

**FOOD IN WORLD HISTORY**  
**History 193F Syllabus—Winter 2010**



**Instructors:**

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Due to budget cuts, the service to all faculty office phones has been cut off; the best way to contact the professors is by email or during office hours.

**Class Time and Room:** T/Th, 2:00-3:15 Buchanan 1940

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course explores the cultural, economic, and geopolitical roles of food and drink in world history from pre-modern times to the present. Topics include: how the introduction of new foods (including spices, coffee, tea, chocolate, sugar) transformed empires and global trading networks; food as a site of cultural exchange and interaction; food practices as expressions and markers of identities based on race, class, gender, nationality, religion and community, and sexuality and body image; how wars, industrialization and other political upheavals transformed food production and consumption; the history of food retailing and public dining, the history of hunger and overeating, the morality of drinking, eating; and the successes and failures of various movements to reform food production and consumption.

**REQUIRED READINGS**

Paul Freedman, *Out of the East: Spices and the Medieval Imagination*

Sidney Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History*

Jeffrey Pilcher, *Que Viven Los Tamales!: Food and the Making of Mexican Identity*

Eric Schlosser, *Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal*

Coursepack, available for purchase at Alternative Copy Shop, Pardall Road

## **COURSE ASSIGNMENTS**

### **Paper 1: (30%): . Due in class on January 26.**

Write a 6-7-page paper answering the following question: Since at least the Middle Ages foods have travelled long distances and transformed the diets of people across the globe. Using your reading from this unit, compare and contrast how and why new foods were adopted and/or rejected in the Middle Ages, Early Modern Period, and the Nineteenth Century. You may want to consider such things as the role of culture and the imagination, economics and politics, science and religion. You must include material from the lectures and **all** the readings in this unit. Be specific and cite your sources.

### **Paper 2: (30%): Due in class on March 2.**

Write a 6-7-page paper using at least one book and at least five articles and material from lectures to answer one of the following:

Option A: How have hunger, scarcity and abundance been politicized in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries? What role have food producers, food consumers and the state played in the process of politicizing food, its allocation and its meaning?

Option B: How have gender ideology and gender roles shaped food practices and meanings in at least three national contexts?

**Take-Home Final (40%):** A 7-9-page analytical essay based on lectures and readings from Parts II-IV. Due March 17 by no later than 4pm. Please put papers in the faculty box in the History Department office on the fourth floor of HSSB.

## **IMPORTANT CLASS POLICIES**

Students who submit plagiarized papers will receive an F on the assignment and an F in the course. Students who fail to complete all of the assignments will also fail the course.

Late papers will be marked down one-third grade for each day late (i.e., an A- would be marked down to a B+). The History Department does not time stamp papers, so if you turn in a paper late, please submit a hard copy and email us a version so that I can know when the paper was turned in. Neither the professors nor the History Department will print out emailed papers, so please always submit a hard copy.

## **SCHEDULE OF LECTURES AND READINGS**

### **I. TRADE, TASTE AND FOOD REVOLUTIONS SINCE THE MIDDLE AGES**

JAN. 5: Introduction and Course Themes: Forbidden Foods and Cherished Foods

JAN. 7: Feast and Famine: The Spice Trade and Medieval Food Cultures

#### **Readings:**

- Freedman, *Out of the East*

JAN. 12: Columbian Exchange

#### **Readings:**

- 1: Sucheta Mazumbar, "The Impact of New World Food Crops on the Diet and Economy of China and India, 1600-1900"

JAN. 14: The Caffeine Revolution

**Readings:** Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*

JAN. 19: Imperial Encounters

- Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*
- 2: Susie Protschky, “The Colonial Table: Food, Culture and Dutch Identity in Colonial Indonesia”
- 3: *Mrs. Beeton’s Book of Household Management* (1861), “Bengal Recipe for Making Mango Chetney”

## **II: INDUSTRIALIZATION, COMMERCIALIZATION, AND FOOD ANXIETIES: NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES**

JAN 21: Industrialization and the Mass Market

**Readings:**

- Schlosser, *Fast Food Nation*

JAN 26: Film: *Food, Inc.*—**First Paper Due**

JAN 28: Food Scares and Food Reforms

**Readings:**

- 4: Warren Belasco, “Food, Morality and Social Reform”
- 5: Erika Rappaport, “Packaging China: Foreign Articles and Dangerous Tastes in the Mid-Victorian England”
- 6: Excerpt from Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle*

FEB. 2: Eating Out

**Readings:**

- 7: Yunxiang Yan, “Of Hamburger and Social Space: Consuming McDonald’s in Beijing,” *Cultural Politics of Food and Eating Reader*
- 8: Dolores Hayden, “Community Kitchens and Cooked Food Services”

FEB. 4: Fat and Thin

**Readings:**

- 9: Brumberg, “Appetite as Voice”
- 10: Becky Thompson, “ ‘Way Outa No Way’: Eating Problems among African-American, Latina and White Women”
- 11: Elisa J. Sobo, “The Sweetness of Fat: Health, Procreation, and Sociability in Rural Jamaica”

## **III: SCARCITY AND ABUNDANCE: THE POLITICS AND CULTURE OF FOOD: NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES**

FEB. 9: Famine and the Modern History of Hunger

**Readings:**

- 12: James Vernon, “Hunger as Political Critique”

FEB. 11. Food Riots and Hunger Strikes

**Readings:**

- 13: “Women’s Popular Protests in Berlin” during World War I
- 14: Jeremy Rich, “Hunger and Consumer Protest in Colonial Africa during the First World War”

FEB. 16: War and the Politics of Food Rationing

**Readings:**

- 15: Amy Bentley, “Islands of Serenity”
- 16: Lisa Jacobson, “Beer Goes to War”

FEB. 18: Disciplining People and Appetites: Food in Institutional Settings

**Readings:**

- 17: Anne Allison, “Japanese Mothers and *Obentōs*: The Lunch-box as Ideological State Apparatus”
- 18: Selection of primary documents on food in institutions from *Food: An Oxford Anthology*

FEB. 23: Cuisine and National Identity

**Readings:**

- Pilcher, *Que Viven Los Tamales!*
- 19: August Giebelhaus, “The Pause that Refreshed the World: The Evolution of Coca-Cola’s Global Marketing Strategy”
- 20: Daniel Miller, “Coca-Cola: A Black Sweet Drink from Trinidad”

FEB. 25: Gender and the Domestic Politics of Food

**Readings:**

- Pilcher, *Que Viven Los Tamales!*
- 21: Josephine Beoku-Betts, “‘We Got Our Way of Cooking Things’: Women, Food, and the Preservation of Cultural Identity among the Gullah”

#### **IV. FOOD VISIONARIES AND FOOD REVOLUTIONS: 1960-PRESENT**

MAR. 2: Cosmopolitanism and the Return to Sensuality and the Natural- **Papers due**

**Readings:**

- 22: Michael Pollan, “Out of the Kitchen, Onto the Couch”

MAR. 4: The Future of Food: Guest Panel Discussion

**Readings:**

- 23: Belasco, *Appetite for Change*, excerpt
- 24: Michael Pollan, “Unhappy Meals”
- 25: Blake Hurst, “The Omnivore’s Delusion: Against the Agri-Intellectuals”
- 26: Raj Patel, et al, “Ending Africa’s Hunger”
- 27: Dayo Olopade, “Green Shoots in New Orleans”
- 28: Anne Lappé, “Cafeteria Consciousness”

MAR. 9: Course Summary

MAR. 11: Non-Classroom instruction day—a film assignment will be handed out

MAR. 17: FINAL DUE. Place papers in faculty box in the History Department office on the fourth floor of HSSB by no later than 4pm.