

and delivered night and day by cement-mixer-type trucks. The cattle eat all day and, under the glare of lights that turns night into day, they eat all night. No matter how much they eat, their trough runneth over, and in four more months they have put on another four hundred pounds and are ready for slaughter.

Just as important as the changes in the way beef was produced, were the changes in the way beef was consumed. First came the growth of suburban homeownership and the use of outdoor living space for cooking and entertaining. To the suburban refugees from the central cities, charcoal broiling represented the fulfillment of pent-up recreational and gustatory aspirations. Aside from its novelty—it was the one mode of preparation that apartment-dwellers had to forego—the backyard charcoal grill offered the convenience of no mess, no pans, and rapid, cooked meals often presided over by husbands who played the role of the great-giver-of-feasts-and-provider-of-meat like the chiefs of old. These backyard redistributors filled their grills with beef. If they submitted pork to smoke and flame, it was as frankfurters, themselves forty or more percent ground beef. Charcoal-broiled steaks were the favorites, made all the more delectable no doubt because they had once been unaffordable. But the charcoal-broiling of prodigious numbers of hamburgers shows that there was more to the beef-grilling mania than mere snob appeal. Technical aspects of backyard cookery, for example, made it difficult to employ pork in ground form. Pork patties cannot be cooked on open grills without falling through, and to prepare them on skillets would defeat the purpose of the flight from kitchen drudgery.

More important perhaps was that pork had to be cooked longer than beef because of the danger of trichinosis. Incredible as it may seem, the U.S. Department of Agriculture does not inspect pork for trichinosis. The only way to detect trichinella in pork is to look for them under the microscope, a time-consuming, costly, and not entirely effective procedure. As a result, about 4 percent of Americans have trichinella worms in their muscles and mistake their trichinosis flare-ups for mild cases of the flu. In lieu of inspection, the U.S.D.A., the surgeon general's office, and the

American Medical Association launched an intensive educational program during the 1930s to get Americans to cook pork until it turns from pink to grey through and through. These warnings ruled out the grilling of pork chops, which upon turning grey through and through also turn tough and dry through and through. Barbecue and pork spareribs present a technically feasible solution because they are well-larded and remain tender and juicy when thoroughly cooked, but they offer much less meat compared with hamburger or steak, are messy to eat, and cannot be put on a bun, placing them at a disadvantage with hamburgers as a convenience food.

The move to suburbia was shortly followed by other social changes that contributed to the beefing of America: the entrance of women into the work force, the formation of families in which both parents work, the rising tide of feminism, and the growing resentment of women against pots, pans, sinks, and stoves. These changes set the stage for an orgy of beef eating outside the home and for the rise of America's most distinctive culinary contribution to world cuisine, the fast-food hamburger. For the new postwar, two-wage-earner families, the fast-food hamburger restaurant provides an opportunity to eat out, to be free of the drudgery of the kitchen—even without homeownership and backyard barbecues—at a cost that is comparable to a medium-budget home-cooked meal, especially if you put a price on the housewife's labor, as wage-earning women are increasingly prone to do.

Americans began to dine out on beef patties a long time ago. Some historians date the hamburger's inception to an obscure restaurant owner who ran out of pork sausages and substituted ground beef at an Ohio county fair in 1892. Others claim that the first hamburgers appeared at the St. Louis Fair of 1904. Less confusion surrounds the origin of the ironically unbeeeflike name. "Hamburger" undoubtedly originated either with German immigrants who booked passage on the Hamburg-America Line and were served a mixture of chopped beef and onions, or with a chopped beef dish popular in the city of Hamburg itself. Whatever their precise origins, restaurant hamburgers were a novelty