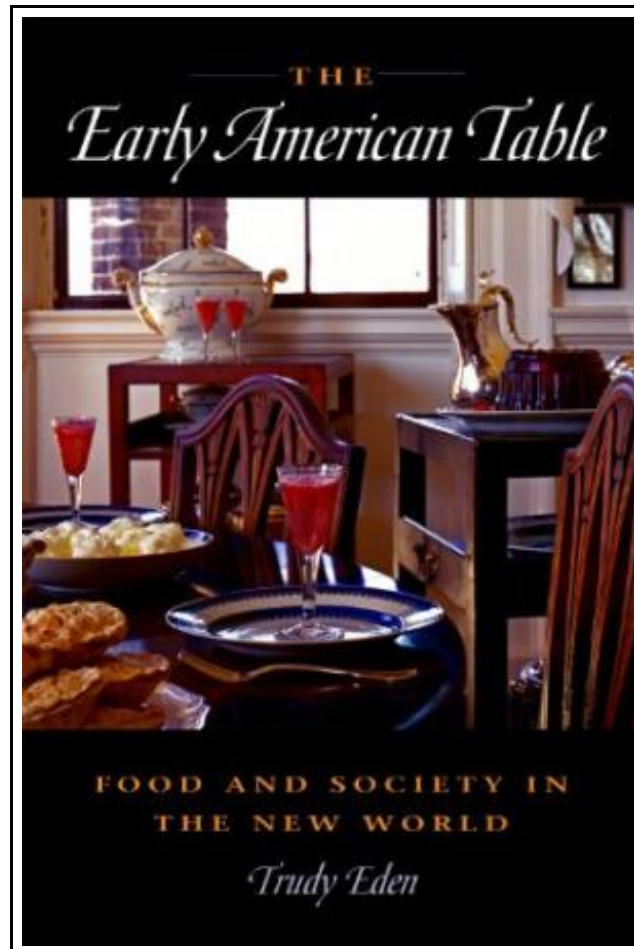


The Early American Table: Food and Society in the New World



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Reviews

Undoubtedly, this is the greatest job by any author. It is actually filled with wisdom and knowledge I am quickly could get a pleasure of reading a written book.

(Kade Ankunding)

THE EARLY AMERICAN TABLE: FOOD AND SOCIETY IN THE NEW WORLD

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Northern Illinois University Press. Hardback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, The Early American Table: Food and Society in the New World, Trudy Eden, An exploration in the history of biopolitics, "The Early American Table" offers a unique study of the ways in which English colonists in North America incorporated the "you are what you eat" philosophy into their conception of themselves and their proper place in society. Eden aptly demonstrates that ideas about the body - ideas which may seem irrelevant or even laughable today - not only guided day-to-day personal behavior but also influenced society and politics. According to the 17th- and 18th-century understanding of the body, food affected the blood, bones, mind, and spirit in ways other social markers (e.g. clothes, manners, speech) did not because food was directly assimilated by the consumer. A plentiful, varied diet of high-quality refined foods created virtuous, refined individuals fit to govern society. In contrast, a more restricted diet of poor quality, coarse foods made an individual coarse, even beastly, and unfit to lead. In the Old World, especially before 1600, poverty, legal restrictions, and the scarcity of land prohibited most individuals from purchasing or raising foods believed to produce refinement and virtue. Only the wealthy were able to enjoy such a diet. In turn, this elite diet marked their social status and reaffirmed their entitlement to power. The Englishmen and women who colonized North America throughout the colonial period held this idea that diet shaped character. After only a few decades of settlement, many of them enjoyed the unprecedented prosperity enabled by the fertile environment. Lower and middling families could set their tables with a greater variety and higher quality of food than their social counterparts in England. As a result, in contrast to England where an aristocrat's dinner was far different than...



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