



# Food, Morals and Meaning: The Pleasure and Anxiety of Eating

By John Coveney

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**Food, Morals and Meaning: The Pleasure and Anxiety of Eating** By John Coveney

Using the fascination with the science of nutrition in many Western cultures, this book examines our need to discipline our desires, our appetites and our pleasures at the table. It highlights the way that concerns about food, the body and pleasure were prefigured in antiquity. Secondly, it examines how those concerns were recast in early Christianity as problems of "natural" appetite which had to be curbed (the connection between food and sex is examined in detail). Thirdly, the book argues how scientific knowledge about food was constructed out of philosophical and religious concerns about indulgence and excess in 18th and 19th Century Europe. Lastly, it illustrates how a rationalization and calculation of food - through a variety of modern nutrition programmes - provides consumers with the means by which they construct themselves as "good", moral agents of food choice. In this last section, the book focuses on the social organization of food in the modern home to illustrate that the meal table - a traditional site for the inculcation of cultural rules - now incorporates the scientific principles of nutrition as form of moral training, especially for children.

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## **Food, Morals and Meaning: The Pleasure and Anxiety of Eating By John Coveney Bibliography**

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