

HIST 303/AMST 301 Food in Modern America
Fall 2019: T/TH 9:00-10:15, Grissom Hall 102
Course Credit Hours: 3 (STS & HUM core)

Sharra Vostral, Ph.D
Associate Professor
University Hall, 672 Oval Drive, #307
office hours: Tuesday 1:30-2:30
svostral@purdue.edu

TA: McKenzie Isom
Recitation #421
Office hours: Tuesday 11:00-12:00
isomm@purdue.edu

The course syllabus and other course materials are posted on Blackboard.

Course Description

This course examines the kitchen as an architectural space, a place of labor and food production, and an arena for technological innovation in modern American history. Cooking and eating reflect cultural sentiments about modernity, progress, ethnicity, and family, and the politics of how society nourishes bodies.

Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to:

- think historically and critically about the cultural consequences of technologies related to eating and food preparation.
- think historically and critically about approaches to the study of American national identity and culture expressed through food.
- appreciate the circumstances and history of kitchen design in relation to raced and gendered identities, home space, and food preparation.
- understand and recognize how assumptions about food production during the late 19th and 20th centuries in the United States reflected notions about labor, modernity, and progress.
- understand the difference between secondary and primary sources. Students will analyze and interpret primary documents related to kitchens, cooking, and food preparation. They also will understand the competing and conflicting nature of historical interpretation.
- sharpen critical reading, thinking, writing, and discussion skills.

Assignments

Individual Work
15% Homework (5 + plus one optional) 30 points

- 15% Midterm Essay- Speculative Design (individual research) 30 points
- 20% Individual Final Project - (15% final + 5% source update) 40 points
- 10% discussion support (including leading a discussion and weekly participation) 20 points

Group work

- 15% Chapter & Recipe from *Eight Flavors* 30 points
- 5% evaluation of and by team members 10 points
- 15% Kitchen Utensils (building on individual research + group “lab” work) 30 points
- 5% evaluation of and by team members 10 points

Grade Scale

A 94-100%; A- 90-93%; B+ 87-89%; B 84-86%; B- 80-83%; C+ 77-79%; C 74-76%; C- 70-73%; D+ 67-69%; D 60-66%; F 0-59%

Course Materials

Articles available as pdfs through Blackboard.

e-book at Purdue Library: Jennifer Wallach, ed. *American Appetites: A Documentary Reader* (2014).

Purchase: Sarah Lohman, *Eight Flavors: The Untold Story of American Cuisine* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2016).

Variable cost: ingredients to make a recipe from *Eight Flavors*; purchase of one kitchen utensil for speculative design

Useful link:

[Writing Lab at Purdue](#)

Participation

Just showing up is not enough. Your participation grade will reflect your overall participation in class discussions. I will also take into account office visits in which we discuss course material.

Criteria for grading this assignment: frequency of your participation (this includes asking intelligent questions); quality of your comments; your ability to get other students talking by raising questions or debating other students directly. **Regular and alert attendance is expected and will not qualify you for full participation points.**

Policies

Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the day they are due. THERE ARE NO LATE GRADES OR INCOMPLETES. You will need a note from the Dean to explain extenuating circumstances.

Missed classes: You are not eligible for an A with more than 3 absences. You may use your 3 however you wish. Attendance is required by university policy and is expected by me.

Academic Honesty

Student-teacher relationships are built on trust. For example, students must trust that teachers have made responsible decisions about the structure and content of the courses they teach, and teachers must trust that the assignments that students turn in are theirs. Acts that violate this trust undermine the educational process.

In this class, all assignments that are turned in for a grade must represent the student's own work. In cases where help was received, or teamwork was allowed, a notation on the assignment should indicate with whom you collaborated. If you have any questions concerning this policy before submitting an assignment, please ask for clarification.

The following will be considered instances of academic dishonesty: copying a paper from another student; recycling one's own or others' papers from other courses; obtaining part or all of a paper from another source other than your own research without providing quotations and citations; direct quotation from printed, electronic or online sources without providing a citation (including rewording or "patchwork plagiarism"); and the use of specific ideas and interpretations of printed or electronic sources without citation ("theft of ideas"). Any material that you quote should be placed under quotation marks and cited with a footnote or reference immediately following the quoted portion that provides the source. Do not hide plagiarism by quoting material and then adding a vague reference at the end of the text. You may discuss homework assignments with other students, and you may prepare for papers and class with other students, but the writing assignments should be your own work. If you quote any source or even take ideas from that source, the source should be referenced completely. The penalty for plagiarism can be an F in the course.

Copying of class notes: You may make a photocopy of written class notes for friends who have been absent from class for their personal use only. Any wider distribution outside the classroom, such as posting on the Internet or via a list to anyone not in this class, is prohibited and will result in an F in the course.

In case of emergency:

In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances beyond the instructor's control. Here are ways to get information about changes in this course.

Course web page (via Blackboard)

Instructor's email (svostral@purdue.edu)

Instructor's phone (History Department, 765 494-4132)

Schedule

*Indicates a scholarly article; others are mixed media

8/20

Introductions

- What is food?

8/22

Cookbooks & Recipes

- *Barbara Ketcham Wheaton, "Cookbooks as Resources for Social History," ch. 13 in *Food in Time and Place: The American Historical Association Companion to Food History*, eds. Paul Freedman, Joyce Chaplin and Ken Abala (University of California Press, 2014): 276-299.
- ["Celebrity Chef Tyler Florence Says Recipes are Dead"](#)
- Watch: ["Feeding America: Historic American Cookbooks"](#)
- In Class: [Cookery Collection](#)

8/27

Modern Food Processing

- *Jim Barrett, Introduction to *The Jungle* (1-15)
- *Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle*, [Chapter 14](#)
- [Impact of Sinclair's 'The Jungle' on Food Safety](#), NPR (1/2/04)
- Watch: ["How to Butcher an Entire Cow"](#) *Bon Appétit*
- In Class: Group assignments *8 Flavors*

8/29

Technology

- *Ruth Schwartz Cowan, *More Work for Mother*, ch. 4.
- [Sarah Archer, "The Frankfurt Kitchen Changed How We Cook—and Live" CityLab \(May 8, 2019\)](#)
- Watch: [Dan Formosa - 7 Slicing Kitchen Gadgets](#)
- In Class: [Museum Gallery: Cooking Implements \(choose 1-3 to examine and analyze\)](#)
- In Class: How Users Matter
- Homework #1 (*Cowan, Archer, Formosa)

9/3

Processed Food and Branding

- *Manring, M. M. "The Mammy," in *Slave in a Box: The Strange Career of Aunt Jemima* (University of Virginia Press, 1998).
- [Episode 597: The Jemima Code, The Splendid Table](#)

9/5

Early American Foods & Flavors

- Lohman, Flavor 1: Black Pepper
- Listen: Pigs & Pork, ["The Whole Hog,"](#) Gastropod
- In Class: [Feeding America, Glossary](#)
- In Class: Food Metaphors

9/10

Technology

- *Shelley Nickles. "'Preserving Women': Refrigerator Design as Social Process in the 1930s," *Technology and Culture*, Volume 43, Number 4, October 2002.
- Bill Hammack, ["The Greatest Discovery Since Fire"](#)
- ["Microwave Ovens,"](#) BBC
- In Class Video: "Tupperware!" The American Experience, PBS (DVD)
- Homework #2 (*Nickles, Hammock, Microwave)

9/12

Flavor and Imitation

- Lohman, Flavor 2: Vanilla
- In Class: Analytical Category -- Simulacra
- In Class: Primary Resources -- *American Appetites: A Documentary Reader*

9/17

Recipes as Primary Sources

- Read: [Searching for Rosa Parks' Pancakes](#), The Sporkful
- Listen: Searching for Rosa Parks' Pancakes (mp3 on BB)
- ["Rosa Parks Home is Now up for Auction"](#)
- In Class: Civil Rights Context

9/19

Capsaicin & Conversion

- Flavor 3: Chili Powder
- [Listen: The Chili Powder Cheat: A Tex-Mex Story](#)
- In Class: David Chang, "Ugly Delicious," Tacos

9/24

Authenticity and Identity

- *Martin Manalansan, "Beyond Authenticity: Rerouting the Filipino Culinary Diaspora," in *Eating Asian American* (NYU Press, 2013).
- Listen: [The Sporkful, "Other People's Food Pt. 1: White Chef, Mexican Food"](#)
- Andrea Nguyen, [Don't Call it the New Ramen](#)
- Optional: [Anthony Bourdain: No Reservations \(No Reservations S05E07 Philippines\)](#)

- In Class: [Anthony Bourdain on 'Appetites,' Washing Dishes and food he still won't eat](#)
- Homework #3 (*Manalanson, Sporkful, Nguyen)

9/26

Outsourcing Flavor & Labor

- Lohman, Flavor 4: Curry Powder
- [Listen: When will Indian food be American?](#)
- Read: "What a Pilot Eats" (for discussion to prepare for 10/1)

10/1

Archives: Purdue Connection

- Guest: Tracy Grimm and presentation of archives and primary sources at Purdue
- Hold Cart Item list on BB
- Midterm Essay, Speculative Design

10/3

Selling Asia

- Lohman, Flavor 5: Soy Sauce
- Listen: [A Sweet Surprise Awaits You](#), 99% Invisible
- In Class: Discuss group projects
- Participation Reflection (P/F)

10/8 – Fall break, no class

10/10 – No class meeting. Online and group work.

Cooking Shows

- *Cheri Ketchum, "The Essence of Cooking Shows: How the Food Network Constructs Consumer Fantasies" *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, Vol. 29, No. 3, 217-234 (2005).
- Kathleen Collins, ["TV Cooking Shows: The Evolution of a Genre"](#)
- Homework #4 (*Ketchum, Collins)

10/15

Julia Child

- *Joanne Hollows, "The Feminist and the Cook: Julia Child, Betty Friedan and Domestic Femininity," in Lydia Martens, *Domestic Cultures and the Commercialisation of Everyday Life* (Routledge, 2007): 33-48.
- [Julia Child's Kitchen](#)
- Watch in class: [Julia Child: An Appetite for Life](#)
- Review cookbooks

10/17

Food, Flavor, Medicine

- Lohman, Flavor 6: Garlic

- Listen: [“Staph Retreat,”](#) Radiolab

10/22 – Purdue-Asia Conference

In class: Group meeting time and submit update and report

10/24

Gender Myths

- *Sherrie Inness, “‘All Those Leftovers Are Hard on the Family’s Morale’: Rebellion in Peg Bracken’s *The I Hate to Cook Book*,” ch. 3 in *Secret Ingredients: Race, Gender, and Class at the Dinner Table*
- [“Irreverent Cookbook Author Peg Bracken Dies”](#) (listen to interview)
- [Betty Crocker](#)
- Watch: [Back in Time for Dinner - 1950s](#)
- Homework #5 (*Inness, Bracken OR Crocker, Back in Time)

10/29

Kitchens & Politics

- *Christina Carbone, “Staging the Kitchen Debate: How Sputnik Got Normalized in the United States” in Ruth Oldenziel and Karin Zachmann, eds. *Cold War Kitchen: Americanization, Technology, and European Users* (Boston: MIT Press, 2009).
- [The Cold War’s Hot Kitchen](#)
- [The Kitchen Debate](#)
- [Miracle Kitchen of the Future](#)

10/31

Enhancing Food

- Lohman, Flavor 7: MSG
- [Listen: Is MSG bad for your health?](#)
- Meet with groups

11/5

Vegetarianism

- *Rita Laws, “Native American and Vegetarianism,” *Vegetarian Journal* (Sept 1994)
- Podcast: Adam Shprintzen, [“The Vegetarian Crusade: The Rise of an American Reform Movement,”](#) Ben Franklin’s World
- [Protose Recipe](#)
- [The Rise of Mock Meat](#)

11/7

Changing Palette

- Lohman, Flavor 8: Sriracha
- Listen: [“In Home Of Original Sriracha Sauce, Thais Say Rooster Brand Is Nothing To Crow About”](#)

- Meet with groups

11/12

Kitchen Utensils Group presentations

- PPT, Summary and Group evaluation due

11/14

Kitchen Utensil Group presentations

- PPT, Summary and Group evaluation due

11/19

Sweets

- *Carolyn de la Pena, *Empty Pleasures: The Story of Artificial Sweeteners from Saccharin to Splenda*, ch. 1 "False Scarlets"
- ["Sweet Talk: A History of Sugar,"](#) Back Story
 - Choose ONE of the segments to listen to
- [50 Years ago, Sugar Industry quietly paid scientists to point blame at fat](#)
- Homework OPTIONAL (de la Pena, one segment Back Story)

11/21

Additives

- *Rima Apple, "Introduction," in *Vitamina: Vitamins in American Culture* (Rutgers: 1996): 1-12
- [Listen: "How A 19th Century Chemist Took on the Food Industry with a Grisly Experiment" NPR \(October 8, 2018\)](#)
- Podcast: ["V is for Vitamin,"](#) Gastropod (April 10, 2017)
- [Vitamin Doughnuts](#)
- Topic & Sources due

11/26 – No class

- Thanksgiving Reading: [Origin of a Dish: Sweet Potato Casserole](#)

12/3

Processed Food & Industrial Eating

- *George Ritzer, "The McDonaldization of Society," *Journal of American Culture* 6.1 (1983): 100-107.
- ["Jaime Oliver Oliver's Food Revolution"](#)
- Michael Pollan, [We are What We Eat](#)
- ["Why Ditching Processed Foods Won't be Easy" \(May 24, 2019\)](#)
- Optional Listen: [Michael Pollan: Conscious Eating](#)

12/5

Discussion and Closing Activity

- [Connections through Food](#)

Final individual project due 12/12

Other stuff that is just fun & interesting:

Kellogg Cereal and Milk

<http://www.sporkful.com/a-brief-history-of-cereal-and-milk/>

When Celery was more special than Caviar

<http://www.sporkful.com/when-celery-was-more-special-than-caviar/>

50 Years After Apollo 11, Here's What (And How) Astronauts Are Eating - NPR

<https://apple.news/AzBcZ1tGQTdaxE9tyBKwpnA>