



Reading Guide:

***97 Orchard: An Edible History of Five Immigrant Families in One New York Tenement* (2010)**

by Jane Ziegelman

1. If you could have been invited to dinner with one of the five families profiled in *97 Orchard*, whose food do you think you would have enjoyed the most?
2. Did any of the recipes shared remind you of a dish from your family history? Is there a recipe you'd be curious to try?
3. If this book had been written about Houston, or about your hometown, how would the story be told? Which immigrant groups and culinary customs and dishes would be included?
4. It is not uncommon for historians to wrestle with very limited sources in exploring historical personages and narratives. How do you think Jane Ziegelman's attempt to address this challenge compares to other works we have read, or that you are familiar with, that grapple with this issue?
5. What does Ziegelman do well in this book? What do you wish she had done differently or better?
6. What questions do you have after reading this book? What do you want to learn more about?
7. Would you recommend this book to others? Who do you think the ideal reader for this book would be?

Author Biography

Jane Ziegelman, a James Beard Award–winning food historian, is the author of *97 Orchard: An Edible History of Five Immigrant Families in One New York Tenement* and *A Square Meal: A Culinary History of the Great Depression*, which she wrote with her husband, Andrew Coe. She is the director of the Tenement Museum's culinary center and the founder and director of Kids Cook!, a multiethnic cooking program for children.

Related Books (descriptions courtesy of Amazon.com)

If you enjoyed this author:

A Square Meal: A Culinary History of the Great Depression (2017) by Jane Ziegelman and Andrew Coe

From the author of *97 Orchard* and her husband, a culinary historian, *A Square Meal* offers an in-depth exploration of the greatest food crisis the nation has ever faced—the Great Depression—and how it transformed America’s culinary culture.

For more on life in lower Manhattan:

Five Points: The 19th-Century New York City Neighborhood that Invented Tap Dance, Stole Elections, and Became the World’s Most Notorious Slum (2010) by Tyler Anbinder

All but forgotten today, the Five Points neighborhood in Lower Manhattan was once known the world over. From Jacob Riis to Abraham Lincoln, Davy Crockett to Charles Dickens, Five Points both horrified and inspired everyone who saw it. While it comprised only a handful of streets, it was home to many of America’s most impoverished African Americans and Irish, Jewish, German, and Italian immigrants. Located in today’s Chinatown, Five Points witnessed more riots, scams, prostitution, and drunkenness than any other neighborhood in America. But at the same time it was a font of creative energy, crammed full of cheap theaters, dance halls, and boxing matches. It was also the home of meeting halls for the political clubs and the machine politicians who would come to dominate not just the city but an entire era in American politics. Drawing from letters, diaries, newspapers, bank records, police reports, and archaeological digs, Anbinder has written the first-ever history of Five Points, the neighborhood that was a microcosm of the American immigrant experience.

A more general account of life in New York in the 19th century:

The Gilded Age in New York, 1870–1910 (2016) by Esther Crain

The Gilded Age in New York, 1870–1910 captures what it was like to live in Gotham then, to be a daily witness to the city’s rapid evolution. Newspapers, autobiographies, and personal diaries offer fascinating glimpses into daily life among the rich, the poor, and the surprisingly large middle class. The use of photography and illustrated periodicals provides astonishing images that document the growth of New York: the construction of the Statue of Liberty; the opening of the Brooklyn Bridge; the shimmering lights of Luna Park in Coney Island; the mansions of Millionaire’s Row.

Bayou Bend/Rienzi Book Club

Join us for the next Bayou Bend/Rienzi Book Club featuring *The Last Emperor of Mexico: The Dramatic Story of the Habsburg Archduke Who Created a Kingdom in the New World* by Edward Shawcross, November 8, 2023, at 1:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. on Zoom.

For more information, visit mfab.org/historybookclub.

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