





# FOOD WORDS: ESSAYS IN CULINARY CULTURE BY PETER JACKSON PDF

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## Review

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sociological thinking on food and food security issues . . . For me it was a fascinating and most enjoyable read-a book that I kept dipping into with pleasure, in the sure knowledge that whatever entry I started reading would, by turns, stimulate and provoke me, and would most certainly set my mind spinning off at an unexpected tangent of further creative thought . . . 'Food studies' is clearly a rapidly evolving field ... so I look forward to the second edition of this informative and entertaining book with keen anticipation.” ?Food Security

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#### About the Author

Peter Jackson is Professor of Human Geography at the University of Sheffield where he leads the CONANX research group which focuses on consumer culture in an 'age of anxiety' with a particular interest in consumer anxieties about food.

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Food Words is a series of provocative essays on some of the most important keywords in the emergent field of food studies, focusing on current controversies and on-going debates.

Words like 'choice' and 'convenience' are often used as explanatory terms in understanding consumer behavior but are clearly ideological in the way they reflect particular positions and serve specific interests, while words like 'taste' and 'value' are no less complex and contested.

Inspired by Raymond Williams, Food Words traces the multiple meanings of each of our keywords, tracking nuances in different (academic, commercial and policy) contexts. Mapping the dynamic meanings of each term, the book moves forward from critical assessment to active intervention -- an attitude that is reflected in the lively, sometimes combative, style of the essays. Each essay is research-based and fully referenced but accessible to the general reader.

With a foreword by eminent food scholar Warren Belasco, Professor of American Studies at the University of Maryland-Baltimore County, and written by an inter-disciplinary team associated with the CONANX research project (Consumer culture in an 'age of anxiety'), Food Words will be essential reading for food scholars across the arts, humanities and social sciences.

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Mixed views

By Autamme\_dot\_com

Food is understandably everywhere and tied into our culture, both on a local, national and international level. This book is a collection of "micro essays", written by a group of 12 scholars, that sets out to examine many key terms or words that are prevalent in food studies as well as in our broader everyday lexicon.

Terms such as Advertising, Artisan, Brands, Celebrity Chefs, Moral Economy, Tradition and Values are all bandied about, often without much thought. Nearly every handmade bread is said to be Artisanal, for example, but does the finished product really justify the term? Does the person using the term really know

what it stands for?

This is an academically focussed book, for a fairly narrow audience that could still be interesting to the more general "foodie" who likes to stretch their mind a bit and go beyond "just cooking and eating." However it is a book that is NOT friendly to those with less-than-perfect eyesight. Did everything really need to be crammed into two columns with very small text? The essays are effectively long screeds of text and this reviewer found his attention waving whilst fighting through a dense form of text that can best likened to the small text used by many newspapers in their classified ads. For a book aimed at academics, it seems an odd oversight also not to leave space for annotations and markings out.

Grumbles aside, if you are able to actually read the text you may find a number of interesting viewpoints being offered up. The essays are, to use a culinary term, bite-sized and thus easily digestible (readability notwithstanding). You are getting a lot more than a typical dictionary or encyclopaedia description, it is more a collection of thoughts that direct you, upon request, to other topics, to other reference sources and to other trains of thought. Even if you only look at one definition a day, you'll stretch out your knowledge diet but still feel quite fulfilled at the end of each reading session. Possibly with tired eyes and a slight degree of irritability (or is this just affecting this reviewer). A little more thought to the visual design would have been a Godsend here.

As you would expect, at the end of the book are pages upon pages of references and a very detailed index.

A conclusion? That is a difficult thing to achieve on many levels. Clearly if you have the professional or educational need for this sort of thing it could be a relatively inexpensive yet important reference tool, a means to inspire further thought, study or research. For the more generalist reader it still has a lot to give but you might need to manage your expectations a bit as it can be a bit of a hard slog (even more so if you have poor or middle-aged eyesight). If you decide not to buy this book, at least consider checking it out from your local library!

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