The Queen of Fats: Why Omega-3s Were Removed from the Western Diet and What We Can Do to Replace Them (California Studies in Food and Culture)

Susan Allport
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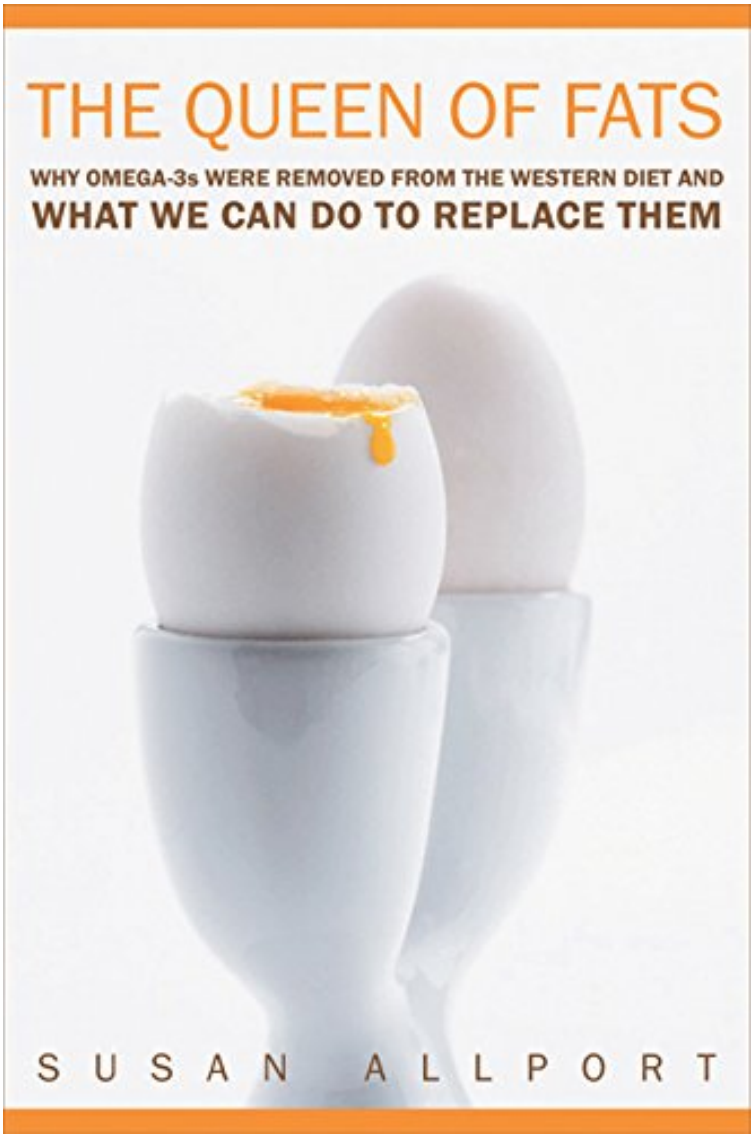

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Susan Allport : The Queen of Fats: Why Omega-3s Were Removed from the Western Diet and What We Can Do to Replace Them (California Studies in Food and Culture) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Queen of Fats: Why Omega-3s Were Removed from the Western Diet

and What We Can Do to Replace Them (California Studies in Food and Culture):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A beautiful look at the history of fatty acid scienceBy Mystic ManifestingThe Queen of Fats is not really a book for the casual reader looking to improve his or her diet (though it provides advice for that). It is instead a historical overview of fatty acid scientific research. I came to this book having already read several books on fatty acids; otherwise, I might have been a bit overwhelmed by the science.You'll learn such things as:* How omega-3s got their name* How they were discovered and by whom* Why omega-3s are removed from processed foods* Disease that can occur because of fatty acid deficiencies* Why reducing omega-6s in the diet is as important as increasing omega-3s* Why grains are rich in omega-6s and greens are rich in omega-3s* The difference between omega-3s found in flax seeds and those found in fish* Why Eskimos eat a lot of fat but are free of heart disease* The role of fatty acids in promoting or reducing inflammation* Why some important research findings never gets published* The role of fatty acids in metabolism* Where and why the various fatty acids are found in high concentrations in humans and animals* How to incorporate more omega-3s in your diet and find a healthy balance between omega-3s and omega-6s.Allport writes, "Trying to undertand health and diet without an appreciation of these fats is like trying to understand earthquakes without knowledge of plate tectonics, or motion without knowledge of physics. Until we revise our food and guidelines to incorporate all that has been learned about omega-3 fatty acids in the past fifty years, our diet will be lacking in a very important way."To address the hubbub regarding Atkins, Allport claims that the Atkins diet (or any low-carb diet, it seems) is dangerous, because the weight lost on such a diet is really muscle loss due to the body breaking down muscle proteins to create glucose for the brain that supposedly cannot rely entirely on ketones. Also, the increased intake of protein can lead to organ failure and a wasting condition known as "rabbit starvation."From my understanding, the brain actually prefers ketones, and rabbit starvation occurs when too much protein and not enough fat are consumed (rabbits are very, very lean). The low-carb diet I followed involved replacing carbs with fat-not protein. And anyone who's lost weight on a low-carb diet can tell you they lost fat. It's no "illusion," as Allport claims. I suggest that if you want to learn about low-carb diets, that you read books specific to them, not books on the history of fatty acids.The low-carb issue aside, I love this book (I've read it three times) and recommend it to anyone who wants to learn more about fatty acids and the history of fatty acid science. Allport's writing is exceptional, and The Queen of Fats remains a valuable addition to my health library.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Very informativeBy Jorge MartinezI was very pleased with this book, because it explains in sufficient detail all I wanted to know about dietary fats. Not being a scientist, I didn't want to get down in the weeds with this subject, but I wanted more information than what one gets in the popular literature. I only wish she had used the acronyms for some of these scientific names, it's very hard to continue reading "eicosapentatoic acid" when one could just as easily say EPA. But, she explains her reasons for doing this, and that's fair. I highly recommend this book to all nutrition followers who want to expand their knowledge on this subject.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Educating Making The Choice To Get Healthy!By G. Anne VanderlaanThe American diet has long been studied as people moved away from the agrarian lifestyle (i.e., farms) and farms consequently became big businesses focused on producing money rather than healthy food. Meanwhile, women have moved into the workplace for a variety of reasons; many stopped nursing their infants because of workplace demands and cultural issues. In light of such changes, the demand for instant food has increased, consequently wreaking havoc on the body--particularly the brain. For example, infant formula has been produced to replace breast milk; yet his has created a problem due to the lack of Omega 3 fatty acids in the formula. It seemed as if overnight children developed issues stemming from the lack of this important item in their diets.These issues began to affect children's moods; indeed, issues normally found in adults were now being found in children. For example, mood disorders were increasingly identified in children as well as adults. Thus, the researcher (Anne Vanderlaan) sought literature on this topic to find a link between professional and scientific research to determine if a connection existed between the lack of omega 3 fatty acids in the American diet and mood issues. Ultimately, the literature review aimed to determine whether putting Omega 3 fatty acids back into the diet would enhance mood. Using this approach, the researcher's purpose is to establish causation and a possible cure for mood issues.Here is one book that I found to explain in easy terms and to pass on to others.The author of this book supplied the researcher with an organized sequential way of looking at Omega 3 fatty acids, putting the information into perspective. The discussion began with a timeline of the history of the finding of Vitamin F and fatty acids (Omega 3). Allport (2006) outlined important findings, including the reasons behind the food industry removing Omega 3 fatty acids from the western diet. Intertwined with stories of scientists in Europe, Greenland, Africa, Australia, and the United States, Allport provided a personal touch to one of the most important dietary stories of all time: how populations in Western countries like the United States came to be deficient in these essential nutrients.The book clarifies the enormous health consequences of this dietary oversight (not just heart disease but also cancer, diabetes, and obesity) and dramatically portrays how scientists have learned that the two families of polyunsaturated fats (Omega 3 and omega 6--one derived from leaves and the other from seeds and both essential to human health) compete for positions in cells but affect cells in very different ways. According to Allport (2006), Omega 3 fatty acids are used for life's speediest tasks. People run into dilemmas when the omega 6

fatty acids cancel out foods and our tissues on a cellular level. The book provides persuasive suggestions for reintroducing Omega 3 fatty acids, whose discovery, science, and politics will transform our thinking about what people should be eating.Allport (2006) plainly explains how little fish eat the algae and big fish eat the little fish, which have eaten the algae. Ultimately, fish get their Omega 3 fatty acids in the end from algae and plankton. One of the reasons why fish are important--and a good source of Omega 3 fatty acids--is because they live in the ocean and need more such flexible fats in their tissues in order to be active in the colder environment. Allport explains that fish are the last animals in our food supply that still eats greens or predominantly eats greens. In the past, all our livestock used to forage for themselves and eat plenty of grasses and other greens, filling their tissues with Omega 3 fatty acids while ingesting fewer Omega 6 fatty acids.Although really small differences in chemical structure exist between these two families of fats, significant differences occur in function and in where they are found. Omega 6 fatty acids are much more abundant in seeds and are far less susceptible to going rancid due to oxidation. Thus, they can be more safely stored in a seed. Plants can then turn those Omega 6 fatty acids into omega 3 fatty acids when the plants need them (e.g., at the moment of germination, when photosynthesis starts). Animals cannot make such a conversion. Moreover, people have to consume them in the right balance to have the right proportion in our tissues or the Omega 6 fatty acids will cancel out the Omega 3 fatty acids on a cellular level.

A nutritional whodunit that takes readers from Greenland to Africa to Israel, The Queen of Fats gives a fascinating account of how we have become deficient in a nutrient that is essential for good health: the fatty acids known as omega-3s. Writing with intelligence and passion, Susan Allport tells the story of these vital fats, which are abundant in greens and fish, among other foods. She describes how scientists came to understand the role of omega-3s in our diet, why commercial processing has removed them from the food we eat, and what the tremendous consequences have been for our health. In many Western countries, epidemics of inflammatory diseases and metabolic disorders have been traced to omega-3 deficiencies. The Queen of Fats provides information for every consumer who wants to reduce the risk of heart disease, cancer, arthritis, and obesity and to improve brain function and overall health. This important and compelling investigation into the discovery, science, and politics of omega-3s will transform our thinking about what we should be eating.* Includes steps you can take to add omega-3s to your diet* Shows why eating fish is not the only way, or even the best way, to increase omega-3s.* Provides a new way to understand the complex advice about the role and importance of fats in the body* Explains how and why the food industry has created a deadly imbalance of fats in our foods* Shows how omega-3s can be reintroduced to our diet through food enrichment and changes in the feeding of livestock

A decidedly proactive voice for healthy balance and moderation in fat consumption.