FOOD IN WORLD HISTORY

# History 193F Syllabus—Winter 2019

  

**Instructor:**

Lisa Jacobson

Office hours: HSSB 4232, M, 11:00-1:00pm and by appointment

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**Class Time and Room:** Tues/Thurs, 12:30-1:45pm Harold Frank Hall 1104

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Are we what we eat? Why do we like certain foods and hate others? Who determines what is healthy and good to eat? When is cooking work and when is it leisure? Why do we live in such a food-obsessed society? Why is there so much hunger in a world of plenty?

This course explores these and many other questions by studying the cultural, economic, and geopolitical roles of food and drink in world history from pre-modern times to the present. We will examine how the introduction of new foods (including spices, coffee, tea, chocolate, sugar) transformed empires and global trading networks; how political upheavals, wars, and industrialization transformed food production and food practices; and how reformers and policymakers have alternately worked to reinforce the power of the industrial food system, remedy its flaws, and create alternatives to it. We will play close attention to the changing meanings of food, hunger, and wellness: How has food acquired meaning through cultural exchange and interaction? How do food practices express and mark identities? How have changing notions of morality shaped the meanings and regulation of particular foods and beverages? How have policymakers, food producers, and food consumers politicized hunger, scarcity, and abundance?

**REQUIRED READINGS**

The following books are available for purchase in the campus bookstore and are on two-hour reserve in the library:

* Paul Freedman, *Out of the East: Spices and the Medieval Imagination*
* Charlotte Biltekoff, *Eating Right in America: The Cultural Politics of Food and Health*
* Eric Schlosser, *Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal*

The remaining articles and book chapters are posted on GauchoSpace (noted on syllabus as GS)

**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS**

**Paper 1: (30%):**  **Due in class on February 5**. A 5-page analytical essay based on readings and lectures from the first four weeks of class. Questions will be posted on GauchoSpace a week in advance.

**Primary Source Analysis Paper (30%): Due in class on February 26.** A 4-page analytical paper focusing on materials in Part II of the course. The essay will evaluate a set of primary sources using ideas presented in the lectures and readings. These sources may include cookbooks, recipes, food advertisements, or diet commercials and dietary advice from any period in the past 200 years. Or you may create your own primary source by interviewing a family member, a food worker, a food grower, or a food entrepreneur, broadly defined. Details to come.

**In-Class Final (30%): Monday, March 18, 12:00-3:00pm.** Based on material from Parts II and III of the course. Study questions for the essays will be posted on GauchoSpace one week in advance.

**Class Participation (10%).** Half of this grade will be based on your class attendance, which will be measured by your iclicker responses. You can earn additional participation points by participating in the Open Forums on GauchoSpace, by participating in class discussion, or by asking questions in class or in office hours. Other opportunities to earn participation points will be announced in class. For a more details on the breakdown of participations points, please see the Participation Points Handout at the top of the GauchoSpace course page.

**IMPORTANT CLASS POLICIES: ATTENDANCE AND CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR**

1. **Attendance:** Students are expected to attend lectures. Students with more than six unexcused absences **will fail the class participation portion of the class**. Students who miss class for *documented* illness, bereavement, or other difficulties beyond the students’ control should contact the professor the day of the missed class. Students can make up some of the lost attendance points by posting a thoughtful comment on some of the readings for the missed day’s lecture on the Open Forum.
2. **Electronics**: During class, please **turn off all cell phones**and put away all electronic devices, except those you are using to take notes. Research increasingly shows that students retain more information and learn better when they take notes by hand rather than by typing on a laptop. I encourage you to take notes by hand, but if you do plan to use a laptop, please sit in the back rows of the class to minimize distractions. Students found surfing the net or engaging in non-class related activities may lose part of the participation grade and may be asked to leave the lecture.

**IMPORTANT CLASS POLICIES: LATE PAPERS AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

1. **How to submit papers/take-home exams:** Please submit a hard copy to the professor and upload a copy using the links on GauchoSpace. Uploading the paper will serve as an official time stamp.
2. **Penalties for plagiarism and uncompleted assignments:** Students who submit plagiarized papers will receive an F on the assignment and an F in the course. All papers will be submitted to plagiarism software. Students who fail to complete all of the assignments will also fail the course.
3. **I-clicker use:** No friend or decent person should ask a classmate to bring their iclicker to class and vote for them. Making the request and agreeing to the request are both considered cheating. Anyone discovered to be cheating in this manner will be reported to the Office of Judicial Affairs and will fail the class.
4. **Late Paper policy:** Late papers will be marked down 1/3 of a grade for each day late (an A- would become a B+). Neither the History Department nor I will print out emailed papers, so please always submit a hard copy and upload a copy to GauchoSpace to time stamp the paper. An extension may be granted under unusual circumstances.
5. **Email:**  I will respond to emails within 24 hours (Monday through Friday). I typically do not email over the weekend. Please include “193F” in the subject line to ensure a timely response.

**SCHEDULE OF LECTURES AND READINGS**

**PART I. FOOD MIGRATIONS AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE**

**Jan. 8: Introduction and Course Themes: Forbidden Foods/Cherished Foods**

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

**Jan. 10: The Spice of Life: Trade and Cultural Exchange in the Middle Ages**

* Paul Freedman, *Out of the East: Spices and the Medieval Imagination*, focus on intro, chapters 1- 6

**Jan. 15: The Columbian Exchange**

* Paul Freedman, *Out of the East: Spices and the Medieval Imagination*, finish (focus on ch.8)
* Nathan Nunn and Nancy Qian, “The Columbian Exchange: A History of Disease, Food, and Ideas,” GS

**Jan. 17: Migrations and US. Foodways**

* Jeffrey Pilcher, “ ‘Old Stock’ Tamales and Migrant Tacos,” GS
* Tracy Poe, “The Origins of Soul Food in Black Urban Identity: Chicago, 1915-1947,” GS
* Yong Chen, “Chinese-American Cuisine and the Authenticity of Chop Suey,” GS

**Jan. 22: Colonial Encounters (Guest Lecturer: Elizabeth Schmidt)**

* Troy Brickman, “Eating the Empire: Intersections of Food, Cookery, and Imperialism in Eighteenth-Century Britain,” GS
* Susan Zlotnick, “Domesticating Imperialism: Curry and Cookbooks in Victorian England,” GS
* Mrs. Beeton’s “Bengal Recipe for Making Mango Chutney,” GS

**Jan. 24: Global Foods/Local Meanings**

* Melissa Caldwell, “Domesticating the French Fry: McDonalds and Consumerism in Moscow,” GS
* Yunxiang Yan, “Of Hamburger and Social Space: Consuming McDonald’s in Beijing,” GS
* Theordore Bestor, “How Sushi Went Global,” GS

**PART II. FOOD PLEASURES AND FOOD ANXIETIES**

**Jan. 29: The Caffeine Revolution**

* Erika Rappaport, “ ‘A China Drink Approved by all Physicians’: Setting the Early Modern Tea Table,” in *A Taste of Empire: How Tea Shaped the Modern World*, GS
* “The Virtue of the Coffee Drink,” 373-374, GS

**Jan. 31: Bong Appétit: Intoxicating Foods and Beverages**

* Lisa Jacobson, “Beer Goes to War: The Politics of Beer Promotion and Production during the Second World War,” GS
* Craig Reinarman, Policing Pleasure: Food, Drugs, and the Politics of Ingestion,” GS
* Kolleen Guy, “Rituals of Pleasure in the Land of Treasures: Wine Consumption and the Making of French Identity in the Late Nineteenth Century,” GS

**Feb. 5: Food Work: Gender and the Labor of Cooking and Shopping (Paper #1 Due)**

* Anne Allison, “Japanese Mothers and Obentos: The Lunchbox as State Apparatus,” GS
* Brett Williams, “Why Migrant Women Feed Their Husbands Tamales,” GS
* Dolores Hayden, “Two Utopian Feminists and Their Campaigns for Kitchenless Homes,” GS
* Laura Shapiro, “Something from the Oven,” GS (optional)

**Feb. 7: Industrialized Food: Progress for the Masses or the Perils of Progress?**

* Eric Schlosser, *Fast Food Nation*, begin reading
* Susanne Freidberg, “The Triumph of the Egg,” GS

**Feb. 12: Industrial Food Innovations: Modern Marvels or Culinary Abominations?**

* Jordan Sand, “A Short History of MSG: Good Science, Bad Science, Taste Cultures,” GS
* Uwe Spiekermann, “Twentieth-Century Product Innovations in the German Food Industry,” GS
* [Rubenstein Library Test Kitchen](https://blogs.library.duke.edu/rubenstein/?s=velveeta+cheese+ring): check out the recipe for the Velveeta Corn Ring with Creamed Mushrooms born in Kraft Food’s kitchen laboratory and peruse some other recipes inspired by packaged foods. You can find the link on GauchoSpace, too.

**Feb. 14: Food Scares and Food Reforms**

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

**Feb. 19: *Food Inc.*: Screening of Documentary and Discussion of *Fast Food Nation***

* Eric Schlosser, *Fast Food Nation*: finish reading and be prepared to discuss book in class

**Feb. 21: Fatness, Thinness, and Wellness**

* Charlotte Biltekoff, *Eating Right in America*, chapters 1, 2, 5
* Susan Bordo, “Not Just a White Girl’s Thing’: The Changing Face of Food and Body Image Problems,” GS
* Robert Albritton, “Between Obesity and Hunger: The Capitalist Food Industry,” GS

**PART III. THE POLITICS OF PLENTY AND WANT**

**Feb. 26: The Modern History of Hunger (Paper #2 Due)**

* James Vernon, “The Humanitarian Discovery of Hunger,” GS
* Janet M. Fitchen, “Hunger Malnutrition, and Poverty in the Contemporary United States,” GS
* Susan Brownell, “Food, Hunger, and the State,” GS

**Feb. 28: Food and the Battlefront, World War II**

* Lizzie Collingham, “Germany Experts Hunger to the East,” GS

**March 5: Food on the Homefront, World War II**

* Charlotte Biltekoff, *Eating Right in America*, chapter 3
* Sherene Seikaly, “A Nutritional Economy: The Calorie, Development, and War in Mandate Palestine,” GS
* Revisit Jacobson, “Beer Goes to War,” GS (under week 4)
* War Cookery Leaflets, Ministry of Food, UK, GS
* Wartime Ads, California Wine Industry, GS

**March 7: Countercuisines**

* Charlotte Biltekoff, *Eating Right in America*, chapters 4, 6
* Wendell Berry, “The Pleasures of Eating,” GS
* Folco Portinari, “Slow Food Manifesto,” GS

**March 12: Green Revolutions and GMOs**

* Michael Specter, “Seeds of Doubt: Vandana Shiva’s Crusade Against Genetically Modified Crops,” GS

**March 14: Contemporary Food Politics/Course Summary**

* Kristin Wartman, “Food Fight: The Politics of the Food Industry,” GS
* Jane Black, “Revenge of the Lunch Lady,” GS
* Rachel Laudan, “A Plea for Culinary Modernism,” GS

**March 18: Final Exam, Monday, 12:00-3:00pm in Harold Frank Hall 1104**