

<1/30/2013 – Check Blackboard for updates and announcements>

Hist 206: Food and Drink in History

Tu, Th 8:35-9:50

Room: King 237

Prof. White

Rice 303

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 10am-12pm or by appointment

Course Goals:

This course explores food and drink from prehistory to the present. We will explore the roles that food and drink have played in all aspects of our lives from human evolution to religion, politics, commerce, class, and national identity. The readings span a range of disciplines, including history, anthropology, biology, and sociology. The class will place particular emphasis on the interaction of material and cultural factors. Students will develop an awareness and understanding of the place of food in history and the origins of modern diets and cuisines.

Format:

This will be a lecture-discussion class, with an emphasis on student participation. You are expected to complete all assigned reading and come prepared for discussion.

Course Policies:

Honor Code: All course work is governed by Oberlin's Honor Code. If you have a question about how the Honor Code applies to a particular assignment, you should ask me in advance of the due date. Further information about the honor code may be posted along with instructions for particular assignments.

E-mail: I will answer short e-mails Mon-Fri 9-5. If you have any questions that require a long answer, please come by my office during office hours instead.

Grading: A (90-100), B (80-89), C (70-79), D (60-69), F (below 60). Plus and minus grades for scores within two points of the next letter grade (e.g., 88 and 89 get a B+; 90 and 91 get an A-).

Submitting Work: All written work must be submitted by e-mail. I will mark off 8 points every 24 hours late, weekends included, no exceptions unless you can bring in a note from your class dean explaining that you could not submit the assignment. If you know in advance that you will not be available to submit work on a given day, please contact me well ahead of the deadline.

Assignments:

Participation: Participation will be 20% of your final grade, based on your attendance and class discussion. You may also earn part of their participation grade by posting written discussions and current news and journal articles relevant to the class on the course Blackboard site. Students who have not participated throughout the semester cannot earn their participation grade by posting articles in the last two weeks of class.

Quizzes: There will be four brief in-class quizzes with short-answer questions testing factual material, for 5% of your grade each (20% total). At each quiz, you may bring in up to two single-sided pages of notes. Everything in this outline must be entirely of your own creation: Any reproductions from any handouts, web sites, books, or classmates will be a violation of the honor code. The outline may be hand-written or typed (minimum 10-pt font). Writing an outline is one of the best ways of reviewing material. However, it is probably not in your best interest to try to fit as much as possible onto the page, because you will not have the time to find it all during the quiz.

Reading Questions: For at least ten different classes in ten different weeks, students should e-mail me at least 3 interesting observations, questions, or ideas for discussion on the class reading by the night before that class meets. Submissions should demonstrate that you have closely read and understood the reading. Students who consistently send in useful questions and discussion ideas will receive an A for this assignment, which makes up 10% of your final grade.

Essay: You will have two essay assignments of 1,500 words (~5 pages) apiece, each worth 20% of your final grade. You will choose from a list of topics, which will emphasize comparisons of cuisines, technologies, commodities, and iconic foods. Detailed instructions and writing guides will be posted to the course Blackboard page.

Final Exam: There will be a take-home final of short essay questions covering broad themes throughout the course, worth 10% of your final grade.

Final Grades:

Participation: 20%

Quizzes: 20%

Reading Questions: 10%

Essay 1: 20%

Essay 2: 20%

Final Exam: 10%

Reading:

The following course book will be available at the bookstore and has been ordered for reserve at the main library:

-Paul Freedman, ed., *Food: The History of Taste* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).

All other readings will be posted as PDFs on the course Blackboard site.

Reading assignments will vary from about 60-120 pages per week. You should read and come prepared to discuss the assigned reading in each class.

Course Schedule:

Week 1 – Beginnings

2/5: Introduction

2/7: Evolution

Reading: Alan K. Outram, "Hunter-Gatherers and the First Farmers: The Evolution of Taste in History," in *Food: The History of Taste*, ed. Paul Freedman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 35-62.

Week 2 – Prehistory

2/12: Cooking and Gender

Reading: Richard W. Wrangham, *Catching Fire: How Cooking Made Us Human* (New York: Basic Books, 2009), 1-14 and 147-77; Alice Julier and Laura Lindenfeld, "Mapping Men onto the Menu: Masculinities and Food," *Food and Foodways* 13 (2005): 1-16.

2/14: Ritual and Taboo

Reading: Felipe Fernández-Armesto and Daniel Lord Smail, "Food," in *Deep History: The Architecture of Past and Present*, ed. Andrew Shryock and Daniel Lord Smail (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 131-59; Steven Pinker, *How the Mind Works* (New York: Norton, 1997), 378-85.

Week 3 – Classical Cuisines

2/19: Classical Mediterranean and Islamic

Reading: Veronika Grimm, "The Good Things that Lay at Hand: Tastes of Ancient Greece and Rome," in *Food: The History of Taste*, 63-98; H.D. Miller, "The Pleasures of Consumption: The Birth of Medieval Islamic Cuisine," in *ibid.*, 135-162.

2/21: Medieval Europe and Imperial China

Reading: C.M. Woolgar, "Feasting and Fasting: Food and Taste in Europe in the Middle Ages," in *Food: The History of Taste*, 163-196; Joanna Waley-Cohen, "The Quest for Perfect Balance: Taste and Gastronomy in Imperial China," in *ibid.*, 99-134.

***First quiz in class 2/21*

Week 4 – Columbian Exchange

2/26: America

Reading: Jeffrey M. Pilcher, *Que vivan los tamales! Food and the Making of Mexican Identity* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1998), 7-43.

2/28: Europe and Asia

Reading: William H. McNeill, "How the Potato Changed the World's History," *Social Research* 66 (1999): 67-83; Sucheta Mazumdar, "The Impact of New World Food Crops on the Diet and Economy of China and India, 1600-1900," in *Food in Global History*, ed. Raymond Grew (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1999), 58-78.

Week 5 – Commerce and Drugs

3/5: Sugar

Reading: Sidney Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York: Penguin, 1986), 74-109, 116-31, 146-50.

3/7: Alcohol and Caffeine

Reading: Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *Tastes of Paradise: A Social History of Spices, Stimulants, and Intoxicants* (New York: Vintage, 1993), 15-79. (NB: A lot of these pages are pictures.)

Week 6 – Modernization

3/12: Europe

Reading: Brian Cowan, “New Worlds, New Tastes: Food Fashions after the Renaissance,” in *Food: The History of Taste*, ed. Paul Freedman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 197-232.

3/14: Japan

Reading: Katarzyna Joanna Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine: Food, Power and National Identity* (London: Reaktion, 2006), 1-34.

****Second quiz in class 3/14**

Week 7 – Industrialization

3/19: Industrial Processing and Production

Reading: Hans J. Teuteberg, “The Birth of the Modern Consumer Age: Food Innovations from 1800,” in *Food: The History of Taste*, ed. Paul Freedman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 233–262; Rachel Laudan, “A Plea for Culinary Modernism: Why We Should Love New, Fast, Processed Food,” in *The Gastronomica Reader*, ed. Darra Goldstein (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 280-92.

3/21: Exchange, Commodification, and Freshness

Reading: Susanne Elizabeth Freidberg, *Fresh: A Perishable History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 122-56.

****First essay due Friday 3/22 by 5pm.**

Week 8 – Spring Break

Week 9 – High and Low Cuisine

4/2: *Haute Cuisine*

Reading: Alain Drouard, “Chefs, Gourmets and Gourmands: French Cuisine in the 19th and 20th Centuries,” in *Food: The History of Taste*, ed. Paul Freedman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 263–99; Elliott Shore, “Dining Out: The Development of the Restaurant,” in *ibid.*, 301–31.

4/4: The Restaurant

Film in class: Jiro Dreams of Sushi (2011)

Week 10 – Nation and Identity

4/9: Nationalism

Reading: Arjun Appadurai, “How to Make a National Cuisine: Cookbooks in Contemporary India,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 30 (1988): 3–24; Steve Penfold, “Eddie Shack Was No

Tim Horton': Donuts and the Folklore of Mass Culture in Canada," in *Food Nations: Selling Taste in Consumer Societies*, ed. Warren Belasco and Philip Scranton (New York: Routledge, 2002), 48-66.

4/11: Immigrant Cuisine

Reading: Hasia R. Diner, *Hungering for America: Italian, Irish, and Jewish Foodways in the Age of Migration* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 21-83.

****Third quiz in class 4/11**

Week 11 – Eating American

4/16: Making the American Diet

Reading: Harvey A. Levenstein, "The Perils of Abundance: Food, Health, and Morality in American History," in *Food: A Culinary History from Antiquity to the Present*, ed. Jean Louis Flandrin and Massimo Montanari (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 516-29; Sidney W. Mintz, "Eating American," in *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom: Excursions into Eating, Culture, and the Past* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996), 106–24.

4/18: A National Eating Disorder?

Reading: Michael Pollan, *In Defense of Food* (New York: Penguin, 2008), 19-81.

Week 12 – Globalization and Fast Food

4/23: Fast Food, Meat, and the Environment

Reading: Michael Pollan, *The Omnivore's Dilemma* (New York: Penguin, 2006), part I.

4/25: Fast Food and Global Culture

Reading: Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, "McDonald's in Japan: Changing Manners and Etiquette," in *Golden Arches East: McDonald's in East Asia*, ed. James L. Watson (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997), 161-82.

Week 13 – New Technologies

4/30: Chemicals, GM, and Organic

Reading: Michael Pollan, *The Botany of Desire* (New York: Random House, 2001), chapter 4.

5/2: Modernist Cuisine

Reading: *Nature* special section on taste, June 2012.

****Fourth quiz in class 5/2**

Week 14 – Conclusion

5/7: Food and Art

No Reading – Guided visit to the Alan Memorial Art Museum

****Second essay due Wednesday 5/8 by 5pm.**

5/9: The Future

Reading: Warren Belasco, "Synthetic Arcadias: Dreams of Meal Pills, Air Food, and Algae Burgers," in *The Technological Fix: How People Use Technology to Create and Solve Problems*, ed. Lisa Rosner (New York: Routledge, 2004), 119–34.

Reading period 5/12-5/14

Final exam schedules will be posted on the OC registrar web page.