

Lecture and discussion topics (by date)**1/18 (1): course logistics, introduction, and previews**

course introduction

how this class is a history class, and what that means for you

how to use primary and secondary sources

weekly writing assignments

book reviews

how to do well on the final presentations

website for syllabus, assignments, announcements, and add'l handouts.

1/20 (2): what can we learn from food and diet in context?

On our first day we take a quick tour through some of the historical and medical themes that we will be addressing throughout the course so you can get a feel for the goals of the readings, lectures, the course as a whole. Where exactly do food phobias come from, anyway? Can they be overcome? How does food define who eats it?

Jeffrey Steingarten, *The Man Who Ate Everything*, 3-15.

Jack Turner, *Spice: a history of temptation*, Introduction xi-xxiv

James Walvin, "A Taste of Empire 1600-1800," *History Today* 47.1 (Jan 1997) pp. 11-16.

FOOD: 1-9.

Piero Camporesi, *The Magic Harvest*, 200-210

UNIT 1: ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL DIETING**1/25 (3): ancient attitudes towards diet and health**

Medical efficacy of food and drink can hardly be understood without a glance at ancient medicine in terms of how health was achieved and how diet plays a central role in achieving and maintaining it. This unit establishes medicine as a holistic practice that is entirely centered around what goes into the body (diet) and changing balances within it. The groundwork laid here sticks around for about 1500 years. Why do suppose so? is this all folklore and superstition? did they really believe this would work?

FOOD: 141-152; 69-89

Owsei Temkin, "Greek Medicine as Science and Craft." *Isis* 44 (1953): 213-225.

Ludwig Edelstein, "The dietetics of antiquity" in *Ancient Medicine*. 303-316.

Hippocrates, *Regimen II*. xxxix-lvii.

1/27 (4): herbal, simples, plant remedies

One of the most consistent and long-lived remedies in the history of medicine is the use of plants and herbs for everything from curing poisonous snake bites to improving memory and warding off old age. This unit lays groundwork for how herbs were used alone, with some foreshadowing about how they come into play in cooking and cuisine more generally for health reasons. Are these remedies folklore, magic, or science?

John Riddle, *Dioscorides On Pharmacy and Medicine*, xvii-xxviii.

John Riddle, "Folk Tradition and Folk Medicine: Recognition of drugs in classical antiquity." 33-45.

Jerry Stannard, *Pristina medicamenta: ancient and medieval medical botany*. 3-23.

G.E.R. Lloyd, *Magic, Reason and Experience. Studies in the Origin and Development of Greek Science*. 1-9.

2/1 (5): introduction to the "middle" ages. what did people eat to stay healthy and why?

One of the themes in this section is the question of continuity with antiquity. Is there any or not? What are the differences and similarities and how do we account for them? A second major theme is the idea of the "middle" ages themselves. The middle of what? Are typical stereotypes of the medieval period reflected in what we know about food and diet? Are the backward dark ages really that different than our own?

FOOD: 165-193.

Mark Grant, *Dieting for an Emperor*, 1-18.

Paul Meyvaert, "The Medieval Monastic Garden," in *Medieval Gardens* (ed. Elisabeth MacDougall). 23-54.

Phyllis Pray Bober, *Art Culture & Cuisine: Ancient & Medieval Gastronomy*, 193-266.

FOOD: 251-267.

2/3 (6): seasonings, spices, and other random concoctions

A stereotypical conception of the so-called "Dark Ages" is that cooks doused everything in spices to cover up rotten flavors. Spices were in fact heavily used, but not to disguise rancid meat (since it would taste like rancid meat with spices, just as it does today), but for various other reasons, including the everything from the positive effects on one's health to display of social status. This unit examines how spices were used in gastronomic, economic, and international contexts.

FOOD: 313-327.

Maguelonne Toussaint-Samat, "Spice at any Price" in *History of Food*. 480-545.

Jack Turner, *Spice: a history of temptation*. 98-141.

Reay Tannahill, *Food in History*. 103-151.

2/8 (7): eastern influence

Western Europe pulled itself out from social, economic, and intellectual backwardness, or so the story goes, by virtue of increasing access and acquisition to superior work of the Arabs. While this trend is well recognized within the contexts of science and medicine generally, but only recently have scholars, food historians especially, begun to appreciate just how much of what we have considered typical European or Mediterranean cooking owes considerable influence to Arab cookery. Much of western medical knowledge came directly from Islamic physicians and scholars—can we see similar kinds of knowledge about diet that comes from them as well. Is this reflected in their cuisine the same way it was reflected in the cuisine of the Greeks and Romans?

FOOD: 207-223.

Reay Tannahill, *Food in History*. 103-151.

Claudia Roden, *The New Book of Middle Eastern Food*. 3-39.

Henry C. Lu, *Chinese System of Food Cures: Prevention and Remedies*. 4-34.

http://www.inmamaskitchen.com/FOOD_IS_ART/sicilian_food_cooking.html

2/10 (8): food and religion

Religion does not necessarily have that much to say about health—at least not in terms of physical health—as many of our previous sources have taken pains to do. Spiritual health, however, is another matter. And it is an understatement to say that religion had something to do with when, how, and why people ate. Here we look at some different ways in which religious concerns have influenced the way people have thought about and used food.

Bridget Ann Henisch, *Fast and Feast*. 1-15; 28-58.

Carol Walker Bynum, *Holy Fast and Holy Feast*. 31-69; 260-276.

FOOD: 224-244.

UNIT 2: EARLY MODERN WORLD & EARLY AMERICA

2/15 (9): food, diet, health in the early modern world

Again, we are interested in trends. As we move in to the modern world, how are attitudes toward health and dietary practices changing from what we saw in antiquity and the middle ages? What are the reasons for such change, or reasons for such continuity? Also, the nature of the physician has undergone substantial changes since the Hippocratic physician we looked at earlier in the course. How do physicians establish credibility?

FOOD: 347-382.

Ken Albala, *Eating Right in the Renaissance*. 78-114.

J. Worth Estes, "The medical properties of food in the eighteenth century" *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 1996 51(2): 127-154.

Steven Shapin, "Trusting George Cheyne: Scientific Expertise, Common Sense, and Moral Authority in Early Eighteenth-Century Dietetic Medicine" *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 77 (2003): 263-297.

2/17 (10): medicinal beverages: coffee, tea

Early modern Europe found itself with access to a large list of beverages that could provide innumerable health benefits, or so their advocates claimed. In fact, the health benefits were far from clear. This unit explores the perceived dietary and therapeutic uses of various drinks, how they were employed, and what both the proponents and opponents were saying about them.

Rudi Matthee, "Exotic Substances: The introduction and global spread of tobacco, coffee, tea, and distilled liquor, 16th to 18th centuries," in *Drugs and Narcotics in History*, ed. Roy Porter, 24-51.

Ralph S. Hattox, *Coffee and Coffeehouses*. 46-71.

Massimo Montanari, *The Culture of Food*. 110-128.

Jean Maurice Biziere, "Hot Beverages and the Enterprising Spirit in Eighteenth-century Europe," *Journal of Psychohistory* 1979 7(2): 135-145.

2/22 (11): coffee houses

One of the most striking changes brought to western Europe with the arrival of coffee was a completely new public space for political discourse, natural philosophy, news, and gossip. Here we look at some central issues that revolve around the culture of the coffee shop. How was coffee important to the coffee shop (I'm not joking.)? How did the coffee house impact existing drinking establishments? Can we find any vestiges of the original coffee house in today's variety?

Ralph S. Hattox, *Coffee and Coffeehouses*. 72-91.

Steve Pincus, "'Coffee Politicians Does Create': Coffee Houses and Restoration Political Culture," *Journal of Modern History* 67 (December, 1995): 807-834.

Stephen B. Dobranski, "'Where Men of Differing Judgements Croud': Milton and the Culture of the Coffee Houses," *Seventeenth Century* 9.1 (1994): 35-56.

2/24 (12): medicinal beverages: chocolate

Rounding out our examinations of various medicinal and social beverages, we now come to chocolate. Chocolate, perhaps more than coffee and tea, has enjoyed an exceptional amount of cultural currency in variety of times and places. What makes chocolate, either has a beverage or food, so versatile and compelling? In what ways does it have medical virtues, and are any of those applicable today? What is so magical about it?

Marcy Norton, "Conquests of Chocolate," *Magazine of History* April 2004: 14-17.

Coe and Coe, *The True History of Chocolate*. 125-178.

Teresa L. Dillinger ... [et al.] "Food for the Gods : cure for humanity? : a cultural history of the medicinal and ritual use of chocolate," *Journal of Nutrition* Vol. 130 (2000): 2057-2072.

http://www.aphrodite-chocolates.co.uk/chocolate_health_benefits.htm

3/1 (13): sugar and cultural implications of a sweet tooth

Because Europeans were unaccustomed to the bitterness of the newfound beverages discussed in the previous days, sugar became an increasingly popular and necessary component to diet. In addition to its own health benefits, this unit explores how sugar became such an integral part of the beverage culture and how dietary and cultural demands for it shaped national empires.

Maguelonne Toussaint-Samat, "New Needs: Sugar, Chocolate Coffee Tea," in *History of Food*. 549-573.

Sidney Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*. 74-150.

FOOD: 383-393.

Woodruff D. Smith, "Complications of the Commonplace; Tea, Sugar, and Imperialism," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* v. 23, Autumn 1992: 259-78.

3/3 (14): medical virtues of wine

People have drunk wine forever, not least because of its pleasing physiological effects, with which most of you are quite familiar. For just as long, wine has also been seen as medicine as well. In what contexts (not solely medical) has wine helped achieve goals of greater health? Many historians and historical actors, too, consider wine to be therapy, as various other foods have been used throughout history. Do you agree? How does wine, if at all, provide medical efficacy?

Toussaint-Samat, "The History of Wine" in his *History of Food*, 247-290.

Arnau of Villanova, *On Wine*, trans. Sigerist in *The first printed book on wine*. 7-44.

Harry W. Paul, *Bacchic Medicine: Wine and Alcohol Therapies from Napoleon to the French Paradox*, 25-55.

3/8 (15): alchemy and aqua vitae

The stereotypical view of alchemy is a foolish search for gold. While this was a motive for some practitioners, alchemy had much more noble goals, including finding and "exilir of life" that could restore a body (or any substance) to health and provide immortality. Cool, huh? When alchemists (who were the first chemists) began distilling wine and producing alcohol, they thought they had finally found it so people wanted to drink it, its pleasing after effects notwithstanding. Wine and beer remained popular drinks, but distilled spirits brought a new dimension to alcoholic drinks. How do alchemy and cooking overlap? What are the medical and social implications of a drinking society?

Stanton J. Linden, *The Alchemy Reader*. 1-23.

T. Sarah Peterson, *Acquired Taste*. 15-41.

Pauolo A. Porto, "'Summus atque felicissimus salium': The medical relevance of the liquor alkahest" *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 2002 76(1): 1-29.

B. Ann Tlusty, "Water of life, water of death: The controversy over brandy and gin in early modern Augsburg" *Central European History* 1998 31(1-2): 1-26.

3/10 (16): diet, nationalism and authenticity

We've talked about food; we've talked about diet. And our discussions have ranged far and across vast chronological and geographic boundaries. The theme for today is localization, specifically how foods shape and identify the people who eat them. There is not so much about health in this section, but of course food is much more powerful than for merely what it can do for our health. How does a people define a cuisine for themselves? Does any nation or group of people have a clearly identifiable cuisine?

FOOD: 418-432.

Silvano Serventi & Françoise Sabban, *Pasta. The Story of a Universal Food*. 9-40.

Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, *Rice as Self*. 99-136.

Susan Zlotnick, "Domesticating Imperialism: Curry and Cookbooks in Victorian England," *Frontiers* 1996 16(2-3): 51-68.

Rachel Laudan and Jeffrey M. Pilcher, "Chiles, chocolate and race in the New Spain," *Eighteenth Century Life* 23 (May 1999): 59-70.

3/15 (17): history of american diet

Arguably, human diet has changed more in the last hundred years than in the last 100,000 years. One of the best places, and perhaps most relevant to us, to witness such changes in the landscape of the American diet. Revolutions in eating have taken place at a multitude of levels, including industry, dietetics, nutrition, health foods, organic farming, etc. This section focuses on the general history of american diet to provide an overview of the many changes that have taken place on our tables.

Waverley Root & Richard de Rochemont, *Eating in America. A History*, 51-88.

Richard J. Hooker, *Food and Drink in America. A History*, 208-251.

Harvey Levenstein, *Revolution at the Table*, 137-173.

3/17 (18): american cuisine

After all the shifts in available food, methods of preparation, attitudes about food, societal values, etc., is there such thing as American cuisine? Mintz says no, but other authors suggest otherwise, that there are well defined characteristics of "eating American." If there is no American cuisine, is one ever possible? How does the notion of an American cuisine square with any other kinds of cuisine? What is unique about the American situation?

Sidney Mintz, "Eating American" in Counihan (ed.), *Food in the USA*. 23-34.

Donna Gabaccia, "What do we eat?" in Counihan (ed.), *Food in the USA*. 35-40.

FOOD: 500-515

Waverley Root & Richard de Rochemont, *Eating in America. A History*. 276-312.

Harvey Levenstein, *Revolution at the Table*. 194-211.

SPRING BREAK

UNIT 3: FEEDING SOCIETY

3/29 (19): business of food

We depend on an enormously complex system of food production and distribution in order to get food on our table. And, despite the claims of so many food companies, their products are not always to the benefit of our health, and, in many cases, is downright detrimental. How is health used and misused by corporations as a way of selling food? How does corporate food shape our ideas about our own society? Our national cuisine?

FOOD: 481-499.

Eric Schlosser, *Fast Food Nation*. 111-131; 225-270.

Hillel Schwartz, *Never Satisfied. A Cultural History of Diets, Fantasies, and Fat*. 237-268.

Mark Weiner, "Consumer Culture and Participatory Democracy, The Story of Coca-Cola During World War II" in Counihan (ed.), *Food in the USA*. 123-141.

Susan J. Terrio, "Crafting Grand Cru Chocolates in Contemporary France" *American*

3/31 (20): class food

Not only does food shape national identities, as we have already discussed, but it differentiates and stratifies kinds of people within a society as well. The Goody reading is somewhat abstract and more challenging than most of the other readings. But it gives us an excellent framework for discussing how food defines and disintegrates class, and gives us a lens through which we can reexamine food in other contexts that we have already seen.

FOOD: 530-547.

William Roseberry, "The Rise of Yuppie Coffees and the Reimagination of Class in the United States" in Counihan (ed.) *Food in the USA*. 149-168.

Jack Goody, *Cooking, Cuisine and Class. A Study in Comparative Sociology*. 97-154.

4/5 (21): vegetarianism

To meat, or not to meat (eat)? Stupid puns aside, vegetarianism has been a serious issue for thousands of years. The health benefits and dangers of such a diet have been a part of this debate, but a relatively small one. Much more interesting, I think, are the moral, ethical, and societal reasons for adopting such a diet. This section outlines some of strongest arguments for being a vegetarian. How can we square the moral and ethical arguments against the health advice that we have been reading, in which meat plays such a prominent role? Are they at all compatible? Adams gives us a very different vegetarian perspective than we have seen before to show us how views of food sometimes spill over into society and class.

Steve F. Sapontzis (ed.), *Food for Thought. The Debate over Eating Meat*. 22-56.

Gillian Clark (trans.), *Porphyry: On Abstinence from Killing Animals*. 1-28.

Carol J. Adams, *The Sexual Politics of Meat. A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory*. 120-154.

4/7 (22): bio-engineered food

Thanks to our extremely rudimentary knowledge of genetics, we can make things to eat that might not have ever been created by nature alone. This group of readings provides a great overview of some pros and cons on the matter. Read and decide: Is this a good idea? How has "the public" (whatever that is) made up their mind on the matter? Does this tell us anything about how science, food, and health mix, or do not mix?

Mark Tester, "The dangerously polarized debate on genetic modification." *British Food Journal* 103.11 (2001): 785-790.

Alison Shaw, "'It Just Goes against the Grain': Public Understandings of Genetically Modified (GM) Food in the UK." *Public Understanding of Science* 11.3 (2002) 273-291.

Martin W. Bauer, "Controversial Medical and Agri-Food Biotechnology: A Cultivation Analysis." *Public Understanding of Science* 11.2 (April 2002) 93-111.

Ganesh M. Kishore & Christine Shewmaker, "Biotechnology: Enhancing Human Nutrition in Developing and Developed Worlds." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 96.11 (25 May 1999) 5968-72.

4/12 (23): history of american dieting

From all the news about it, one might get the idea that people have only recently become obsessed with their weight, their girth, and what it says about them. In fact, not only have those concerned big a big part of American society for hundreds of years (the country is hundreds of years old), but these views of fatness and thinness have flip-flopped at various points in time. How have health reformers played a part this? How do they become "experts?" What determines how people want to look? How does the food industry respond? How does this affect what people eat?

James C. Whorton, *Crusaders for Fitness. The History of American Health Reformers*. 3-37.

Hillel Schwartz, *Never Satisfied. A Cultural History of Diets, Fantasies, and Fat*. 147-187.

4/14 (24): dieting in the 21st century

Any one who has not at least heard of the Atkins diet has been living underground or on another planet for quite some time. Do you find Dr. Atkins persuasive? Are you convinced his diet will work? How does it square with previous centuries of dietary advice? How can we reconcile Atkins and Colgan? Why do people talk so much about Atkins's book, but not the book by the ADA? Who is really qualified to tell us what to eat, anyway? Physicians? Researchers? Government agencies? How is the notion of the modern diet different than definitions of diet that we have seen throughout the course?

Robert C. Atkins, *The New Atkins Revolution*. 17-30; 47-92.

Michael Colgan, *Optimum Sports Nutrition*. 3-18.

Roberta Larson Duyff, American Dietetic Association *Complete Food and Nutrition Guide*. 5-51.

4/19 (25): how shall we eat?

A tour of a bookstore will surely lead you past scores of books and magazines devoted to your health, especially your diet. Everyone has advice for you as far as what to eat, how to cook it, how often to eat, how much, etc. As we have seen over the semester, such motherly advice is hardly novel—people have been writing general dietary advice for thousands of years. Is history playing an implicit or explicit role in modern dietary advice? Should our perception of diet and health and the significance of food be any different with historical perspectives under our belt?

4/21 (26): first presentations**4/26 (27): more presentations****4/28 (28): still more presentations****5/3 (29): finally, the last presentations****5/5 (30): course review and evaluations**