The Path to the Table: Cooking in Postwar American Suburbs

Abstract
This work examines the foods eaten by postwar (1946 to 1965) American suburbanites to see how those foods were affected by larger trends in society. The work is divided into chapters which look at the effects of, respectively, suburbanization and affluence; gender; changes in the postwar food industry, including food manufacturers and grocers; women's responses to those changes; and race and ethnicity. The conclusion is that suburban cooking was shaped by many of the larger trends in American society, and these trends tended to push Americans toward using more convenience foods such as packaged mixes and frozen foods.

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This work examines the foods eaten by postwar (1946 to 1965) American suburbanites to see how those foods were affected by larger trends in society. The work is divided into chapters which look the effects of, respectively, suburbanization and affluence; gender; changes in the postwar food industry, including food manufacturers and grocers; women's responses to those changes; and race and ethnicity. The conclusion is that suburban cooking was shaped by many of the larger trends in American society, and these trends tended to push Americans toward using more convenience foods such as packa The suburbs of postwar Long Island silently simmered in a preordained sameness, no more so than in the summer. Summer days were metered out in predictable beats. Smoky backyard barbecues were a ho-hum summer staple of mid-century suburban life, but our annual king-sized barbecue for my mother's birthday had a rhythm and tempo of its… While some beat a path to the Suburbs, others beat a hasty retreat (L) Cover “On the Road” Jack Kerouac. Although invitations to meet us had been proffered previously, this was the first one to be accepted. Feeling a bit snubbed, rumors were rampant among the family that this soon to be new aunt of mine shunned the sub-division world of the suburbs, as if they were Kryptonite and would sap this die-hard urbanite of her vital life force.