



OUR JOURNEY WITH FOOD

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Foreword by James L. Wilson, ND, DC, PhD



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We live in an age in which doctors and scientists are specializing more and more, building their reputations and careers around being experts in ever-narrowing areas of expertise. This has allowed us to make significant advances in medicine and science, but has also left us drowning in a tsunami of often conflicting bits of information that are too overwhelming and confusing to be useful in our daily lives. What is lacking but greatly needed are generalists who can meaningfully integrate all the bits of information generated by specialists, and impart that understanding in a practical way to the rest of us. A very important area desperately in need of unbiased, knowledgeable generalists is the connection between food, nutrition and health because it plays such a central role in our ability to lead full and healthy lives.

I believe Dr. Karr is one of these much needed but rare generalists with no vested interest or ulterior motive except to integrate and synthesize information in a way that both makes sense and is useful. In *Our Journey with Food*, Dr. Karr has provided a sourcebook integrating extensive scientific, historical and traditional information from the fields of food, nutrition and health. She writes from the perspective of one who loves and understands the subject based on her academic training, clinical expertise and hands-on experience living in the wilds of Oregon.

With a grassroots style that is almost folksy at times, she tells it like it is, as a person who has real experience with food—growing, storing, cooking and studying it—and also as a professional with academic knowledge and a clear grasp of practical applicability. This is an unusual book combining many scientific facts, anecdotes, folk tales, history and photos, as well as political issues and fallacies around food and specific nutrients. She does a nice job of debunking the cholesterol and fat myths, and emphasizes the devastating effects of white sugar and flour, while revealing the influences of agribusiness and politics on our daily food intake without being too sinister or fatalistic.

So this book is indeed a “Journey with Food” that also provides a succinct rundown on each of the major vitamins and minerals and their roles in health, plus the medicinal uses of some foods. It makes for entertaining reading!

When so much of the United States’ gross domestic product (GDP) depends upon sickness, you know that overall health in this country is not nearly as good as we would like to believe. One significant reason for this is that many people no longer recognize good food when they see or taste it, let alone know how to grow, store and cook it. Their taste buds have become so distorted with the excess sugar and artificial sweeteners and flavors present in much of the typical North American diet that if they shift to a diet of natural foods, it takes them approximately six weeks to be able to fully taste the natural flavors. Food has been defined and redefined to fit so many political and economic purposes, but for me the definition of food is simple: Real food is that which comes from or runs around on the ground, or lives in the water. In short, if it does not look like it was once alive it probably is not real food.

Most of you familiar with my writing know that stress and its effects on endocrine function and the overall balance of the body (homeostasis) is a central topic of my work. I can attest from decades of clinical and research experience that without making real food the major component of daily consumption, it is almost impossible to recover from stress, adrenal fatigue, or other forms of debilitation and illness. It is also true that without the basic ingredient of good food, it is very difficult to be and remain healthy and withstand the stresses of life. Food is the raw material that becomes the body. Just as in building a house, substandard raw materials cannot produce a house that will withstand the storms of life.

Too many people drive themselves with caffeine and quick energy concoctions instead of obtaining real energy from good quality foods. Most cannot even imagine functioning properly without their caffeine and sugar fixes. Combine this with the high consumption of over-the-counter, prescription and street drugs and it is not surprising that a large portion of the population no longer knows what it is like to wake up feeling refreshed, healthy and eager to meet the day. We are on a runaway train careening from fast food restaurants to doctor’s offices, while accepting these

diminished or debilitated states of life as normal. Because we have forgotten or never knew we could be healthy by eating real food and leading less stressful lives, we continue to exist in desensitized overloaded states, just striving to remain functional. This is now so common we do not even recognize how unusual it is to live life unencumbered by sickness, partial disability or degeneration before our time. We must change!

So thank you, Dr. Karr, for writing this book! It is a place where people can find practical guidance on how to incorporate real food as the major portion of their daily diet, as well as answers that lead the way back to health. With the shift in healthcare currently taking place in the U.S., there will be an ever greater divide between the people who know how to live a healthy lifestyle and take care of themselves, and those who depend on the medical system for their "health" (i.e. sick) care. Over time the former will fare much better. We would all greatly benefit from having more generalists like Dr. Karr who have lived their subjects as she has lived food, nutrition and health.

James L. Wilson, DC, ND, PhD, author of
Adrenal Fatigue: The 21st Century Stress Syndrome

Introduction

My journey into the world of natural health began in the late 1970s when a great aunt gave my mother a copy of the book *Back to Eden* by Jethro Klose. It wasn't long before the book caught my attention and my newfound passion was inspired. Years later, I went from being a "dabbler" to a serious student of nutrition.

In 1996, I became a nutraceutical representative. This came about, not because of a drive for a home-based business, but because my best friend and husband was daily enduring chronic pain due to a motorcycle accident. There were more days than I care to remember when he was unable to sit upright or play with his toddler son due to the pain from damaged discs in his back and severe, nerve-pinching muscle spasms.

We took some herbal supplements and ate reasonably well, but it wasn't until my husband tried a liquid mineral supplement from humus plant sources that pain relief occurred. That single event propelled me to learn more about nutrition and how it might help my family. With the encouragement of friends and a chiropractor, I started distance schooling in the field of holistic nutrition. I don't know if it was because I had already been working with nutritional products or if I was just a natural, but before I knew it I had completed my bachelor's of science degree and signed on for the master's and the doctorate of holistic nutrition programs.

In 2002, I was offered an opportunity to work with a small alternative medical group in rural Southern Oregon. Everything I thought I knew quickly went out of the window as I was introduced to clients who were dealing with such issues as having more titanium in their backs than bone, failed gastric bypasses, migraines, glaucoma, rheumatoid arthritis, diabetes 1 and 2, hepatitis C, thyroid and endocrine system illnesses, PTSD, depression, bipolar disorder, drug addiction and cancer. School was now truly in session, and these folks were desperate for help.

In time I was introduced to national accreditation bodies and have since dedicated time to serving on their various boards. I am very proud of the work being done by the National Association of Nutrition Professionals and the American Association of Integrative Medicine to further the profession of holistic nutritionists, integrated, culturally traditional medicine, and natural health and dietary modalities. The students graduating from schools like the Wellspring School of Healing Arts are a joy to mentor and give me confidence in the work I and many others are doing to build a brighter future for natural health practitioners.

Clients' symptoms vary from brain fog, leg cramps and digestive complaints to more serious conditions such as Parkinson's disease, MS, cancer and the rare Pick's Disease (rapid deterioration of the brain's frontal lobe). So many of these degenerative and chronic illnesses could have been prevented with real food and optimized nutrition.

One of the topics I have chosen to write about involves alcoholic drinks. I know this can be a controversial subject for nutritionists to write about, but the fact remains that I have told clients countless times to eliminate alcohol for their blood sugar levels, waistline and health, but they rarely do. I found myself wondering about all the reasons why. There are the obvious ones about deficiency craving, brain chemistry, self-medication, addiction and diabetic sugar cravings. However, I thought there had to be more to this question and began looking into the history of spirits, beer and wine and how they affect our health and our innate desire to imbibe. The story is long and may be surprising.

Over time, I have developed a theory that "our cells carry the memories of our ancestors." All of us are suffering from progressive generational malnutrition. Each successive generation that digresses further from our ancestral and "real" foods former diet suffers more genetic and nutritional imbalances and more chronic, life-shortening illnesses. Fortunately, the new field of nutrigenomics is validating the superiority of real foods over those synthesized by man.

Every year, science opens more doors of understanding into the wisdom and knowledge of our ancestors. Ancient man did not need a microscope or mass-spectrometer to determine what foods and herbs to eat, they learned from

experience and observation. Throughout time, this knowledge was passed forward until “modern” medicine and technology overshadowed common sense and tradition.

The following pages will detail some of the information from patient studies, clinical research and practical application garnered over my years of private practice in the fields of holistic nutrition and integrative medicine.

Food is very much a part of our history and our health. Enjoy the journey.

Tammera



Native Americans fishing at Celilo Falls on the Columbia River, 1950s. Photo by Benjamin Gifford – OHS Image BB001038. The roughly horseshoe-shaped falls 14 miles upstream from present-day The Dalles, Oregon, were one of two important Native American fishing and trading places on the Columbia River. Celilo Falls disappeared under the water behind The Dalles Dam in 1957. Bonneville Power Agency operates and maintains about three-fourths of the high-voltage transmission in its service territory which includes Idaho, Oregon, Washington, western Montana and small parts of eastern Montana, California, Nevada, Utah and Wyoming.

In 1973 Reay Tannahill wrote a book that today is still considered one of the most comprehensive works on food history. The aptly titled *Food in History* covers man’s selections of foods from prehistoric to the modern age. At last, here was a book that spoke to my love of history as well as food. From here I began collecting works such as *Near a Thousand Tables: A History of Food* by Felipe Fernandez-Armesto, *Empires of Food* by Evan D.G. Fraser, and similar historical tomes. One day I came across *The Taste of War* by Lizzie Collingham and *Botany of Desire* by Michael Pollan and my vision changed from past to present.



As I read, I saw our travels taking us from continent to country to state. As I learned about our ancestors’ quest for new foods, farm land, commercial enterprise and new methods of food preservation, a realization dawned. I began to see how much food has shaped our heritage and history on this continent. Nourishment, sustenance, food; no matter what you call it, it has been sought out by explorers long before the works of Frank N. Meyer and P.H. Dorsett coined the term “agricultural explorers” in the late 1800s. We are dirt farmers, ranchers, truck drivers, teachers, doctors and stockbrokers, all living our lives

Catalogue advertisement provided by the Bowman Museum Prineville, Oregon

because of the one ingredient that is the foundation of life—food.

Most of the world sees food as a healer as well as a source of primal nourishment. Unfortunately, many of us who live in the contemporary United States have forgotten about the role of food as healer and cultural treasure. We want it fast, easy, with no muss or fuss; we want the high, the sweet, the satisfaction. And so we have developed into a country with a chronically ill population, confused by what food is good for us and what is not (if we can even call these new-fangled processed products “food”).

In the 1950s most households had televisions, which brought about the advent of “TV dinners” and mindless eating in front of the screen. Food product development and marketing became an exciting, fast-growing field.

“While the frozen turkeys rode the rails, Gerry Thomas, a shrewd Swanson & Sons salesman, traveled from his company’s base in Nebraska to the kitchens of Pan American Airways in Pittsburgh. At the time, Pan Am was testing single-compartment foil trays used to serve warm in-flight meals to passengers. Thomas ‘borrowed’ one of the trays (conveniently slipping it into his coat pocket) and spent his return trip drawing up plans for a three-compartment version that would ensure that peas and gravy would never touch each other.”¹

CorningWare, the white cookware decorated with blue cornflowers, has been a fixture at family gatherings and potlucks for decades.

“S. Donald Stookey is credited with creating a synthetic ceramic glass in the 1950s that led to the famous cookware brand. Stookey discovered glass ceramics in 1952—the fortuitous outcome of an experiment gone wrong.”

¹ <http://www.gourmet.com/food/gourmetlive/2011/101911/the-history-of-the-tv-dinner>

The durable cookware, able to withstand extreme temperatures, became one of the housewife's best kitchen finds of the 1950s-1970s. "CorningWare was the first cookware of the modern age to go from freezer to oven to table. Later, CorningWare was used in microwave ovens and on cooktops."^{2,3}

Tupperware, invented by Earl Tupper, began appearing in every home in America in the 1950s as well.

"A dynamic single mom with a knack for marketing took a plastic container invented in 1946 from obscurity to essential kitchen staple." This was the dawn of a new age of plastic containers and storage bags. Americans had not yet heard of the xenobiotic dangers they presented to our endocrine systems.^{4, 5}

Before the microwave oven became a fixture in homes, circa 1960, *The I Hate to Cook Book* was impacting millions of kitchens in the United States and abroad. Peg Bracken's cookbook quickly became a staple of suburban homes. She believed that ingredients should be cheap, common and above all convenient, ideally frozen or tinned. Canned soups were a main ingredient in her recipes. So were crushed cornflakes, powdered onion soup mix and Spam. Alcohol had its place as well, though in many cases Bracken's instructions called for it to bypass the cooking process entirely and proceed straight down the cook's throat.⁶

Bracken's book opened the doors of home kitchens to mega-food manufacturers; Rice-a-Roni, American Cheese and Hamburger Helper are just some of the processed foods, still prevalent in stores and homes today, that were used for convenience cooking by low-income and working families. Most people have no idea about the cooking revolutions that took place in 1960s kitchens, the opposing views of Julia Child and Adelle Davis, and the results that Bracken's quick-fix recipes had on Americans' health.

In 1955, "the Tappan Stove Company, under a licensing agreement with Raytheon, brought the first consumer microwave ovens to the U.S. market with a price tag of \$1,300. In 1965, Raytheon acquired Amana Refrigerators, Inc., and in 1967, it introduced to the U.S. market the first 'countertop' model of microwave ovens (it sold for \$495 retail and was smaller, safer and more reliable than previous models). By 1986, 25 percent of U.S. households owned a microwave oven, up from less than one percent in 1971." (Microwave Oven Regression Model, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics).^{7, 8}

During this time period, science and technology seemed to promise an ever more convenient, beautiful future for the denizens of post-war America. Each product was better, faster and sleeker than the last.

Many of our contemporary opinions about food can be traced to the beginnings of the Clean Food movement of the 1960s⁹ and "the diet age", which really took off in the 1970s. The Age of Aquarius introduced us to "the grapefruit diet" (revived from the 1950s), and, in the mid-1970s, Elvis Presley popularized the "Sleeping Beauty Diet" in which he was heavily sedated for several days, hoping to wake up thinner. Actress Twiggy introduced us to vegetarianism, which, though seen as faddish at the time, is now still a popular lifestyle choice.

Low-calorie plans were promoted by actress Farah Fawcett (simultaneously, and perhaps not coincidentally, a startling increase in anorexia began during the 1970s, jeopardizing many young women's lives). Macrobiotic and Ayurvedic approaches were also popular. These protocols were undoubtedly far healthier than the snazzy new "diet"

² <http://www.npr.org/blogs/thetwo-way/2014/11/07/362226389/scientist-who-invented-corningware-glass-dies-at-99>

³ http://www.classickitchensandmore.com/page_3.html

⁴ <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/films/tupperware/player/>

⁵ <http://stri.si.edu/english/research/facilities/library/index.php>

⁶ http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/23/arts/23bracken.html?_r=0

⁷ <http://www.bls.gov/cpi/cpimwo.htm>

⁸ http://www.bls.gov/cpi/cpimwo.htm_truncated

⁹ *The Complete Idiots Guide to Clean Eating* 2009, Diane Welland, MS, RD

and weight-loss foods appearing on grocery store shelves that resembled desserts, such as the low-fat “chocolate” chews and drinks.

Low-fat diets were all the rage in the 1980s and supermodels like Christie Brinkley produced workout videos to thin us down. This misguided approach ignored our bodies’ need for a vital nutrient found in real unprocessed food: fats.

In the 1990s, the work done by Dr. Barry Sears, Gean and Joyce Daoust, Dr. Robert Atkins¹⁰ and Ann Louise Gittleman, PhD, illustrated the need for a balance between the macronutrients of protein, fat and carbohydrates. In this decade, we were introduced to the Mediterranean Diet, the Atkins Plan™, 40-30-30, the Perricone Prescription Diet™ and the pH Diet. Medical professionals began getting involved in the nutrition arena; perhaps this was due to a savvy business sense, or perhaps it was due to their frustration at seeing their patients’ health failing on the conventional diets of the day.

Now science has catapulted us into nutrigenomics, DNA/RNA activators, and a far better understanding of bio-individuality, the idea of tailoring different lifestyle choices to different individuals. We are learning about the inherent nutritional superiority of real whole foods over processed and refined ingredients (much to the horror of the commercial food industry and political lobbyists).

Newfound understanding of the genes involved in taste perception and food preferences can lead to personalized nutrition plans, which can be effective not just in terms of weight loss but in preventing diseases like cancer, depression and hypertension.

“The ability to devise diets based on individual genetic profiles can lead to significantly better results—for example, a weight loss 33% greater than with a control group who had a similar calorie count but a non-personalized diet plan,” researchers from the European Society of Human Genetics (ESHG) say.¹¹

Farming has changed dramatically since the 1970s. A 2014 NPR feature highlighted a few of the changes: “According to the latest census of American agriculture, released in 2014, there are two million farms in America.¹² But just four percent of those farms account for two-thirds of all agricultural production.”¹³



Illustration from the National Archives Washington, D.C.

According to a National Geographic article, “Large corn and soy farms in the midwest may cover up to 16,000 acres, which equates to 25 square miles of farmland.” (*In The Making Of Megafarms, A Mixture Of Pride And Pain, June 16, 2014*) At one time, dozens of smaller farms covered the same area of land, and tens of families were supported by their agrarian lifestyle. Today, two men with just seven full-time employees are doing the work that hundreds did just a few decades ago. Those seven or ten workers plant the seeds, spread the fertilizer and keep the irrigation water flowing. The farm managers spend as much time inside monitoring their crops on computers as they once did out in the field, deliberating what seeds to buy, when to plant and when to sell their harvest.

Currently there seems to be a slight rebounding of small, family farms as more people realize the health benefits of locally produced food. A niche market for homespun goods is reappearing in American culture, similar to what was seen during the Great Depression and World War II. Farmers’ markets are cropping up

¹⁰ <http://www.shape.com/blogs/weight-loss-coach/dieting-through-decades-what-weve-learned-fads>

¹¹ European Society of Human Genetics (ESHG). “Revolutionizing diets, improving health with discovery of new genes involved in food preferences.” ScienceDaily. ScienceDaily, 1 June 2014. <www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2014/06/140601201954.htm>.

¹² <http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/>

¹³ <http://www.npr.org/blogs/thesalt/2014/06/16/321705130/in-the-making-of-megafarms-a-few-winners-and-many-losers?sc=ipad&f=1001>

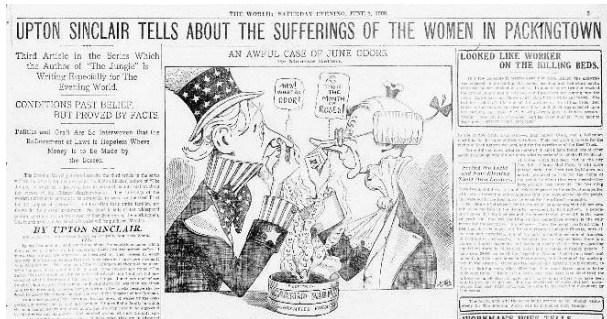


Illustration from the National Archives, Washington, D.C.

from coast to coast, and in some areas such as Washington, D.C., activists are introducing the public to healthy foods via mobile farm market vans. People are also learning how to prepare and preserve their homegrown produce, and canning, fermenting and other food preservation methods are making a comeback in American kitchens.

The implementation of the Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906 made it illegal to sell products doctored with toxic

chemicals.¹⁴ John McMonigle and Charles Wille served one year in Leavenworth Prison, in 1886 and 1915, respectively,

for the crime of selling margarine, or oleo, recorded as “crimes against butter”.¹⁵ In today's world there are dozens of margarine products for consumers to buy, yet at the turn of the 20th century it was considered a health hazard.

The Hatch Act of 1887 was designed to “sow the seeds of creativity in every state” through land grants and research stations dedicated to improving agricultural and food production methods. In a way, it was a success—but not without a cost.

In terms of productivity and efficiency, a collective increase in the use of chemical fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides makes perfect sense. Subsequent bills passed in the 1930s helped regulate supply and demand.¹⁶ This race for bigger, faster and better has moved beyond the application of chemicals and into the realm of altering the genetic code of living organisms. Multi-billion dollar agribusinesses such as Monsanto® and Cargill® are splicing dog DNA into corn and cholera into potatoes.

The idea that the scientist has more to offer us than the farmer has led us to inventions such as artificial sweeteners (which can affect cognition and harm pancreatic function), processed fats plugging our arteries and Senomyx™¹⁷ (aborted fetal tissue) in soda pop.¹⁸

Too bad that the Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906^{19, 20} has been buried in a quicksand of time, politics and “progress”. Undoubtedly, the writers of that bill would balk at the amount of chemicals, many with little to no safety data, that are being introduced into our food supply. I suspect that lawmakers of the day would have locked Monsanto and its cohorts up into Leavenworth and thrown away the key.

While large corporate mega-giants are without a doubt “doing what it takes” to make billions, consumer responsibility also plays a role in deciding what’s found on our grocery store shelves.

The Internet has made it possible for activists and average citizens critical of GMOs and industrial-chemical farming methods to rally millions of supporters to their cause. It has also proved a fertile field for frauds and charlatans hawking the next “miracle” cure or diet.

Keep in mind that efforts to combat obesity can be a threat to businesses that produce and sell food: If people eat less, profits will decline. The food industry can't appear to be nonresponsive to what has been termed a public health crisis, so it employs several tactics to maintain legitimacy and position itself as “part of the solution” while also protecting

¹⁴ What’s Cooking Uncle Sam? Records from the National Archives pg. 28

¹⁵ What’s Cooking Uncle Sam? Records from the National Archives pg. 13

¹⁶ Agricultural Adjustment Act 1933

¹⁷ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Senomyx>

¹⁸ <http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2013/03/17/senomyx-flavor-enhancers.aspx>

¹⁹ <http://www.loc.gov/rr/news/topics/purefood.html>

²⁰ http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Food_and_Drug_Act_of_1906.aspx

profits. Food companies tend to frame obesity as solely the consequence of the choices people are making rather than the choices they are being offered, say researchers at George Washington University.²¹

Buzzwords like “antioxidant”, “gluten-free” and “whole grain” deceive consumers into thinking food products are healthier than they actually are, according to a new research study. That “false sense of health” as well as a failure to understand the information presented in nutrition facts panels may be contributing to the obesity epidemic in the United States, say researchers at the University of Houston.²²

²¹ George Washington University. "Is the food industry really concerned with obesity? If people eat less, profits will decline." ScienceDaily. ScienceDaily, 2 June 2014. <www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2014/06/140602150703.htm>.

²² University of Houston. "How food marketing creates false sense of health." ScienceDaily. ScienceDaily, 13 June 2014. <www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2014/06/140613130717.htm>.