

AFFLICTIONS OF TRADITION:
TRENDS AND CONSEQUENCES OF TRADITIONAL AFRICAN AMERICAN
FOODWAYS

by

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ABSTRACT

Heart disease, diabetes, hypertension, obesity, and high cholesterol are among the leading health concerns facing African Americans. Since these conditions are related largely to lifestyle choices, such as diet, it is important to highlight the historical social significance of African American foodways, known as “soul food”. Using personal narratives from former slaves and individuals recollecting American life during socially traumatic times, – including life under Jim Crow laws, the Great Depression, and the Civil Rights movement –compared with African American cookbooks from the same periods, show connections between dietary patterns and changes in African American identity. This along with information from studies of the causes, effects, and treatments of metabolic disorders shows that the prevalence can be seen as results of dietary traditions, maintained as coping mechanism for social marginalization.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated my parents Marilyn and Luzelle for your constant encouragement and support. Also to Ariel, my niece, I hope that this will encourage through next few years of high school and inspire you to continue academic pursuits.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>CDC</i>	Centers for Disease Control
<i>CVD</i>	cardiovascular disease
<i>FWP</i>	Federal Writers' Project
<i>HHS</i>	United States Department of Health and Human Services
<i>MetS</i>	metabolic syndrome
<i>NCAC</i>	Negro Culinary Art Club of Los Angeles
<i>NHDR</i>	National Healthcare Disparities Report
<i>OMH</i>	Office of Minority Health
<i>USDA</i>	United States Department of Agriculture
<i>WPA</i>	Works Progress Administration

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CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
DEDICATION	iii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	iv
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	v
INTRODUCTION	1
BACKGROUND	5
Metabolic Syndrome in African Americans	5
Cookbooks and Nutrition	10
METHODS	15
Slave Food through the 19th century	21
Emancipation, Reconstruction, and Recovery 1865-1940	28
Depression, War, and Civil Rights 1940-1960	37
Civil Rights and Soul 1950-1980	41
Soul Food Reform	45
CONCLUSION	47
REFERENCES	50
APPENDICES	55
Appendix A: Slave Foods	55
Appendix B: Ingredient List 1910s	57
Appendix C: Ingredients List 1920s	58
Appendix D: Ingredients List 1930s	60
Appendix E: Ingredients List 1940s	62
Appendix F: Ingredients List 1960s	64
Appendix G: Opossum and Sweet Potatoes by year	66

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to examine diet of African Americans spanning from enslavement to modern times, examine their role in African American identity, and draw correlations between prevalent health problems plaguing African Americans. This study worked under the hypothesis that the prevalence of metabolic disorders in African American communities was due to traditional foodways continued outside of their original context. This is to say that, African Americans continued the dietary habits from enslavement after emancipation, passing them down as traditions. This transmission lead to a prevalence of diet related ailments such as metabolic disorders in the African American community. Specifically it examines how foodways, including diet, food production, processing, and consumption patterns, relate to prevalent health issues. Given that foodways are integral to the African American identity, it is necessary to examine the historical motivations facilitating the dependence on the traditional foodways known as “soul food” as a tool for coping. Therefore, this study examines the social history of African Americans with a focus on connections between social status, cultural identity, diet, and health.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that risk factors for metabolic syndrome (MetS) are prevalent health concerns for African Americans (Ervin 2009). Obesity (abdominal), elevated triglycerides, high levels of LDL cholesterol (low density lipoprotein), low levels of high density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol, elevated blood pressure

(hypertension), and insulin resistance (type 2 diabetes) are common afflictions among African Americans, suspected to result from a combination of inherited tendencies, environment, and lifestyle. When assessing causes and treatments for these conditions, many experts recommend dietary adjustment as a major step in intervening (Rankins et al. 2007; Grundy 2008; Clark and EL-ATAT 2007; Bhanushali et al. 2013)

Historical circumstances heavily influenced the development of African American foodways. Decades of slavery, followed by years of segregation and social and environmental marginalization affected the evolution of contemporary African American dietary traditions. The foodways resulting from these events can be found by examining many traditions within African American communities. The first significant experience in the development of these dietary habits was slavery. Through four hundred years of enslavement, subsistence was limited to the food allowances granted by slave owners and items that could be raised, foraged, or hunted near home. Modern African American-authored cookbooks provide specific information about the types of foods consumed over time. However, there is a shortage of data. Specifically, there is a shortage of African American cookbooks from before the second decade of the twentieth century. For this reason, information was taken from other historical sources detailing accounts of African American dietary habits.

The results of this study are organized into four chronological periods. The first period, *Slavery/ Pre-emancipation 19th century*, focuses on the slave diet in the early 1800s through emancipation in 1865. It describes the social settings in which African Americans lived and their dietary strategies of the time. The second period, *Emancipation, Reconstruction, and Recovery, 1865-1940*, characterizes the decades directly following emancipation, through the 1940s. Representing the rise and height of the Jim Crow era, the politics of this period created long-

lasting societal restrictions on African Americans that affected dietary practices. The third period, *Depression, War, and Civil Rights 1940-1980*, discusses the Civil Rights era and the emergence of “soul food” through the 1960s and 70s. The final period, *Soul Food Reform 1980-Present*, covers the 1980s through twenty-first century, a time identified as “soul food” reform.

Since foodways are fundamental features of how a group views itself and others (Baer 1982; Latshaw 2009; Germov 2008, 1999), the exchange of recipes observed through cookbooks also illustrates perceptions of African Americans’ group identity over time. African American foodways, also known as “soul food”, are exceptional examples of the multifaceted roles of foodways. Although it has only been recognized as “soul food” since the 1960s (Opie 2008), it has been a sustaining force in the African American community since the time of slavery. Historically, while providing sustenance, African American foodways have supported the emotional well-being of entire communities. They offer support to communities by linking people and places despite geographic and social separations. African American foodways serve as tools for coping through the many physical and emotional traumas experienced by African American communities.

It is impossible to understand any cultural or ethnic identity without an understanding of its historical contexts. Researchers of collective identities (Korieh 2006), affirm that cultural identities are multifaceted, being self-imposed as well as ascribed by others. That is, those within and outside of the group influence cultural identities. Identities are not innate; they develop for any number of reasons. Historically, African American identities have been imposed, ascribed, and negotiated (Korieh 2006), resulting from, yet also contributing to, great disparities in American society. This is exemplified in the chronology of terms that have been used to identify

African Americans from “Colored” or “Negro” to “black” to “African American.” In this study, the predominant terms of the time are used as a replacement for the term African American.

After the abolition of slavery, these food traditions aided African Americans in their navigation through their newly attained freedom. Arguably, little changed socially and economically for African Americans, since they continued to be relegated to the lowest social strata of American society. Former slaves languished as subservient non-members of society. Even as freedmen, African Americans gained employment in service and agricultural positions, such as domestic servants and farmers. Especially in the South, it was nearly impossible for African Americans to find employment outside of plantations or similar settings. Those who migrated north also experienced hardships in acquiring employment. As a result, African Americans in both regions remained impoverished. The resourcefulness and skills learned during slavery, such as trapping, hunting, fishing, and making sustainable meals from limited resources, enabled African Americans to survive these harsh times, such as during the Great Depression.

BACKGROUND

Metabolic Syndrome in African Americans

The ten leading causes of death for African Americans, in descending order, are heart disease, cancer, stroke, diabetes, unintentional injuries, kidney disease, chronic lower respiratory disease, homicide, septicemia, and Alzheimer's disease (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2013). African Americans, or blacks, have a substantial, or disproportionately higher, prevalence of conditions such as asthma, hypertension, obesity, and high cholesterol than the rest of the U.S. population (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2013). "Metabolic syndrome is defined as the occurrence of three of any of the five following factors: obesity, elevated triglyceride level (TG), low HDL-C, elevated blood pressure (BP), and elevated fasting glucose (FG)" (Bhanushali et al. 2013).

African Americans, women especially, suffer from disproportionate rates of these risk factors when compared to whites (Anderson-Loftin et al. 2005; Clark and EL-ATAT 2007; Rankins et al. 2007; Warolin et al. 2014). Although it is believed that there are some hereditary causes associated with this condition, the evidence also shows that there are distinctive lifestyle factors, mainly dietary practices, contributing to it.

According to some, foodway traditions practiced by African Americans that encouraged the empowerment of black identities contribute to this higher prevalence (Kulkarni 2004; Nettles 2007). “Soul food” is a marker of African American identity, yet it is also a factor in the prevalence of diet-related illnesses. These foodways have great influence on the frequent occurrences of diabetes, obesity, and high cholesterol, which often lead to or coincide with cardiovascular disease (CVD) in African Americans (Liburd 2003; Rankins et al. 2007; Jones 2007).

Diabetes— Diabetes commonly occurs in different forms, type 1 and type 2. Both are instances of inadequate insulin production. Type 1, or juvenile diabetes appears in childhood, when the pancreas cannot produce insulin; type 2 diabetes is identified when the body becomes resistant to insulin or is no longer able to produce enough (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2007). Essentially, in both cases, the their blood sugar is too high and may potentially lead to other problems such as serious damage to the eyes, kidneys, nerves, and heart.

Type 2, or adult onset, diabetes is a major health concern in African American communities. According to a 2011 report from the CDC, 4.9 million, or 18.7%, of all non-Hispanic blacks aged 20 years or older have been diagnosed with diabetes This is from a population of nearly 26.2 million people meaning that, of the 18.8 million Americans diagnosed with diabetes, 26.1% are African American. By comparison, 15.7 million, or 10.2%, of all non-Hispanic whites, a population of roughly 154 million aged 20 years or older, have been diagnosed with diabetes (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2011).

Risk factors for type 2 diabetes are genetic predisposal or family history of the condition, lack of physical activity, overweight, or presence of type 1 diabetes (Centers for Disease Control

and Prevention 2011; HHS 2007). Due to the risk of inheriting diabetes, being of African American descent can be seen as a risk factor in itself.

Obesity— Obesity as a risk factor for MetS refers to abdominal obesity, or an increase in waist circumference (Grundy et al. 2004). Not only is it risk factor of MetS, but it also contributes to health issues such as hypertension, high serum cholesterol, low high-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol, hyperglycemia, and it promotes CVD risk. Abdominal obesity, characterized by excess adipose tissue around the midsection, exacerbates the development or worsening of the other symptoms.

According to the CDC, 38.1% of non-Hispanic black men 20 years or older are obese, as well as 54.2% of women (Holmes 2013). According to a 2009 CDC study, one reason for such high frequencies of obesity among African Americans is that there is little incentive to maintain healthy weights or to lose weight. The three explanations supporting this idea are that: 1) African Americans have a general cultural acceptance of overweight body types; 2) that they tend to live in environments providing few safe locations to engage in physical activity; and 3) that socioeconomic factors inhibit access to fresh and healthy foodstuffs.

Hypertension— Hypertension is a major public health issue for African Americans, placing them at high risk of cardiovascular disease, which is the number one cause of African American mortality (Black or African American Populations 2013). Elevated blood pressure, along with obesity, often occurs in insulin resistant people, although some believe it not actually “metabolic” like the other risk factors (Grundy et al. 2004).

The suggested causes of hypertension are in line with diabetes and obesity. Although disputed, some suggest that this is, in part, due to the high levels of dietary salt consumed in

African American diets (Peters et al. 2006; Korieh 2006; Sumlin and Garcia 2012). They also reported that lifestyle choices such as reducing alcohol consumption, quitting smoking, and reducing dietary salt proved a difficult task for many African Americans.

Prevention and Intervention—The 1980s and 1990s were times when major public health concerns brought about the questioning of past dietary habits. The large numbers of African Americans suffering from diabetes and obesity drew the attention of government health organizations attempting to address common health issues of Americans. Because of the recognition of major disparities in health between ethnic groups, especially African Americans, in 1985 the Secretary's Task Force Report on Black and Minority Health created the Office of Minority Health (OMH). According to the *Report of the Secretary's Task Force on Black and Minority Health: Volume I: Executive Summary* (1985: p. 113):

Behavioral risk factors, such as diet, smoking patterns, and physical activity are often part of the particular cultural patterns that are grounded in socioeconomic circumstances associated with increased risk. In addition, certain cultural patterns may impede efforts to reduce risk. In particular, cultural factors may determine the effectiveness of efforts to prevent hypertension, to lower CHD risk by reducing risk factors, and to treat hypertension more effectively.

Today, prevention and elimination of the risk factors for MetS require extreme lifestyle changes along with medical interventions. However, understanding the deeper contexts behind the causes can ease the effects of the transition. For example, in explaining the connections between food, culture, and diabetes, Kulkarni (2004) warns that those looking to educate African Americans about the dangers of the condition must take into account the cultural influences on it. As interventions require nutritional changes, Kulkarni suggests familiarization with African American dietary customs. She explains that knowledge of African American diets and traditions, mainly “soul food” traditions, is essential when providing guidance to African American patients. Kulkarni also notes that socioeconomic status, education, cooking resources/

facilities, family support, and health literacy are factors influencing successful or failed diabetes interventions.

It is recommended that the first step in intervening in MetS is weight loss since many of the related risk factors, may be more easily corrected with a significantly reduced weight (Clark and EL-ATAT 2007; Grundy et al. 2004; Grundy 2008). As previously noted, excessive weight exacerbates the persistence of the symptoms of MetS risk factors, so by relieving the body of extra weight, it is easier to alleviate other metabolic burdens.

Dietary changes are widely recommended as a means to progress in these interventions. However, understanding the cultural contexts of dietary habits is extremely important (Clark and EL-ATAT 2007; Liburd 2003; Rankins et al. 2007; Ruidavets et al. 2007; Sumlin and Garcia 2012). Sumlin and Garcia (2012) observed that, “culturally tailored” dietary interventions are essential for managing type 2 diabetes. Kulkarni (2004) describes “soul food” traditions as diets that include a variety of green leafy vegetables; corn; starchy vegetables (such as beans and peas), grains (such as rice, grits, corn and other breads), meats (which are often breaded and fried), and whole and buttermilk. She instructs that there are healthy options, which allow for the continued adherence to “soul food” traditions while allowing patients to reduce amounts of cholesterol, fat, and sodium in their diets. Ruidavets et al. (2007) suggests that higher intake of fish, fresh fruits, vegetables, and grains, while reducing fried foods, cured meats, and potatoes, could help individuals to stave off MetS risks.

In terms of obesity, body image, and diet, many African Americans place higher values on maintaining cultural traditions than on good health (Anderson-Loftin et al. 2005; Liburd 2003; Rankins et al. 2007). Traditional foodways create a sense of community that bonds

African Americans; it makes it difficult to give up foods that are part of their, even if it is known that these foods may be detrimental to their health (Anderson-Loftin et al. 2005; Liburd 2003).

Cookbooks and Nutrition

“Soul food” encourages physical development. Although it is associated with negative health effects, it is seen among African Americans as a symbol. It is a dietary pattern that feeds people within tight limits and constraints. For slaves, it supplemented meager rations with easily accessible ingredients, and it sustained hard-working families through physical and emotional strife. For African Americans as freed people, it provided familiarity and comfort in contexts of social unfamiliarity.

Cookbooks are useful tools for examining foodways. They offer narratives of the dietary practices of those who write and read them. They present perspectives about the cooks and the consumers of their recipes. African American cookbooks are representative of perceptions of food and eating. They allow the reader insight into the contemporary contexts surrounding the people who write them. This analysis of historical African American cookbooks examines the transition of ingredients used by African American cooks.

Many changes occurred during the decades following slavery. These African American authored cookbooks aid in illustrating the changes accepted in cooking ingredients during this time. Recipe comparisons are especially useful for this purpose. For example, a common recipe that shows up in cookbooks from the 1910s through the 1990s may yield the same basic result, but using different ingredients. A recipe calling for one pound of lard in 1912 might evolve to

two cups of margarine in 1994. Not only are the ingredients important, but also the quantities of the ingredients.

African American cookbooks illustrate the changing or non-changing roles of African Americans over time. During the Great Migration, which led many African Americans from the South, cookbooks often reflected southern whites experiencing the loss of domestic servants such as mammies and cooks (Bell 1927; McKinney 1922). At this time, many African Americans migrated to northern industrial cities to seek out new job opportunities. More than an estimated 700,000 African Americans migrated from the South between 1920 and 1930, representing the largest single movement of people during the six decades of the Great Migration (Marks 1989). This left some whites in the South to feel somewhat abandoned by their servants that were something of a southern tradition (McKinney 1922; Bell 1927).

Cookbooks served as a mode of expressing to the country that African American cooks had moved past being servants. This is especially true of African American women (Inness 2006). Historically, African American women had, for the most part, been responsible for the transmission of traditional recipes. Cooking for slaves and their owners was done by women. Therefore, the cooking traditions were transmitted temporally through women, even before the first African American cookbook was written. Two notable works by African American women are Malinda Russell's *A Domestic Cook Book: Containing a Careful Selection of Useful Receipts for the Kitchen* (1866; 2007), and *What Mrs. Fisher Knows About Old Southern Cooking* by Abby Fisher (1870).

Russell (1866; 2007) was a freed African American businessperson and experienced cook from Tennessee. Following a number of hardships, Russell self-published this cookbook which

allowed her to share her recipes as well as support herself financially, which she documents in the introduction to the book. Her story is not unique. Many of the cookbooks used here have information about the context or inspiration of the book.

Fisher was a former slave from Mobile, Alabama, who migrated to California. According to her “Preface and Apology”, she was persuaded by friends and fans of her cooking to publish a compilation of her recipes. She notes that neither she, nor her husband, was educated to read or write, so the book was written by dictation (Fisher 1870). The low literacy rate among African Americans may be the reason that there were so few African American cookbooks published in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. However, this could also be due to community traditions of passing down recipes through orally.

A notable trend can be seen in the 1920s where many “so-called” African American cookbooks were written on behalf of African American cooks by whites. It appears that there were some concerns about losing the long-loved recipes prepared by mammies; therefore, there are many compilations of recipes of African American cooks from this time. According to *Mammy’s cook book* (Bell 1927; McKinney 1922), black mammies were dying out, and the lives of whites would not be the same without the recipes that they had grown to love. Such cookbooks intended to preserve the recipes and instruct consumers to prepare them for themselves. Another example of this “mammy nostalgia” is *Aunt Caroline’s Dixieland Recipes*, authored by Emma and William McKinney (1922). The forward suggests that they were white people suffering from nostalgia for the so-called “art of the Old Southern Mammy” cooking and needed to learn to prepare their beloved recipes in the absence of their mammies, or at least be able to pass them on to their new servants. This is the type of work that authors such as Sherrie

Inness (2006) suggests promotes mammy stereotypes. According to Inness, this fear was related to pop cultural images of mammies, such as the film *Gone with the Wind* and the Aunt Jemima food brand.

Inness (2006) supports the value of African American cookbooks as cultural narratives and speaks on behalf of African American women as authors of cooking literature. However, this is fitting, as most cooking traditions are passed down through women. Inness proposes several functions of African American cooking literature. For one, Innes suggests it conveys cultural and historical facts about African Americans that are often overlooked in mainstream African American history. Second, Innes suggests that these cookbooks emphasize the importance of community as avenues for passing on African American traditions. One of the most important points made about the importance of African American cooking literature, written for and by African Americans, is that it contradicts mammy stereotypes.

Cookbooks from the earliest parts of the 19th century suggest that there was more focus on providing instructions for professional service rather than instructions for in-home meal preparation for African Americans. One of the earliest known cookbooks authored by an African American, *The House Servant's Directory, or A Monitor for Private Families: Comprising Hints on the Arrangement and Performance of Servants' Work Boston* was published in 1827 and written by Robert Roberts, a freeman of Boston. This work is called a cookbook, but it is essentially an instruction manual for domestic servants. The book was clearly not intended for slaves, as slave education and literacy were illegal at the time. The work, however, may have been intended for the instruction of freed African Americans. Although it is not a suitable source of information about the African American diet at the time, it is useful in illustrating the

perceived stereotypes about African American cooking (Inness 2006). There is a perception that African American cooks only exist as servants to whites. This was a trend seen in many early African American cookbooks.

The post-emancipation transitions in African American identity are reflections of the changes in community self-perceptions. The changes in preferences for identification terminology coincided with changes in the social roles of African Americans. These changes along with strong food traditions are not arbitrary occurrences, but manifestations of the African American community's resilience in surviving the obstacles of marginalization.

METHODS

In order to observe the dietary habits of African Americans spanning over time, four types of sources were examined. First, for information about African Americans slave diet, the slave narratives from the Works Progress Administration, provided useful data, while secondary associated sources, such as *What the slaves ate : recollections of African American foods and foodways from the slave narratives* (Covey and Eisnach 2009), were useful as well. Second, studies from the USDA, which provided dietary inventories of African American households, were used to assess household eating or at least food acquisition patterns over the span of several decades. Third, interviews from the *Behind the Veil: Documenting African-American Life in the Jim Crow South* series provided testimonies from times when the slave narratives were collected from the mid to late-1990s. The fourth, source was the collection of African American authored cookbooks which allowed for comparisons of the kinds of foods that African Americans were cooking and eating at home, as well as how they shared them within their community.

From these sources, there is information presenting insider and outsider perspectives of African American dietary patterns over a span of 18 decades ranging from the mid-19th century to the present. From the USDA studies there is information gathered by researchers and reputable sources outside of the African American community. Meanwhile, the WPA narratives, *Behind the Veil* interviews, and the cookbooks present different perspectives from within different African American communities. Many of the documents overlap in time, allowing for a continuous data record of dietary practices.

The narratives collected from former slaves much information about the ingredients, acquisition methods, preparation, and overall perceptions about food and meals from first hand perspectives. Collected during the 1930s, the WPA slave narrative provided elemental descriptions of slave diet, as well as that of freed people following their emancipation. The interviews allowed the former slaves to account for their enslaved lifestyles. However, many spoke of how they lived during the times of the interview. These narratives were the main basis for assessing staple foods consumed by slaves.

The narratives are available in the digital collections of the Library of Congress' American Memory, under the heading of African American History, *Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1938*. All of interviews are transcribed and available in print, while some also have audio recordings. Unfortunately, the audio is of poor quality due to the primitive equipment and locations of the interviews. In some, there is background noise such as of trains and dogs barking, which create distortions in the overall interview. Furthermore, there were other concerns associated with the use of these slave narratives.

The validity of the WPA, and other slave narratives, has been challenged on occasion. One argument is based on the doubted of reliability of the human memory. Either the informants were very young when they were emancipated or they were very old at the time of the WPA interviews (Blassingame 1975; Soapes 1977). Both of these situations suggest that the age of the informants during either experience may have affected the quality of their memories of slavery. If they were very young when they were emancipated, then they may not have had much memory of what life was like as a slave (Soapes 1977). Many of their memories were likely

stories passed down from older relatives. Many of the informants actually said in the interviews that they could not remember specific events that happened to them, but were relaying stories that they had been told. For the older informants who had experienced partial adulthood as slaves, they might have had trouble remembering because of old age. This is not to say that none of the informants were capable of remembering their experiences. These are just reasons that others, such as Blassingame (1975) and Soapes (1977) have found to question the validity of the interviews. Nevertheless, the transcripts were found to be extremely useful.

The USDA past dietary studies provided a good deal of information about the foods consumed by African Americans over several decades. The USDA gathered data from communities in northern and southern regions of the U.S. Researchers took stock of the food supplies held in African American households in rural and urban areas of several states, allowing comparisons with the previously noted lists of slave foods. The Atwater Study (1895) provides a good introduction for the slave narratives, as it spans from 1894 to 1897. The other USDA studies, inspired by Dr. Atwater, recorded the foods and the weekly dietary patterns of Americans from 1935 to 1969.

There were difficulties in pinpointing sources that actually represented the non-manipulated African American perspective of foodways. The slave narratives are recounts of slavery, told to mainly white interviewers, and the USDA studies were based on data collected by researchers representing government agencies. As previously mentioned, African Americans had experienced hard times at the hand of whites. Therefore, there was a precedent for distrust of white people. The residual tensions between whites and blacks in the South, has led to

questioning of the accuracy of depictions of former slave experiences (Blassingame 1975). The validity of the slave narratives have been criticized for a number of reasons.

Where African Americans were approached by whites or people representing the government or some other powerful institution, there may have been more apprehension about presenting the complete accounts of their food supplies. Such apprehensions are understandable, considering the exploitative sharecropping systems of the time. It is possible, and likely, that some information may have been withheld from researchers, especially in the case of the USDA studies. The information provided through these inquiries may not include full disclosure of African American dietary habits.

Although the WPA narratives and the USDA studies provided useful information about the dietary patterns of African Americans, they arguably lack validity in truly representing the African American perspective. The need for literature about African American foodways led to cookbooks. Although it is understood that there may be unwritten variables affecting the contexts of these works, they are seen as voluntary expressions of African American dietary preferences and traditions. As W.E.B. Dubois (1904) explains, in so many words identity is characterized by insider and outsider perspectives. Therefore, using this combination of narratives, dietary studies, but emphasizing cookbooks makes sense in pursuing a broader perspective of African American dietary habits.

African American authored cookbooks can be thought of as personal narratives from African American cooks (Eves 2005; Inness 2006). They offer details about the types of foods that African Americans ate, the construction of meals, and even the social contexts of cooking

and eating. It was not enough to know what they were eating. There was a greater significance in the community perceptions of the foods that they were eating.

The majority of the cookbooks used in this study were obtained from the *David Walker Lupton African American Cookbook Collection* at the W.S. Hoole Special Collections Library at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa. The books were the personal collection of David W. Lupton, donated to the University of Alabama following his death. The collection consists of four hundred and fifty volumes of “African American” cookbooks, spanning from 1827 through 2004. The term “African American” is used loosely in describing many of the earliest books in this collection. For the most part, they are authored or inspired by African American cooks, but some were omitted from this research due to their principles of their perceived purposes. The “mammy nostalgia” and service manuals were not included in the description of ingredients.

The cookbooks represent various regions of the U.S. over a span of 184 years. Each one is believed to present recipes from African American cooks. The cookbooks used represent themes of maintenance of community and the “soul”. The “community” books were compilations of recipes collected from within a single community. Most of these are from women’s groups and churches. The soul cookbooks were mostly published after 1960 and many have the term “soul food” in the title. These books were of interest as many of them began with introductions to “soul food” or explanation of why the types of recipes in the book were relevant to African American communities.

Although cookbooks were the focus of this research, the other sources were useful in providing a basis for comparison. For example, there was a basis to compare cookbooks including recipes exchanged within African American communities in 1930s Tennessee, with the

recollections from Tennessee slave narratives. Was there overlap and they were all eating the same things, or did the subjects of the narratives eat differently from the cookbook contributors? There was a tremendous amount of overlap in the sources, especially spanning from the 1930s through the 1960s, that was very helpful in assessing dietary habits and social changes experienced by African Americans. The interviews explain what was going on in society as well as in their households. This data was compared to information from the cookbooks.

RESULTS

Slave Food through the 19th century

The good-natured African accepted his lot willingly, and went about his task as though he had been born to serve others. He was thus doomed to an awful fate from his very earliest experience in the New World, from which he is still suffering. (Tobias 1898, p.15)

The time of American slavery was an important era in African American history. It was the cause of trauma, yet inspiration, for the development of African American identity. During this time, slaves experienced many hardships through which they managed to survive. An examination of slave lifestyles reveals that foodways practiced during this time were beneficial for more than physical sustenance. Specifically, foodways practiced by slaves made a great contribution to the cultural heritage shared by African Americans today by acting as a tool for coping with the difficulties of slavery.

Of the many obstacles experienced by slaves, identity is a significant issue. As African captives, but also “Negro” or “Colored” slaves, they lost much of their ethnic identity in the process of being lumped in with so many others from differing geographic and cultural backgrounds. They were not citizens, and had no more social significance or rights than livestock. This is seen in laws of the time. Laws from Alabama stipulated that slaves were not allowed to own property and that their possessions were actually the property of the slaves’ owner. “§1018. No slave can own property, and any property purchased or held by a slave, not claimed by the master or owner, must be sold by order of any justice of peace...”(Alabama Slave Code.” 1852, p. 239). Upon the capture of runaway slaves, they were to be jailed and their captures entitled to a twenty dollar per slave reward from the owner. The capture was to be

advertised locally allowing the true owner six months to claim the slave; otherwise, the slave could be sold to a new owner, with the profits gained by the county.

Slaves had no rights, could own no property, and were not even allowed to marry legally. The slave trade, followed by long-term enslavement necessitated African Americans learning coping mechanisms for their physical and emotional survival. The cultural traditions of foodways was an important tool in this respect.

Slaves combined familiar foods brought from Africa with those introduced to them via the slave trade. African slaves often brought foods and passed down traditions from their cultures of origin. Foods such as okra, watermelon, and black eyed peas among many others, were brought from Africa. Also, through the Middle Passage, they encountered foods from European descended people that were merged with what they already knew (Covey and Eisnach 2009; Opie 2008). Upon reaching America and the outer islands of the Caribbean, they made contact with Native Americans from whom more traditions were absorbed (Opie 2008). The long span of American slavery resulted in great geographic and generational separations from their cultures of origin, leading to absorption of a wide variety of cultural influences.

Scholars of Black Studies argue that African Americans possess multiple identities (Du Bois 1904; Gomez 2004). This is to say that traumas experienced by slaves shaped the African American identity. Slavery involved losing touch with their ethnic heritages and accepting new imposed roles as slaves (Du Bois 1904; Harris 2011; Harris, et al. 1987; Korieh 2006; Smith 1992; Tobias 1898). DuBois also argues that “Negroes” could only see themselves from the perspectives of others, because of the inhibited development of a self-constructed identity.

This might have left them at the mercy of the whites who owned them, as their owners and overseers stipulated much of their day-to-day lives. Slave-owners provided their slaves with shelter, clothing, and food. However, it remains unsettled whether the allowances were sufficient. Some claim that slave owners took care of their slaves as a form of nurturing investments or maintenance of livestock, as slaves generally received enough food to supply them with enough energy to survive the strenuous work that they required (Newson and Minchin 2007; Rees, et al. 2003). Others suggest that the foods provided to slaves lacked both sufficient calories and essential nutrients (Covey and Eisnach 2009; Genovese 1974).

Slave food rations – Evidence suggests that slaves lacked adequate provisions; as they resorted to their own devices to supplement allowances, for food especially. The provided food rations were often of poor quality and insufficient to last supplied for an entire week. Different accounts of slavery express that primary food supplies were rationed by slave owners on a regular basis (Federal Writers' Project 2001). Many former slaves recounted that they received a weekly allotment of provisions from their owners in the form of salt pork, cornmeal, and molasses. However, regional differences influenced the availability of flora and fauna for consumption (Covey and Eisnach 2009; Federal Writers' Project 2001; Gibbs, et al. 1989; Opie 2008; Singleton 1995).

Many sources affirm that demographics, such as the age, sex, and occupation of slaves, determined the amounts of food rations (Covey and Eisnach 2009; DeBow 1853; Opie 2008). Able-bodied males received the largest food allotments, and physical laborers received more than the domestic or household slaves. However, the slaves who worked in closer proximity to their white owners had access to better quality food. Often, enslaved children received leftovers

and scraps from the owner's kitchens, sometimes without the knowledge of their owners (Federal Writers' Project 2006). Some former slaves claimed that their owners willingly distributed leftover food from their meals to small slave children. Such situations became the foundation of the common misconception that slaves subsisted solely on the unwanted leftovers of their owners (Harris 1992; Harris 2011). Ultimately, the final decision was up to the slave owners as to how much and how often the slaves received the supplies that they needed.

Historical accounts suggest that meat supplies varied, often depending on what was available on and near the plantation. Pork was common, but in some places beef, mutton, or other types of meat were available. This was due to the economy of raising hogs, which required little maintenance, and many of them could be raised at one time in pens that required little space. Another positive aspect of raising hogs was that they were easy to please, meaning that they could and would eat nearly anything. Where pork prevailed, hogs were slaughtered during specific times of the year when the weather was cool. After the slaughter, the pork was salted and cured, then stored in smoke houses. Along with the portions of bacon and salt pork received in weekly ration, slaves were also allowed to keep the less desirable scrap parts of the pig. Skillful preparation methods made the various hog parts palatable. Tails, knuckles, ears, and feet were among the many hog parts consumed. A popular pork dish for slaves was chitterlings or "chitlin's" – prepared pig intestines that remain a soul food tradition.

Grain rations were mostly corn byproducts such as corn meal, hominy, or grits. While some slaves received flour made from wheat, these products were mainly used for making breads. Corn bread, hoecakes, and ashcake were common (Covey and Eisnach 2009; Federal Writers' Project 2006). Because they were equipped with limited cooking utensils and vessels

for food preparation, many slaves used what was available. For ashcakes, cornmeal was mixed to the consistency of soft dough with water or milk and butter or fat, then thrown into the ashes of a fireplace and allowed to cook until browned. Hoecakes were mixed similarly, but cooked on the flat head of a fieldwork hoe and held over a fire (Covey and Eisnach 2009; Federal Writers' Project 2006).

The Slave Diet – On occasions of food shortages, some slaves resorted to stealing from their owners (Federal Writers' Project 2013; Gibbs, et al. 1989; Singleton 1995; Tuma 2006). In addition to, or as an alternative to, stealing, they employed other methods for supplementing food rations. Although there were variations from one plantation to another, some slave owners allowed hunting, fishing, and the maintaining of small garden plots in the slave quarters (Covey and Eisnach 2009; Federal Writers' Project 2006; Genovese 1974; Gibbs, et al. 1989). Such supplemental efforts often allowed slaves and their families to survive from one work week to another.

A typical meal for slaves included bacon or salt pork, served with ashcakes and molasses. Some form of this combination was available for daily meals with breakfast being eaten at home before sunrise and lunch eaten in the fields at noon. (Covey and Eisnach 2009; Federal Writers' Project 2006). Three meals a day were not guaranteed for many slaves (Covey and Eisnach 2009; Federal Writers' Project 2006; Gibbs, et al. 1989), as the food and meal allowances, as chosen by the owners, were provided only to sustain slaves.

The staples of most slave diets were often some type of meat, grains, and some form of molasses or syrup (Covey and Eisnach 2009; Federal Writers' Project 2006; Gibbs, et al. 1989). Dairy consisted of milk, butter, and buttermilk. Vegetables were peripheral foods, most of which

were grown in the aforementioned slave gardens. The crops in their gardens were easily cultivated and harvested, and beans, leaf greens, and root crops were common. These gardens created a great diversity in the diets of slaves. In addition, slaves were very resourceful and able to make use of what was available to them, including consumption of many different types of wild flora and fauna (see appendix). (Covey and Eisnach 2009; Federal Writers' Project 2006; Gibbs, et al. 1989).

Small game were common additions to slave rations. Squirrels, opossums, raccoons, and various game birds were widely enjoyed (Federal Writers' Project 2013; Gibbs, et al. 1989; Singleton 1995; Tuma 2006). A popular game animal among slaves was opossum, which became a sort of delicacy for slaves (Covey and Eisnach 2009; Federal Writers' Project 2006). Popular because they were plentiful, small, easy to trap, kill, and prepare (Opie 2008), the favored method for the preparation of opossum was to bake it with sweet potatoes. This was a quintessential meal for slaves as a single prepared pot required little preparation and could feed the whole family.

Period Cookbooks— The earliest African American authored cookbook examined as part of this study were from the 19th century: Robert Roberts 1827, *The House Servant's Directory*. This work was not solely a cookbook, but also an instruction manual for male domestic servants. In the introduction, Roberts writes that he intends for this book to guide young men entering into service positions. Although it is not a suitable source of information about African American diet, it is useful in illustrating the stereotypes about African American cooking. There is a perception that African American cooks only exist as servants to whites (Inness 2006). This was a trend seen in African American cookbooks through the early 20th century.

While the *House Servant's Directory* does not reflect slave dietary patterns, does demonstrate the social roles of African Americans in different regions during the time of slavery. The preface from the book's publisher includes an endorsement of the book written by Roberts' employer, Christopher Gore, in which he stated, "I have read the work attentively, and think it may be of much use" (Roberts 1827, ii). The publisher goes on to express that there is a necessity for such a publication by stating that:

... what praise is not due to an humble attempt to amend the morals and awkwardness of domestics? In school-learning generally our native servants surpass foreigners, but in manners, deportment, and a knowledge of the duties of their station, it must be admitted they are considerably inferiour. To borrow a phrase from the kitchen, our oboriginal servants need grilling; they require much instruction, and an apprenticeship to the art and faculty of unbending (p. iii).

Following this in the books introduction, Roberts writes:

...there are many young men who are in good situations at present, but who oftentimes are deficient of several of those branches that are requisite for a perfect servant to understand; I therefore have a sincere wish to serve all those who are in that capacity of earning an honest living, and perhaps are not perfect in the several branches of their business, which in this station they are expected to perform without being ordered by the lady of the family. There are many young men who live out in families, who, I am sorry to say, do not know how to begin their work in proper order unless being drove by the lady of the family, from one thing to another, which keeps them continually in a bustle and their work is never done. There is no servant that can keep from being in a state of confusion, that has not a regular rule for his work, and, on the other hand, how disagreeable it must be for the lady, who has to tell them ever thing that she wants to be done. It was merely for this idea, that the author of this took in hand to lay before the public those general rules and directions for servants to go by as shall give satisfaction to their employers, and gain a good reputation for themselves. And it is my most earnest wish to give to the utmost extent of my power, every instruction that it requisite for a house servant to understand. (p.viii-x)

Therefore, as the publisher's preface asserts, it was believed that such a book was necessary to teach servant classes how to perform the duties expected of them. It is unclear if they are

referring solely to African Americans, or “Negroes”, or if this refers to different groups of people. The use of “native” and “aboriginal” are somewhat misleading, but as this is labeled an African American authored book, one might speculate that it refers to African Americans. In any case, Roberts agrees that servants need to know their places and their duties in order to make life easier for their employers. Where slaves in the South were forced into service positions, free people living in other regions also sought those roles.

Emancipation, Reconstruction, and Recovery 1865-1940

Life After Emancipation— The decades following the abolition of slavery did not see much change in lifestyle for African Americans. While some former slaves migrated out of the South, many remained in the region and on the same plantations where they were enslaved, leaving no room or reason for dietary changes. Since their economic resources did not see rapid improvement, there was little allowance for dietary changes. Those who did move tended to maintain familiar dietary patterns as well.

The 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was passed in December of 1865, officially emancipating slaves. However, this was not an instantaneous release of all “Negro” chattels because many slave owners chose not to inform slaves of the change and forced them to continue living and working as slaves. Even after notification of their freedom, for many, their lives changed very little. Legal freedom did not ensure social equality. DuBois (1939) characterizes white sentiment from the 1930s with this comment, "The Negro is a problem in the American social order because his aspiration and behavior are oriented toward a goal that a dominant majority does not want realized" (DuBois 1939). This illustrates how the “Negroes” remained second-class citizens, given that they continued to experience racial discrimination from whites after their official emancipation and well into the 19th century.

The introduction of Jim Crow laws, which legalized racial segregation, left many southern communities unchanged after slaves were emancipated. According to Wells (1892), Jim Crow laws not only mandated racial segregation, but also validated the social abuses and physical violence acts against “Negroes,” further restricting their civil rights.

Former slaves also saw little change in their diet. Even when former slaves had the means to acquire different types of foods, they continued to prefer the types of foods they had eaten as slaves. Evidence for the continuity in the diets of former slaves can be found in agricultural studies performed by the USDA in the 19th century (Atwater and Woods 1897). The researchers made distinctions between white and “Negro” families, and were able to offer dietary studies of Americans overall.

Most of the newly freed “Negroes” were extremely impoverished due to highly limited economic opportunities. While some remained on plantations, they were now responsible for providing financial support for themselves while also acquiring their own food and shelter. Without the economic means to travel far from home, they were left to rely heavily on foods immediately accessible and affordable to them. Many former slaves and sharecroppers recalled eating foods that were grown on, or very near, the properties where they lived (Duke University. Center for Documentary Studies. and John Hope Franklin Research Center for African and African American History and Culture.).

Therefore, poverty among African Americans contributed to their continued marginalization, as they had little choice but to follow lifestyle patterns similar to what they had experienced as slaves. Their low standard of living in a sharecropper economy did not allow them to buy higher quality products or foodstuffs. Moreover, since many of the foods were not

part of their traditional lifestyle under slavery, they may not have been inclined to purchase different types of foods, even if they had been able to afford them.

Atwater and Woods (1897) gathered data from communities in northern and southern regions of the U.S., offering descriptions of “Negro” living conditions in the late 19th century. During the spring of 1895 and winter of 1896, they conducted dietary assessments, which included African Americans living in rural areas. They found that “Negro” houses generally consisted of small, two to three room cabins, where cooking took place on a stove or in a fireplace. The cabins were often constructed from logs with gaps in the walls to allow airflow throughout the dwelling during the warm seasons. Wooden blinds instead of glass covered the windows, which typically remained open to allow in light. The roofs were made of coarse shingles or boards. A single room served as a kitchen, living room, and bedroom. The cabins held homemade furnishings such as rope beds with corn husk stuffed mattresses. Butter churns were common fixtures in these cabins since butter, and its leftover milk, were dietary staples.

Atwater and Woods (1897) recorded that these households were attached to larger properties owned by whites. The owners employed the prevailing mortgage system of the area, known as sharecropping. This allowed poor “Negroes” to live and work on farms raising crops for sale. They were both able to live off the crops they raised and to sell them for profit to pay their rent and other expenses. This system was a form of de facto slavery. A son of former slaves observed that, “From personal experience and observation in the States in general and in the South in particular, I am frank to say that emancipation has not made the coloured race a free people in the U.S.A” (Tobias 1898).

Findings from the Atwater and Woods study demonstrate that farms required the labor of the entire family who worked for 7.5 months out of the year planting, cultivating, and picking cotton. Late November through June was the working season, while the remaining months were known as the social season. While this allowed more leisure time, the work hours were roughly the same as they had been for slaves, working from sunrise to sunset, and resting at noon.

With the high percentage of crops owed by a tenant to the landowner under sharecropping, there was little income remaining for non-farm-related expenses, perpetuating poverty. Former sharecroppers describe the extent to which sharecropping resembled slave conditions. Malachia Andrews, a former sharecropper from Tallahassee, Florida recalled:

We went to work at sunrise and we worked til sunset... We worked rain or shine... The blacks would work sharecroppers with the big farmers and they would take a third of what was made. My daddy sharecropped for years and he could make it because we were a big family and just our family was enough to run a sharecropper's farm. When we started harvesting everything a third of it belonged to us and this is the way we lived. We got bit a lot of times because the farmers, the big farmers, when the end of the year come we would began to harvest, the big farmer got most of it because he would come and bring us a bill for fertilizer and tools and when he done this we didn't get too much because they had took it up in tools, fertilizer and other expenses. So sharecropping wasn't so good after all during those times. But we had to live so we choose this to work. (Andrews 1994) Andrews also stated that sharecroppers experienced intimidation when they opposed the system. "Black folks as far as they thought wasn't supposed to talk back, challenge the big boss I'll say about the harvesting and sometimes it would cause house burning. Sometimes it would cause flogging, hanging and different things ." However, some had better experiences than Andrews.

In terms of nutrition, studies from the late 19th century demonstrate that as long as thirty years after emancipation, “Negroes” living in the rural South continued with the same dietary patterns (Dirks and Duran 2001; Atwater and Woods 1897). Families made weekly trips into town as a group to buy needed supplies, usually on Saturdays. These excursions allowed them to stockpile corn and salt pork for meals for the following week.

Milk was a staple ingredient. Families without cows would trade various items with neighbors and use milk both for drinking and to make their own butter and buttermilk. The acquisition of sugar cane and sorghum allowed for the production of molasses. Small gardens provided a sustainable supply of leafy greens and root crops. Crops from these gardens, in combination with hunting and trapping small game, supplemented weekly food supplies (Atwater and Woods 1897).

The continuity in dietary habits reflects a similar continuity in the social conditions experienced by African American communities. The basic ingredients used in “soul food” represent the lack of freedom to explore physical and social spaces restricted by whites. The system changed little from when they were receiving food allotments from white owners because their access to other types of food was still restricted. The movements of African Americans were limited in many ways. As slaves, they were restricted to areas allowed by their owners. Living and working spaces of freed people were similarly restricted by bigotry. Segregation continued to create restrictions for non-whites, mainly African Americans. The segregation of access to goods and services sent the message that even though they were no longer property, African Americans were not desirable members of American society.

19th Century Cookbooks — African American authored cookbooks from the 19th century speak to the ingenuity and overarching importance of food and the sharing of recipes. Women were responsible for the majority of transmissions of traditional recipes, long before the first cookbook was written. Notable works by African American women include *A Domestic Cook Book: Containing a Careful Selection of Useful Receipts for the Kitchen*, by Malinda Russell, originally published in 1866, reprinted in 2007; and *What Mrs. Fisher Knows About Old Southern Cooking* by Abby Fisher (1870).

As previously noted, Russell (2007) a freed African American businessperson and cook from Tennessee self-published her cookbook as a way of supporting herself financially. The recipes in this book are mostly desserts; such as cakes and pies, but there are also some soups and stews. For the most part, the ingredients are very basic and generic. Russell does not require any specific brand names for her recipes. Since she made her business from cooking commercially, it seems that these recipes are not for everyday consumption.

Four years later, Fisher (1870) compiled a collection of her recipes using dictation, a result to her illiteracy leftover from the time of her enslavement. The low literacy among African American at this time suggests that these books might not have been intended for their peers. Both authors recognized the value of their cooking skills and that it would be beneficial to themselves and others to share them. Therefore, in a time when African Americans were barely more than chattel, these women used the skills and resources available to them, to disseminate cooking traditions.

1900 and 1910s— A key book representing this era is *The Fisk Club Cookbook*, which is a compilation of recipes contributed by associates of Fisk University in Nashville (*Fisk club*

cookbook : receipts contributed by members of the club and friends 1912). This cookbook is a good example of community recipe exchanges. The book contains ninety-eight recipes, with twenty-four documented contributors. A considerable amount of social information about this particular community can be gathered through this cookbook. For example, most of the recipes yield large batches, so they were either intended for entertaining or perhaps for serving a single meal to a large group of people. Few of the recipes indicate serving sizes, so there is no way to gauge how much a single person typically ate. There little evidence that health concerns were an issue with these recipes, particularly since they include the use of large amounts of lard, other fats and sugars – all of which could present major health difficulties if consumed regularly.

Due to the length of time needed for preparation of these recipes, it can be gathered that the women contributing these recipes did not work outside the home. This is supported by the following: 1) while some cook times are included with the recipes, many cook until the dish appeared to be done.. For example, breads baked in the oven until brown, while meat dishes cooked until tender. 2) The types of ovens used also suggest long cook times. Some of the recipes are based on wood-burning ovens, which require wood to be brought to the oven, stacked inside, a fire started, and wait time for the oven to heat. However, gas ranges were in use at this time as well, which would not take as long to start. 3) The recipes relied primarily on raw ingredients that required considerable time for preparation. Fresh fruits and vegetables, milk, sugar, eggs, various spices, etc., are often listed as ingredients. There are some recipes requiring cured meats or fruit preserves, but for the most part everything was made from scratch. One example is a recipe for “Marshmallow Pudding” (*Fisk club cookbook : receipts contributed by members of the club and friends* 1912), where the instructions included the steps for making the marshmallow itself.

1920s— A notable trend of so-called African American cookbooks in the 1920s is that they were written by white women on the behalf of African American cooks. These cookbooks demonstrated an appreciation of the cooking skills of African Americans who served as mammies in the past and a concern of losing the recipes for their favorite dishes. According to *Mammy's cook book* (Bell 1927), black mammies were dying out, and the lives of whites would not be the same without the recipes that they had grown to love. The author wrote,

With the dying out of the black mammies of the South, much that was good and beautiful has gone out of life, and in this little volume I have sought to preserve the memory and the culinary lore of my Mammy, Sallie Miller, who in her day was a famous cook. She possessed moreover, all those qualities of loyalty and devotion which have enshrined her and her kind, in the loving hearts of their "White Folks," to whom they were faithful, through every vicissitude and change of fortune (p.1).

Such cookbooks intended to preserve these recipes and to instruct consumers on how to prepare them for themselves. Another example of this "mammy nostalgia" is *Aunt Caroline's Dixieland Recipes*, authored by Emma and William McKinney (1922). The forward suggests that they were white people suffering from nostalgia because "the art of the Old Southern Mammy has few equals and recognizes no peers" (p. 3) and that there was a need to learn to prepare their beloved recipes in the absence of their mammies, or at least be able to pass them on to their new servants. Such works certainly promoted mammy stereotypes. Inness (2006) suggested that mammy nostalgia was related to pop cultural and marketing promotions of mammies in media forms such as in the film *Gone with the Wind* and the iconic Aunt Jemima brand images.

One cookbook appropriate for observing the dietary practices of African American during the 1920s is the *Cook Book "work and serve the home" : dedicated to the New Jersey State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs* (Cook and New Jersey State Federation of Colored

Women's Clubs. 1928). It is similar to *The Fisk Club Cookbook* in being a compilation of recipes contributed by community members. The book includes two hundred and forty recipes from an unknown number of contributors.

The recipes range from basic bread to Fig Croquettes. Overall, the book includes many recipes allowing, for versatility using low cost ingredients. Foods such as sardines, cheap cuts of meat, eggs, and a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables were creative uses of foodstuffs acquired inexpensively, including government rations, which were common during this time of restriction.

1930s— Recipes from this time period, such as *Eliza's cook book : favorite recipes* (Negro Culinary Art Club of Los Angeles. 1936), demonstrates that African Americans managed to continue to subsist on a variety of foods through the Great Depression. This book includes 271 recipes, with 19 identified contributors. Although there is not much information about the contributors, it is assumed that the NCAC was some form of African American social club. Based on previous cookbooks, social clubs such as the NCAC seemed to be a common venue for recipe sharing. Interestingly, this particular cookbook has a number of sponsors. It lists some individual donors, but also some of the businesses that placed actual advertisements in the book. Doctors, dentists, dry cleaners, a tailor, and other local businesses contributed to publishing the book. This suggests that at least for this particular cookbook, a great deal of cooperation went into its development. This cookbook contains a wide variety of recipes from cream-cheese-filled canapés to Spanish tripe to veal gumbo. Given that it comes from a community in Los Angeles, it is not surprising that it includes a number of Hispanic-inspired recipes. Mixing of cultural traditions is common in “soul food” cooking.

During this time, innovations in transportation and food production allowed cooks to utilize a wider variety of ingredients, despite the economic depression. This is seen in the types of ingredients used throughout this book. However, some concern for cost is also seen in the use of cheap processed ingredients as substitutes. For example, there is a massive exchange of shortening, such as Crisco, in the place of butter or lard.

Depression, War, and Civil Rights 1940-1960

Depression and War under Jim Crow— During the 1940s, African Americans experienced some role changes in American society although they did not completely overcome those of the past. African Americans seem to be less passive and to have a more visible public presence during this time. This is seen in the founding of African American focused publications such as *Ebony* magazine and a growing presence in the creative arts in stage acting, literature, through the work of artists such as Lena Horne, Paul Robeson, and Richard Wright. Perhaps surviving the Great Depression gave African Americans the confidence to assert themselves in society. The restrictions placed upon them by slavery and “Jim Crow” laws helped them to survive the constraints of the early 20th century. The survival skills they used as slaves may have helped them cope with deprivations in the basic bare necessities of life, such as food, healthcare, and even reasonable shelter, through segregation, the Great Depression, and World War II. Although the conditions of these times cast great hardships onto all Americans, African Americans were already accustomed to great oppression.

Although they were all suffering, little accommodation was provided for African Americans. African Americans as well as whites had to depend on government rations, as there were food shortages due to the need for massive food supplies for soldiers fighting in the war.

African Americans continued strategies similar to those of slaves where they prepared the best meals they could with the allotments they were given, and utilized whatever other resources were available. Similar to slave gardens, the government encouraged families to plant “victory gardens” to supplement their rationed food supplies and support the troops (Hochbaum 1944). While this may have been difficult for those accustomed to abundant food supplies, these practices were customary for many African Americans, especially those still living in the rural South.

This is not to say that African Americans had it easy, because they experienced just as much, if not more, discrimination during the Depression. Limited resources created competition between whites and African Americans. When African Americans migrated from rural areas to cities in search of work, they were met with great resistance by whites who were competing for the same scarce jobs (The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow: The Great Depression 2002).

America’s entrance into World War II in 1941 expanded the presence of African Americans in the military, leading to the desegregation of the military in 1948, meaning that “Negroes” were now allowed in the military. At this time, African American men were now fighting and dying alongside whites. However, African Americans were still not allowed to eat or ride in the same train cars as whites. In fact, testimonials from African American soldiers during World War II recalled seeing enemy POWs treated better than themselves (Reiss 2004). Many African American WWII veterans recall observing enemy soldiers serving in segregated “White Only” establishments on and near military bases. Meanwhile, other soldiers observed similar unfair treatment overseas. Upon returning home from war, African American veterans received the same poor treatment as they had before the war.

Even though they were accustomed to this poor treatment, it was difficult to go back to accepting that imposed role of inferiority. This proved to be especially difficult after the end of World War II. During the 1940s, more African Americans organized to and spoke out in resistance of the status quo that marginalized them from the society in which they lived and worked. There was also an outrage with “Jim Crow,” which legitimized the blatant torment and exploitation of African Americans at the will of whites. Smythe expresses that,

“Jim Crow” is a concept intelligently interpreted in connection with the concept “accommodation.” It refers specifically to a human group in the United States functioning on a basis of inequality in the social system which has resulted in social stratification and segregation. It infers that in the stratified societal pattern of the United States a caste-like group exists (in this instance the Negro) which has been assigned to allow position and for which the contacts with the group on a higher level are regulated; the term “Jim Crow” is thus used succinctly to describe this situation to which the Negro has become accommodated. [1948:46]

Even with innovations in technology (especially transportation), African Americans experienced more difficulties becoming absorbed as members of society. Activities such as public travel were especially difficult for African Americans. Not only were they restricted to segregated seating on train cars; they were not even given the option of purchasing food when available.

During times when train travel was most common, African Americans were accustomed to preparing food at home to sustain them through their travels. When automobiles became a common mode of transportation, access issues persisted. When traveling by car, African Americans did not have the luxury of utilizing rest stops and gas stations in the same way as whites. Both official and unofficial segregation continued. In the late 1940s and through the 1950s, the “Green Book” was the road guide for African Americans, guiding them to establishments that could be safely patronized (Seiler 2006). These books listed by state, the

tourist homes, hotels, barber shops, salons, garages, restaurants, and various forms of entertainment that were accessible to African American travelers. The intention was to “give the Negro traveler information that will keep him from running into difficulties, embarrassments and to make his trips more enjoyable ” (Green 1949). With the understanding that they were not welcome to travel as freely as whites, African Americans made national communal efforts to aid each other in easing the difficulties of travel.

For some travelers, the facilities of many of these places are not available, even though they may have the price, and any traveler to whom they are not available, is thereby faced with many and sometimes difficult problems. The Negro traveler’s inconveniences are many and they are increasing because today so many more are traveling, individually and in groups.
[1949:3]

During the 1940s, American society was alerted that African Americans were growing more self-aware and were no longer willing to accept the second-class citizenship previously imposed on them.. The discontentment from this and previous decades culminated in the Civil Rights movement in the 1950s. The rise in disapproval of segregation from the Supreme Court seems to have helped to accelerate the movement. The Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas court decision, which declared the unconstitutionality of “separate, but equal,” and the desegregation of buses validated the frustrations of African Americans with their situations.

Cookbooks– During this time, cookbooks by African Americans generally show that they consumed wide arrays of foods. One book from 1948, especially, iterated that it was intended to show that blacks were capable of preparing foods other than those typically characterized as southern (De Knight 1948). Upon leaving the South and breaking the traditions of domestic servitude, those migrants had to adapt to new regions, lifestyles, jobs, and social structures. Some African Americans adapted to the tastes and cooking styles of other regions, breaking

away from southern traditions. Others who had not lived in the South during slavery were likely to have some aversions to the traditional southern foods of the migrants. *A date with a dish, a cook book of American Negro recipes* (De Knight 1948) is proclaimed by its author to be a non-regional representation of African American cuisine. This book is a compilation of recipes compiled by *Ebony* magazine's editor Freda De Knight. In the book's introduction, she states that it is a representation of African American cooking from various regions, not limited to the South. It is a great example of the diversity of tastes and styles among African Americans and is an excellent example of their adaptability as a whole.

Civil Rights and Soul 1950-1980

Civil Rights Movement and Soul Awareness—The resilience of African Americans is demonstrated in their ability to jump over the many over hurdles of discrimination since their ancestors were first enslaved. The foodways known as “soul food” are now traditions in the African American community representing their steadfastness in coping with the many difficulties faced by African descended people in American society. Consequently, these food traditions have come to be markers for ethnic identification as African American.

Before the 1960s, it seems that most African Americans ate what was easiest to obtain and what was most affordable, from slave rations and food from gardens to government rations and food from “Victory gardens.” Ironically, while these convenient foods were good enough for many African Americans, their roles in society were disadvantageous. As they came to reclaim their identity, it empowered them no longer to comply with discriminatory perspectives. Reliance on traditional “soul foods” became a form of empowerment.

The height of the Civil Rights movement in the 1960s parallels the embracing of “soul food” as an important aspect African American identity. One form of this newly affirmed empowerment was in choosing “black” as a self-identifying over “Negro” or “Colored” (Hecht and Ribeau 1991; Smith 1992). At this time, the emergence of the Black Power and Civil Rights movements served as a means to create a positive sense of self-perception amongst African Americans, which served to unify them in facing the many struggles of those times. Groups such as the Black Panthers and Black Muslims took on the new label as an act of defiance and empowerment (Smith 1992). This term exemplifies the struggle of African Americans at odds with whites for the rightful treatment as equals in society. Essentially, “black” is a symbolic opposition to the term “white” (Smith 1992). Identifying as black created a unifying sense of pride among black people (Smith 1992, Hecht and Ribeau 1991).

The end of the legal segregation of blacks and whites did not end tensions and resentments between the two groups. The notion of “soul”, served as a reminder that there was something that blacks possessed which whites had no control over. Given that so much of African American history involved coping with boundaries set by whites, “soul” powered them through it. The concept of “soul” is not only found in “soul food” cookbooks, but also in “soul music” from the 1960s and especially post 1965. “Soul food” became a symbol of African American resilience.

Throughout the decades of struggle, African American eating habits continued as before with little attention. However, the perception of foodways changed as soul food became identified as representative of a unified cultural heritage and symbolic of survival and perseverance in the face of social struggles. Although present before the 1960’s, “soul food” is a

sort of branding for Black empowerment movements. In a way, “soul food” is an ongoing movement in itself. Social movements require that the members be linked by a common ideology that distinguishes the group from the mainstream society, a commitment to influence change, perceptions of opposition, recruitment, segmented socioeconomic organization, multiple types of involvement in the movement, and rapid change (Jerome et al. 1980). The term “soul” was widely used by influential African Americans as a way of empowering African Americans and expressing identity. The term also indicates the strength of the people by incorporating meaning of religious faiths. Applying “soul” to “food” suggests that these foods are more than just mere foods; they are something worthy of faith. When discouraged, “soul food” may have encouraged perseverance.

Cookbooks of the 1960s and 70s– The true soul food cookbooks appeared in the 1960s. The increasing prevalence of these books creates a sense that soul was an actual ingredient. Books from this era provide the clearest indication in describing the true character of soul food. These books have a sense of going “back to the basics.” Ingredients listed for the recipes were simpler and perceivably less expensive. This is especially true of the *Soul Food cook book* (Harwood and Callahan 1969). These are some of the most basic recipes from the large collection of soul food cookbooks. It is the epitome of soul food cookery. In the tradition of wasting very little, it includes recipes for nearly every hog part and makes use of ingredients that were often discarded, such as pickled watermelon rind. One of the first recipes listed in the book is for “Chitt’lins”. As noted previously, chitterlings were common amongst slaves and they have become iconic as a soul food dish. These types of recipes exemplify soul food as they utilize the parts that would ordinarily be thrown away once the desirables were removed. Other recipes include, squirrel, opossum, and pigeon. These are not products that one typically purchases from

the grocery store or butcher shop, but animals that can be trapped and slaughtered at home. The convenience of soul food is that it does not require searching for expensive, exotic ingredients. It requires the basics of someone wandering out into their own backyard and collecting whatever flora and fauna available and preparing a meal from them.

The 1960s presented the “soul” genre of cookbooks. These were books dedicated to soul food specifically. This emphasis on soul coincides with the Black Power movement. In re-establishing their identity as black, African Americans also re-established their identities through foodways. The cookbooks from the 1960-1980 era perpetuated recipes that emphasized these ingredients in order to reclaiming them as parts of African American heritage. Gaskins, explains in *Every good Negro cook starts with two basic ingredients; a good heart and a light hand* (1968), that a “Negro Welcome,” provides a sense of belonging and fellowship through the sharing of a good meal, is a remnant of slave times. Gaskins writes:

For over 200 years we were told where to live and where to work. We were given husbands, and we made children, and all these things could be taken away from us. The only real comfort came at the end the end of the day, when we took either the food that we were given, or the food that we raised, or the food that we caught, and put it in the pot, and we sat with our own kind and talked and sang and ate [1968:vii].

Similar sentiments shared by other cookbook authors who display a similar sense of pride and nostalgia associated with “soul food.” In the introduction to *Soul Food Cooking*, states:

As someone speaks of “soul food”, he is speaking of well-seasoned, savory dishes that difficult to eat without delight, enjoyment and satisfaction. . . . There is a spirit connected with the following recipes so that when one who is familiar with them and hears the name, he has a certain feeling of nostalgia, pleasure and anticipation. . . . There are no, what one would call delicacies- just basic “stick to the ribs” staples. I would imagine that the basis for this lies in the limited acquisition potential of the peoples from whom these recipes came. It was a matter of making a tasty and most importantly, substantial meal on a very limited budget. [Kaiser 1968:3]

Where the previous cookbooks presented an array of recipes, including many different types of ingredients, the “soul food” cookbooks emphasize pork, corn bread, and greens (Gaskins

1968; Jackson 1971). Cookbooks prior to this time included recipes with these ingredients, but did not emphasize them as pillar elements of African American diet. If the frequency of any particular ingredients is an indicator of its importance in African American foodways, then many food items should be included with pork, corn meal, and molasses.

Although there is evidence that these items have been common in African American diet over a long span of history, it seems that their consumption might have been accelerated in order to promote the black identities through “soul food” in the 1960s. From what is known about the slave dietary trends from pre-1960 African American cookbooks, it appears that the true foodways sustaining African Americans through their tumultuous history were based on the use of inexpensive, easily accessible food items to bring people together and create a friendly atmosphere devoid of exclusions and strife.

Soul Food Reform

The good news has always been that soul food is delicious, hearty, and laden with tradition. The bad news is that much of it is also laden with fat, cholesterol, sodium, and excess sugar. [Jones 1996: xi]

Public Success, Poor Health — Following the “soul” 60s and 70s was the change in consciousness of the 1980s and 90s. During these two decades, America saw the first African American go into space, the first black Miss America, the Civil Rights leader Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s birthday becomes a national holiday, and Colin Powell serving as the first Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the U.S. military. African Americans made many new strides in government, entertainment, sports, and other areas, yet they struggled with major health disparities. They were far more involved in advocacy, running for political offices, and other nationally

recognized positions of authority, yet dying at alarming rate from cardiovascular disorders and complications related to diabetes.

In this period, there was a growing awareness that cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and obesity created a need for health promotion in African Americans. As diet is a major issue tackled during interventions of these ailments, community members as well as health organizations took to reforming “soul food,” creating healthy but familiar options. Promotion of community health became a major public health issue, bringing awareness to the broader public about the importance of nutrition.

Healthy Soul Food cookbooks— While some “soul” cookbooks continued in markets, cookbooks promoting healthy “soul food” and alternatives became popular. *How not to eat pork, or, Life without the pig* (Ali 1985) presents non-pork recipes encouraging the complete banishment of any pork products. It even goes as far as to list in detail potential illnesses associated with pork consumption as a deterrent.

Books such as *Ruby's Low-Fat Soul-Food Cookbook* (Banks-Payne 1996), *Low-Fat Soul* (Nash 1996), and *The New Soul Food Cookbook: Healthier Recipes for Traditional Favorites* (Jones 1996) took traditional soul food recipes and, adapted them for a healthier diet, using different cooking methods or alternating ingredients, while still maintaining the essence of the foods. Jones writes, “With everything that we now know about how what we eat affects our health- and we seem to learn more every day- there is no reason to prepare traditional favorites in unhealthy ways.” (1996: xi) Where the recipes’ substitutions require some adjustments to taste, it is seen that such recipes do continue to appreciate and celebrate African American heritage, but create more nutritional options.

CONCLUSION

From enslavement through segregation, traditional foodways have supported African American communities, physically and emotionally, through all of the struggles associated with being a racial minority in American society. Suffering through centuries of enslavement, followed by decades of continued neglect and abusive treatment at the whim of the dominating whites, African Americans took from the experiences that were forced upon them to cope and survive under conditions of continuous adversity.

There were many historic periods forcing African Americans to depend on allotments for their basic subsistence needs. As slaves, they received rations of food and clothing from their owners; as sharecroppers after emancipation they awaited allowances produced from their work; and during the Great Depression, they depended on rations of food from the government. Through it all, they managed to survive by supplementing their allowances with gardens produced from their own labor, along with other foraging and hunting strategies. From this is learned that the essence of “soul food” is taking what is given and available and making the most out of it.

“Soul food” traditions have had a great deal of influence on the rising prevalence of metabolic disorders among African Americans; it is understandable, since the traditions were created during situations of extreme stress. Yet as the social situation improved, the stress-induced dietary habits continued. “Soul food” traditions initially formed out of sheer necessity, by slaves trying to survive from one week to another. Here is what became more of a passive

habit than a conscious tradition upon its reclamation. Outside of the original context of necessity, “soul food” has proved to have long-term negative consequences in fostering metabolic syndrome and related health risks.

At the same time, “soul food: traditions are also representative of the marginalization and suffering of African during their long experiences of discrimination, deprivation, and abuse in American society. This history is still being felt today. Regardless of what economic or political strides have been made, residual effects are still experienced. Descendants of slave owners imposed Jim Crow laws, while their descendants perpetuated segregation. As long as the grandfathered racism exists, it is possible African Americans might be wary about letting go of traditions such as “soul food” just in case they might face the same conditions in the future that they faced in the past.

It is likely that “soul food” will continue to play a role in the lives of African Americans despite its unhealthy aspects. “Soul food” reflects African American survival tactics, through enslavement, war, famine, poverty, and general poor treatment, and as such, is expected to continue as symbolic of African American identity and resilience. However, future research will demonstrate the extent to which African Americans are willing to adapt traditional “soul food” to promote improved health.

African Americans have come a long way in American society. There is an African American President of the United States, which seems promising, yet evidence of victimization due to racial discrimination persists. Therefore, in a continuation of this research one would have to examine the election and re-election of Barak Obama as President and then the killing of

Trayvon Martin and similar incidents and question if African Americans truly feel secure enough to venture further away from comforting traditions such as “soul food”.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Slave Foods

Fruits:

Apple juice, apples, apples (dried), bananas, berries (unspecified), black hawes, blackberries, cantaloupes, cherries, chinquapins, currants, dewberries, elderberries, figs, fruit (canned), fruit (dried), fruit (jam), fruit (jelly), fruit (preserves), gooseberries, grapes, honeysuckle, huckleberries, lemon juice, melons, mulberries, muscadines, oranges, peaches, pears, persimmons, plantains, plums, pomegranates, quinces, raisins, raspberries, strawberries, watermelons

Vegetables:

Artichokes, beans (dried), beans (parched for coffee), beets, butter, beans, cabbage, cabbage (whitehead), cane root, carrots, collard greens, corn, corn (parched for coffee), cowpeas/ black eyed peas, cucumbers, gourds (squash), hash, kale, lettuce, mustard greens, okra, onions, parsnips, peas, pepper, grass, pickles, poke, popped, corn, potatoes, pumpkins, rutabagas, sassafras (tea), sauerkraut, shallots, snap, beans, squash, string beans, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, turnip greens, turnips, watercress, weeds, yams (sweet potatoes)

Grains:

Barley, bran, buckwheat, cottonseed, flax, flour, (white), flour, (wheat), hemp, rice, oats, , rye, sorghum, suet, wheat

Meats/Poultry/Seafood:

Backbone, bass, belly, carp, cat, chicken, , chitterlings, clam, conch, crab, cracklings, crane, crow, crawfish, duck, ears, eel, entrails, fat back, feet, gar, goose, guinea , ham, ham hock, hawk head, herring, Horney head, jack, Jelly, Jowl, lark, liver, mackerel, mullet, mussels, neck bones, opossum, oysters, partridge, pea fowl, perch, pheasant, pigeon, pike, quail, raccoon, red herring, red horse, rinds, robin, roe, salmon, Sausage, shad, shoat (piglet), shoulder, shrimp, skin, snout, squab, sturgeon, tail, trout, , turkey, whippoorwill

Spices/ Sweeteners/ Flavorings:

Brown sugar, cinnamon, ginger, honey, maple sugar, maple syrup, mint, molasses, molasses (from apples), molasses (from persimmons), molasses (from wheat bran), pepper, salt, sugar, syrup, vinegar

Other:

Baking powder, baking soda,

(Federal Writers' Project 2006; Covey and Eisnach 2009)

Appendix B: Ingredient List 1910s

Fruits:

Apples, bananas, coconut, cranberries, date, grapes, orange juice, oranges, pears, raisins

Vegetables:

carrots, corn, corn, (canned), cucumbers, French, peas, green peas, green peppers, lima beans, mushrooms, navy, beans, okra, onions, pimentos, rhubarb, squash, string beans, sweet potatoes, tomato soup (canned), tomatoes, tomatoes (canned), turnips

Meats/Poultry/Seafood:

Eggs, ham, pork, roast, rabbit, salt, fish, salt, pork, sardines, steak, veal

Grains:

Bread crumbs, cornstarch flour, graham flour, Indian meal, meal (corn), rice, rolled oats

Fats/Oils:

Butter, lard, oil, shortening

Dairy:

Cheese, milk, sour milk, sweet milk, whipping cream

Sweeteners:

Molasses, powdered sugar, sirup

Spices/ Herbs/ Flavoring:

Cayenne, celery, seed, cinnamon, cloves, cocoa, garlic, ginger, mace, mustard, nutmeg, parsley, sage, salt, thyme, white, mustard seeds

Prepackaged/Processed:

Minute tapioca, peanut butter

Nuts:

Nut meat (unspecified), peanuts, walnuts

Other:

Baking powder, baking soda, chocolate, cream of tartar, gelatin, tea, vinegar, yeast

(Fisk Club 1912)

Appendix C
Ingredients List 1920s:

Fruits:

Applesauce, bananas, blackberries, citron, coconut, cranberries, currants, dates, fruit juice, grapes, lemon, mangoes, maraschino, cherries, oranges, peaches, pears, pineapple, plums, prunes, raisins, raspberries, rhubarb

Vegetables:

Cabbage, asparagus, beans, capers, carrots, celery, corn, cucumber, green, beans, green, peppers, lettuce, okra, olives, onions, parsley, peas, potatoes, red peppers, squash, sweet cucumber pickles, sweet peppers, tapioca, tomato, watercress, white pepper

Meats/Poultry/Seafood:

Anchovy, essence, chicken, cod, fish, ham, larding pork, mutton, oysters, pork shoulder, round steak, salmon, salt pork, shrimp, suet, tripe

Grains:

Breadcrumbs, cake flour, cornmeal, cornstarch, flour, graham flour, noodles, rice, rolled oats, wheat biscuits

Fats/Oils:

Butter, lard, shortening, fat

Dairy:

Buttermilk, cream cheese, milk, sour cream, sour milk, sweet cream, sweet milk

Sweeteners:

Brown sugar, corn syrup, maple syrup, molasses, powdered sugar, saccharine, sorghum, sugar syrup, white syrup

Spices/ Herbs/ Flavoring:

Allspice, almond extract, bay leaves, celery seed, cayenne, cinnamon, cloves, ginger, mustard, nutmeg, paprika, parsley, turmeric, vanilla

Prepackaged/Processed:

Butterscotch sauce, crackers, ice cream, ketchup, marshmallows, peanut butter, sweet cider

Nuts:

English walnuts, nuts (unspecified), peanuts

Other:

Baking powder, baking soda, coffee, cream of tartar, fruit coloring, sweet chocolate, tea, vinegar, yeast

(Bell 1927; Cook and New Jersey State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs. 1928; McKinney and McKinney 1922)

Appendix D
Ingredients List 1930s:

Fruits:

Apples, apricot, banana, blueberries, canned, pineapple, cranberries, dates, grapefruit, grapefruit juice, lemon juice, maraschino, cherries, mincemeat, orange juice, oranges, pineapple, prunes, quinces, raisins, strawberries

Vegetables:

Avocado, artichoke, asparagus, bay leaves, beets, bell pepper, black beans, cabbage, capers, carrots, celery, cucumbers, eggplant, garlic, green peas, green pepper, kidney beans, mushrooms, okra, onion, parsley, peas, pickled onion, pickle, pimento, potatoes, sauerkraut, Spanish, olives, spinach, string beans, sweet potatoes, thyme, tomato sauce, tomato soup, tomatoes, (can No. 2), turnips

Meats/Poultry/ Seafood:

Anchovies, bacon, salmon (canned), tuna (canned), chicken, chicken liver, crab, dried beef, eggs, ground beef, ground liver, ground pork, ham, lamb, lobster, oysters, porterhouse, round steak, sardines, sausage, shrimp, steak, sweetbreads, tripe, veal

Grains:

Bread, crumbs, brown rice, cake flour, corn flakes, cornmeal, cornstarch, crackers, flour, graham flour, oatmeal, popcorn, rice, spaghetti, white bread

Fats/Oils:

Butter, fat, oil, shortening

Dairy:

Buttermilk, Camembert, cheese spread, cheese (yellow), condensed, milk, cottage, cheese, cream, cream, cheese, evaporated milk, milk, parmesan cheese, pimento cheese, Roquefort cheese (genuine), sour cream, whipping cream

Sweeteners:

Brown sugar, maple syrup, molasses, powdered sugar, sugar

Spices/ Herbs/ Flavoring:

Cayenne, celery, salt, chili, powder, chili, powder, chives, cinnamon, cloves, curry, powder, horseradish, lemon, extract, mace, mustard, nutmeg, paprika, pepper, poultry, seasoning, sage, salt, vanilla, extract

Prepackaged:

A-1 sauce, French dressing, graham crackers, Lea & Perrins, marshmallows, orange marmalade, peanut brittle, Tabasco sauce, Velveeta cheese, Worcestershire sauce

Nuts:

Walnuts

Other:

Baking powder, chocolate, cream of tartar, gelatin, ketchup/catsup, sauterne, Tarragon vinegar, vinegar, yeast

(Negro Culinary Art Club of Los Angeles. 1936)

Appendix E
Ingredients List 1940s:

Fruits:

Apples, apples (dried,) apricot juice (canned), apricots, apricots (canned,) bananas, citron, cocoanut, cranberries, (canned), currants, figs, fruit cocktail (canned), grape juice, grapefruit (canned), grapefruit juice (canned), lemon juice, lime, maraschino cherries (canned), orange, grapefruit juice (canned), oranges, peaches (canned), peaches (canned), pears (canned), pineapple juice (canned), pineapples (canned), plums (canned), prunes, Queen Anne cherries (canned), raisins, red sour cherries (canned), spiced apples (canned), spiced pears (canned)

Vegetables:

Acorn squash, asparagus ,asparagus tips (canned), avocados, banana squash, beets (canned), black-eyed peas, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, capers, carrots (canned), cauliflower, celery, chili beans, chili peppers, Dandelion greens, endives, escarole, green onions, green peas, green peppers, green tomatoes, kale, kidney beans, lettuce, lima beans, lima beans (canned), mixed vegetables (canned), mushrooms, Napa lettuce, Nasturtium, navy beans, okra olives, onions, parsnips, pickles, pimentos (canned), potatoes, red beans, red peppers, Romaine lettuce, rutabagas, spinach, split peas, string beans, suet, sweet potatoes, Swiss chard, tomato juice (canned), tomato paste (canned), tomato puree (canned), tomato sauce (canned), tomatoes (canned), turnips, watercress, zucchini

Meats:

Anchovies (canned), bacon, Bass, beef, beef (dried), Blue fish, brisket, Butter fish, capon, catfish, chicken, chicken (giblets), chicken (livers), chicken (necks), chicken liver, chitterlings, chuck roast, clams, Cod, corned beef, crabs, crawfish, Croaker, duck, eggs, fish (fresh), flank steak, Flounder, frankfurters, goose, ground beef, haddock, ham, ham hocks, Herring, Lake trout, lamb, lamb (breast), lamb (kidneys), lamb (shanks), lamb (shoulder), lobster, Mullet, mutton, opossum, oysters, Perch, Pickerel, pig (whole), pig's feet ,pike, Porgies, pork, pork chops, pot roast, red snapper, roast beef, round steak, rump roast ,salmon, salmon (canned), salt pork, sardines, sausage, shad, Sheepshead, shrimp, Smelts, snapper, Sole, Sunfish, soup ,bone spare ribs ,squirrel, stewing beef ,Swiss steak ,T-bone steak, tenderloin steaks ,tripe, tuna (canned), turkey, turtle, veal, Weakfish, white fish, Whitning

Grains:

All-purpose flour , bran flour, buckwheat flour, cake flour, corn, cornmeal, cornstarch, cream of wheat, creamed corn (canned), flour, graham flour, hominy, grits, macaroni, noodles, pastry flour, rice, rolled oats, spaghetti, wheat, flour

Fats/Oils:

Butter, cooking oil, fat, lard, olive oil, peanut oil, shortening

Dairy:

Blue cheese, Brick cheese, buttermilk, cheddar cheese, condensed milk, cottage cheese, cream
cream cheese, evaporated milk, milk, Parmesan cheese, Roquefort cheese, sour milk

Sweeteners:

Brown sugar, corn syrup, golden syrup, honey, maple syrup, molasses, powdered sugar, white
syrup

Spices/ Herbs/ Flavoring:

Allspice, almond extract, basil, bouillon, capers, cayenne pepper, celery (dehydrated), celery
salt, celery seed, chili powder, chives, cloves, cocoa, cumin seeds, curry powder, dill, garlic,
garlic, salt, ginger, hickory, salt, horse radish, lemon extract, mace, marjoram, mint, mustard
(dry), onion salt, oregano, paprika, parsley, pepper, pickling spice, poppy seed, poultry
seasoning, rosemary, sage, salt, savory, season salt, season-all, tarragon, thyme, vanilla extract,
white pepper

Prepackaged:

Biscuit, mix, catsup, chili, sauce, chutney, corn, muffin, mix, crackers, dry, cereal, French,
dressing, ginger, ale, hot, roll, mix, hot, sauce, marmalade, marshmallows, mayonnaise, peanut,
butter, prepared, pie, crust, puddings, salad, dressing, salad, dressing, sherbet, Tabasco, sauce,
wheat, cereal, Worcestershire sauce

Nuts:

Almonds, peanuts, pecans, pistachios, walnuts

Other:

Baking powder, baking soda, Bourbon, brandy, Burgundy wine, charged water, chocolate,
coffee, cream of tartar, gelatin, Port wine, rum, sherry, soya sauce, tea, vinegar, white wine,
yeast
(De Knight 1948)

Appendix F
Ingredients List 1960s:

Fruits:

Apples, apples (dried), applesauce (canned), box pineapple, cherries (candied), citron, coconut, cranberries, dates, fruit cocktail (canned), lemons, mandarin, oranges, oranges (canned), peaches, peaches (dried), pineapple (canned), pineapples, raisins, rhubarb, sultana, watermelon, white grapes (canned)

Vegetables:

Baked beans, beets, black-eyed peas, catfish, catsup/ ketchup, celery, cream of mushroom soup (canned), cucumber pickles, cucumbers, Great Northern beans, green onions, green peas, green peppers, green peppers (sweet), green tomatoes, kidney beans (canned), kidney beans (dry), beans (dry), butter beans, cabbage, carrots, dill pickles, green tomatoes, lettuce, lima beans, onion soup, mix vegetables (boxed), mushrooms mushrooms (canned), mustard greens, navy beans, okra, okra (frozen), olives, onions, peas, pickled relish, pickles (sweet), pimentos, pinto beans, pole beans, potatoes, potatoes (dried), red peppers (sweet), relish, sauerkraut, spinach, spring onions, squash, string beans, sweet peas, sweet potatoes, tomato juice, tomato paste (canned), tomato sauce, tomato sauce (canned), tomato soup, tomatoes, tomatoes (canned), turnip greens, turnips, yams (sweet potatoes)

Meats/Poultry/Seafood:

Backbone (pork), beef, bologna, chicken, chitterlings, cracklings, eggs, fish (fresh), fish (frozen), ground pork, ham, ham hocks, ham shanks, hamburger patties, hog brain, hog ears, hog feet, bacon, brains (unspecified), Buffalo fish, catfish, ground beef, Herring, hog head, hog heart, hog jowls, hog kidney, hog liver, hog lungs, hog maws, hog snout, hog stomach, lamb, lean pork, mackerel (canned), mountain oysters, neck bones, opossum, ox tails, Perch, polish sausage, pork chops, pork shoulder, pot roast, poultry giblets, rabbit, raccoon, round steak, salami, salmon (canned), salmon (canned), salt pork, sardines, sausage, scallops, slab of ribs, soup bone, spareribs, squabs, stew meat, tripe, tuna (canned), tuna (canned), turkey, turtle/ terrapin, veal knuckles, veal tails, wieners

Grains:

All-purpose flour, bread, breadcrumbs, cake flour, cake flour, corn, cornmeal, cornstarch, flour, flour, grits, hominy, hominy grits, macaroni, noodles, oatmeal, old fashioned oats, popcorn, rice, self-rising flour, spaghetti, sweet corn, white bread

Fats/Oils:

Butter, cooking oil, fat, lard, margarine oil, oleomargarine, peanut oil, salad oil, shortening, vegetable oil

Dairy:

Buttermilk, cheddar cheese, cheese, condensed milk, cream, evaporated milk, homogenized milk, milk, parmesan cheese, sour cream, sweet milk, whipping cream

Sweeteners:

Brown sugar, confectioner's sugar, honey, light syrup, maple syrup, molasses, powdered sugar, saccharin, sugar

Spices/ Herbs/ Flavoring:

Allspice, bay leaves, bouillon consommé, caraway seed, cayenne pepper, chili powder, cinnamon, cloves, cocoa, curry powder, garlic, garlic powder, garlic salt, lemon flavoring, mint, mixed whole spices, mustard powder, nutmeg, paprika, parsley, pepper, pickling spices, red pepper, salt, seasoned salt, sweet basil, thyme, vanilla essence, vanilla extract, white pepper

Prepackaged:

All Bran, Bisquick, cake mix, corn muffin mix, California dip, Cornflakes, cornmeal mix, crackers, French dressing, graham crackers, pudding, liquid smoke, marshmallows, mayonnaise, orange flavored breakfast drink, pancake mix, Pillsbury biscuits, potato chips, salad dressing, sandwich spread, sherbet ice cream, soy sauce, Tabasco sauce, Worcestershire sauce

Nuts:

Almonds, black walnuts, nuts (unspecified), peanuts, pecans, walnuts

Other:

Baking powder, baking soda, brandy, coffee, cooking chocolate, crushed ice, dry yeast, flavored gelatin, food coloring, ginger ale, powdered alum, prepared mustard, sandwich spread, sherry, sterilized water, sweet cider, vinegar, white wine

(Harwood and Callahan 1969; Kaiser 1968; Rufus King High School (Milwaukee Wis.) and Hearon 1968)

Appendix G
Opossum and Sweet Potatoes by year:

POSSUM

Plunge possum into very hot water. Water should not be boiling. Hold possum in water for 2 minutes. Scrape off hairs. Do not damage skin. Slit belly from throat to hind legs. Remove entrails, feet, eyes, and brain. Do not remove head or tail. Wash thoroughly. If possible, freeze for 3 or 4 days to remove the gamey taste. When ready to cook, sprinkle with salt and pepper. Put in roasting pan. Add 1 cup of water and the juice of 1 lemon. Bake in hot oven (400^o) for 15 minutes, turning once. Cover. Reduce heat to 350^o, and bake for 1-1/2 hours longer.

CASSEROLE OF POSSUM

1 2-pound dressed, washed possum	2 tablespoons flour
1 tablespoon salt	1-1/2 pounds sweet potatoes –
2 pods of red pepper	peeled and halved

Place possum in a 3-quart saucepan. Add 5 cups of cold water, the salt, and 1 pod of red pepper. Heat to boiling. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer gently for 1-1/2 hours. Drain off broth, saving 1 cup. Put the possum in a casserole. Sprinkle with flour and 1 pod of crushed red pepper. Put 2 halves of sweet potato inside the body, and arrange the rest of the potatoes around the body. Pour the cup of broth around the possum, and bake covered until the meat and potatoes are very tender. Remove cover and bake until golden brown. Serves 4.

(Kaiser 1968)

BAKED OPOSSUM

1 opossum
4 sweet potatoes (sliced)
barbecue sauce

2 c. water
salt
pepper

Place opossum in roasting pan with water. Cover and place in 300 P. oven and steam for 2 hours. At end of first hour, add potatoes, barbecue sauce, salt and pepper. At end of second hour remove top, return to oven for 30 minutes or until crispy brown.

Mr. Madison Grigsby

(Rufus King High School (Milwaukee Wis.) and Hearon 1968)

OPOSSUM

1 opossum, skinned and cleaned
1/4 cup salt
2 tablespoons crushed red pepper
4 bay leaves
1 cup vinegar

Place whole possum in a large pot. Cover with water; add salt, pepper, vinegar, bay leaves; soak overnight.

Opossum is fatty and must be roasted for at least 1 hour, uncovered, on a rack in the oven at 375° until tender. Test leg meat with a fork. Cooking time depends upon the size, shape, and age of the animal.

Peeled sweet potatoes can be placed on the rack in the last hour of cooking.

(Jackson 1971)

ROAST POSSUM
(Opossum)

1 opossum
1 c. salt

6 fresh apples
6 sweet potatoes

The opossum is a very fat animal and has a very odd flavored meat. It is dressed much like one would dress a suckling pig. Cut off the head and
(Continued on Page 28)

415-2

-27-

(Mitchell 1977)