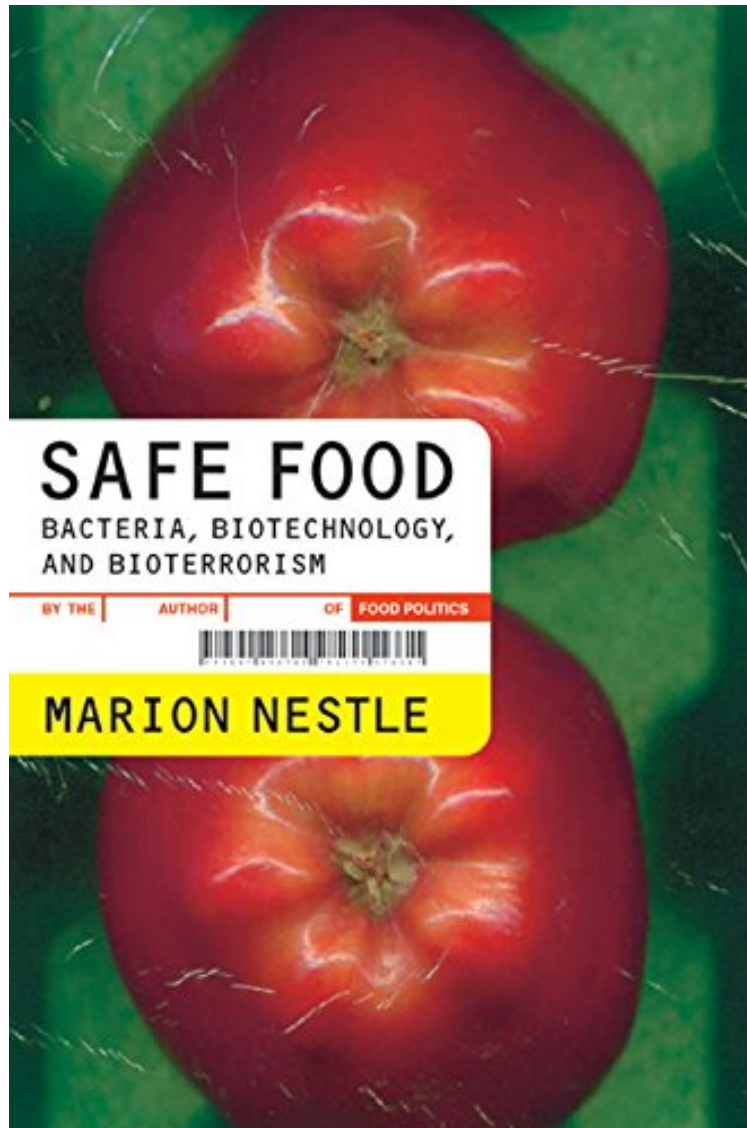


(Ebook pdf) Safe Food: Bacteria, Biotechnology, and Bioterrorism (California Studies in Food and Culture, 5)

Safe Food: Bacteria, Biotechnology, and Bioterrorism (California Studies in Food and Culture, 5)

Marion Nestle

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Marion Nestle : Safe Food: Bacteria, Biotechnology, and Bioterrorism (California Studies in Food and Culture, 5) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Safe Food: Bacteria, Biotechnology, and Bioterrorism (California Studies in Food and Culture, 5):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. An Honest Look at "Plate Politics"By Courtney Kleshinski"Safe

Food" is a terrific look at our nation's food supply and its safety. This book covers pathogens, genetic modifications and bioterrorism. It is also a look behind the scenes at how our democracy affects what foods end up on our plates. Corporations choose profits over public health, government sides with industry rather than consumers, corruption, greed, and ineptitude are all part of this fascinating story. The kindle version of this book is not perfect. Some diagrams and charts were cut off or difficult to follow. Though maybe now slightly out of date, overall, "Safe Food" is an important book, and one well worth reading by anyone concerned about the quality of the food we eat. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Everyone should read Marion Nestle's books! By Brian Fahey Excellent book. Marion Nestle is a rockstar within the food and nutrition world. This is an in-depth look at how our food is produced and distributed. It may shock you, but it will certainly be informative. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Read it By Clarice K. You will never eat pre-packaged hamburger purchased from chain grocery stores again. Nestle's book is a must-read for people who are interested in food policy.

Food safety is a matter of intense public concern, and for good reason. Millions of annual cases of food "poisonings" raise alarm not only about the food served in restaurants and fast-food outlets but also about foods bought in supermarkets. The introduction of genetically modified foods immediately dubbed "Frankenfoods" only adds to the general sense of unease. Finally, the events of September 11, 2001, heightened fears by exposing the vulnerability of food and water supplies to attacks by bioterrorists. How concerned should we be about such problems? Who is responsible for preventing them? Who benefits from ignoring them? Who decides? Marion Nestle, author of the critically acclaimed *Food Politics*, argues that ensuring safe food involves more than washing hands or cooking food to higher temperatures. It involves politics. When it comes to food safety, billions of dollars are at stake, and industry, government, and consumers collide over issues of values, economics, and political power and not always in the public interest. Although the debates may appear to be about science, Nestle maintains that they really are about control: Who decides when a food is safe? She demonstrates how powerful food industries oppose safety regulations, deny accountability, and blame consumers when something goes wrong, and how century-old laws for ensuring food safety no longer protect our food supply. Accessible, informed, and even-handed, *Safe Food* is for anyone who cares how food is produced and wants to know more about the real issues underlying today's headlines.

From *The New England Journal of Medicine* "Food safety is political." So claims the title of the introduction to Marion Nestle's book *Safe Food*, and this assertion is solidly confirmed in the pages that follow. In her instructive monograph, Nestle exposes the political workings of the system that supposedly guarantees the safety of our food. The operation of this system is unfamiliar to many, but Nestle's well-researched and carefully documented arguments convince me that the topic should be of concern to anyone who eats. Most Americans believe that the United States has the safest food supply in the world. But is this belief justified? Does the public know what the government does and does not do regarding food inspection? How many people believe that their ground sirloin is tested for *Escherichia coli* O157:H7, their chicken for campylobacter, and their cold cuts for listeria? How many know whether their taco shells are made from transgenic corn? Do people assume that the package label reflects this information? And most important, do they know who decides what is done to ensure food safety and why? The answers to these questions are surprisingly predictable when one considers the workings of other regulatory systems in our society. In *Safe Food*, we learn of food producers that place the interests of stockholders above those of the public, byzantine government agencies that work at cross-purposes, the flow of personnel between government and industry that confuses the goals of the watchdog with those of the watched, and a spectrum of citizens' groups that engage in activities ranging from responsible public advocacy to street theatrics and "biovandalism." In essence, all the troubling problems of the military-industrial complex seem also to be manifested in our food-production system. *Safe Food* addresses all these elements in two major sections and a conclusion that roughly correspond with the three Bs in the book's subtitle. Part one, "Resisting Food Safety," includes an account of the government agencies concerned with food safety -- there are no fewer than 12 -- and their sometimes inexplicable regulatory responsibilities. For example, the reader learns that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) oversees the production of hot dogs in pastry dough, whereas the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulates hot dogs in rolls. Beef broth and dehydrated chicken soup are regulated by the USDA, but chicken broth and dehydrated beef soup are regulated by the FDA. After this look at the regulatory side of the process, Nestle turns to a discussion of food producers' historical resistance to regulation. Since 1906, one role of USDA meat inspectors has been to exclude diseased animals from the food supply. The suggestion to refocus oversight on specific pathogens by instituting Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) systems at critical points in food production has been repeatedly deferred by political and legal actions since the early 1980s. For example, from 1971 until the mid-1990s, the meat industry argued successfully that foodborne pathogens such as *E. coli* O157:H7 are inherent components of raw meat and therefore not "adulterants" that are subject to regulation. Part two of the book recounts the efforts of biotechnology firms to introduce genetically modified foods onto the farm and into the food supply. This introduction was accomplished with the complicity of government agencies but largely without the knowledge or consent of the public. Industry aggressively promotes genetically engineered foods as the

solution to world hunger. But what evidence supports this claim? And what of the hidden dangers of so-called Frankenfoods to our health and economy that some outspoken critics predict? Nestle stresses two major themes here: the exploitation of science-based justifications for points of view on either side of the question, and the notion that public opinion in these matters is often based on values, a sense of dread, and a healthy distrust of institutions, rather than on scientific principles. The conclusion, which deals with bioterrorism, may be the weakest part of the book. Here the author uses examples of novel foodborne diseases, such as mad cow disease, to show how authorities might react to a deliberate contamination of the food supply. A few minor inaccuracies in the argument are more annoying than substantive, but the premise itself is a bit of a stretch. The last major revolution in food safety in this country followed the publication of Upton Sinclair's 1906 fictional expose, *The Jungle*. Remarkably, our system for securing the food supply has grown in size and complexity but only marginally in scope since then. *Safe Food* will probably not generate the public uproar that Sinclair's book did, but it expresses in scholarly terms the compelling reasons for undertaking another reorganization of the system. An advocate holding a passionate and transparent point of view, Nestle concludes her book with a list of specific suggestions for the food industry, the federal government, and the public. As citizens, consumers, and patient advocates, physicians would be wise to be informed about these issues and their possible solutions. N. Cary Engleberg, M.D. Copyright 2003 Massachusetts Medical Society. All rights reserved. The New England Journal of Medicine is a registered trademark of the MMS. "An excellent analysis of the shortcomings of the science-based approach to food." -- Felicity Lawrence, *The Guardian* "Bioterrorism, genetically modified foods, food irradiation, *Safe Food* weighs in on all the hot topics....Nestle's arguments are consistently solid and persuasive....The book is thorough and well researched."--San Francisco Chronicle Book -- "Marion Nestle speaks in a voice that is by turns that of a consumer advocate and a scientist." -- Boston Globe "Nestle tackles it all, with admirable thoroughness." -- Washington Post Book World "Provocative and consumer-friendly." -- *Saveur Magazine* From the Inside Flap "Marion Nestle's compelling and accessible book explains what the industrialization of the food supply in this country has done to both the taste and safety of the foods we eat." Alice Waters "Marion Nestle has emerged as one of the sanest, most knowledgeable, and independent voices in the current debate over the health and safety of the American food system. All of us who eat should count ourselves lucky to have this indispensable book." Michael Pollan, author of *The Botany of Desire: A Plant's-Eye View of the World*