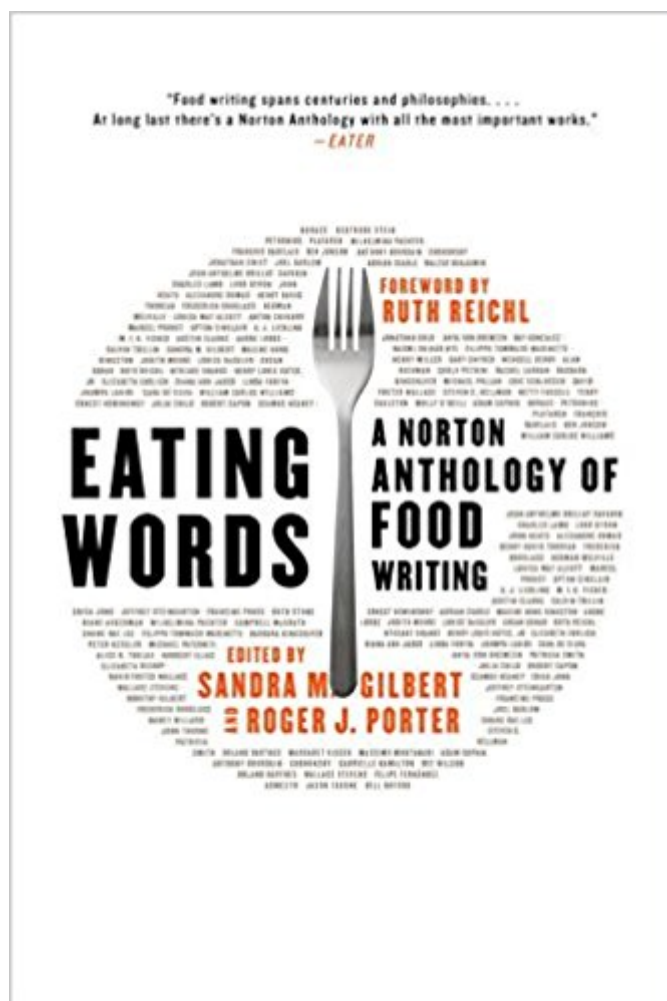


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Eating Words: A Norton Anthology Of Food Writing



Synopsis

“Food writing spans centuries and philosophies. . . . At long last there’s a Norton Anthology with all the most important works.”
Eater
Edited by influential literary critic Sandra M. Gilbert and award-winning restaurant critic and professor of English Roger Porter, *Eating Words* gathers food writing of literary distinction and vast historical sweep into one groundbreaking volume. Beginning with the taboos of the Old Testament and the tastes of ancient Rome, and including travel essays, polemics, memoirs, and poems, the book is divided into sections such as “Food Writing Through History,” “At the Family Hearth,” “Hunger Games: The Delight and Dread of Eating,” “Kitchen Practices,” and “Food Politics.”
Selections from writings by Julia Child, Anthony Bourdain, Bill Buford, Michael Pollan, Molly O’Neill, Calvin Trillin, and Adam Gopnik, along with works by authors not usually associated with gastronomy—Maxine Hong Kingston, Henry Louis Gates Jr., Hemingway, Chekhov, and David Foster Wallace—enliven and enrich this comprehensive anthology. “We are living in the golden age of food writing,” proclaims Ruth Reichl in her preface to this savory banquet of literature, a must-have for any food lover. *Eating Words* shows how right she is.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“As *Eating Words* reveals, writing about food is as old and ubiquitous as the written word itself. . . . Chock full of delectable morsels to keep even the most discerning reader sated.” -

New York Journal of Books – “Food and cooking, from the metaphysical to the political . . . a literary banquet that will leave readers hungry for more.” – Oregon Live – “Eating Words is a remarkable gathering of commentary on every aspect of food from the ritualistic and symbolic to the pragmatic; a wonderfully diverse collection of writers from the renowned and classic (Hemingway, Chekhov, Julia Child) to contemporaries (Anthony Bourdain, Michael Pollan, Calvin Trillin, Henry Louis Gates Jr.). There is much for carnivores here, not surprisingly, but surprisingly, there is a good deal here for vegetarians as well. Fascinating reading. A feast of a book!” – Joyce Carol Oates – “Fernand Point once said, ‘As far as cuisine is concerned, one must read everything, see everything, hear everything, try everything, observe everything, in order to retain in the end, just a little bit.’ How right he was. I encourage young chefs to take it all in and to never lose their appetite for learning. Eating Words makes a great first course. Nourished by these stories, they will be better prepared to contribute to our profession.” – Thomas Keller, chef/proprietor, The French Laundry – “This engaging compendium of taste is certainly designed to suit all palates. The extraordinary selections range from the delicacy of a madeleine to the macabre details of hog slaughters, from prohibitions to a celebration of international cuisines. At the heart of this array lies the vein of language, which only reinforces the multiple pleasures of the text. It leaves the reader both fulfilled and longing for more.” – Sara Suleri Goodyear – “Eating Words is a sobering, entertaining, delicious, and delightful romp through the written world of food. The editors’ wide and inclusive arms have gathered many from different times and approaches. I loved rereading pieces I was already familiar with as much as reading those I didn’t know at all. Eating Words was a treat I looked forward to sampling every evening, and I believe that subsequent nibbles will be just as good.” – Deborah Madison, author of *Vegetable Literacy* and *Vegetarian Cooking for Everyone*

Sandra M. Gilbert has published numerous volumes of criticism as well as collections of poetry and a memoir. She is coeditor (with Susan Gubar) of *The Norton Anthology of Literature by Women* and a recipient of the National Book Critics Circle’s Ivan Sandrof Lifetime Achievement Award. A Distinguished Professor of English emerita at the University of California, Davis, she lives in Berkeley, California. Roger J. Porter is a professor of English literature at Reed College. He lives in Portland, Oregon.

Eating Words: A Norton Anthology of Food Writing well may redefine the role of gustatory prose as

an essential genre of literary study -- to say nothing of the pleasure it will offer to readers for whom taste -- of all kinds -- is an important component of life's deepest experiences. Gilbert and Porter -- with their combined skills as poets, literary scholars, food critics, travel writers -- bring an exemplary level of consciousness to a wonderful banquet of selections from the ancient world to the present. I can't think of a better holiday gift-book and one that can be read over the years by the hearth or near the stove with friends and family. Dr. Howard R. Wolf, Emeritus Professor and Senior Fellow, SUNY-Buffalo, and Life Member, Wolfson College (Cambridge University), author of *FAR-AWAY PLACES: LESSONS IN EXILE* and *FORGIVE THE FATHER: A MEMOIR OF CHANGING GENERATIONS*

I can't believe it, but I'm disappointed in the selections chosen for this book. I admire the organization, the structure, and the writing chosen as interstices, but if you have even a modest knowledge of gastronomy, you will have read every piece and every author in this anthology. There are no new voices -- which I guess may be part of the definition of the canon, but man, is the canon more homogenous than I remembered. On the plus side, there is a Gubar essay (although sans Gilbert) so you do know you are reading a Norton.

This was a beautiful anthology rich with humor, depth and honesty. I loved the compilation of the best pieces of so many stories and how they piece together in such a smooth way. Many of the stories, while short, leave a lasting impression on the reader.

bought this for my English lit class but I am really enjoying this read.

textbook, impartial

This book is a delightful smorgasbord! You can open it at random, and come across something nourishing and pleasing. For those of us who have not had prior experience with similar compendia, this is a fine array of writings, and there is bound to be something tasty wherever you dig in. I'm having a wonderful time dipping my mental spoon (pardon me, but I just can't not do that) in and trying a bit of this, a little bit of that, and maybe some of that way over there. M-m-good!

EATING WORDS by Sandra Gilbert and Roger Porter is not a cookbook by any means, so readers should not expect it to be a cookbook. It is a very broad collection of writings

essays, poems, and more about food and dining. Indeed, Gilbert and Porter select a broad range of times, places, and authors for this anthology. The very first selection is from Leviticus 11 of the Bible, the passage that details what people of that time may or may not eat; it is my understanding that those who keep a Kosher diet and kitchen still adhere to these regulations. But there are also very blunt contemporary writings by such food titans as Julia Child, M. F. K. Fisher, Anthony Bourdain, and many more. There are many works that fall in between these two extremes, too, such as Keats, Melville, and Swift. I appreciated the broad variety of the selections in this anthology, and I learned many things about food and the food service profession. This anthology does take some time to sit down and READ, but it is worth it.

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