HIST 4495, United States Food History
MWF, 2:00-2:50, WH 212

Instructor: Dr. Jennifer Jensen Wallach
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Office hours: MW 11:30-1:30 or by appointment

Course Description/ Course Goals
Anthropologists and folklorists have long considered documenting foodways to be an important part of their attempts to understand the inner workings of various cultures. More recently, historians have begun to pay serious attention to the relationship between foods and food practices and our understanding of the past. Like everything else, food has a history. Some recent studies have concentrated on the way that various food items—salt, oysters, and potatoes among others—have shaped the course of history as these items were sought after, transplanted, and consumed.

In this course, we will pay some attention to the specific histories of various food items—when and where they were produced and eaten. However, our primary emphasis will be on the relationship between food and culture. Our perspective will be interpretive as we look for meanings embedded in various food practices, using the culinary sphere as a lens for gaining a better understanding of the cultural history of vanished times and places.

The overarching theme of this course will be that of “identity.” Food practices are used to denote racial, ethnic, and regional backgrounds; class positions and aspirations; and political and religious ideologies. As we survey American food history from the colonial era through the present, we will pay particular attention to what food practices can tell us about evolving ideas about American identity.

Our examination of the history of food will inevitably also lead us to the present and to the future. Students will be encouraged to think critically about their own food practices and what their behavior tells them about their own values and individual histories. We will use our knowledge to look to the foodways of the future. What changes do we see in American consumption patterns and in attitudes towards foods over time? What challenges, dangers, and exciting promises do we see in the future of American food and eating?

Required Texts
Carol J. Adams, Burger
Charlotte Biltekoff, Eating Right in America: The Cultural Politics of Food and Health
Katharina Vester, A Taste of Power: Food and American Identities
Other readings will be posted on Canvas

Class Format
The ethos of the class will be participatory and collaborative. Students are expected to have come to class having completed the assigned reading and ready to participate. The success of the class will depend on the intellectual collaboration of the entire group.

Attendance
Please note that attendance is required in this course. I want to create an atmosphere where people will comfortable to speak up in class and inspired to engage with the material. In order for this to happen, we must all commit to attending regularly. After more than three unexcused absences I will deduct one letter grade from your final grade. Please contact me before you miss class to see if your absence will be excused.
**Grades and Assignments**

Three tests—(50 points each) 150 points
Five Reading Quizzes (10 points each)—50 points
Cookbook Analysis Paper—100 points
Food Reflection Journal—100 points

**Total points:** 400

Grades:
- 360-400 = A
- 320-359 = B
- 280-319 = C
- 240-279 = D

**Tests and Quizzes**
You will take three tests covering the lectures, reading assignments, and films viewed in class. In the class period before each test, I will give you some tips for how to best prepare for it.

**Reading Quizzes**
You will take five reading quizzes worth ten points each. See the syllabus for the schedule.

**Cookbook Analysis Paper**
You will write a 5-6 page paper analyzing a cookbook written before 1975 as a historical resource. Further guidelines for this assignment will be distributed later. This paper will be due on Monday, May 6, 2018 and will serve as your final exam for the course.

**Food History Journal**
Throughout the semester, you will keep a food history reflection journal, which will be due during the on the last day of class. You should write in the journal every week, and you should turn in at least 15 pages (typed, 12 point font, double-spaced) at the end of the semester. 15 pages is the minimum for an acceptable journal. Excellent journals are generally much lengthier. Please use the weekly essay prompt listed on your syllabus to inspire your entry that week. Please date each entry.

**Late/ Missed Quizzes or Assignments and Attendance**
I will allow you to make up tests and quizzes only if arrangements are made in advance and proper documentation explaining your absence is provided. Please do not ask me to make exceptions to this or any other stated policy. Out of fairness to the entire class, I must strictly adhere to the rules stated on this syllabus.

**How to Reach Me**
Please always feel free to come and see me during my office hours if you have any comments, questions, or concerns. E-mail is the best way to reach me to set up an appointment or to ask a quick question.

**Special Needs**
The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at http://www.unt.edu/oda. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.
**Academic Honesty**

Students are expected to strictly adhere to the UNT Student Code of Conduct, which prohibits lying, cheating, and plagiarism. Honor code violations may result in a failing grade for an assignment on the first offense. The second offense will result in failure of the course.

Please be particularly careful to avoid plagiarism—taking credit for another person’s intellectual property without giving her proper credit.

The American Historical Association’s “Statement on Professional Conduct” defines plagiarism in the following way:

“The word *plagiarism* derives from Latin roots: *plagiarius*, an abductor, and *plagiare*, to steal. The expropriation of another author’s work, and the presentation of it as one’s own, constitutes plagiarism and is a serious violation of the ethics of scholarship. It seriously undermines the credibility of the plagiarist, and can do irreparable harm to a historian’s career.

In addition to the harm that plagiarism does to the pursuit of truth, it can also be an offense against the literary rights of the original author and the property rights of the copyright owner... The real penalty for plagiarism is the abhorrence of the community of scholars.

Plagiarism includes more subtle abuses than simply expropriating the exact wording of another author without attribution. Plagiarism can also include the limited borrowing, without sufficient attribution, of another person’s distinctive and significant research findings or interpretations. Of course, historical knowledge is cumulative, and thus in some contexts—such as textbooks, encyclopedia articles, broad syntheses, and certain forms of public presentation—the form of attribution, and the permissible extent of dependence on prior scholarship, citation, and other forms of attribution will differ from what is expected in more limited monographs. As knowledge is disseminated to a wide public, it loses some of its personal reference. What belongs to whom becomes less distinct. But even in textbooks a historian should acknowledge the sources of recent or distinctive findings and interpretations, those not yet a part of the common understanding of the profession. Similarly, while some forms of historical work do not lend themselves to explicit attribution (e.g., films and exhibitions), every effort should be made to give due credit to scholarship informing such work.

Plagiarism, then, takes many forms. The clearest abuse is the use of another’s language without quotation marks and citation. More subtle abuses include the appropriation of concepts, data, or notes all disguised in newly crafted sentences, or reference to a borrowed work in an early note and then extensive further use without subsequent attribution. Borrowing unexamined primary source references from a secondary work without citing that work is likewise inappropriate. All such tactics reflect an unworthy disregard for the contributions of others.

No matter what the context, the best professional practice for avoiding a charge of plagiarism is always to be explicit, thorough, and generous in acknowledging one’s intellectual debts.”

(See: [http://www.historians.org/pubs/free/professionalstandards.cfm#Plagiarism](http://www.historians.org/pubs/free/professionalstandards.cfm#Plagiarism))

If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism while you are in the process of writing your final exam, see me. In the past I have had to assign failing grades to students for plagiarism; I do not want this to happen again.
Schedule—Please note that the schedule is subject to change. Students are expected to attend class regularly and to be aware of any changes.

Week 1: The Emergence of a Multicultural Cuisine

Journal prompt: Why did you sign up for this course? Based upon the syllabus and our discussions so far, is the course similar or different to what you expected?

January 14—Introduction; How to Analyze a Primary Sources

January 16—Lecture: Colonial Culinary Encounters at Jamestown
Reading posted on Canvas: “Olaudah Equiano Describes the Food of Seventeenth Century Igbo,” “Alexander Falconbridge Describes the Food of the Middle Passage,” “Colonial Advertisement Offering Slaves for Sale Who had Experience Cultivating Rice,” Wahunsonacock Advises the English Residents of Jamestown Not to Steal Food from Native Americans,” “Captain John Smith Describes the Starving Time of 1609-1610”


Week 2: Ambivalent Attitudes about Corn; The So-called “First Thanksgiving”

Journal prompt: What does your family’s Thanksgiving (or different holiday) menu reveal about your family’s history and/or aspirations?

January 21—NO CLASS, MLK Day


January 25—Lecture: The So-called First Thanksgiving

Week 3: Food and the Founding/ Critical Nutrition Studies

Journal prompt: Do you think there is a “right” way to eat? Explain.

January 28—Discussion: Be prepared to discuss the symbolism of your Thanksgiving (or other significant holiday) menu; Reading posted on Canvas: Lisa Jordan and Elizabeth S.D. Engelhardt, “The Perilous Whiteness of Pumpkins”


February 1—Discussion/ Read: Biltekoff, *Eating Right in America*, Chapter 1“The Cultural Politics of Dietary Health”; Reading Quiz #1

Week 4: Food and the Expanding American Empire

Journal prompt: Today, is there a distinctly “American” way of eating? Explain.

February 4—Lecture: The Food of the Louisiana Purchase
Reading/ Discussion Posted on Blackboard: Shannon Lee Dawdy, “A Wild Taste’: Food and Colonialism in Eighteenth Century Louisiana”
**February 6**— Lecture: The Food of Westward Expansion
Reading/Discussion Posted on Blackboard: Michael D. Wise, “Seeing Like a Stomach: Food, the Body, and Jeffersonian Exploration in the Near Southwest, 1804-1808”

**February 8**— Catch up; Review for Test #1

**Week 5:** Test #1/ Immigration and the American Palate

*Journal prompt:* Throughout history, immigrants to the United States have modified their diets in various ways after arriving in the US. Have you had an experience in your life that caused you to modify how and what you eat? If not, can you imagine circumstances that might make you radically change how you eat? Explain.

**February 11**— Test #1

**February 13**— Lecture: The Invention of Italian American Cuisine


**Week 6:** Technology, Taste, and Industrial Food/ Utopian Food Reform in the Nineteenth Century

*Journal prompt:* Write about whatever inspires you this week.

**February 18**— Lecture: Technology and Taste

**February 20**— Lecture: The Ascendency of Industrial Food; Reading posted on Canvas, Shane Hamilton, “The Twentieth Century”; *Reading Quiz #2*

**February 22**— Lecture: Nineteenth Century Food Reformers; Reading: Vester, *A Taste of Power*, 49-53

**Week 7:** Race and Pragmatic Food Reform

*Journal prompt:* How has your understanding of US history changed or grown this semester? Has studying food opened up different perspectives or raised new questions about historical issues you thought you were familiar with?

**February 25**— Lecture: Booker T. Washington and Pragmatic Food Reform at the Tuskegee Institute

**February 27**— Catch up; Share from journals

**March 1**— NO CLASS TODAY. The history department is hosting a conference titled “Body, Place, Identity” on March 1-2 for undergraduate and graduate students. You may attend up to two sessions (including the keynote addresses) and write a 1-2 page response to what you heard for extra credit. Details will be distributed later.

**Week 8:** Scientific and Righteous Cooks during the Progressive Era

*Journal prompt:* How effective was the domestic science movement in elevating the status of female, domestic labor? Do you think the strategy of describing housework as a “science” a good one?

**March 4**— Lecture: Outsourcing the Domestic Sphere
March 6—Lecture: The Invention of the Domestic Scientist

March 8-- Discussion/ Read: Biltekoff, Chapter 2 “Scientific Moralization and the Beginning of Dietary Reform”
Guidelines for Cookbook Analysis Paper Distributed

Week 9: Spring Break

March 11—NO CLASS

March 13—NO CLASS

March 15—NO CLASS

Week 10: Gendered and Patriotic Bodies during the Second World War/ Test #2

Journal prompt: To what extent are twenty-first century expectations about food preparation and gender roles similar or different from the 1940s and 1950s?

March 18-- Lecture: Women on the World War II Food Front

March 20-- Discussion/ Read: Biltekoff, Chapter 3 “Anxiety and Aspiration on the Nutrition Front”

March 22—Test #2

Week 11: Food and Gender in the Postwar Era/ Food and Racial Construction

Journal prompt: List some foods that are coded as “male” or “female” foods and speculate about why for at least one food.

March 25-- Lecture: The Idealized Housewife Confronts Convenience Food

March 27—Lecture: Cooking and Changing Ideas of Masculinity in the Twentieth Century; Discussion/ Read Vester A Taste of Power, 117-136; In class, watch “Fast Food Lasagna: Epic Meal Time” (5 minutes, 37 seconds); Reading Quiz #3

March 29-- Lecture: Food, Racial Construction, and African Americans Food Stereotypes; Reading Posted on Canvas, Michael Twitty, “An Open Letter to Paula Deen”

Week 12: Ambivalent Attitudes about Chinese Food; Library Instruction Session

Journal prompt: Write about the prestige of various varieties of restaurant cuisine in the United States (French, Mexican, Thai, Chinese, Italian, etc.) What varieties of food have the highest or lowest status, and why?

April 1—Lecture: Ambivalent Attitudes about Chinese American Food; In class, watch Eddie Huang, “No Coupons: Immigrants Should be Confident in Charging Full F***ing Price” (7 minutes and 58 seconds)

April 3—Library Instruction Session, Willis Library, Room 136
Please do not consider this class optional. You need this information in order to do research for your cookbook papers. You must use materials from the library
April 5—NO CLASS TODAY. Please use class period today to practice the research skills you learned on Wednesday and look for sources for your cookbook paper.

Week 13: The Appropriation Conversation/ LGBTQ in the Kitchen

*Journal Prompt: Write a response to one of the reading assignments for this week—your choice.*

April 8—NO CLASS TODAY. In lieu of class, please watch *Vegucated*, which is available streaming at the UNT Media Library (https://library.unt.edu/media/)

April 10—Lecture: Mexican Food and the Appropriation Conversation; Reading posted on Blackboard: Lisa Heldke, “Let’s Cook Thai” and Krishnendu Ray, excerpt from *The Ethnic Restaurateur*

April 12—Discussion/ read: Vester, *A Taste of Power* 169-195 and Kyle Fitzpatrick, “Queer Food is Hiding in Plain Sight,” *Eater*, June 28, 2018; Watch in class, ”First Date Couscous: Cooking with Lesbians” (6 minutes and nine seconds)

Week 14: “Ideal” Bodies and Hungry Ones in the Twentieth Century

*Journal prompt: Create one daily menu for the “Standard American Diet” (high in animal products, sugar, and processed foods) and create one menu for a either an “Ethical Omnivore” (organic fruits and vegetables and “humane” meat) or a “Vegan Diet” (no animal products) (Two menus total.) Estimate the cost of each. Try to create the most budget friendly menus you can. Which diet seems the more economical, ethical, and enjoyable?*

April 15—Lecture: Nutritional Guidelines and Changing Ideas about the Healthy Body
Discussion/ Read: Discussion/ Read: Biltekoff, Chapter 5, “Thinness as Health, Self-Control, and Citizenship, Reading Quiz #4

April 17—Watch film, “Food Stamped,” (64 minutes)

April 19—Lecture: The Politics of Food

Week 15: Food Ethics

*Journal prompt: Has your diet or your ideas about a proper diet or the possibility of eating “right” changed throughout the semester? Explain.*

April 22—Lecture: The Politics of Food continued

April 24—Discussion/ Reading, Carol J. Adams, *Burger*, Reading Quiz #5

April 26—Discussion: How to analyze cookbooks/ recipes as historical sources; workshop on cookbook analysis papers

Week 16: Test #3/ Conclusion

April 29—Test #3

May 1—Food Reflection Journals Due; Be prepared to share one page from your journal.

*Cookbook analysis paper due in my office Wooten 247 by 3:30 am on Monday, May 6. Please note: I will not accept reflection journals late. I will not accept reflection journals via email.*