely allied to the moderate wing of the Reform Jewish movement in the United States.[58] Kirschenblatt-Gimblett suggests that *Aunt Babette's Jewish Cookery Book* was produced and intended for German Reform Jews who "rejected certain ritual requirements that set Jews apart and who tried to bring elegance and decorum to Jewish life in the synagogue and home, whether through beautifully bound prayer books in translation or *haute cuisine.*"[59] Kramer envisioned a dinner table where Jewish diners would not be estranged from their non-Jewish friends. As American Jews, their religiosity was no longer to be defined by ancient ceremonial practices, but instead by religious concepts and ethical principles that had become one of the defining characteristics of the Reform Movement. The cookbook also provided much guidance on how to hold theme parties, which was widely popular in the 1890s.[60]

To the early Reformers, *treyf* was an ideological issue, not simply a matter of indifference, pragmatism or aesthetics. By including recipes with *treyf*, Kramer made it clear that she did not think it necessary for one to observe ritual law to be Jewish.

Included in the cookbook were recipes that were clear, detailed and, for many, tasted wonderful. Among some of her greatest hits was her recipe for gefilte fish and many cakes and

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[57] *Ibid*, Kramer, *Aunt Babette's Cook Book*, 280.
[58] *Ibid*, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, "Kitchen Judaism," 79.
[59] *Ibid*, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, "Kitchen Judaism," 80.
[60] Gil Marks, *Encyclopedia of Jewish Food* (Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons Inc., 2010),140.

pastries, that author Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett writes, "were fondly remembered delicacies with which a middle–class German Jewish family would broke the Yom Kippur fast in the Midwest in the 1890s." [61]

In addition to delicious recipes, Kramer's cookbook also included advice on hiring servants, grocery shopping, work, dish-washing, preserving lunches, and even cleaning cream. Regarding servants, she reminds her readers that people become servants often because of circumstance, and it is not a career that many people opt into. Therefore, she writes, "...they cannot smile all the time. They have their secret sorrows, aches and pains as well…."[62] Additionally, she advises a housewife to use good judgment when choosing a servant, and to choose one who is less experienced and train them rather than choosing experienced help who "may be arrogant and feels superior" [63]

In Kramer's section titled "Marketing," she advises the woman of the house, rather than the housekeeper, to do the food shopping.[64] Kramer makes it known that it does not matter what a woman's status is; shopping should be her "wifely duty."[65] Kramer advises that before shopping, one should go into their pantry and see what they are short on and what they may have a surplus of. By checking on the status of one's pantry every so often before food shopping, one can keep a better eye on how their housekeeper is managing their kitchen. She once again writes about the importance of not wasting by sharing what to do with stale bread.

In Kramer's section titled "Work," she explains the importance of being prepared and having meals thought out before beginning them. By having all of the ingredients purchased and

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[61] *Ibid*, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, "Kitchen Judaism," 77.
[62] *Ibid*, Kramer, *Aunt Babette's Cook Book*, 8.
[63] *Ibid* Kramer, *Aunt Babette's Cook Book*, 8.
[64] *Ibid*, Kramer, *Aunt Babette's Cook Book*, 9.
[65] *Ibid*, Kramer, *Aunt Babette's Cook Book*, 9

an organized kitchen, the reader will have ample time to accomplish what they set out to do while also having time to make dessert.[66] Kramer was a big proponent of both the housewife and the servant being as efficient with household tasks as possible.

This was especially true regarding dish washing, which I believe is related to her unconcern with *kashrut*. Kramer's tips and tricks for washing dishes came way before the dishwasher. She recommended taking all of the dishes together and first scraping off leftover food and pouring out leftover drink. She then tells her reader to have "two dish pans, one to wash and the other to rinse the dishes in, and a large pitcher with hot, soapy water to receive knives, forks and spoons."[67] She then recommends that her readers not use soap for all different kinds of cups, but warns the reader about the temperature of the water for a glass that has been in contact with milk.[68] While this is normally a concern for *kashrut*, Kramer warns against it because milk gives the glass a murky look if it is placed in hot water. Kramer then gives instructions on how to clean China, most likely presuming that this was something her audience most certainly owned and used on a regular basis, insinuating that they were of a certain socio-economic class.

Kramer's next two categories: "How to preserve lunches" and "Cleaning cream" detail how to prepare a picnic, how to preserve groceries and keep a tidy pantry, how to maintain a stove, and how best to clean boys' and men's clothes. Kramer returns to the topic of efficiency once again in this section, reminding her reader to always keep track of the ingredients they have on hand and the ones they are missing in order to save time.[69] Additionally, she recommends that one clean one's stove with old newspaper every single day in order to prevent the need for

[66] *Ibid*, Kramer, *Aunt Babette's Cook Book*, 9.
[67] *Ibid*, Kramer, *Aunt Babette's Cook Book*, 9.
[68] *Ibid*, Kramer, *Aunt Babette's Cook Book*, 10.
[69] *Ibid*, Kramer, *Aunt Babette's Cook Book*, 10.

considerable scrubbing.[70] Kramer shares her own homemade laundry soap concoction that includes, "four ounces of white Castile soap, cut up fine, in one quart of soft water, over the fire. When dissolved, add four more quarts of water; then add four ounces of ammonia, two ounces of ether, two ounces of alcohol, and one ounce of glycerine."[71] Unlike Levy's cookbook, Kramer includes units of measurement. Both authors seem to encourage their readers to DIY basic household necessities as much as possible.

[70] *Ibid*, Kramer, *Aunt Babette's Cook Book*, 11.
[71] *Ibid*, Kramer, *Aunt Babette's Cook Book*, 11.

Chapter 2: Age of Immigration (1900-1924) & Interwar (1924-1939)

The 1900s was an interesting era for *kashrut* observant Jews in the United States. It was not until the mid to later part of the century that there was an abundance and really any prepared kosher foods or kosher certified restaurants. Until this point, *kashrut* remained a home and community based ritual. It was not until 1944 that a food inspection bureau to authenticate kosher meats was formed in New York state.[72] Before then, there was a real lack of unified Jewish leadership in Orthodox immigrant communities, compared to life in the Eastern European shtetl, where specific rabbis served as central authorities and the shochet used to purchase kosher meat was under that specific rabbi's jurisdiction. In the United States, there was no central authority overseeing kosher butchers.

Creating a central authority was attempted and eventually accomplished by Orthodox Jews who were committed to creating organizations that could enforce kosher standards in food manufacturing. These organizations eventually did even more, by establishing a formal structure in which kosher law could be adjudicated and enforced. There were many debates in between the 1930s-1950s between rabbinic factions, but the Orthodox Union (OU) was later able to step in.

The Settlement Cookbook was first published in 1901 by Lizzie Black Kander, who was born in 1858 and died in 1940. This cookbook included non-kosher recipes while additionally preserving traditional European Jewish dishes, while also including recipes that were both modern and American in origin. It was really used as a "how-to" guide for recent immigrants by including clear instructions as well as simple instructions that were aimed at the inexperienced cook and head of household. The cookbook explained the importance of family unity, and

[72] Joan Nathan, "Food in the United States," *Jewish Women's Archive*, June 23, 2021, https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/food-in-united-states.

additionally cared much about the health and happiness of each of the member's in one's household.[73]

Interestingly enough, Lizzie's first name was not written on the original publication, but she instead addressed herself as "Mrs. Simon Kander," instead using her husband's first name as was the American custom until the late-20th century.[74] The book was intended to introduce Eastern European immigrants to an American middle-class milieu. Culinary historian Gil Marks considers *The Settlement Cookbook* one of the most successful Jewish cookbooks of all time because it had 33 editions and sold roughly two million copies since its first appearance.[75] Since 1901, over 40 editions have been printed and it later turned into one of the most successful American (not just Jewish American) cookbooks ever published.[76]

Kander was one of the founders of "The Settlement," a neighborhood house in Milwaukee where immigrants took classes in English language, citizenship, sewing and cooking. Kander was in charge of the cooking class and wanted to compile recipes so her students did not have to copy each one she provided on the classes' chalkboard. While her cookbook recipes included *treyf*, many of her original cooking classes at the Settlement House included kosher cooking instructions. Kosher cooking instructions included how to kasher a kitchen and cookware, where to find kosher meat, and how to make delicious meals without mixing meat and milk. Additionally, she taught recent immigrants how to scrub and wash dishes, how to set the table, and how to serve meals. Her instructions were indeed similar to the earlier cookbook

[73] Lizzie Black Kander, *The Way to a Man's Heart: "The Settlement" Cook Book*, (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: The Milwaukee Settlement House, 1901) 4.
[74] *Ibid*, Lizzie Black Kander, *The Way to a Man's Heart: "The Settlement" Cook Book*, Cover Page.
[75] Marks, *Encyclopedia of Jewish Food*, 141.
[76] *Ibid*, Joan Nathan, "Food in the United States."

authors. According to journalist Angela Fritz, Kander operated under the premise that the immigrant's "Old World" dishes did not translate into the new industrialized city.[77]

Kander's book functioned primarily as a teaching tool. The first edition of the cookbook contained 24 lessons and 500 "heirloom recipes," which were contributed by women who "set some of the finest tables in Milwaukee."[78] Additionally, Kander invoked her authority as an experienced homemaker and guaranteed that each recipe had been tested in her own kitchen; later she was able to cast herself as a cultural authority on Jewish-American cuisine.

When culinary icon James Beard was interviewed by a food columnist for *The New Yorker* if he had a favorite cookbook, his response was "Actually, if I consult a cookbook at all, it is likely to be one of those sensible, flat heeled authors like the famous Mrs. Kander."[79] This comment was of incredible significance because of the influence Beard had in the world of food. Beard is not only remembered as a food columnist, but he was later anointed as "Dean of American cookery" by the *New York Times* in 1954, and he is remembered for laying the groundwork for the food revolution that has put the United States at the forefront of global gastronomy.[80] For a culinary icon to speak so highly of Kander's work is quite the accomplishment.

Her cookbook is divided into two parts; the first part features a list of recipes in the earlier chapters, and the second part includes courses of instruction, which were taken from her Settlement House cooking classes. Included were 24 lessons that covered how-tos from poaching eggs to rendering beef and chicken fat. These lessons seemed to be more refined than earlier

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[77] Angela Fritz, "Lizzie Black Kander & Culinary Reform in Milwaukee 1880-1920." *The Wisconsin Magazine of History***,** vol. 87, no. 3 (2014): 44.
[78] *Ibid*, Lizzie Black Kander, *The Way to a Man's Heart: "The Settlement" Cook Book*) 2.
[79] *Ibid*, Angela Fritz, "Lizzie Black Kander & Culinary Reform in Milwaukee 1880-1920," 36.
[80] "About Us," *James Beard Foundation*, https://www.jamesbeard.org/about.

cookbooks such as Esther Levy's "Jewish Cookery." While Levy's how-tos covered different ways of preparing fish such as boiling and broiling, Kander's instructions for poached eggs, a popular French technique, may be seen as more sophisticated. Her cookbook was used by many women as a crash course on how to run a house during a time when most women never lived on their own before marriage.

She knew that in order to write a cookbook to compile all of her recipes, she needed funds. While men on the Settlement House's board refused to finance the project, women raised the necessary money and set about collecting recipes from members of high society and noted chefs as well as from various students.[81] Additionally, Kander took a large portion of the profits from her popular cooking classes to finance the book as well.[82]

What made Kander's cookbook "Jewish"? While the cookbook read as if it was intended for everyone, the institution's sponsors were Jewish, as were their immediate constituents in the early years.[83] Later versions contained more extensive Jewish content such as a collection of Passover recipes. Kander was able to take many Jewish Eastern European recipes and include a modern twist. For example, her recipe for "herring salad" or "chopped herring," a very traditional Ashkenazi dish, included the fish itself, apples, boiled potatoes, mixed nuts, hard boiled eggs, and even a little piece of veal![84] Additionally, she takes chopped liver, a dish that became popular in Eastern European cuisine, most likely because poor Jews wanted to use every part of the chicken,[85] and created a recipe called "Chicken Liver Timbales." [86]

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[81] *Ibid*, Marks, *Encyclopedia of Jewish Food*, 141.
[82] *Ibid*, Angela Fritz, "Lizzie Black Kander & Culinary Reform in Milwaukee 1880-1920," 43.
[83] *Ibid*, Solomon, "More Than Recipes: Kosher Cookbooks as Historical Texts" 28.
[84] *Ibid*, Lizzie Black Kander, *The Way to a Man's Heart: "The Settlement" Cook Book*," 84.
[85] Tamar Fox, "Chopped Liver," *My Jewish Learning*, *https://www.myjewishlearning.com/recipe/chopped-liver/*.
[86] *Ibid*, Lizzie Black Kander, "*The Way to a Man's Heart: 'The Settlement' Cook Book."* V, A *timbale* is a moulded French dish made of a starch such as rice or pasta, or ground meat." "Timbale," *Cooks Info,* https://www.cooksinfo.com/timbales.

Kander's best seller included many non-kosher dishes as well as traditional Ashkenazic fare, such as kugels, gefilte fish and matzo balls. Kander includes recipes for shellfish, recipes for non-kosher cuts of meat, and additionally, recipes mixing meat and milk. Included in her cookbook are recipes for crabfish cream soup, scalloped oysters, crawfish butter and lobster. In the early editions, recipes including pork were included, yet very subtle. For example, her recipes for both fish and clam chowder included "fat salt pork."[87] Her recipe for "oysters in blankets" additionally included bacon.[88] Yet, in the 6th edition of Kander's cookbook, that was additionally published in 1901, pork had its very own section.[89] Recipes included pork chops, bacon, liver, ham, and sausage.[90] Compared to other sections of her book, the recipes listed in the pork section seemed to be very minimal.

Why did she include "high" *treyf* in her compilation of recipes? Eileen Solomon suggests that

> This inclusion may be read as a reflection of the reality of options that new Jewish immigrants were exploring in the United States. Certainly they wanted traditional recipes, but fewer and fewer felt obligated to follow all the rules of *kashrut* and looked to cookbooks to understand foods that were new to them. [91]

Instead of being concerned with maintaining Jewish dietary laws, Kander tried to bring elegance and decorum to the Jewish home through *haute* cuisine. Included on her cookbook's cover page is a heart, and inside the heart is the text "the way to a man's heart."[92] Her book also accepted traditional gender roles regarding the home and kitchen arena. She wanted to instill American

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[87] *Ibid*, Lizzie Black Kander, *The Way to a Man's Heart: "The Settlement" Cook Book*," 77.
[88] *Ibid*, Lizzie Black Kander, *The Way to a Man's Heart: "The Settlement" Cook Book*, 111.
[89] *Ibid*, Lizzie Black Kander, *The Way to a Man's Heart: "The Settlement" Cook Book*, 125.
[90] *Ibid*, Lizzie Black Kander, *The Way to a Man's Heart: "The Settlement" Cook Book*, 125-126.
[91] *Ibid*, Solomon, "More Than Recipes: Kosher Cookbooks as Historical Texts," 28.
[92] *Ibid*, Lizzie Black Kander, *The Way to a Man's Heart: "The Settlement" Cook Book*," Cover Page.

middle class values into her readers by including cocktail recipes such as Manhattans and mint juleps. Her cookbook also aimed to familiarize immigrant women with the basics of American cuisine by including recipes such as oatmeal, baking powder biscuits, doughnuts, pot roast, and apple pie.

Additionally, many of her recipes were French inspired including recipes for Delmonico salad dressing with chopped truffles, water lily salad, and a recipe for *foie gras*. Wendell Steavenson writes in an article in *The Guardian* that it was during this era that all the best restaurants in the United States were French.[93] She writes, "French was the epitome of what food–a chicken or a piece of beef chuck or a carrot–could aspire to be."[94] It seems that her message made its way all the way to Milwaukee! Her cookbook also featured many traditional British recipes such as English brown bread, mince meat and old English fruit cake. But of all countries and regions in the U.S., Germany had the biggest influence on recipes included in *The Settlement Cook Book*. Thirty years before the cookbook was published, 72 percent of Milwaukee's population was of German origin.[95] Milwaukee's food industry has always reflected these statistics with the establishment of skillful sausage, German cheese and German beer manufacturers. Kander additionally includes German recipes in her book such as *Berliner Pfann Kuchen, Hasen Pferrer, Murberteig, Springerlie, Hesterliste,* and *Pfeffernusse*.

Journalist Angela Fritz writes, "by reflecting the cuisine of the dominant Anglo-American culture, Kander sent the subtle message that cuisines which were most successful in infiltrating American kitchens were those that resembled the cooking of Western Europe."[96]

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[93] Wendell Steavenson, "The Rise and Fall of French Cuisine," *The Guardian*, July 16, 2019, https://www.theguardian.com/food/2019/jul/16/the-rise-and-fall-of-french-cuisine.
[94] *Ibid*, Wendell Steavenson, "The Rise and Fall of French Cuisine."
[95] *Ibid*, Angela Fritz, "Lizzie Black Kander & Culinary Reform in Milwaukee 1880-1920," 47.
[96] *Ibid*, Angela Fritz, "Lizzie Black Kander & Culinary Reform in Milwaukee 1880-1920,"47.

Additionally, I think her cookbook indicates a similar sentiment about religious practice as well. While *The Jewish Cookery Book* and *Aunt Babette's Cook Book* included introductions about Jewish holidays and accompanying Jewish dishes, in *The Settlement Cookbook*, such descriptions are nowhere to be found. She includes household rules and directions on how to use a gas range, but no instructions on what should be included on a *seder* plate or what traditional recipes one might serve for Rosh Hashanah.[97]

As time passed, the Jewish landscape in Milwaukee shifted. By 1885, Russian Jews comprised 39 percent of the Jewish community in Milwaukee.[98] Families immigrating from Russia and Poland flocked to an area of Milwaukee where property was cheap but living conditions were horrendous. Kander had remained socially and politically active since her youth, and was vocal about denouncing the conditions in which recent immigrants were forced to live. She called the Eastern European Jewish ghetto "a deplorable situation, threatening the moral and physical health of the people."[99] She cared deeply about the community in which she lived and that is evident as well in her cookbook. She featured many recipes highlighting Wisconsin's two biggest exports of cattle and high quality dairy products. In addition, the last 20 or so pages of her book included advertisements for local small businesses in Milwaukee and the surrounding area.

Based on her recipes alone, her cookbook characterizes the transformation of the Russian immigrant's diet with the emphasis of red meat, as there are twice as many recipes for red meat than fish. Kander stated that fish, which in Europe was once the main staple in the Russian diet, was "less stimulating and nourishing than the meat of other animals."[100]

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[97] *Ibid*, Lizzie Black Kander, *The Way to a Man's Heart: "The Settlement" Cook Book*, 11.
[98] Angela Fritz, "Lizzie Black Kander & Culinary Reform in Milwaukee 1880-1920," 40.
[99] Report of the Settlement, November 9, 1909, LBK Papers, Urban Archives.
[100] *Ibid*, Lizzie Black Kander, *The Way to a Man's Heart: "The Settlement" Cook Book*, 40.

As mentioned previously, included in both the introduction and conclusion of Kander's book are many advertisements for businesses such as silk stores, grocers, tailors, doctors, etc. It seems that she assumed her audience was less sophisticated and experienced in both the kitchen and the home, with much of the language being as simple and direct as possible. Additionally, it is quite possible that she used the inclusion of advertisements to finance the cookbook itself. I think it is likely that she would have solicited such advertisements as a way of promoting businesses in the area, steering new clients toward those businesses, and showcasing people who were like minded.

In bringing together education and food trends, Kander was responsible for a Jewish culinary revolution. Journalist Angela Fritz describes her endeavor as deeply invested in the power of foodways:

> Kander understood that food was a powerful means of religious and cultural expression, and she used culinary reform to gain control over the effects of massive immigration and industrialization, to aid in the assimilation of immigrant girls, and to introduce immigrant women to American consumer culture.[101]

In other words, Kander hoped to bring social harmony to a religious community that was often threatened by class divisions. Kander's community in Milwaukee was largely composed of Jews of German ancestry; her parents served as founding members of the Reform Temple Emanu-El.

Kander additionally seems to be the first cookbook author that I have examined thus far who cares about and knows the basics of nutrition. Included in her "rules for household" is a segment about nutrition. She includes an entire classification system, that lists foods as both organic and inorganic, nitrogenous or proteids, and includes categories such as albumen, fibrine,

[101] *Ibid,* Angela Fritz, "Lizzie Black Kander & Culinary Reform in Milwaukee 1880-1920," 38.

gelatine, casein, gluten, carbohydrates and fats and oils and different foods she classifies as belonging in each category.[102] She writes that an average adult requires daily, "3 ½ ounce protein, 10 ounces of starch, 3 ounces of fat, 1 ounce of salt, and 5 pints of water."[103] She recognizes that it is not just important that food tastes good, but additionally how important it is to properly nourish one's body.[104]

In addition to nutrition, she emphasized the importance of neatness, order, and precision for recent immigrants in following her prescribed recipes. In this regard, she differs from Levy and Kramer, who included instructions such as "use a little bit of this and a little bit of that." The first lesson in Kander's cookbook included explicit instructions in the most accurate methods for exact measurements of a speck of any material, "a speck of anything is what will lie within a ¼ inch square."[105] This precision comes after Fannie Farmer, the author of *The Boston Cooking-School Cookbook*, and who was the first cookbook author in 1896 to use strict standardized measurements (which earned her the title "the mother of level measurements"[106]).

At the same time, Kander encouraged the use of processed foods because they provided shortcuts to make cooking more efficient. Many of her recipes called for brand name products such as Knox's Gelatin, Crosse and Blackwell's Mocha Essence, and Shrewsberry Ketchup. Her advocacy for name brand food is noteworthy for two reasons: one, they exist already (thus, indicating that there are standard brands that have established legitimacy) and two, those brands matter. This is around the same time that big goods companies take advantage of the assembly line and the nation sees advancement in automation. During this time, there is a nationwide trend

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[102] *Ibid*, Kander, *The Way to a Man's Heart: "The Settlement" Cook Book*, 1.
[103] *Ibid*, Kander, *The Way to a Man's Heart: "The Settlement" Cook Book*, 1.
[104] *Ibid*, Kander, *The Way to a Man's Heart: "The Settlement" Cook Book*, 1.
[105] *Ibid*, Kander, *The Way to a Man's Heart: "The Settlement" Cook Book*, 6.
[106] Keri Engel, "Fannie Farmer, the Mother of Level Measurements," *Amazing Women in History*, https://amazingwomeninhistory.com/fannie-farmer/.

of moving away from handmade goods such as clothing, furniture and food, and moving towards manufactured goods. One can assume that by Kander mentioning these different corporations and brand-named products, she supports this trend and is additionally responsible for teaching her readers how to be consumers in the American economy.

What did the later editions of *The Settlement Cookbook* entail? Much had changed in the cookbooks 40 editions and four revisions. The Settlement House, which was later renamed as the Milwaukee Jewish Center, and later became the Jewish Community Center, continued publishing it until the 1970s, subtly changing recipes and tips, reorganizing the book, and addressing health concerns of the times.[107] For example, the 1991 edition, this time published by Simon & Schuster, had lost the subtitle "way to a man's heart," but was instead simply titled, *The New Settlement Cookbook*. In this edition, there were more than double the amount of recipes, and additionally, there are sidebars about low cholesterol substitutes for dairy products, instructions on how to utilize your microwave and food processor when cooking, and recipes for Pad Thai as well as Southern corn cakes. [108]

Tempting Kosher Dishes was printed in 1930 by The Manischewitz Company as a promotional cookbook that calls for recipes including their product. Ninety two years after the initial printing of the cookbook, Manischewitz remains the largest producer of matzo in the world.[109] While the family name has remained the same, the company has gone through many different iterations of ownership. The cookbook was originally published in Yiddish in 1928 and

[107] Layla Schlack, "*The Settlement Cookbook*: 116 Years and 40 Editions Later," June 21, 2017, *Taste Cooking*, https://tastecooking.com/the-settlement-cookbook-116-years-and-40-editions-later/.
[108] Charles Pierce, ed., "The New Settlement Cookbook," (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1991), 4.
[109] Miranda Bannister, "Tempting Kosher Recipes," *Museum of Jewish Heritage*, December 16, 2021, https://mjhnyc.org/blog/tempting-kosher-recipes/.

was translated in 1930. Two other editions were printed subsequently in 1944 and 1949. The cookbook includes 250 recipes that the text claims were tested and approved in the Manischewitz Experimental Kitchens by Ms. F. O. Gahr, B.S., who is listed as a Domestic Science Expert and Graduate in Institutional Management. The title page encourages readers to send in their favorite recipes to be included in future editions, claiming, "We shall carefully test recipes submitted, and pay liberally for such recipes as are accepted for publication in future editions of this book."[110] This was not unusual for this era, with Pillsbury corporation's annual Bake Off contest that has been in operation since 1949, as well as the cooking and baking competitions taking place in Reader's Digest and Parade Magazine. These different corporations paid people who sent in recipes to be printed, which subsequently allowed the recipes to be used by the companies at their sole discretion.

The B. Manischewitz Company was originally established in Cincinnati, Ohio by Dov Behr Manischewitz who arrived in the United States from Prussia in 1885. Escaping poverty and pogroms, he changed his surname Abramson to Manischewitz after purchasing a dead man's passport in order to immigrate. The newly named Manischewitz was a *schochet* in Lithuania and served as the personal butcher for the Gaon of Salant. After arriving in Cincinnati, Manischewitz began as a part-time peddler and *schochet* for observant Jews in the city. Why was his first venture in the kosher food industry making matzo? His desire came from his own halakhic concerns, and he set out to make kosher matzo first for his family and a few friends, and soon after for many of the devout Jews of the city.[111]

[110] The B. Manischewitz Company, "Tempting Kosher Dishes," (Cincinnati: The B. Manischewitz Company, 1930) 2.
[111] "The Manischewitz Company, LLC," *Reference for Business*, https://www.referenceforbusiness.com/history2/89/The-B-Manischewitz-Company-LLC.html.

Manischewitz's company began as a humble bakery in Cincinnati serving the local observant community, but had become an institution in kosher cooking by the time the cookbook was released. Manischewitz soon became so popular that he needed to shift to a bigger operation and needed to employ machinery in order to mass produce his product. This technological advancement was not well received by the traditionally observant Jewish community of Cincinnati, because they were skeptical about whether a human-run machine was able to adhere to the strict religious restrictions of Passover.[112] Could these no longer human-run operations perform halachic observances? The skepticism contrasted Lizzie Kander's encouragement of her readers to eat commercially produced food. In order to soothe concerns, the matzo was instead shaped into a square rather than what was then a traditional round shape in order for there to be no concern that the trimmed edges would make their way back into the dough. It is also long thought that round matzo symbolizes idolatry. The Hebrew word for calf (which reminds us of the Golden Calf incident) which is עֵגֶל, has the same Hebrew root as the word for circle which is עָגוֹל. Author of "Through a Bible Lens," Mel Alexenberg wrote in a *Times of Israel* article that "the idolatrous transgression of the Israelites was their worship of *Ra*, the sun God represented in Egyptian art as a golden circle."[113] On the other hand, rectangular matzo symbolizes slavery, with the Egyptians responsible for having enslaved the Israelites in the מַלְבֵּן, which means both rectangle and brickyard. The majority of machine-made matzo produced even in the United

[112]Jeff Suess, " Manischewitz Matzo, a Staple of Passover, Originated in Cincinnati," *The Enquirer*, April 14, 2022, https://www.cincinnati.com/story/news/2022/04/15/manischewitz-matzo-staple-passover-originated-cincinnati/7290747001/.

[113] Mel Alexenberg, "Don't Pass Over the Significance of the Shapes of Matzah," *The Times of Israel*, April 19, 2019, https://blogs.timesofisrael.com/dont-pass-over-the-significance-of-the-shapes-of-matzah/.

States remains square in shape. Prior to the establishment of the Manischewitz Company, most matzo was produced in synagogues in special ovens that they had designated for the holiday.[114]

The cookbook begins in the foreword with "Housewives from every quarter of the globe where Manischewitz Products are used, have made possible this book of delicious kosher dishes."[115] At the time the cookbook was released, Manischewitz was selling a variety of baked goods, matzo, and cereal but it wasn't until a decade later that they released their famous "Tam Tams" and other kosher for Passover classics.[116] The author of the foreword explains that many of the recipes included are family favorites, with some being unique, and others as old favorites. The family favorite recipes come from families that submitted 250 coveted recipes.[117] This cookbook is intended for everyday use, while simultaneously most of the recipes may be used for Passover. Although, included is the marketing caveat "provided that the other ingredients called for are like Manischewitz's Matzo Products, strictly kosher for Passover."[118]

Following the foreword is a Jewish calendar with all of the holidays listed for the years 5691 (1930), 5692 (1931), 5693 (1932), 5694 (1933), and 5695 (1934). The pages after include advertisements for Manischewitz's latest kosher for Passover products. The first product listed was the new Whole Wheat Matzo products, which were introduced during a time when whole wheat flour was considered healthier than white flour, because no additives were used in the flour. It is written in the cookbook that, "All [products] are made out of 100% high gluten whole wheat flour. Nothing is added. Nothing is taken out. Because all the bran, minerals, and vitamins

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[114] Jonathan D. Sarna, "How Matzah Became Square: Manischewitz and the Development of Machine-Made Matzah in the United States," In *Chosen Capital: The Jewish Encounter with American Capitalism* edited by Rebecca Kobrin. Ithaca, NY: Rutgers University Press, 2012, 3, https://doi.org/10.36019/9780813553290-015
[115] *Ibid,* Jonathan D. Sarna, 3.
[116] *Ibid,* "The Manischewitz Company, LLC,."
[117] *Ibid,* The B. Manischewitz Company, "Tempting Kosher Dishes," Foreword.
[118] *Ibid,* Jonathan D. Sarna, 3.

are added in the proportions intended by nature-the starch or fattening content is modified…."[119] The new line of products is intended to be a healthier option for diabetics and other individuals on restricted diets.

The other new product advertised is Manishewitz's cereal. Made from wheat, this product is able to be made quickly by simply adding boiling water and letting it sit for no longer than a minute. This product also boasts that it is suitable for those on specific diets. Additionally, while the product is kosher for Passover, it is additionally listed as intended for everyday use.[120]

Manischewitz has long been known for their matzo ball mix, a shortcut method that produces fluffy matzo balls by just adding vegetable oil and eggs to a premade mix. It is unknown to many that matzo balls is a somewhat recent term. It was first introduced in English in 1902 in the section on Jewish food in *Mrs. Rorer's Cookbook.*[121] I think many would be shocked to know that the name was even coined by a non-Jew! For generation upon generation, matzo balls were known by their Yiddish name, *kneidlach*. This nomenclature changed when Manischewitz began marketing their boxed matzo ball mix as "feather balls Alsatian style" first in their cookbook.[122] The recipe calls for chicken fat, eggs, matzo meal, nutmeg and salt.[123] It is worth noting that Manischewitz was the first company to commercially sell matzo meal and matzo ball mixes. Until then, one was only able to crush matzo by hand and make matzo balls from scratch. In addition to the matzo meal, many of the cookbook's recipes call for matzo cake meal.

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[119] *Ibid*, Jonathan D. Sarna, 5.
[120] *Ibid*, Jonathan D. Sarna, 6.
[121] Joan Nathan, "Matzo Balls," *100 Jewish Foods*, https://100jewishfoods.tabletmag.com/matzo-balls/.
[122] Alsace is a region and former province situated in northeastern France between the Rhine River and Vosges Mountains.
[123] *Ibid*, Jonathan D. Sarna, 7.

On top of “feather balls Alsatian style,” the cookbook includes another 20 recipes for matzo balls alone, showcasing the book’s roots as a marketing vehicle. The recipes included reflect different emphasis on fat content and on convenience. Along with “feather balls,” matzo balls are listed under the disguise of “dumplings” and “*knodel*” (German boiled dumplings that were commonly found in Central and Eastern European cuisine). The company cookbook includes recipes for liver *knodel*, “fluffy” *knodel*, cheese *knodel*, fruit *knodel*, potato *knodel*, vegetable *knodel*, three different types of matzo *knodel*, and marrow *knodel*.

The cookbook also lists many desserts, with the included note for readers to “use level measurements in preparing all recipes. Successfully gratifying results are assured if you follow the simply worded directions exactly.”[124] Most of the recipes offered are traditional Jewish Central and Eastern European recipes.

Additionally, many of the entrees are noteworthy. One recipe, for tamales, a type of Mesoamerican cuisine that is traditionally a small steamed cake of dough made from corn, [125] instead substitutes cabbage leaves, crushed matzo and matzo meal. Recipes for meat alternatives are included as well, such as “mock sausages” which substitute lima beans for ground meat.

The cookbook concludes with more information on the company and a list of other products for sale. In 1930, Manischewitz had three bakeries that were producing matzo: two were located in Cincinnati and one was in Chicago. The conclusion states, “Here are the superfine baked matzo products which are so perfect–so high in quality that they are hesitatingly accepted as the standard by which other similar products are judged.”[126] The process by which each piece is made using all automatic technology from mixing the dough to packaging the final

[124] *Ibid*, Jonathan D. Sarna, 9.
[125] Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopedia. "tamale." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, October 23, 2022. https://www.britannica.com/topic/tamale-food.
[126] *Ibid*, Jonathan D. Sarna, 78.

product is described. Following the explanation of processes, they discuss sanitation practices at the facility. The conclusion reads, "In these sunlit bakeries, cleanliness and sanitation are not words, but deeds…. As a result, Manischewitz's Matzo Bakeries have the highest sanitary rating of all food establishments of their kind."[127] Kander had a similar concern for sanitation and reaction to the idea of disease control, especially after living in heavily populated, urban, immigrant spaces. The legitimacy of this claim is unclear, but they must have been doing something right to remain in business more than 100 years later.

[127] *Ibid*, Jonathan D. Sarna, 79.

Chapter 3: WWII and Post-war (1940–1960) & Counterculture and *ba'al tshuvah* emergence (1960-1980)

The Art of Jewish Cooking was first published by Jennie Grossinger in 1958. The Grossinger family was well known for owning and operating a resort in the Town of Liberty, New York amidst the Catskills Mountains that attracted more than 50,000 guests each year.[128] Grossinger's Catskills Resort Hotel was a strictly kosher resort that began in the 1920s and closed in 1986. What first began as a $5,000 investment in 1917 turned into a facility that was able to provide "rooms for over one thousand guests, a block-long dining room capable of seating thirteen hundred diners, six hundred fifty acres of grounds…, a private lake with water vehicles, and a private airport."[129] Jennie Grossinger, who was the long time hostess of the resort, was a firm believer in her mother's maxim that "no one must ever go away hungry!"[130]

Grossinger was born to a poor Jewish family in Baligrod, a small village in Galicia, in 1892 and immigrated to the United States at seven years old. In 1914, her father bought a farm in the Catskill Mountains and the family would take in extra weekend guests in order to earn some extra income. They later sold their farm and bought the hotel. Under Grossinger's supervision the resort turned into a destination for both Jews and non-Jews and included prominent guests such as Nelson Rockfeller and Eleanor Roosevelt.[131] It was later Governor Rockfeller that resolved to designate June 16th as "Jennie Grossinger Day" in New York State.[132] The resort was able to maintain a fully kosher kitchen while guests had the luxury of dining under crystal

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[128]Jennie Grossinger, "The Art of Jewish Cooking: A Cookbook," (New York: Random House Publishing, 1958), 2.
[129] Howard M. Sachar, *A History of the Jews in America*, (New York, 1992), 666-67.
[130] *Ibid*, Jennie Grossinger, "The Art of Jewish Cooking: A Cookbook," 2.
[131] Andrea Madea, "Jennie Grossinger," *Jewish Women's Archive*, https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/grossinger-jennie.
[132] "The Catskills Cultural Revolution: Jennie Grossinger," *American Jewish Archives*, https://www.americanjewisharchives.org/snapshots/the-catskill-cultural-revolution/.

chandeliers. Her mother was a renown cook as well, and was first in charge of dining operations until Jennie took over.

Grossingers was later hurt by the Great Depression, but they managed to remain open. The family continued to bring in new entertainment to attract guests and, decades after opening, the resort offered a respite from resorts that excluded Jews while becoming a destination for wealthy Americans regardless of religion. The hotel was responsible for advancing the careers of many well known entertainers such as Eddie Fisher and Eddie Cantor. Following her husband Harry's death in 1964, she turned her administrative role of the resort over to her children, Paul and Elaine. By this time, Grossingers had grown to 35 buildings that had covered 1200 acres.[133] While she shifted her role, she continued to stay at a cottage on the grounds each year.

During this time, the block of resorts in the Catskills that attracted Jewish guests was known as the Borscht Belt. Thousands of Jews would leave their urban environments in the summer and winter months and spend year after year in the Catskill Mountains. The resorts were able to cater to all income groups, beginning with the *kochalein* (meaning cooking for oneself), which included rooms with cooking privileges that were rented to families, all the way to swanky hotels, like the Grossinger Resort. While many of these resorts were known for their amazing entertainment, they were also known for their connection to religious life, by providing kosher food and a wide variety of religious services.

The Grossinger Resort is remembered as the one of the largest outstanding and expensive kosher hotels in the Catskills. Operations began in 1914 as a kosher farm, and its growth then took place during the Americanization of the rise in wealth of the Eastern European immigrants during the 1920s and 1930s. According to a paper by Abraham G. Duker, Grossinger's husband

[133]*Ibid*, "Jennie Grossinger," *Jewish Women's Archive*

Harry was very particular about who he trusted to *shecht* his meat, which even came from his own farm![134]

Grossinger's cookbook did not speak to her success in her industry or to her extensive philanthropy; instead, it praises modest homey virtues. Her cookbook included recipes that were focused primarily on traditional Eastern European dishes that include chicken soup, brisket, gefilte fish, knishes, strudel, and many more. Of the 300 hundred recipes included in the cookbook, many of them were recipes that were passed down through generations of her family. In addition, she included recipes from many different ethnic groups across the globe and shared recipes from Italy, China, Russia and, of course, "American food." Abiding by *kashrut*, her cookbook included kosher Americanized Chinese and Italian recipes like pizza and Chinese sweet and sour meatballs, as well as many American recipes such as grilled cheese and tomato sandwiches, hamburgers, and hot dog hash. When discussing Grossinger's goals and interests, author Eileen Solomon writes, "negotiating life in America in the middle of the twentieth century had little to do with religious practice and far more to do with cultivating a sort of Jewish cultural style."[135]

Her cookbook begins with a foreword written by her son Paul Grossinger. He explains that all of the recipes included in the cookbook were chosen and assembled by his mother and his grandmother Malke Grossinger. He describes his mother's mastery in the kitchen and how she put all her pride and joy into the food she cooked and the thousands of people she subsequently fed.

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[134] Abraham G. Duker, *Jewish Social Studies*, vol. 15, no. 3/4, 1953, pp. 320–21. *JSTOR*, http://www.jstor.org/stable/4465188. Accessed 23 Feb. 2023.
[135] *Ibid,* Solomon, "More Than Recipes: Kosher Cookbooks as Historical Texts" 36.

He tells *Grossinger's* readers that she grew up on the East Side of Manhattan after immigrating to the United States when she was seven years old. He details what her experience was like growing up in a diverse tenement in New York City, with all of the different cultures and foods, and the senses that her own apartment elicited with large meals being prepared for Friday nights, and how much food in general meant to her family. He goes into detail about not just how much food meant to his mother's family, but how much it means to the entire Jewish people.

Paul Grossinger writes, "But Jewish cooking, since the kettles of the Hebrew have simmered in every country of the world since the Dispersion many centuries ago-it is never monotonous, but thoroughly international in flavor. All it requires is good ingredients and plenty of them."[136] He then goes on to explain how "Jewish food" is encapsulated by recipes that come from all over the globe. He then writes, "All of these things, adapted to the requirements of Jewish law, were brought to the American melting pot by immigrants of the Jewish faith."[137]

The introduction to *Grossinger's* describes Jewish-style cookery and dishes, traditional holiday and Shabbat dishes and provides information on how each holiday is observed. Jennie Grossinger explains cooking measurement equivalents, an "oven temperature guide," and an equivalency guide that details the correlation between temperature and description.[138]

Grossinger's first recipes are for appetizers and party snacks. Grossinger writes, "Appetizers play an important part in a Jewish-style meal. They are intended to sharpen your appetite for the courses to follow, and most Jewish families like meals of several courses."[139] They are intended to be much smaller portions than entrees because, Grossinger writes,

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[136] *Ibid,* Jennie Grossinger, "The Art of Jewish Cooking: A Cookbook," 4.
[137] *Ibid,* Jennie Grossinger, "The Art of Jewish Cooking: A Cookbook," 5.
[138] *Ibid,* Jennie Grossinger, "The Art of Jewish Cooking: A Cookbook," 7.
[139] *Ibid,* Jennie Grossinger, "The Art of Jewish Cooking: A Cookbook," 12.

"intended to pique or stimulate your appetite, not satisfy it."[140] While I have always known this to be true, as someone who is quick to fill up on appetizers and pass *hors-d'oeuvres*, I am intrigued!

While her appetizer recipes include generation-old recipes such as chopped liver, herring, and fish balls, I was surprised to see recipes that included both calf's brains and calf's feet. The calf's brains are prepared similarly to chopped liver, and the feet recipe that Grossinger includes is called *p'tcha*, which is a traditional Ashkenazi dish that is traditionally served with chopped eggs on Shabbat.

Grossinger additionally includes appetizer recipes with meat substitutes like chickpea "hotdogs." She has four different liver recipes that include traditional chopped chicken livers, beef liver, vegetarian chopped liver that includes both walnuts and sardines and what she named "dairy liver," which is a dairy side dish that just contains salad oil, mushrooms, onions, hard boiled eggs, salt and pepper.[141] As mentioned earlier, she includes both Chinese and Italian American dishes such as egg rolls served with duck sauce and Chinese sweet-and-sour meatballs.

Grossinger died in 1972 at the age of 80 after being ill for many years. She was not only remembered for her recipes or her wildly successful resort, but many of her former employees remember her for the way she treated people.[142] According to her obituary, an old employee recalled that she treated her workers like members of her own family. The article reads, "In the early days, when the family was pinched for ready cash, some of the help would not take their salaries from her, but insisted on getting by on their tips. 'Use it Jenny,' they would say.'"[143]

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[140] *Ibid,* Jennie Grossinger, "The Art of Jewish Cooking: A Cookbook," 13.
[141] *Ibid*, Jennie Grossinger, "The Art of Jewish Cooking: A Cookbook," 25.
[142] Richard F. Shepard, "Jennie Grossinger Dies at Resort Home," *New York Times*, November 21, 1972, https://www.nytimes.com/1972/11/21/archives/jennie-grossinger-dies-at-resort-home-jennie-grossinger-dies-at-80.html.
[143] *Ibid*, Richard F. Shepard, "Jennie Grossinger Dies at Resort Home."

Additionally, she is remembered by her many philanthropic interests, especially those that pertained to the State of Israel.

The Spice and Spirit of Kosher-Jewish Cooking was first published in 1977 by the Lubavitch Women's Organization Jewish Division. The book was made possible by a volunteer team of 14 women led by Esther Blau, Cyrel Deitsch, and Cherna Light. Along with eight variations of gefilte fish, the cookbook explains the laws of *kashrut* in relation to food, the kitchen, and the home in great detail. In addition to *kashrut* observance, the cookbook included instructions for celebrating Jewish lifecycle events and additionally included were written explanations on the meaning of Shabbat and the holidays. The cookbook was also praised for its fortune of recipes, as it was often referred to as "a culinary kosher food encyclopedia."[144]

The cookbook was published by Chabad-Lubavitch, a Hasidic sect led by Menachem Mendel Schneerson, known as the Lubavitcher Rebbe. The sect originates in the 18th century and was first called *Chabad Chasidut*; the movement "shows how every concept in Judaism relates to the inner development of each Jew."[145] The term *Chabad* comes from the Hebrew acronym חכמה, בינה, דעת, wisdom, understanding, and knowledge, a tripling of terms that appears in the daily *amidah* and has significance in Kabbalah.

The book was published during the Lubavitch *mitzvah* campaign, which highlighted *kashrut* observance. As part of the outreach program of Chabad-Lubavitch Judaism, Schneerson began an emissary program that has sent more than 3,700 Lubavitch couples to live, work, and

[144]Laurence Roth, "Toward a Kashrut Nation in American Jewish Cookbooks, 1990–2000," *Shofar* 28, no. 2 (2010): http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5703/shofar.28.2.65, 73.
[145] Tzuvia Emmer & Tzipora Reitman,ed, "Spirit and Spice: The Complete Jewish Cookbook," (New York: Lubavitch Women's Cookbook Publications, 1977), 2.

serve Jews in more than 100 countries worldwide.[146] Some of those families serve students on college campuses, and continue to create many programs and gatherings in order to attract non-observant students to Jewish activities. The scope and reach of *Spice and Spirit* has only grown larger as the efforts of the Rebbe have contributed to the increasing observance levels of Jews worldwide.

In the summer of 1975 Schneerson called on Jewish people around the globe to place a special emphasis on *kashrut* by "explaining that its laws have an acute impact on a Jew's spiritual health."[147] The *mitzvah* campaigns were meant to increase Jewish literacy and observance[148]; eventually 10 campaigns–each one focused on a different aspect of Jewish adherence to *halacha*–were launched. Those initiatives include the generally low levels of religious literacy amongst Jews during this time. *ahavat yisrael* (loving one's fellow Jew), *chinuch* (Torah education), Torah study, donning tefillin, *mezuzah*, *tzedakah*, possessing Jewish books, lighting Shabbat and festival candles, and *taharat mishpachat* (the Torah perspective on married life).[149]

When speaking about her experience in conceptualizing and subsequently producing the cookbook, Esther Blau, who served as longtime editor-in-chief recalled, "It was all very primitive, all by hand. Women didn't write recipes in any professional order; it was totally amateur. We collected and tested, and we probably had quite a few hundred recipes."[150] Publishing coincided with the emergence of the *ba'al teshuva* movement, so Blau and her team

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[146]"Orthodox Judaism: Lubavitch and Chabad," *Jewish Virtual Library*, https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/lubavitch-and-chabad

[147] David Margolin, "How One Purple Book Revolutionized Kosher Cooking," *Chabad.org*, November 23, 2015, https://www.chabad.org/news/article_cdo/aid/3135198/jewish/How-One-Purple-Book-Revolutionized-Kosher-Cooking.htm.

[148]*Ibid*, Laurence Roth, "Toward a *Kashrut* Nation in American Jewish Cookbooks, 1990–2000," 6.

[149] *Ibid*, "Orthodox Judaism: Lubavitch and Chabad," *Jewish Virtual Library.*

[150] *Ibid*, "How One Purple Book Revolutionized Kosher Cooking," *Chabad.org.*

knew that writing about Jewish customs and traditions and *kashrut* tips and tricks were important. The organization enlisted the assistance of Yehuda Kalman Marlow, an influential rabbi in Chabad-Lubavitch, to oversee the section dedicated to the laws of *kashrut*.

The authors reworked the first manuscript many times, and finally submitted it to the Rebbe in 1975. His response had shocked the authors. The Rebbe responded to their request in a hand-written letter written in Hebrew. His concern was that the cookbook would be competing with many others that were already on the market. He advised the Lubavitch Women's Division that, "Since this will have an effect on kosher observance in many Jewish households, it needs to be beautiful externally as well, even if it costs more to create. Surely you'll consult cookbooks that are already sold in stores."[151] The committee was subsequently reinvigorated with the Rebbe's explicit interest.

The committee immediately began consulting professionals. The written sections were rewritten and additionally expanded. Artist Michoel Muchnik was commissioned to illustrate the book and the front cover. The committee continued working day and night to get the manuscript ready for printing. The Rebbe received a copy of each iteration, and he provided detailed critiques and instructions. Upon release in 1977, the cookbook received much attention and press. *New York Times* food critic Mimi Sheraton wrote in a review of the cookbook, "Because rules for kosher cooking prohibit the mixing of meat and dairy products, cookbooks devoted to such recipes usually resort to awful ersatz ingredients that result in tricked-up 'mock' this or that. One exception is *The Spice and Spirit of Kosher-Jewish Cooking*."[152]

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[151] *Ibid*, As quoted by X in "How One Purple Book Revolutionized Kosher Cooking," *Chabad.org*.
[152]Mimi Sheraton, "De Gustibus; Tao to Kosher to Albanian," *The New York Times*, January 15, 1983, https://www.nytimes.com/1983/01/15/style/de-gustibus-tao-to-kosher-to-albanian.html.

Around this time and for about 10 years following the cookbook's initial release, there was a significant influx of *ba'alei t'shuva*, the term used for Jews who increase their observance of traditional *halakha*. The *ba'al t'shuva* movement began in Israel and moved to include the entire Jewish diaspora, including the United States, South Africa, South American and Europe. Though the movement is often tied specifically to non-Hasidic denominations of Orthodox Judaism, the Lubavitch movement had already invested time, resources, and publications into outreach programs to assist bringing non-observant Jews closer to Judaism. They succeeded in this venture by sending a network of *shlichim* (messengers) to locations across the globe, many in remote locations. The *shlichim* live in places with dwindling Jewish communities in order to bring the Rebbe's teachings to the four corners of the Earth. *Schlichim* create or bolster existing public outreach centers, synagogues, classrooms, sometimes schools or day camps; often they have a space large enough to host many guests who arrive for Shabbat and holiday meals.

The publication of *Spice and Spirit* capitalized on an increased Jewish consciousness and awakened Jewish pride that resulted after the 1967 War in Israel when Israel was attacked by and later defeated neighboring countries of Egypt, Jordan and Syria. For some, this newfound pride grew into a zeal for Orthodoxy. The generation following the Holocaust was anxious about Jewish survival and the subsequent fear of maintaining one's Jewish identity. The birth of the State of Israel seemed to warrant a different, renewed emphasis on following traditional *halakhic* observance.

Chabad found much success in capturing large audiences because of their post-modernist approach. There may be some skepticism with this statement, as Chabad is also a traditional, ultra-Orthodox movement. Yet, I believe that they are able to maintain an ultra-Orthodox approach as well as a postmodernist approach simultaneously. What might this look like in

practice? On the one hand, there is strict adherence to *halacha*: meat has to be *glatt* kosher, milk has to be *chalav Yisrael*, married women cover their hair, etc. Yet, Schneerson simultaneously preached the importance of secular studies and encouraged all of his followers to be well versed in Chabad Hasidic teachings as well as Talmud and *halacha*.

Thanks to Schneerson, the ethos of the movement became that each Jew is significant whether or not one observes the commandments. The Rebbe believed that each individual Jew is crucial to the Jewish people as a whole. The Rebbe would often cite a passage in *Mishneh Torah* that states,

> Each person should consider himself or herself as half meritorious, and half guilty. And similarly the whole world is half meritorious and half guilty. [Therefore]...if one does one good deed, one tips oneself and the whole world to the side of merit, and brings salvation to oneself and to the world.[153]

The Rebbe was even known for deconstructing the wider boundary between the Jew and the non-Jew. He once again cited Maimonides by instructing that the Jewish people have a duty to recognize and communicate the Seven Noahide Laws to the Gentiles.[154]

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[153] Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah*, Laws of Repentance, 3:4.
[154] Naftali Lowenthal, "The Hasidic Ethos and the Schisms of Jewish Society." *Jewish History* 27, no. 2/4 (2013): 377–98. http://www.jstor.org/stable/24709802.

Conclusion

There is much to be learned about the evolution of *kashrut* in the United States by studying Jewish cookbooks published in the United States of America. In 2013, it was estimated that 40% to 50% of the items in conventional U.S. supermarkets are certified kosher by Orthodox rabbis.[155] This proliferation of kosher food options may seem perplexing given that at most there are only 1,000,000 observant Jews in the US, which is less than .3% of the total population of over 300 million people.[156] The numbers beg the questions of how kosher products become so prevalent, and additionally, why so many American businesses accommodate kosher requirements. I think the answer can be found in the various six cookbooks that I studied.

With first the wave of German Jewish immigrants landing in the US in the 1840s, and millions of Eastern European Jews later immigrating to the United States beginning in the 1880s, keeping to tradition, especially with regards to dietary observance was a priority.[157] With so much novelty in a new country, food and the way to both prepare and consume it was able to

[155] Roger Horowitz, "The Real Thing: How Coke Became Kosher," *Science History Institute*, January 8, 2013, https://www.sciencehistory.org/distillations/the-real-thing-how-coke-became-kosher.
[156] *Ibid*, Roger Horowitz, "The Real Thing: How Coke Became Kosher."
[157] Joellyn Zollman, "Jewish Immigration to America: Three Waves," *My Jewish Learning*, https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/jewish-immigration-to-america-three-waves/.

remain a constant. I imagine this is why Esther Levy clung tightly to *kashrut* and other ways of religious observance. As mentioned previously, her observance of dietary guidelines was coupled with her concern that American born Jewish children's knowledge of Jewish tradition and customs was both lacking and no longer a priority. To combat this, not only did she include laws of *kashrut* in her cookbook, but additionally she included how to halachically observe Shabbat and Jewish holidays.

On the other hand, *Aunt Babette's Cook Book* was printed in Cincinnati in 1893, 41 years after Issac Mayer Wise became rabbi of Congregation B'nai Yeshurun there. As mentioned earlier, Wise was related to a founding member of the publishing company that Bertha Kramer used to publish her cookbook. Additionally, prior to writing her cookbook, Kramer found much success in writing for a column in Wise's newspaper, *The American Israelite.* Not only was Kramer inspired by the Reform movement's take on *kashrut* and the 1883 graduation dinner celebrating the first ordination class (infamously but erroneously referred to as a *treyfa banquet*) but her recipes showed her desire to acculturate into an American way of life, while simultaneously holding onto elements of Europe. Included in her cookbook were both a predominance of traditional Ashkenazi dishes and a section entitled "Easter Dishes: cakes, pudding, sauces, wine etc. How to set the table for the service of 'Sedar' on the eve of Pesach or Passover."[158] Included in this section are instructions on how to prepare a *seder* plate and *seder* table, and different kosher for Passover recipes. Based on the title one would expect to find recipes for baked ham and deviled eggs, but they are nowhere to be found.

Similarly to Kramer's cookbook, both *The Settlement Cookbook* and *The Art of Jewish Cooking* encouraged retaining culinary traditions while simultaneously acculturating to life in the

[158] *Ibid,* Bertha Kramer, "Aunt Babette's Cook Book," 475.

United States. While Grossinger's cookbook abided by the laws of *kashrut* and Kander's did not, both cookbooks included many traditional Ashkenazi recipes as well as American recipes that were popular during the eras the two cookbooks were published. For example, *The Settlement Cookbook* excludes recipes for eggnog and waffles, and on the same page she includes a recipe for blintzes, that she defines as "cottage cheese pancakes."[159] As previously mentioned, her recipes include all sorts of *treyf*, which to many readers was the appeal of the book, including Joan Nathan's family. Regarding these recipes, Nathan said, "It's American. People like my mother's family were not interested in [the old] recipes at all. They wanted to get away from that."[160] By gifting this cookbook as a wedding gift, newlywed couples were able to do just that, but if they found themselves hosting a Jewish holiday or Shabbat gathering, they knew where to turn. In a similar vein, cookbook author and food historian Jayne Cohen writes, "contemporary American Jews mainly cook the same kinds of foods that Americans [of different ethnic groups] cook most of the time. They mainly make Jewish dishes for Jewish holidays. And the *Settlement* books offer mainstream and Jewish recipes reflecting that."[161]

Jennie Grossinger's cookbook has "Jewish" in the title, and additionally abides by *kashrut* just like her hotel dining accommodations, but does not expect her audience to do the same. Additionally, it is worth noting that she was the only author I studied who was not born in the United States. Her introduction is as follows, "If you wish to cook according to strict dietary observances, you will cook such dishes with fat if they are to accompany meat, with butter if they are to accompany dairy products."[162] It is worth noting that no such acknowledgement exists in Esther Levy's cookbook, it seems that she believed that one would only buy her

[159] *Ibid*, Lizzie Black Kander, *The Way to a Man's Heart: "The Settlement" Cook Book*, 498.
[160] *Ibid*, Layla Schlack, "*The Settlement Cookbook*: 116 Years and 40 Editions Later."
[161] *Ibid*, Layla Schlack, "*The Settlement Cookbook*: 116 Years and 40 Editions Later."
[162] *Ibid*, Jennie Grossinger, "The Art of Jewish Cooking: A Cookbook, Introduction.

cookbook if one observed dietary observances strictly. Additionally, her one note on *kashrut* is that when one is cooking with liver, the liver is to be broiled over an open flame.[163] She does not include page upon page on tops for kosher observance and maintaining a kosher kitchen like Esther Levy and the Lubavitch Women's Cookbook, she only includes that one footnote.

While *Spirit and Spice* was published as a part of Chabad's *mitzvah* campaign to get more Jews observing *kashrut*, it additionally includes recipes that were American born and bred in order to "meet the needs of today's Jewish woman by responding to several trends."[164] The authors of this cookbook additionally understood their readers' desires to be able to host Shabbat and holiday gatherings, but at the same time, broaden one's culinary horizons. It is additionally stated in the preface that "We have become, as a society, more sophisticated and knowledgeable about food, with more people taking interest in gourmet cooking, in eating healthy and new cuisine styles."[165] This meant that there were recipes included such as knishes and blintzes, but additionally included recipes for Szechuan chicken and Egg Foo Young!

I concluded from my research that not only was there an emphasis placed on how to set the table and most elegantly present each meal, but additionally, it was important to every cookbook author to write to different culinary trends in the United States while either abiding by or not abiding by *kashrut*. It did not matter if the publication was printed by Chabad, which lands on the very strict observance side of ritual behavior, or if the publication included recipes for "Easter Dinner"; each author knew that the reader did not want dietary preferences or prohibitions to set then apart from their non-Jewish neighbor. While the importance of *kashrut*

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[163] *Ibid*, Jennie Grossinger, "The Art of Jewish Cooking: A Cookbook, Introduction. This has to do with the prohibition against consuming blood from Leviticus 7:26 that states "Moreover you shall eat no blood, whether of fowl or of animal, in any of your dwellings."

[164] *Ibid*, Tzuvia Emmer & Tzipora Reitman,ed, "Spirit and Spice: The Complete Jewish Cookbook," preface.

[165] *Ibid*, Tzuvia Emmer & Tzipora Reitman,ed, "Spirit and Spice: The Complete Jewish Cookbook," preface.

ebbed and flowed in Jewish cookbooks over the last 160 years, the desire to both acculturate but at the same time hold onto tradition can be found in all of the cookbooks that I studied.

While autonomy was more difficult to find in the *shtetl*, following the Jewish emancipation emerged as Eugene Borwitz defined "the autonomous self," meaning there was a scope for the individual to include or exclude certain aspects that are relevant to them.[166] For all intended cookbook audiences, Jewish food remained relevant, but whether or not one abided by centuries old dietary restrictions and customs was now entirely up to them.

To conclude, I would like to ask the question that I began with, how did kosher products become so prevalent, and additionally, why do so many American businesses accommodate kosher requirements? I believe that one reason remains, as always, that there is an audience for it. According to the BBC, by 2025, the global kosher food market is predicted to increase to almost $60 billion, up from $24 billion in 2017.[167] The number is indeed significant! I believe this is because the kosher market is changing alongside the wants and needs of the kosher-abiding consumer, who is looking to expand their recipe repertoire to not only include Shabbat chicken and kugel, but to additionally include recipes like Pad Thai and Szechuan chicken. Nowadays one will find these exotic, American or foreign born recipes included on the Shabbat table alongside chicken soup, or vegan chick'n soup, if need be.

[166] Eugene Borowitz, "The Autonomous Jewish Self," *Modern Judaism*, 1984;4(1):39–56. doi: 10.1093/mj/4.1.39.
[167] Dave Gordon, "Why is Kosher Food Soaring in Popularity?" *BBC*, January 16, 2020, https://www.bbc.com/news/business-51107136.

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