

ANTH 4701  
Food and Culture  
Spring 2015

Instructor: Carrie Perkins

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Office Hours: Tues & Thurs, 3:30-5:30 and by appt

**Course Description:**

"Tell me what you eat and I will tell you what you are."  
-- Anthelme Brillat-Savarin (1755-1826)

The course will provide an overview of the theoretical ways in which the topic of food can be addressed from an anthropological perspective. Exploring the food and traditions of various cultures will allow us to examine the role food plays in identity, class, gender, technology and globalization. We will begin the course by looking at how food and eating are linked to identity, class, gender, and nationality. Then, we will study how industrialization and globalization have impacted food and eating in various cultural settings. Finally, we will examine alternative food movements.

**Course Goals:**

- Compare and contrast the meanings and practices related to food and cultural diversity
- Evaluate the impact of industrialization and globalization on various food systems
- Identify social, cultural, and economic alternatives to large-scale, modern food production

**Texts:**

- Food and Culture: A Reader, 3rd ed., Carole Counihan & Penny Van Esterik, eds. (2013). Routledge Press
- The Omnivore's Dilemma, Michael Pollan (2006). Penguin Books

**Grading:**

Grades for this course are calculated on completion of the assignments as follows:

10% Food Diary Assignment

20% Class Participation (Attendance, Class Discussions, Weekly Readings & Assignments)

20% First Exam

20% Second Exam

30% Final Exam

**Food Diary Assignment:** You will be required to track and record everything you eat over a three-day period, and the social contexts in which you ate. The diaries are private journals through which I want you to explore some of the patterns of your own consumption and then to situate these in a broader local and global context. The paper you write based off of your diary should reflect upon particular insights gained about your eating habits in light of the readings and films. The paper should be 3 pages, double-spaced.

**Exams:** There will be 3 exams covering the weekly readings and films.

**Plagiarism and Cheating.** The Department of Anthropology does not tolerate plagiarism, cheating, or helping others to cheat. Plagiarism is defined as misrepresenting the work of others

(whether published or not) as your own. It may be inadvertent or intentional. Any facts, statistics, quotations, or paraphrasing of any information that is not common knowledge, should be cited. Students suspected of any of these will be provided the opportunity for a hearing; if found guilty they can receive an automatic “F” in the course. In addition, I reserve the right to pursue further disciplinary action within the UNT legal system, which may result in your dismissal from the university. For more information on paper writing, including how to avoid plagiarism, and how to use citations, see <http://www.unt.edu/anthropology/writing.htm>. For information on the University’s policies regarding academic integrity and dishonesty, see the UNT Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities, <http://www.unt.edu/csrr/>.

*The Anthropology Department does not discriminate on the basis of an individual’s disability as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Our program provides academic adjustments or help to individuals with disabilities in its programs and activities. Attempts will be made to meet all certified requirements.*

**NOTE: The instructor reserves the right to add, delete, or revise segments of the syllabus**

## **WEEKLY SYLLABUS**

### **Week 1: Introduction to Food and Culture**

Jan 20 – Why study food? Syllabus & general overview of class structure

Jan 22- Pollan, *Introduction, Our National Eating Disorder* (1-11); Counihan & Van Esterik, *Introduction* (1-11)

### **Week 2: The Anthropology of Food**

Jan 27- Barthes, *Toward a Psychosociology of Contemporary Food Consumption* (23-29)

Jan 29- Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (31-39)

### **Week 3: A Brief History of Modern Food**

Feb 3 - Goody, *Industrial Food: Towards the Development of a World Cuisine* (72-88); Pollan, *The Omnivore’s Dilemma*, (p.15-31)

Feb 5 – Mintz, *Time, Sugar and Sweetness* (91-102); Pollan, *The Omnivore’s Dilemma*, (p.32-40)

### **Week 4: Food and Race**

Feb 10- Williams-Forsen, *More than Just the “Big Piece of Chicken”: The Power of Race, Class and Food in American Consciousness* (107-118)

Feb 12- Counihan, *Mexicanas’ Food Voice and Differential Consciousness in the San Luis Valley of Colorado* (173-186)

### **Week 5: Food and Gender**

Feb 17 – Swenson, *Domestic Divo? Televised Treatments of Masculinity, Femininity and Food* (137-153); Optional Reading: Holden, *The Overcooked and Underdone: Masculinities in Japanese Food Programming* (119-136)

Feb 19 – Carrington, *Feeding Lesbian Families* (187-210)

### **Week 6: Alternative Food Movements Part I**

Feb 24- First Exam

Feb 26- Clark, *The Raw and the Rotten: Punk Cuisine* (231-244)

**Week 7: Alternative Food Movements Part II**

Mar 3- Leitch, *Slow Food and the Politics of "Virtuous Globalization"* (409-425)

Mar 5- Freeganism- *Dive! Living Off America's Waste-* (Film in class)

**Week 8: Food and Identity**

Mar 10- Wilk, "*Real Belizean Food*": *Building Local Identity in the Transnational Caribbean* (376-393)

Mar 12- Walker Bynum, *Fast, Feast and Flesh: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (245-264)

**Week 9: Spring Break- no class****Week 10: Food Choice**

Mar 24- Guthman, *Fast Food/Organic Food: Reflexive Tastes and the Making of "Yuppie Chow"* (496-509)

Mar 26 – Food Diary Instructions Handout; *Food Inc-* (Film in Class)

**Week 11: Food and Health**

Mar 31 – Mead, *Why Do We Overeat?* (19-22); Nabhan, *Rooting Out the Causes of Disease: Why Diabetes is So Common Among Desert Dwellers* (330-341)

Apr 2 – Food Diary Paper Due; Albritton, *Between Obesity and Hunger: The Capitalist Food Industry* (342-354);

**Week 12: Food and Globalization**

Apr 7- Second Exam

Apr 9- Ceccarini, *Food Workers as Individual Agents of Culinary Globalization: Pizza and Pizzaioli in Japan* (437-448)

**Week 13: Food & Ethics Part I**

Apr 14- *Guatemala: The Human Price of Coffee* (Film in Class)

Apr 16- Schlosser, *The Chain Never Stops* (485-495)

**Week 14: Food and Ethics Part II**

Apr 21- Poppendieck, *Want Amid Plenty: From Hunger to Inequality* (563-571)

Apr 23- Levkoe, *Learning Democracy Through Food Justice Movements* (587-599)

**Week 15: Open topic**

Apr 28- TBA

Apr 30- TBA

**Week 15: Food as Feast**

May 5- Final Exam Review

May 7 – Last Day of Class- Class Potluck

**May 14- Final Exam**