

# The Politics of Food

Freshman Seminar, PSCI 009-302

Prof. Mary Summers

Mondays, 2-5

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office hours: Tues, 2-4 and by apptmt

Leadership Hall, rm 20

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This seminar will explore the many different politics that shape food production and consumption here in West Philadelphia and around the world. Students will be encouraged to think broadly about how people engage in politics --articulate goals, form alliances, struggle for power, respond to and engage in leadership— in many different arenas: kitchens, factory floors, markets, industries, churches, universities, social movements, elections, legislatures. A focus on case studies of leaders who have made a difference in the politics of food will include several guest speakers, who work on food related health, labor, farming, technology, and globalization issues.

Requirements include: weekly readings, with brief responses (1-3 pages), submitted by email by Sunday at 4pm. Each student will also develop and report back to the class on one food related research or community service project.

Jan. 7 Introduction to course themes and each other

Jan. 14 The Jungle and the Pure Food Movement: the Nineteenth Century

Upton Sinclair, The Jungle, (1906, 1981) bantam edition w. intro by Morris Dickstein, v-xvii, 1-29, 72-118, 133-161, 257-280, 330-346.

Clayton Coppin and Jack High, The Politics of Purity: Harvey Washington Wiley and the Origins of Federal Food Policy, 1999, 1-6, 18-34, 165-171.

(packet)

Jan. 21 Food Industries and Consumer, Environmentalist and Populist Campaigns: the Twentieth Century

Harrison Wellford, Sowing the Wind: A Report from Ralph Nader's Center for Study of Responsive Law On Food Safety and the Chemical Harvest (1972), xi-26, 45-78, 219-237, 286-309, 354-355 (packet)

Jim Hightower, Eat Your Heart Out: Food Profiteering in America (1975), vii-58, 88-91, 108-121, 135-153, 225-231, 256-277, 278-306

Jan. 28 Issues for the 21<sup>st</sup> century: Fast Food

Sidney Minz, "Food and Eating," 24-34 and in Belasco and Scranton, eds., Food Nations (2002), 24-33; Eric Schlosser, Fast Food Nation, 2001, 1-222, 255-270

Feb. 4 Obesity

\*\*\*\*Guest speaker: Prof. Kelly Brownell, professor of psychology at Yale, and director of the Yale Center for Eating and Weight Disorders

Kelly Brownell, "The Environment and Obesity," and "Public Policy and the Prevention of Obesity," in Fairburn and Brownell, eds., Eating Disorders and Obesity: A Comprehensive Handbook (2002), 433-438, 619-623. (Packet)

Jeffrey Pilcher, "Industrial Tortillas and Folkloric Pepsi," in Belasco and Scranton, Food Nations, 222-239.

Feb. 11 Hunger

Janet Poppendieck, Sweet Charity?: Emergency Food and the End of Entitlement (1998), 1-48; 81-140, 201-255, 288-318

Feb. 18 Chickens, farmers, and workers

\*\*\*Guest speaker: Rev. Jim Lewis, founding member and past president  
Delmarva Poultry Justice Alliance

Harrison Wellford, Sowing the Wind (1972), 101-124 (packet)  
Southern Exposure, "Ruling the Roost" (Summer, 1989), 1-42; "Fowling the Nest," (Spring, 1991), 8-12 (packet)

Jesse Katz, L.A. Times series, (November, 1996), (packet)  
Jim Lewis, "Grasshopper Power," packet.

Feb. 25 Farmers and Farm Workers

Lawrence Goodwyn, The Populist Moment: A Short History of the Agrarian Revolt in America (1978), 20-93 (packet)

James Hightower, Eat Your Heart Out, 238-255. (packet)

Cindy Hahamavitch "'In America Life is Given Away': Jamaican Farmworkers and the Making of Agricultural Immigration Policy," and Mary Summers, "From the Heartland to Seattle: The Family Farm Movement of the 1980's and the Legacy of Agrarian State Building," in Countryside in the Age of the Modern State, Stock and Johnston, eds., 2001, 134-160, 304-326.

Wendell Berry, Home Economics (1987), 122-132, 152-178 (packet)

Janet Thomas, The Battle in Seattle: the Story Behind and Beyond the WTO Demonstrations (2000), 168-177 (packet)

March 4 Women and food, markets, and kitchens

Delores Hayden, The Grand Domestic Revolution: A History of Feminist Designs for American Homes, Neighbors and Cities (1981), 1-29, 55-89 (packet)

Katherine Jellison, "An 'Enviably Traditional' Patriarchy: New Deal Investigations of Women's Work in the Amish Farm Family," in The Countryside in the Age of the Modern State, Stock and Johnston, eds., 240-257.

Tracy Deutsch, "Untangling Alliances: Social Tensions surrounding Independent Grocery Stores and the Rise of Mass Retailing," in Food Nations, Belasco and Scranton, eds., 156-174

Ann Bentley, "Inventing Baby Food: Gerber and the Discourse of Infancy in the United States," in Food Nations, Belasco and Scranton, eds., 92-112.

Arlene Avakian, ed., Through the Kitchen Window (1997), 1-9, Clare Coss, "My Mother/Her Kitchen," 13-14, Marge Piercy, "What's that smell in the kitchen," 111 (packet)

March 18 Research and Development: Industrialized Agriculture and Genetic Engineering

Don Paarlberg, Toward a Well-Fed World (1988), 60-71 (packet)

Alfred Charles True, A History of Agricultural Extension Work in the United States (1928) 58-73 (packet)

Harrison Welford, Sowing the Wind (1972) 264-285 (packet)

Jim Hightower, Hard Tomatoes, Hard Times (1973), (packet)

Jack Kloppenberg, First the Seed (packet)

Michael Pollan, The Botany of Desire (2001), 185-248 (packet)

Bill Lambrecht, Dinner at the New Gene Café (2001), ix-18, 311-369 (packet)

March 25 Globalization

\*\*\*Guest Speaker: Mark Ritchie, President of the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy and "Paul Revere" of the globalization movement

Sidney Minz, Sweetness and Power, 61-73 (packet)

Karen Lehman and Al Krebs, "Control of the World's Food Supply," in Jerry Mander and Edward Goldsmith, The Case Against The Global Economy, 1996, 122-130 (packet)

Schlosser, Fast Food Nation, 225-252

Vandana Shiva, "War Against Nature and the People of the South," Anuradha Mittal, "The South in the North," in Views from the South, 91-125, 164-175 (packet)

Wendell Berry, "Conserving Communities," and Mark Ritchie, "Cross-Border Organizing," in The Case Against the Global Economy, Mander, ed, 407-417, 494-500

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April 1, April 8, April 15

Class Reports, contemporary issues and organizing efforts  
Some Possibilities: the Slow Food Movement; Community Supported Agriculture; Food Security; Labor and Farmer Organizing; Organic food; Labeling issues; Mad Cow Disease; Effects of Welfare Reform; Food for Peace initiatives.

Renske van Staveren, now working for the Urban Nutrition Initiative and the Fair Food Project, has agreed to be available for consultation regarding relevant community organizing, research and service projects. Email: [Renske@riseup.net](mailto:Renske@riseup.net) or cell phone, 215-668-6222. But also feel free to consult with the instructor. We will learn together!

Sara Coelho, at the program Communication within the Curriculum (CWIC), is available to help with preparing oral presentations. Her phone number is 215-573-6309. CWIC's website also has lots of useful information: [www.sas.upenn.edu/cwic](http://www.sas.upenn.edu/cwic)

Required Readings: Course Packet on sale at Campus Copy Center, 3907 Walnut St, 215-386-6410; Books are at Penn Bookstore, 3601 Walnut. Books and readings will also be placed on reserve.

Required books: Upton Sinclair, The Jungle, (any edition ok, but banam edition with intro by Morris Dickstein is at bookstore); Warren Belasco and Philip Scranton, Fast Food Nations; Eric Schlosser, Fast Food Nation; Janet Poppendieck, Sweet Charity?: Emergency Food and the End of Entitlement; Catherine Stock and Robert Johnston, eds., The Countryside in the Age of the Modern State: Political Histories of Rural America. (It should be possible to borrow copies of the Stock/Johnston anthology from me.)