

History BC 2380

Spring 2017 T/Th 10:10-11:25

Professor Deborah Valenze

218 Lefrak dvalenze@Barnard.edu

Office hrs: Tuesday 1-3 pm & by appt.

The Social and Cultural History of Food in Europe



This course will examine changing patterns of production and consumption of food in Europe from prehistoric to modern times. Our study begins and ends with an examination of food in a global perspective; for most of the semester, we will focus on the cultural context of Europe as a site of modernizing technologies and patterns of consumption. Students will consider the development of settled agriculture in the history of food; the use of grains, fish, and dairy in diets across Europe; the significance of geographical location, exploration and colonialism; the impact of social stratification and ideologies of taste on food consumption; changing knowledge about health and hygiene; the involvement of the state in food security; changing modes of production of basic food commodities; the place of drink in diet and social life; the development of the science of nutrition; changes in transport and technology in the fostering the rise of consumer culture and commodification; the regulation of food safety; food and social welfare in the twentieth century; mass production of food; and finally, the globalization of food production, dietary norms, and access to markets.

Required books available at Book Culture (W. 112th St.) for purchase:

- Reay Tannahill, *Food in History* (rev. ed., 1995).
- David Gentilcore, *Food and Health in Early Modern Europe*.
- Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *Tastes of Paradise*.
- Raj Patel, *Stuffed and Starved: The Hidden Battle for the World Food System* (2nd ed., 2012).

Recommended for purchase:

- Warren Belasco and Philip Scranton, eds., *Food Nations*.

Course requirements:

- mandatory, alert attendance, participation in class discussions, in-class activities, responsible handling of assignments (10%).

- a midterm exam on February 28th (30%)
- one eight-page paper on *either* the history of a single commodity *or* the impact of technology on food consumption due on April 11th (30%)
- a take-home final exam due on May 4th (30%)

Learning objectives, or what you can expect to learn from taking this course:

- an appreciation for the diversity and complexity of human experience
- a critical understanding of the relationship between past events and modern life
- an ability to conduct close readings of key texts, primary and secondary
- an ability to analyze and interpret historical material
- the skill of responding constructively and critically to the views of others
- the skill of presenting arguments cogently and logically in writing and speaking

Students will not be allowed to use laptops or cellphones during class. Past experience has shown that these devices significantly diminish your ability to listen and participate in class. Handwritten note-taking has proven to be a more effective way of assimilating what is being said in class.

Please note: throughout the semester, we will be using blocks of time during class for discussion. Questions and comments are welcome at every class, so please speak up if you need a point elaborated or wish to contribute to what is being discussed.

Assigned readings marked with *'s will be posted on Canvas.

I. First Foods: From Mother's Milk to Crop Harvesting (January 17, 19)

Required reading:

Reay Tannahill, *Food in History*, pp. 1-59; 103-52.

Sidney Mintz, "Food and Eating: Some Persisting Questions," in Warren Belasco and Philip Scranton, eds., *Food Nations*, pp. 24-32.

A useful timeline for reference (and sometimes assigned reading) throughout the semester <http://foodtimeline.org/>

II. Food in Ancient Times (January 24)

Required reading:

Reay Tannahill, *Food in History*, pp. 60-91.

*B.D. Shaw, "'Eaters of Flesh, Drinkers of Milk': the Ancient Mediterranean Ideology of the Pastoral Nomad," *Ancient Society*, 13/14 [1982-3]: 5-31.

*Jean-Louis Flandrin and Massimo Montanari, eds., *Food: A Culinary History*, Chaps. 7, 8, and 17: "Greek Meals: A Civic Ritual," "The Culture of the Symposium," and "Arab Cuisine and Its Contribution to European Culture," pp. 90-105 and 207-223.

III. The Emergence of a European Food Culture (January 26, 31, February 2)

Required reading:

*Flandrin and Montanari, eds., *Food: A Culinary History*, Part Five, Introduction and Chap. 19, pp. 247-67.

Reay Tannahill, *Food in History*, Chaps. 12-15, pp. 155-223.

David Gentilcore, *Food and Health in Early Modern Europe*, Chap. 1, pp. 10-26; Chaps. 4-7, pp. 71-155.

IV. Country Food and City Food in Early Modern Times (February 7, 9)

Required reading:

Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *Tastes of Paradise*, Chaps. 1-3 (pp. 3-95).

David Gentilcore, *Food and Health in Early Modern Europe*, Chap. 3, pp. 49-73.

*Richard Steckel, "Nutritional Status in the Colonial American Economy,"

William and Mary Quarterly, 56, no. 1 (1999), 31-52.

*John Bohstedt, "The Pragmatic Economy, the Politics of Provisions, and the 'Invention' of the Food Riot Tradition in 1740," in *Moral Economy and Popular Protest: Crowds, Conflict, and Authority*, ed. Adrian Randall and Andrew Charlesworth (Basingstoke, 2000).

SKIM so that you can state the argument: *E. P. Thompson, "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd," *Past and Present*, No. 50 (1971), 76-136. You will be asked to bring a two-sentence summary to class for discussion.

V. Food and the People in an Age of Revolution: Bread and Potatoes (February 14, 16)

Required reading:

*Stephen L. Kaplan, *The Bakers of Paris and the Bread Question 1700-1775*: Chap. 1, "Breadways," pp. 23-60.

Read the Food Timeline on the French Revolution:

<http://www.foodtimeline.org/foodcolonial.html#frenchrevolution>

*Rebecca Spang, *The Invention of the Restaurant*, Chap. 4, "Morality, Equality, Hospitality!" pp. 88-118.

*Redcliffe Salaman, *The History and Social Influence of the Potato*, Chap. XVI, pp. 289-317.

*Harmke Kamminga, "Nutrition for the People, or the Fate of Jacob Moleschott's Contest for a Humanist Science," in *The Science and Culture of Nutrition*, pp. 15-47.

*J. Drummond and Anne Wilbraham, *The Englishman's Food*, pp. 327-40.

VI. Food and the Body: Hygiene, Morality, and Taste in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries (February 21, 23)

Required reading:

David Gentilcore, *Food and Health in Early Modern Europe*, Chap. 2, pp. 27-48.

*Timothy Morton, ed. *Radical Food: The Culture and Politics of Eating and Drinking, 1790-1820*: Vol. I, Chap. 4: Joseph Ritson, *An Essay on Abstinence from Animal Food, as a Moral Duty*, pp. 188-214 only; Chap. 5: Percy Bysshe Shelley, "A Vindication of a Natural Diet," pp. 274-84; Vol. III, Chap. 11, Thomas Trotter, "A View of the Nervous Temperament," pp. 576-592 only.

*Alain Drouard, "Chefs, Gourmets and Gourmands: French Cuisine in the 19th and 20th Centuries," in Paul Freedman, ed., *Food: The History of Taste*, pp. 263-86 only.

Jean-Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, *The Physiology of Taste*, beginning at "Meditation Two: Taste," to "Meditation Six," as far as "On Fish":

<http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/5434/pg5434.txt>

Midterm exam: February 28 (review class: TBA)

VII. Food for the People: Beer, Milk, and Beef Tea (March 2, 7, 9)

Required reading:

Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *Tastes of Paradise*, Chaps. 5-7.

*Peter Clark, "From Alehouse to Public House," from *The English Alehouse*.

*Mark Finlay, "Quackery and Cookery: Justus von Liebig's Extract of Meat and the Theory of Nutrition in the Victorian Age," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, Vol. 66, no. 3 (1992), pp. 404-18.

*Nils-Arvid Bringeus, "A Swedish Beer Milk Shake," in Patricia Lysaght, ed., *Milk and Milk Products*, pp. 140-50.

*Rachel Laudan, "Fresh From the Cow's Nest: Condensed Milk and Culinary Innovation," in Harlan Walker, ed., *Milk: Beyond the Dairy*, pp. 216-24.

VIII. Gender, Food, and Households in the Victorian Age (March 21, 23)

Required reading:

*Mrs. Isabella Beeton, *Mrs. Beeton's Book of Household Management* (rev. ed., 2000), see Canvas for chapters and links.

*"A Middle Class Dinner," from *The Woman's Signal* (Dec. 19, 1895).

*Deborah Dwork, *War is Good for Babies and Other Young Children*, Chap. V, "Maternalism: The Conservative Solution," pp. 124-66.

Film: “Babette’s Feast”**IX. Food as a Social and Political Right: The Example of Britain (March 28, 30)**

Required reading:

*James Vernon, “The Ethics of Hunger and the Assembly of Society: The Techno-Politics of the School Meal in Modern Britain,” *American Historical Review*, Vol. 110, No. 3 (June 2005), pp. 693-725.

*Frank Trentmann, “Bread, Milk, and Democracy: Consumption and Citizenship in Twentieth-Century Britain,” in *The Politics of Consumption*, eds. M. Daunton and M. Hilton, pp. 129-63.

*Maud Pember Reeves, *Round About a Pound a Week* (1913), Chaps. 7-10.

X. Food, Health and Safety: The Rise of Government Regulation (April 4, 6)

Required reading:

*Chris Otter, “Civilizing Slaughter: The Development of the British Public Abattoir, 1850-1910,” in *Meat, Modernity, and the Rise of the Slaughterhouse*, ed. Paula Young Lee (2008), pp. 89-106.

*Harmke Kamminga, “Axes to Grind: Popularizing the Science of Vitamins in the 1920s and 1930s,” in *Food, Science, Policy and Regulation in the Twentieth Century*, ed. David Smith and Jim Phillips, 83-100.

*Harry G. Day, “E. V. McCollum and Public Understanding of Foods and Nutrition,” *Nutrition Today* (1987), 31-9.

**Paper due on April 11th
(Review session on paper-writing skills: TBA)**

XI. War and Food: Politics, Science, and Provisions (April 11, 13)

Required reading:

*M. Worboys, “The Discovery of Colonial Malnutrition Between the Wars,” in D. Arnold, ed., *Imperial Medicine and Indigenous Societies*, 208-225.

*Nick Cullather, “The Foreign Policy of the Calorie,” *American Historical Review* (April, 2007), pp. 337-64.

*Deborah Dwork, Chap. VI, “School Meals and Medical Inspection” and Chap. VII, “Conclusion” in *War is Good for Babies and Other Young Children*, pp. 167-220.

XII. The Industrialization of Food (April 18)

Required reading:

*Jack Goody, *Cooking, Cuisine and Class*, Chap. 5, “Industrial Food” and Chap. 6, “Impact of a World System,” pp. 154-74; 175-90.

Martin Bruegel, “How the French Learned to Eat Canned Food” and
Donna R. Gabaccia, “As American as Budweiser and Pickles? Nation-Building in American Food Industries,” and

Jeffrey Pilcher, “Industrial *Tortillas* and Folkloric Pepsi: The Nutritional Consequences of Hybrid Cuisines in Mexico” in Belasco and Scranton, eds., *Food Nations*, pp. 113-30; 175-93; 222-239.

*Suzanne Freidberg, *Fresh: A Perishable History*, Chap. 1, “Refrigeration: Cold Revolution,” 18-48.

XIII. From Post-War to Food Wars: Food after 1950 (April 20, 25, 27)

Required reading:

*David Grigg, “The Nutritional Transition in Western Europe,” *Journal of Historical Geography*, 21, no. 3 (1995), 247-61.

*Carlo Petrini, *Slow Food: The Case for Taste*, Chap. 1, “Appetite and Thought” and Chap. 3, “Educating and Learning,” pp. 1-34; 65-83.

*Alison Leitch, “Slow Food and the Politics of ‘Virtuous Globalization,’” in *Food and Culture: A Reader* (3rd ed.), ed. Carole Counihan and Penny Van Estesrik, pp. 409-25.

Raj Patel, *Stuffed and Starved: The Hidden Battle for the World’s Food System*, Chap. 1, “Introduction,” Chap. 7, “Glycine Rex,” Chap. 8, “Checking Out of Supermarkets,” Chap. 9, “Chosen by Bunnies,” and “Chap. 10, “Conclusion.”

Film: “Our Daily Bread” (2005) by Nikolaus Geyrhalter.

Final Take-home Exam: Distributed on April 27th and due Thursday, May 4th, by 1 p.m