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Food and Culture (FOODGE.2191.001)

Fall 2014
Thursdays, 6:45- 8:25 P.M.
GCASL 279

For appointments-call 212-998-5580 to schedule an appt. during office hours
Office Address: 411 Lafayette Street, 5th Floor
Office Hours: generally on Wednesdays 1-3 p.m.
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Course Description and Objectives

In Food and Culture we will determine how people use food to define themselves as individuals, groups or whole societies. We will identify the meaning and significance of food in different cultures by exploring the way that ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status and religion influence our food choices or preferences. Additionally, we will examine how culture is transmitted and preserved through food. Through reading scholarly articles, personal essays, book excerpts, newspaper articles and cookbooks we will explore the intricate relationship that people have with food.

We will look critically at the following questions: how can food have different meanings and uses for different people? How does food function both to foster community feeling and drive wedges among people? What are some prevailing academic theories that help us identify and understand more subtle meanings of food?

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course students should be able to:

1. Describe major academic theories about the relationship between food and identity.
2. Analyze how individual and collective identities are asserted and represented in the realm of food practices and in the media.
3. Compare and contrast processes of food-based identity as they have developed around nation, region, religion, race and ethnicity.
4. Identify and explain stereotypes and archetypes about another through their food.
5. Contrast insider and outsider modes of identity claims and assignment.
6. Explain why and how people fight over food, and why disgust is often gustatory.
7. Elaborate on the mutual constitution of the self and the other, along with the love,

longing and disdain for the other's food.

Required Readings

Books:

Counihan, C. and Esterik, P.V. (Eds.), *Food and Culture: A Reader* 3rd edition (F&C)

Counihan, C. *Food in the USA: A Reader* (Routledge, 2002). (USA)

Recommended (but not required)

Belasco, W. and Scranton, P. *Food Nations: Selling Taste in Consumer Societies* (Routledge, 2002).

Additional articles- posted on NYU Classes (NYUC)

*** All assigned readings are due on the day they appear on the syllabus. You are expected to read all articles, and be prepared to discuss them critically. We will be doing close reading of the texts in class so please bring readings to class on the assigned day.

Course Schedule

September 4

Course Introduction

Overview of Course

September 11

Theories of Food, Part I: The Ideal

Readings:

Levi-Strauss, Claude, "The Culinary Triangle." (F&C)

Douglas, Mary, "Deciphering a Meal." (NYUC—not the one in F&C)

Paz, Octavio, "Eroticism and Gastrosophy," *Daedalus* 101 (Fall 1972): (67-85). (NYUC)

Barthes, Roland, "Towards a Psychosociology of Contemporary Food Consumption." (F&C)

September 18

Theories of Food, Part II: The Material

Readings:

Harris, Marvin, "The Abominable Pig." (F&C)

Bourdieu, Pierre, "Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste" (F&C)

Goody, Jack, "Industrial Cuisine: Towards the Development of a World Cuisine." (F&C)

September 25

Food and Race/Ethnicity

Levenstein, Harvey, "The American Response to Italian Food, 1880-1930)," (**USA**, 75-90).

Nabhan, Gary Paul, "Diabetes, Diet, and Native American Foraging Traditions." (**USA**, 231-237)

Poe, Tracey, "The Origins of Soul Food in Black Urban Identity: Chicago, 1915-1947." (**USA**, 91-108)

Additional Optional Readings:

Williams-Forson, Psyche, "'More than Just the Big Piece of Chicken': The Power of Race, Class, and Food in American Consciousness" (**USA 107-118**)

October 2

Food and Religion/Food and Taboo

Readings:

Tuchman, Gaye and Levine, Harry, "New York Jews and Chinese Food: The Social Construction of an Ethnic Pattern." in Shortridge, B. & Shortridge, J., (Eds.) The Taste of American Place. Rowman & Littlefield, 1998, (163 - 186) (**NYUC**)

Bynum, Caroline Walker, "Fast, Feast, and Flesh: The Significance of Food to Medieval Women." (**F&C**)

McCutcheon, Priscilla, "Community Food Security 'For Us, By Us': The Nation of Islam and the Pan African Orthodox Christian Church" (**F&C**)

Schwabe, Calvin, W., *Unmentionable Cuisine*. Virginia: University Press of Virginia, 1979. Introduction, Chapter 4, 5, 6, and 20. (pp.1-10, 149-178, 365-383) (**NYUC**)

October 9

Food and Gender

Readings:

Allison, Anne, "Japanese Mothers and Obentos: The Lunch Box as Ideological State Apparatus." (**F&C**)

Carrington, Christopher, "Feeding Lesbian Families" (**F&C**)

Swanson, Rebecca, "Domestic Divo? Televised Treatments of Masculinity, Femininity, and Food" (**F&C**)

Bentley, Amy, "Islands of Serenity: Gender, Race, and Ordered Meals During World War II." (**USA**, 171-192)

Additional Optional Readings:

Parasecoli, Fabio, "Feeding Hard Bodies: Food and Masculinity in Men's Fitness Magazines." **(F&C)**

Beoku-Betts, Josephine, "'We Got Our Way of Cooking Things': Women, Food, and Preservation of Cultural Identity Among the Gullah." **(USA, 277-294)**

Counihan, Carole, "Mexicanas' Food Voice and Differential Consciousness in the San Luis Valley of Colorado" **(F&C)**

October 16

Food and Socioeconomic Status

Readings:

Fitchen, Janet, "Hunger, Malnutrition, and Poverty in the Contemporary United States." **(NYUC)**

Poppendieck, Janet, "Want Amid Plenty: From Hunger to Inequality." **(F&C)**

Roseberry, William, "The Rise of Yuppie Coffees and the Reimagination of Class in the United States." **(USA, 149-168)**

October 23

Food and Identity/Food as Cultural Icon

Readings:

Fischler, C. "Food, Self and Identity," Anthropology of Food (27), 2 (1988): 275-292. **(NYUC)**

Weiner, Mark. "Consumer Culture and Participatory Democracy: The Story of Coca-Cola." **(USA)**

Neustadt, Kathy, "Born among the Shells": The Quakers of Allen's Neck and Their Clambake." In Humphrey and Humphrey (Eds.) "We Gather Together" Food and Festival in American Life (pp.89-110) **(NYUC)**

October 30

Food, Memory and Nostalgia

Readings:

De Silva, Cara. ed. In Memory's Kitchen: A Legacy from the Women of Terezin (New York: Jason Aronson, 1996), ix-xvi, xxv-5. **(NYUC)**

Proust, Marcel- "Madeleine" excerpt **(NYUC)**

Sutton, David. "Sensory Memory and the Construction of Worlds," in *Remembrance of Repasts* **(NYUC)**

November 6

No class—work on your papers

November 13

The Locus of Cuisine: Nation, Region, Metropole

Readings:

Rozin, Elizabeth, "The Structure of Cuisine," in Barker, Ed., *The Psychobiology of Human Food Selection* (AVI Publishing, 1982).
(NYUC)

Mintz, Sidney, "Eating American." (USA, 23-33)

Appadurai, Arjun. "How to Make a National Cuisine." (F&C)

Gabaccia, Donna, "What Do We Eat?" (USA, 35-40)

Davis, Mitchell, "Eating Out, Eating American: New York Restaurant Dining and Identity," in *Gastropolis: Food and New York City*, eds. Annie Hauck-Lawson and Jonathan Deutsch (Columbia UP, 2009): 293-307. (NYUC)

November 20

Food, Holidays and Rituals: Thanksgiving as a Case Study

Siskind, Janet, "The Invention of Thanksgiving: A Ritual of American Nationality" (USA, 41-58)

Eric Hobsbawm & Terence Ranger, ed. (192). *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge University Press. (excerpt TBD)

***** 5 Page rough draft of research paper due *****

Try to make this draft as close to your final project as possible. Include a **thesis, rough chronology of ideas and concluding remarks**. Bring (2) copies of your draft - one to turn in to me, and one to share with a reading partner. We will spend 30 minutes in class, working in paired groups.

November 27

NO CLASS- THANKSGIVING

December 4

presentations

December 11

presentations

***** Papers Due Friday, December 18, 2014 *** Hard Copy due in the office by 5 p.m.**

Research Paper and Presentations

An independent 15 page research paper of your choice, accompanied by an 8 minute oral presentation is the culminating project for Food and Culture. You may choose a topic that we are exploring in class, or an area of personal or academic interest. A brief list of the **types** of topics appropriate are:

- . Exploring a particular ethnic group's foodways.
- . Specific religious practices and food
- . Wonder Bread as an American phenomenon

- . An in depth study of a food event or festival
- . An ethnographic study of a soup kitchen
- . A literary analysis of food related novels or films
- . The sociological movement of vegans
- . Cultural identity through street food
- . Power and chefs
- . Cultural significance of medieval fasts and feasts
- . A study of a Korean family's acculturation and resistance through food
- . Technology's role in "Americanizing" an ethnic cuisine
- . Masculine meat, and feminine field greens

These topics are merely meant to give you an idea of the vast possibilities. Whatever topic you select, it must be original. By this, I mean that you may not select a topic that you are using, or have previously used for another class. Try to select a topic as soon as possible, and make an appointment to meet with me and discuss your ideas.

The Paper

Please type, double space and staple your 15 page paper. Please use 12 point font. It must have a title that accurately defines your paper. **You must have a clearly stated thesis, and focus the entire paper around it.** Provide specific examples to support this thesis. Select other studies, or scholarly articles to use as models. For example, if you are doing a study on female roles in Ethiopian festival cooking, look for studies that also focus on gender roles or festival food preparations. It is important that you incorporate other academic studies into your project. I am not however, just looking for a related literature review. You must not just cite these projects, but frame them, or compare them to your study in some way.

I suggest beginning with a thorough search in the library, for any and all material related to your topic of interest. You may use Bobcat, or other ONLINE searches. The reference librarians at Bobst are extremely helpful. Do not be afraid to use other libraries as well. The research library at the NYPL is perhaps the finest in the world. Explore the Internet, newspaper articles, journals, live interviews, participate in an actual event or situation, or consult archives. All information is helpful. You must use at least ten scholarly references (journals or books). Additionally, you may use newspapers, popular magazines, cookbooks, trade publications, films, surveys, pamphlets, labels, etc. Strong research papers combine both primary and secondary sources.

It is understood that the paper must be free of typographical and grammatical errors. I strongly urge even the most accomplished writers to seek advice from the Writing Center. Make your appointments early, as they book up quickly. **Check the rules of plagiarism.** Cite all original quotes and paraphrased information. Any academic style is acceptable. However, make sure that you consult a style manual for the exact way to reference materials. Staple your

paper (no binders please) and include a title page. You may use footnotes OR endnotes, but either way, your paper MUST have a separate bibliography.

The paper is due Thursday, December 18, 2014. Late papers will receive a drop in grade. Additionally, you need to email me a copy of your paper.

A 5- page rough draft of your paper is due on November 20th in class. I am unable to accept drafts after that.

The Presentation

The presentation is your opportunity to share your research with the rest of the class. Use your 5 minutes of glory wisely. Remember that the class is unaware of your project or area of interest. You must successfully “teach” us your topic in 5 minutes. To achieve this you need to quickly summarize your project, and cite specific supporting examples. You obviously cannot share your entire project with the class, so choose your selections carefully.

Do not read your paper, or even read from an abridged version. Rather, use note cards to remind you of key points, and speak to us, not at us. A touch of humor, if appropriate is fine. Just make sure that your presentation is interesting. You selected a topic that you are passionate about. Share the passion with us.

Use any aids that might be helpful: slides, overheads, handouts, music, video, photographs, etc.

Grading Criteria

Participation: discussion and attendance	40%
Research paper, draft, and presentation	<u>60%</u>
TOTAL	100%

Participation involves coming to class, completing all of the required readings and active participation in lecture and discussion. The richness of our discussions requires involvement from everyone. Your thoughts and opinions matter.

*** Please note: Any student attending NYU who needs an accommodation due to chronic psychological, visual, mobility and/or learning disability, or is Deaf or Hard of Hearing should register with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212-998-4980, 240 Greene Street, www.nyu.edu/csd ***

Please sign and attach to your paper:

HONOR CODE

I pledge that the attached work is my own and that I have received no assistance from anyone in any way executing it beyond others' reviewing it and making recommendations for revision. This work was not rewritten by another. The words are my own. If I have used someone else's ideas, those ideas have been given full and proper credit. All reference works actually exist and have been fully identified. I pledge that nothing here has been disguised so as to mislead the reader. I understand that it is my responsibility to make public immediately all violations of the code by anyone.

Signed _____

Date _____