

ANTHROPOLOGY OF FOOD
Anthropology 333 WIC, CRN 60077
Spring Quarter 2008
T/R 2:00 – 3:50, Neuberger Hall 227

Dr. Michele Gamburd
gamburdm@pdx.edu
Office: 141-N CH
Phone: (503) 725-3317
Office Hours: T 12-1, R
1-1:45 and by
appointment

Writing Associate:
Kushlani de Soyza
kushd@pdx.edu
188-F Cramer Hall
Office hours: Thurs 4-5
and by appointment

Writing Associate:
Eric Wynkoop
wynkoop@pdx.edu
141-Q Cramer Hall
Office hours: Mon 2-4
and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This class explores the interplay between biological and cultural aspects of human food systems. We'll talk about human nutrition, the cultural significance of food, the domestication of plants and animals, archaeological records of competitive feasting, the global movement of foods during the colonial period, new revolutions in food technology, the politics of contemporary food systems, obesity, and eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia. By the end of the course, students will have gained a broad-ranging familiarity with the cultural, political, and economic aspects of past and present human food systems. This is a Writing Intensive Course, and students will receive ample feedback on their prose.

REQUIRED READINGS:

Materials on Blackboard (explained below)

Fernandez-Armesto, Felipe

2002 Near a Thousand Tables: A History of Food. New York: The Free Press.

Recommended: Hacker, Diana

2003 A Pocket Style Manual, Fourth Edition. Boston: St. Martin's Press.

CLASS REQUIREMENTS:

Policy on grades, illness, emergencies, extensions, and plagiarism:

Students taking this course pass/no pass are required to earn a 'C-' or better to pass the class. The following assignments will form the basis for evaluating student performance: the short observations (5%), first essay (35%), quiz (10%), second essay (25%), and final exam (25%).

Regular attendance and active participation in classroom discussions are expected and required. Legitimate reasons to miss class are few and dire. Except in the event of severe illness or emergency, unexcused late papers will lose one letter grade for each day past due until the student contacts the professor. Requests for extensions on deadlines should be made in writing or by email before the due date. Students with a documented disability needing accommodations in this course should immediately inform the instructor.

Plagiarism (intellectual theft) is a very serious academic offense. Any assignment containing plagiarized material will receive a failing grade. Students are responsible for

reading and understanding the department handout on plagiarism, which is available on the class Blackboard site. Please ask the instructor or the writing associates if you have any questions.

Blackboard

Class readings, the course syllabus, the plagiarism document, assignment sheets, review sheets, and discussion questions will be available on Blackboard. You may read the materials online or print copies for use during class discussions.

All students can access Blackboard with an Odin account. If you do not have an Odin account, you can sign up to get one at <https://www.account.pdx.edu>. Use your Odin username and password to login to Blackboard at <http://psuonline.pdx.edu/>. Use of Blackboard will be demonstrated on the first day of class. Please contact the instructor if you encounter difficulties in accessing this resource.

Description of assignments

Short Observations (5%)

Both of these informal exercises will be graded on a pass/ no-pass basis, with a check-plus and check being passing grades.

- **Restaurant review: Due Tuesday 22 April.** Students will visit an “ethnic” restaurant and write a 2 page informal essay analyzing cultural indicators of ethnicity that they note in the menu, food, decor, server costumes, and other aspects of the establishment. Further instructions will be discussed in class.
- **Food Log: Due Thursday 22 May.** Students will track what they eat and where they eat it over a three-day period. Further instructions will be discussed in class.

Essay #1: The Rewrite (35%) Rough draft due Tuesday 29 April. Final draft due Tuesday 13 May. Students will receive a list of possible essay questions on class materials in Section 2. They will turn in a hardcopy rough draft of a 4-5 page essay. The Writing Associates will return papers with comments on style and content. Students will rewrite and turn in a hardcopy of the final draft (with rough draft attached) to the instructor, who will read, comment on, and grade the essay. Please note that the completion of a rewritten essay forms an essential part of a Writing Intensive Course; failure to turn in rough drafts and obtain comments will result in the loss of 10 points from the final grade on the paper in question.

Quiz (10%) Tuesday 6 May

This quiz will consist of two essay questions covering material in Sections 3 & 4 (weeks 4 – 5). A review sheet will be posted in advance. Students may prepare one sheet of notes for use during the quiz. Please bring a blue-book and a pen to the quiz.

Essay #2: (25%)

Students will choose to write one of 3 possible 4-page essays in the second half of the quarter. Further instructions for each assignment will be posted on Blackboard. Possible topics and due dates are:

- **Option A (Tuesday, 27 May):** Vegetable Retailers in the Portland Area
- **Option B (Tues, 3 June):** Super Size Me, Advertising, and Dietary Guidelines

- **Option C (Thursday, 12 June):** Eating Disorders and Identity

Final Exam (25%) Monday 9 June, 10:15 – 12:05, NH 227

The final exam will consist of two short and two longer essay questions and will cover material studied since the quiz, i.e. Sections 5, 6, 7, & 8 (weeks 6-10). A review sheet will be posted in advance. Students may prepare one sheet of notes for use during the exam. Please bring a blue-book and a pen to the exam.

COURSE OUTLINE

SECTION 1 (Weeks 1-2): Introduction

This section introduces food as a topic of both biological and cultural investigation.

Esquivel, Laura

1992 March. *In Like Water for Chocolate*. Pp. 47-60. New York: Doubleday. *Near a Thousand Tables*: Chapter 1.

Harrison, G. A., J.M. Tanner, D.R. Pilbeam, and P.T. Baker

1988 Chapter 22: Nutritional Stress. *In Human Biology: An Introduction to Human Evolution, Variation, Growth, and Adaptability*, 3rd Edition. Pp. 479-507. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Nestle, Marion

2002 Appendix: Issues in Nutrition and Nutrition Research. *In Food Politics: How the Food Industry Influences Nutrition and Health*. Pp. 375-385. Berkeley: University of California Press.

SECTION 2 (Weeks 2-3): The changing meaning of food in present cultural systems

This section investigates the relationship between food and cultural identity (class, nationality, and gender).

Near a Thousand Tables: Chapter 2.

Bestor, Theodore C.

2006 Kaiten-zushi and Konbini: Japanese Food Culture in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction. *In Fast Food/ Slow Food: The Cultural Economy of the Global Food System*. Richard Wilk, ed. Pp. 115-130. New York: Altamira Press.

Limon, José E.

1989 "Carne, carnales," and the Carnavalesque: Bakhtinian "batos," Disorder, and Narrative Discourses. *American Ethnologist* 16(3): 471-486.

Read either Suggs or Hunt et al.:

Suggs, David N.

1996 Mosadi Tshwene: The Construction of Gender and the Consumption of Alcohol in Botswana. *American Ethnologist* 23 (3): 597-610.

Hunt, Geoffrey P., Kathleen MacKenzie and Karen Joe-Laidler

2005 Alcohol and Masculinity: The Case of Ethnic Youth Gangs. *In Drinking Cultures: Alcohol and Identity*. Thomas M. Wilson, ed. Pp. 225-254. Oxford: Berg.

Caplan, Pat

- 2008 Crossing the Veg/Non-Veg Divide: Commensality and Sociality Among the Middle Classes in Madras/Chennai. *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 31(1): 118-142.

Roseberry, William

- 1996 The Rise of Yuppie Coffees and the Reimagination of Class in the United States. *American Anthropologist* 98(4):762-775.

SECTION 3 (Week 4): The domestication of plants and animals

Lectures and readings in this section discuss archaeological evidence for the transition from hunting and gathering to the widespread use of agriculture and animal husbandry.

Near a Thousand Tables: Chapters 3 and 4.

SECTION 4 (Week 5): Feasting and the politics of past food systems

Archaeological and ethnographic evidence suggests that the social organization of feasting both shapes and reflects levels of social stratification.

Near a Thousand Tables: Chapter 5.

Kirch, Patrick V.

- 2001 Polynesian Feasting in Ethnohistoric, Ethnographic, and Archaeological Contexts. *In Feasts: Archaeological and Ethnographic Perspectives on Food, Politics, and Power*, Michael Dietler and Brian Hayden, eds. Pp. 168-184. Washington, DC: Smithsonian

Schmandt-Besserat, Denise

- 2001 Feasting in the Ancient Near East. *In Feasts: Archaeological and Ethnographic Perspectives on Food, Politics, and Power*, Michael Dietler and Brian Hayden, eds. Pp. 391-403. Washington, DC: Smithsonian

Wilson, Douglas C. and William L. Rathje

- 2001 Garbage and the Modern American Feast. *In Feasts: Archaeological and Ethnographic Perspectives on Food, Politics, and Power*, Michael Dietler and Brian Hayden, eds. Pp. 404-421. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution.

SECTION 5 (Week 6): The global movement of foods during the colonial period

During the colonial period, plants, animals, and people moved around the world on an unprecedented scale, with complex ecological, economic, and political implications.

Near a Thousand Tables: Chapters 6 and 7.

Mintz, Sidney M.

- 1997 Time, Sugar, and Sweetness. *In Food and Culture: A Reader*, Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterrick, eds. Pp. 357-369. New York: Routledge.

SECTION 6 (Week 7-8): Industrializing food systems and GMOs

This section explores advances in food technologies (e.g. freezing, canning, green revolution innovations, and genetic manipulation).

Near a Thousand Tables: Chapter 8.

Goody, Jack

- 1997 Industrial Food: Towards the Development of a World Cuisine. *In Food and Culture: A Reader*, Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterick (eds). Pp. 338-356. New York: Routledge.

Schaeffer, Robert K.

- 1997 Technology, Food, and Hunger (Chapter 8). *In Understanding Globalization: The Social Consequences of Political, Economic, and Environmental Change*. Pp. 143-182. New York: Rowman & Littlefield.

Middendorf, Gerald, Mike Skladany, Elizabeth Ransom, and Lawrence Busch

- 2002 New Agricultural Biotechnologies: The Struggle for Democratic Choice. *In Food in the USA: A Reader*, edited by Carole M. Counihan. Pp. 373-384. New York: Routledge.

Shiva, Vandana

- 2000 The Stolen Harvest of Seed (Chapter 5). *In Stolen Harvest: The Hijacking of the Global Food Supply*. Pp. 79-94. Cambridge, MA: South End Press.

Hendrickson, Mary K. and William D. Heffernan

- 2002 Opening spaces through relocalization: Locating potential resistance in the weaknesses of the global food system. *Sociologia Ruralis* 42 (4): 347-369.

Altieri, Miguel A. and Eric Holt-Gimenez

- 2007 UC's Biotech Benefactors: The Power of Big Finance and Bad Ideas. *The Berkeley Daily Planet*, Weekday Edition, February 6-8, 2007.

SECTION 7 (Week 8-9): Advertising and state regulations

Readings and lecture explore the role of industry and government in shaping people's food habits.

Nestle, Marion

- 2002 Introduction: The Food Industry and "Eat More", *and* Introduction to Part Three: Exploiting Kids, Corrupting Schools, *and* Starting Early: Underage Consumers (Chapter 8) *and* Pushing Soft Drinks: 'Pouring Rights' (Chapter 9). *In Food Politics: How the Food Industry Influences Nutrition and Health*. Pp. 1-28, 173-174, 175-196, 197-218. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Van Esterik, Penny

- 1997 The Politics of Breastfeeding: An Advocacy Perspective. *In Food and Culture: A Reader*, Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterick (eds). Pp. 370-383. New York: Routledge.

SECTION 8 (Week 10): Eating disorders

Obesity, overweight, anorexia, and bulimia have reached alarming proportions in our society. This section explores the biological and cultural background for these problems.

Brown, Peter J. and Melvin Konner

- 1998 An Anthropological Perspective on Obesity. *In* Understanding and Applying Medical Anthropology. Peter J. Brown, ed. Pp. 401-413. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Co.

Brownell, Kelly D.

- 2002 The Environment and Obesity. *In* Eating Disorders and Obesity: A Comprehensive Handbook, second edition. Christopher G. Fairburn and Kelly D. Brownell, eds. Pp. 433-438. New York: Guilford Press.

Puhl, Rebecca and Kelly D. Brownell

- 2002 Stigma, Discrimination, and Obesity. *In* Eating Disorders and Obesity: A Comprehensive Handbook, second edition. Christopher G. Fairburn and Kelly D. Brownell, eds. Pp. 108-112. New York: Guilford Press.

Beumont, Pierre J. V.

- 2002 Clinical Presentation of Anorexia Nervosa and Bulimia Nervosa. *In* Eating Disorders and Obesity: A Comprehensive Handbook, second edition. Christopher G. Fairburn and Kelly D. Brownell, eds. Pp. 162-170. New York: Guilford Press.

Bordo, Susan

- 1997 Anorexia Nervosa: Psychopathology as the Crystallization of Culture. *In* Food and Culture: A Reader, Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterrick (eds). Pp. 226-250. New York: Routledge.

CLASS SCHEDULE:

Week	Day	Date	Month	Readings to be discussed, assignments due, tests, handouts, films:
1	T	1	April	Handout: Syllabus
	R	3		Read: Esquivel, NTT 1 Film: Dani Sweet Potatoes
2	T	8		Read: Harrison et al., Nestle (appendix)
	R	10		Read: NTT 2, Bestor
3	T	15		Read: Limon, [Suggs OR Hunt et al].
	R	17		Read: Caplan, Roseberry
4	T	22		Due: Restaurant review
	R	24		Read: NTT 3 & 4
5	T	29		Due: Essay #1 rough draft Read: NTT 5, Kirch Guest lecture: Dr. Douglas Wilson
	R	1	May	Read: Schmandt-Besserat, Wilson & Rathje
6	T	6		Quiz Read: NTT 6 Film: The Feast
	R	8		Read: NTT 7, Mintz
7	T	13		Due: Essay #1 final draft Read: NTT 8, Goody Film: The Future of Food
	R	15		Read: Schaeffer, Middendorf et. al.
8	T	20		Read: Shiva, Hendrickson & Heffernan
	R	22		Due: Food log Film: Super Size Me
9	T	27		Due: Essay #2 Option A Read: Nestle Introduction, Chapter 8
	R	29		Read: Nestle Chapter 9, Van Esterik
10	T	3	June	Due: Essay #2 Option B Read: Brown & Konner, Brownell, Puhl & Brownell Film: Slim Hopes
	R	5		Read: Beumont, Bordo
11	M	9		Final exam, 10:15-12:05, NH 227
	R	12		Due: Essay #2 Option C, 4:30, Anthropology Department, 141 Cramer Hall