

Katherine Leonard Turner's *How the Other Half Ate: A History of Working-Class Meals at the Turn of the Century* is a concise and well-researched corrective to a burgeoning field of study—the social and cultural history of food—that emphasizes the culinary lives of those who left behind ample evidence of what they swallowed. We already know a great deal about what entered the gullets of the elite, and even the middle classes, at the turn of the twentieth century. But when it comes to “ordinary urban working-class people” (p. 8), those for whom “there were no regular meal hours” (p. 3), those for whom eating was not the pursuit of pleasure in the land of plenty but a “problem” (p. 18), we know much less. Turner's book, which essentially explores “how people got food when money was tight and life was uncertain” (p. 7), may not make a sweeping argument about American food and the working class, but it does an admirable job of illuminating the darker and more remote corners of the American diet during the Progressive Era.

One reason why writing about food has become so popular is that it permits the historian to explore a variety of larger themes through the concrete act of eating. Turner takes full advantage of food's flexible physicality to explore the culinary lives of the downtrodden through the shifting lenses of gender, class, and ethnicity. Her authoritative voice generally succeeds because she effectively blends context—technological change, evolving work patterns, gendered work space, the rise of distribution networks and grocery stores, the emergence of home economics—with texts including diaries, autobiographical accounts, federal reports, novels, and—most notably—photos taken by researchers interested in poverty, immigration, and urban living conditions. Especially central to her research agenda is the work of Lewis Wickes Hine, a sociologist whose camera graphically documented the working poor for the National Child Labor Commission, and a figure whose photos Turner “reads” with rare aplomb. Even if Turner's balance occasionally tilts toward too much context and not enough text, the overall impact is one in which her subjects are actively making food choices in a well-defined matrix of options.

For anyone who follows contemporary food discourse, one of the unexpected pleasures of reading Turner's book is the way her careful research repeatedly sullies the romanticism that mars so much of today's rhetoric of food reform. Advocates of sustainability and locally sourced ingredients currently urge consumers to eat in season in order to evoke a preindustrial golden age when food was supposedly more honest and wholesome. Turner, however, notes that for struggling immigrants and the rural poor working in mill towns “seasonality seemed like a curse” (p. 29), one that the eager adoption of canned goods, processed food, and takeout meals helped exorcise. Likewise, whereas today's contemporary critiques of industrial food lament the lost art of home cooking, Turner reveals many families abandoned the tribulations of the kitchen the very minute pushcart and grocery store of-

ferings became affordable. “[T]here were twice as many bakeries per capita in 1910 as there had been 1880,” she writes (p. 61). Such well-chosen statistics stress an obvious point that has been obscured by today's glorification of the kitchen: cooking was often pure drudgery.

Turner's most conceptually sophisticated chapter—“‘A Woman's Work Is Never Done’: Cooking, Class, and Women's Work”—traces the impact of industrialization on women's domestic work to show how such drudgery was “a private matter with public consequences” (p. 142). Progressive-era efforts to mold immigrant cookery to white middle-class expectations—a kitchen separate from the rest of the house, cooking as an expression of traditional family and gendered values, and a belief that there was (as one economist believed) “a right and a wrong way to cook” (p. 134)—invested women's domestic work with unprecedented moral weight in the looming sphere of public opinion. Given their limited resources, though, working-class women could rarely fulfill the costly demands of domestic and culinary virtue. “When femininity was defined in middle-class terms,” writes Turner, “working-class women could not but fail to be truly feminine.” Although chastised for “performing their cooking tasks half-heartedly or without love” (p. 139), these women were, as Turner concludes, “the wave of the future” (p. 136) insofar as they “continued doing what they needed to do for their own and their family's survival whether it met the middle-class criteria of ‘womanly virtue’ or not” (p. 139).

Turner often makes big claims such as this one without belaboring it with excessive evidence, a method that some specialists might find too breezy, not to mention the omission of several other works related to her topic (Helen Zoe Veit's *Modern Food, Moral Food: Self-Control, Science, and the Rise of Modern American Eating in the Early Twentieth Century* [2013] comes to mind). But these concerns are small potatoes compared to Turner's signal accomplishment of bringing to light the dietary habits of a long neglected group of Americans and, perhaps most notably, doing so in a way that reminds us of an axiom that is as central to the past as it is today: “food choices are never simple” (p. 141).

JAMES MCWILLIAMS
Texas State University

EDWARD J. ROACH. *The Wright Company: From Invention to Industry*. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2014. Pp. xii, 218. Cloth \$69.95, paper \$22.95.

The Wright Brothers are world famous for their success as the first to operate a heavier-than-air flying vehicle, achieving this milestone on December 17, 1903, in the windswept sand dunes near Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. This invention offered the brothers an opportunity to cash in, and they did so once they had further developed their airplane, validated it with flights for the U.S. Army in 1908, and took it to Europe in 1909. With those demonstrations Wilbur and Orville Wright decided to establish the Wright Company to build and

market their flying machines. It is the story of this company that Edward J. Roach, historian of the Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historic Park, seeks to tell in this fine book.

The Wrights were excellent self-taught engineers who achieved success through a process more akin to tinkering than systematic research and development. They were poor businessmen, however, as this fine discussion of their stint as “captains of industry” illustrates. The brothers gained the backing of entrepreneurs from New York in 1909, among them Cornelius Vanderbilt III, set up shop in their hometown of Dayton, Ohio, and operated the Wright Company until 1915. They had some early successes, especially their pilot training and demonstration flying programs, which became the key profit centers for the company. Thousands watched the Wright demonstration teams at airshows around the nation; their flying enthusing the masses about the potential of flight.

The company's flight school taught hundreds to fly, among them Henry H. “Hap” Arnold, who would go on to fame as the five-star head of the Army Air Forces of World War II, and A. Roy Brown who was credited with shooting down “Red Baron” Manfred von Richthofen during World War I. Cal Rodgers, also trained as a pilot through the Wright Company, flew a Wright Model B flyer across the country in 1911 in pursuit of a \$50,000 prize offered by William Randolph Hearst for the first to fly across the U.S. within 30 days. He did not win the prize but went down in history for his attempt.

The success of the Wrights as manufacturers of airplanes, however, left something to be desired. During the life of the company only 120 aircraft were built at its Dayton factory. The brothers were ineffective in the production of flyers, their sales teams were less than stellar, and they tended to stand pat in their aircraft technology when the industry was rapidly advancing. Moreover, they were cantankerous in business dealings, stubborn in decision-making, and illogical in their commitment to certain modes of thinking.

Nothing was more destructive to the Wright Company, according to Roach, than the Wright brother's patent battle with rival aircraft manufacturer Glenn H. Curtiss. The Wrights had a 1906 patent on their control systems and fought tenaciously to protect what they considered their inviolate innovation. This led to lengthy court proceedings that only benefited the attorneys on both sides. It was finally resolved in February 1917 through an agreement to establish the Manufacturers' Aircraft Association to coordinate aircraft manufacturing in the United States and administer a patent pool that disbursed royalties to appropriate technical organizations, including the Wright family. By that time Wilbur was dead—succumbing to typhoid fever in 1912—and Orville, who lived until 1948, had retired from business.

The Wright brothers may have invented the airplane but they failed to create the kind of business juggernauts accomplished by Glenn H. Curtiss, Donald Wills Douglas Sr., William E. Boeing, and others. *The Wright*

Company: From Invention to Industry tells effectively the story of the business the brothers attempted.

ROGER D. LAUNIUS

National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution

STEVEN CASSEDY. *Connected: How Trains, Genes, Pineapples, Piano Keys, and a Few Disasters Transformed Americans at the Dawn of the Twentieth Century*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2014. Pp. xx, 319. \$35.00.

The concept of the network has gained notoriety in our own era as personal computers, tablets, smart phones, and information technology have reshaped everyday life in the United States as well as other parts of the world. Many observers have lamented the fact that this interconnectedness has come at the expense of privacy; our personal lives have been opened to the inquisitive gaze not only of our friends and family members but also of advertisers and content providers. Being connected to a network raises anxieties about our identity as individuals, our sense of who we are in relation to the social world.

Steven Cassedy's excellent new book reminds us that networks have been around for a long time, in forms both material and immaterial, and that the experience of connectedness has often raised similarly powerful concerns about independence and autonomy. Cassedy begins by drawing connections of his own between the past and present through an imaginative journey along the countless miles of railroad track that crisscross North America. This physical manifestation of networking illuminates how the network has functioned for at least a century as a deep template for many forms of organization in our society. As Cassedy notes, the North American rail system, a vast web of “pathways and nodal points,” both enables travel and also restricts choice, combining “promise and constraint” in ways that are typical of networks in general (p. xvi). Even less obviously tangible networks such as the public health system follow this basic pattern, enabling new connections while foreclosing other possibilities.

Many readers will no doubt expect a historical study of networks to deal primarily with topics such as transportation and communication, but the first section of the book (following the prefatory imagined railway journey) turns this expectation on its head by focusing on the human body and related ideas about “the biological self” (p. 17). This move is a brilliant one on Cassedy's part, as it foregrounds the way that participation in networks shapes the most intimate details of self-identity. Around the turn of the twentieth century, Americans were encouraged to think of their bodies as containing internal networks (of cells, tissues, and organs) that were in turn linked to the bodies of others. The advent of germ theory, popular science writing on subjects such as the nervous system, cell doctrine, and genetics, and new ideas about psychology and sexuality fed into movements for public hygiene and social prog-