

“On Food and Cooking”

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I didn't set out to make this collection, it is simply a byproduct of my interests in food, cooking, nutrition, plants, people, and of course, books. It began with my mother's cookbooks and wisdom, both of which she shared with me over the years as we baked together. The first cookbook that I purchased myself, *Kids Cooking: A Very Slightly Messy Manual*, came from a school book fair when I was in third grade. It was this book that really sparked my interest in food and cooking. It also came with my own assortment of brightly colored plastic measuring spoons that is still my favorite set. The cookbook portion of my collection really began to grow while I was in high school. Once I was old enough to cook on my own, I wanted as much information as I could find on the subject. After that, the collection began to feed itself; each book I buy makes me want to buy three others! And, through this process, many of my books have actually played pivotal roles in the direction my life has taken. The books led me to culinary school, the plant biology program at MSU, and they are helping to shape my decisions about where I am headed after graduation.

That is what I like best about my collection. It isn't just a bunch of books that decorate my shelves. These are books that I read, learn from, and use every single day. Every time I cook, which is nearly every time I eat, I use at least one thing that I learned from these books, but this collection isn't just cookbooks. It provides me with ideas that I use in every part of my daily life. Even though the collection may seem like it isn't very cohesive, I think my constant use of it illustrates my need for every single one of these books, and several more I am sure, to understand the cultural significance, nutritional importance, and pure fun of food in my life.