A Recipe for Student Engagement:

Using Cookbooks to Create More Inclusive Special Collections

Heidi Herr, The Johns Hopkins University
Read It & Eat It

Edible Book Festival Held Annually since 2014
"Leveling Up"

- Faculty Collaboration
- Entries inspired by books studied in class
- Students design and manufacture an edible book concept
- "The Once and Future Witches" was required reading for a first-year writing class focused on the women's suffrage movement
A Receipt to make Dutch Ginger-Bread.

To a quarter of a pick of fresh flower take two ounces of plain Ginger, a quarter of an ounce of Synamon root, a quarter of an ounce of Cinnamon, and Orange-Peale shed very thin, Any seed, Coriander seed and Caraway seeds, each a quarter of an ounce. Bruise the seeds and mix them together with the flower. Take two pounds and a half of Treacle, mix it very well with the flower and seeds. Take a quarter of a Pint of Milk, and put it in a pot to boil, and double refit it, as it boil up, and the stalks, add all the cream.
Cookbooks in Special Collections

• Special Collections at The Johns Hopkins University is composed of 3 different locations: The George Peabody Library, The John Work Garrett Library, & Special Collections at the Homewood Campus.

• Each location has a unique history in terms of its founding and collections, with Peabody originating as an academic public library and Garrett the private library of a wealthy family. This mishmash of collections made it difficult to conduct a collection audit of historic cookbooks.

• While cookery is not a traditional strength across the collecting board, the collection has manuscript cookery books dating to the 17th century. The oldest cookery book in print dates to the 16th century.

• Cookbooks as a collection focus started around 2017.
What's the Meat of Your Collection?

- Manuscript Cookery Books in English, ca 1690-1940
- 18th Century English Cookbooks Authored by Women
- Activist Cookery (i.e., community cookbooks, vegetarianism, cookbooks written in support of political movements)
- American Food Trends & Foodways, 1830-1980
- Books Arts that Center on Recipes or the Culture of Food
Building on the Ingredients We Have

- Student-driven cookbook acquisitions began in 2018, tied to my course "Cooks & Their Books." I have taught this course 3 times using a student-driven acquisition model to assess student learning and create a cookery collection that is reflective of student interests and experiences. Students in our First-Year Fellows program have also completed year-long cookery fellowships in which they build collections on a topic of their choosing.
- Over 100 cookbooks have been purchased. Once cataloged, each record will include an "in honor of" note featuring the student.
- The cookbooks often reflect an individual student's cultural traditions, artistic tastes, or favorite foods. The selections will become a time capsule of what students' value in cookbooks.
- The cookbook selections range in date from the 1730s to the 2020s and include ephemera like Jell-O pamphlets. Titles include *Cuban Cookery: Gastronomic Secrets of the Tropics*, Lena Richard's *New Orleans Cookbook*, & *Cocina to You: Mexican Dishes for American Kitchens*.
- The student selections are incorporated into new iterations of the course, outreach events, and class visits.
hopkinsdining: Have you any of November’s The Culture Kitchen specials at Levering Kitchens and CSM? These recipes were inspired Morgan Brown’s cookbooks, found in the JHU Special Collections library.

Who is Morgan Brown?

“Chokmal Chikashasha saya, Chahta da hoke: My name is Morgan Brown, and I am a citizen of the Chickasaw Nation and a descendant of the Choctaw people. Growing up in Oklahoma, I was not raised with the culture of my ancestors, and to this day it is a source of great pain. I am a reconnecting Native, meaning I am consciously learning and practicing my Indigenous culture as an adult. During a curatorial class last year, I curated three Indigenous cookbooks for the JHU Special Collections, two of which were books of Chickasaw recipes. This was very important to me, as Indigenous texts are underrepresented in academic collections. I have cooked several recipes from these books: hushpuckea bread, chili, and my favorite, grape dumplings. These traditional recipes have survived hundreds of years of oppression, and it is a testament to the strength of my community that they are still alive and well today. When I cook our traditional foods, I know my ancestors are standing behind me with pride. Yakkwel!”

#HopkinsDining #explore #explorepage #indigenous #jhu #hopkins #nativemerican #foodielock

23h

yasmine.bolden: @borgan_morgan YOU ARE A SUPERSTAR

3h 2 likes Reply ???

jhuspecialcollections: So, so, so cool!

22h 2 likes Reply
Challenges

• Facing the challenges:
  o Buying "ingredients" requires funding: where to find it and how to budget it;
  o No existing model for undergraduate-driven acquisitions in Special Collections;
  o Teaching students how to write acquisition proposals.
  o Will an acquisition model be hip with the students or will it be more "Hey Beatnik!"

• Creating buy-in and trust with the students:
  o Honest conversations that not every acquisition can be purchased (or purchased immediately).
  o Not leading them into areas that I think are relevant – ensuring that it is their voice and not mine that is reflected in their acquisition pitches.
  o What stories do cookbooks tell? What histories do objects reveal?
  o What stories do you want to see included in the cookbook holdings at Hopkins?
What Mrs. Fisher Knows About Old Southern Cooking (1881)
A Story of Cookery and Womanly Duty (1737)
Stories of the Counterculture, Drugs, & Vegetarianism for the UFO Takeover

- Bemused discussions are had courtesy of The True Light Beavers, Cosmic Cookery, & The Hashish Cookbook
What's Cooking with Spring 2024 Student-Driven Acquisitions?
Victory Garden
LEADER'S HANDBOOK

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
LENA RICHARD is one of the great cooks of a city as famous for its food as for its Mardi Gras. She makes her recipes practical by including her secrets of preparation—measuring, mixing, and timing—so that you will understand the ABC of her cooking.

She gives you three hundred and thirty-three adventures in eating that will put Creole personality into your kitchen and bring the flavor of the South's finest cooking to your dinner table.

This is not a cover-all cook book; it is especially designed to feed your vanity as well as your hunger by giving you such dishes as cocktail puffs and gumbo, chocolate waffles and pecan pie, jambalaya, chicken fried Creole, fluffy egg dressing; and many basic dishes done in a new, exciting way.

There is an introductory endorsement by Gwen Bristow, an outstanding Southern author who knows and loves New Orleans cooking.
Student Perspective on Adding Jesse's Creole Recipes to Special Collections

Why do we need more Southern Cooking Recipes?

- 8 Titles in African American Cookbooks
- Over 400,000 rare books available in the collection, Hopkins has made it its specialty to share and represent the numerous cookbooks written throughout history
  - 7.7% of the student population who identify as Black or African American
- African American Culture, I believe is underrepresented in the existing collection
- Adding more cookbooks would benefit African American humanities courses and foster cultural understanding – Students can learn more about their history and feel much more inclusive as others dive deep into African American heritage
WOW - I am full. I can't eat another thing.

I'm going to get ice cream!

out! No more! Aww!

KOREAN everyday cooking

by Sangyoon Cho

AMERICAN
Student Justification for Adding Korean Cooking Comic Zines to Special Collections

Introduction

Approximately 29% of undergraduates identify as Asian American.

Aim to provide an educational resource for individuals seeking culinary prowess within a specific cuisine.

Goal is to enrich the Special Collection, make it more diverse and reflective of our student body diversity.
CABBAGE-CARROT-CELERY SALAD
(Cha na-mool)

3 cups shredded celery
cabbage
1 cup shredded carrot
½ cup shredded celery
1¼ tsp. salt
½ tsp. oil
2 tbsp. sugar
1 tbsp. vinegar

Cut celery cabbage into 1½-inch lengths. Peel carrot and
cut into 1¼-inch lengths. Shred celery and carrot
lengthwise, very finely. Cook for 3 minutes in a small amount of
boiling, salted water. Drain and cool.

Cut the celery into 1½-inch lengths. Shred lengthwise.
Sprinkle with ½ tsp. salt and let stand 10 minutes. Then
wash, drain, and fry in a small amount of oil for 3
minutes, stirring constantly. Cool. Mix vegetables. Add
1 tsp. salt, sugar, and vinegar. Mix lightly. Mustard may
be used for seasoning, if desired.

FOREWORD

The Art of Korean Cooking is a revised and enlarged
edition of an earlier book, Korean Recipes, now out of
print, which was begun in 1948 with extensive experimen-
tation, in Wichita, Kansas, in order to make the recipes
better adapted to western taste, and to include ingredients
which, with little effort could be procured in most western
cities.

The earlier book had had three private printings and
has been widely distributed in many parts of the world.
The purpose, at that time, was to introduce Korean foods
to the Western world, and to provide scholarships by
which Korean teachers and students could continue study
abroad.

Korean food has for years been considered extremely
delicious by those to whom it has been available. The
preparation is time consuming, but there is a certain
satisfaction that results from serving many dishes to your
guests from which they may choose. Although they are
highly seasoned when prepared by Korean housewives, the
recipes in the present book have been modified consider-
ably to suit the Western palate.

For many years the author has been revising and modi-
ifying the recipes through experimentation. In this she
has been greatly assisted by Miss Sin Young Pang, for-
merly of the Ewha Woman’s University faculty. The illus-
trations are by Mr. Joon Lee, also of Ewha University.
Focused Collection-Building via First-Year Fellows
Building a Collection that Documents Asian American Foodways
MEET OUR FRESHMAN FELLOWS: KOBI KHONG ON HISTORIC AMERICAN COOKBOOKS FEATURING ASIAN CUISINE

POSTED ON SEPTEMBER 14, 2021 BY HEIDI HERR

Enjoy this post by Kobi Khong, one of our Special Collections Freshman Fellows for the 2020-2021 academic year!

Whether you’re a lover of lox or a lover of lore, a biter or a writer, a baker or a note-taker, you’re in for a treat! Make sure you don’t spill, because today we’re going to be putting the bib in bibliophile as we dive into the sometimes sloppy, sometimes spicy, forever finger-lickingly flavorful history of Asian American Cuisine—Udon’t want to miss this!

This past year I’ve had the wonderful opportunity to work on researching and building upon our Sheridan Libraries’ Special Collections treasure trove of cookbooks, which detail the meals and memories of human history. As I parsed through pages of parsley, I found a topic that connected with me. My parents were immigrants from Vietnam who fled during the war; in a blink of an eye they went from being children running barefoot through rice paddies to refugees in a country 10,000 miles away from their home. They couldn’t return home, but when they missed their lives, they would nh?u. With their family and friends they would all come together, sharing foods and sharing stories from dusk until dawn and with every mouthful of mì Quang and every slurp of Oc len xào dua they would be transported back to their childhoods.

To understand the introduction of Asian cuisine to the Americas, we have to understand that history and food are intrinsically entwined; the culture that we see today is as a result of pivotal moments of history. At first glance, food may seem like a relatively tame and uninteresting topic, but it’s a culmination of a millennia of human interactions, all of which must be considered in the context of food. I will be taking you through a chronological journey of how Asian food found a home in America, many based on books and pamphlets that I helped to select for Special Collections acquisition!
Focused Collection Building Through Undergraduate Fellowships

Activist Cooking

• MENTOR: HEIDI HERR

• Special Collections has cookbooks dating back to the 16th century, featuring culinary traditions from around the world. However, cookbooks are far more than just collections of recipes. They can be fascinating agents for social change, works of nationalistic propaganda, and profound documents for cultural memory and identity. From suffragettes using cookbooks to promote voting rights for women to privacy activists publishing recipes from data leaks, the allegedly innocuous cookbook has made the question of “What’s for dinner” fraught with possibilities for centuries! Lettuce guide you on a culinary journey like no other during your first year at JHU.
One Student's Family History Inspires a New Collection

- Postcards from the 1960s-1970s promoting The Vegetarian Hotel.
- This restaurant/hotel was founded by the great-grandmother of a student in the First-Year Fellows program.
- It remained in the family until the early 1990s when the family decided to close the establishment.
Vegetarian Cookbooks from the 1880s-1970s
Yay Takeaways!

• Students value contributing to Special Collections.
• Centering the curriculum on the stories students find in cookbooks creates a more inclusive learning environment.
• Building a collection from scratch and with a rather tight budget takes time, but will reap big rewards.
• Students enrolling in the course are largely not your typical Humanities students—they include Hopkins athletes, future engineers, & public health advocates, all of whose interests and skills can translate to rare book research in new ways.
• A major assessment of the cookbook collection in terms of inclusiveness and discoverability cannot be made until the catalog backlog issue is resolved.
Thank You!

Heidi Herr
The Sheridan Libraries of
The Johns Hopkins University

hherr1@jhu.edu