

ANTH2003 Food Across Cultures

Session 2, Weekday attendance, North Ryde 2020

Department of Anthropology

Contents

General Information	2
Learning Outcomes	2
Assessment Tasks	3
Delivery and Resources	5
Unit Schedule	5
Policies and Procedures	13

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Notice

As part of Phase 3 of our return to campus plan, most units will now run tutorials, seminars and ot her small group learning activities on campus for the second half-year, while keeping an online ver sion available for those students unable to return or those who choose to continue their studies onli ne.

To check the availability of face-to-face and onlin e activities for your unit, please go to timetable vi ewer. To check detailed information on unit asses sments visit your unit's iLearn space or consult yo ur unit convenor.

General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff Eve Vincent eve.vincent@mq.edu.au

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Credit points 10

Prerequisites (ANTH150 or ANTH1050) or (40cp at 1000 level or above

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

We all eat. But what, when, how, how much and with whom we eat is bound up with questions of cultural difference, gender and power. The study of food, eating and hunger has long held a particular fascination for anthropologists--from subsistence strategies to nutritional intake, from food taboos to the social rules that structure how people eat together. This unit introduces the idea that the everyday activities of cooking and eating are packed with economic, medical, political, and cultural meanings. We will focus on some classic anthropological work on eating as a social practice. Then we move to the concerns of contemporary anthropology, examining issues such as the global industrial food system, and the link between migration, ethnic identity and food. Throughout this unit we are concerned with everyday eating practices, exploring the extraordinary variety of food likes and dislikes in a range of ethnographic contexts. Not only will we talk about food, we will also come together to share food.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

ULO1: Analyse how the everyday activities of food classification, cooking and eating are packed with cultural meanings.

ULO2: Identify connections between food, globalisation, consumption practices and class, identity and migration.

ULO3: Account for the relationship between food, gender and power.

ULO4: Apply anthropological theory to the study of food-related practices in contemporary Sydney.

ULO5: Integrate theories regarding memory and the transmission of embodied knowledge into the practice of sharing food and recipes with others.

ULO6: Demonstrate a command of anthropological knowledge and theories as applied to the study of food and culture.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Weekly Participation	25%	No	Weekly
Short Essay	10%	Yes	Sunday August 23
Research Essay	35%	No	Sunday October 11
Food, eating, cooking and/or exercise during COVID-19	30%	No	Sunday November 15

Weekly Participation

Assessment Type 1: Participatory task Indicative Time on Task 2: 30 hours Due: **Weekly** Weighting: **25%**

Each week, you should complete the required readings and then complete the short Weekly Participation task for that week outlined in iLearn. You will receive weekly marks and feedback on each weekly task: these exercises are designed to augment your participation in weekly interactive Zoom lectures.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Analyse how the everyday activities of food classification, cooking and eating are packed with cultural meanings.
- · Identify connections between food, globalisation, consumption practices and class,

identity and migration.

- Account for the relationship between food, gender and power.
- Integrate theories regarding memory and the transmission of embodied knowledge into the practice of sharing food and recipes with others.

Short Essay

Assessment Type 1: Essay Indicative Time on Task 2: 12 hours Due: **Sunday August 23** Weighting: **10% This is a hurdle assessment task (see <u>assessment policy</u> for more information on hurdle assessment tasks)**

You are required to submit a short essay in response to a selected question. Details for this assessment task and essay questions will be made available.

On successful completion you will be able to:

• Analyse how the everyday activities of food classification, cooking and eating are packed with cultural meanings.

Research Essay

Assessment Type 1: Essay Indicative Time on Task 2: 40 hours Due: **Sunday October 11** Weighting: **35%**

You will write a research essay based on a selected question. Details for this assessment task and a list of essay questions will be released. You may design your own essay question, in consultation with your tutor.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Identify connections between food, globalisation, consumption practices and class, identity and migration.
- Account for the relationship between food, gender and power.
- Integrate theories regarding memory and the transmission of embodied knowledge into the practice of sharing food and recipes with others.

• Demonstrate a command of anthropological knowledge and theories as applied to the study of food and culture.

Food, eating, cooking and/or exercise during COVID-19

Assessment Type ¹: Reflective Writing Indicative Time on Task ²: 30 hours Due: **Sunday November 15** Weighting: **30%**

This short reflective assessment tasks requires you to reflect on the changing role of food, cooking, eating and/or exercise during COVID-19. You may undertake auto-ethnographic or digital research for this exercise. Your reflections must make an explicit link to course themes and readings.

On successful completion you will be able to:

• Apply anthropological theory to the study of food-related practices in contemporary Sydney.

¹ If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- the Writing Centre for academic skills support.

² Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation

Delivery and Resources

All readings for this unit are available via Leganto.

Unit Schedule

Week 1. Eating together: introduction to the anthropology of food

Thursday July 30

Eating is a profoundly social experience, cementing or marking social intimacies, hierarchies and roles. In this lecture we will talk about the idea of 'commensality': the practice of eating together. We will explore the kinds of relationships and boundaries between people created through various meals: a Javanese feast called a 'slametan'; an everyday Chinese lunch in a Hong Kong eatery; an anthropologist's attempt to share a festive Christmas meal in the Kalahari desert. At

this introductory lecture, the structure of the unit, its key themes, and the assessment items will be explained.

Required reading:

- Clifford Geertz, The Slametan: Communal Feast as Core Ritual, In *The Religion of Java*, New York: The Free Press, 1960, 11-15.
- Eugene Cooper, Chinese Table Manners: You Are How You Eat. *Human Organization,* Summer 1986, vol. 45, no. 2, pp. 179-184.

Further reading:

- Maurice Bloch, Commensality and Poisoning, Social Research, vol. 66, no. 1, 1999, 133-149.
- Richard Lee, Eating Christmas in the Kalahari, in James Spradley (ed), Conformity & conflict: Readings in cultural anthropology. Scott Foresman/Little Brown Higher Education: Glenview, 1990, 30-37.
- David Sutton, The vegetarian anthropologist, *Anthropology Today*, vol. 13, no. 1, February 1997, 5-8.
- James Staples, Food, Commensality and Caste in South Asia, in Jakob Klein and James Watson (eds), *The Handbook of Food and Anthropology*. Bloomsbury academic: London and New York, 2016, 74-93.

There are no tutorials in Week 1. Please complete the reading for this week, which we will discuss in the Week 2 tutorials.

Week 2. Taste and taboo

Thursday August 6

Have you ever eaten spiders? Perhaps. Seaweed? No doubt. Raw meat? Guinea pig? Pig trotters? Kangaroo?

Why do some cultures regard certain foodstuffs as disgusting, while others regard these same items as highly desirable delicacies or as everyday foods? How do we learn about these categories? What explains the different cultural categorisations of the same edible foodstuffs? In the lecture, we will survey how prominent anthropologists such as Edmund Leach, Marshall Sahlins, Mary Douglas and Marvin Harris answer these questions, which are fundamental to the anthropology of food.

Required reading:

- Soleil Ho, Do You Eat Dog? *Taste*, July 2018. https://www.tastecooking.com/the-dogquestion/
- Marshall Sahlins, Food Preference and Tabu in American Domestic Animals, In *Culture and Practical Reason*, University of Chicago Press, 1976, 170-179.

Further reading:

- Mary Douglas, The Abominations of Leviticus, In *Purity and Danger*, England: Penguin Books, 1970, 54-72.
- Marvin Harris, The Abominable Pig, In *Good to Eat: Riddles of Food and Culture*. London: Allen & Unwin, 1985, 67-87.
- Marianne Elisabeth Lien, Dogs, Whales and Kangaroos: Transnational Activism and Food Taboos. In Marianne Lien and Brigitte Nerlich (eds), *The Politics of Food.* Oxford: Berg, 2004, 179-197.

Week 3. Cannibals?

Thursday August 13

Was anthropophagy – the consumption of human flesh – a sanctioned practice in certain societies, partaken in for specific cultural reasons? What might it mean to lovingly ingest parts of the body of a deceased family member? Or is cannibalism a myth, generated so that one culture can differentiate itself from others it sees as inferior thus justifying colonisation? We will explore these questions via the lecture, readings and the film *Kuru*.

Required reading:

• Beth A. Conklin, Thus Are Our Bodies, Thus Was Our Custom: Mortuary Cannibalism in an Amazonian Society, *American Ethnologist*, vol. 22, no. 1, 1995, 75-101.

Further reading / watching:

- Kuru: The science and the sorcery (2009) Rob Bygott (available via iLearn).
- Shirley Lindenbaum, Cannibalism, Kuru and Anthropology, *Folia Neuropathol*, vol. 47, no. 2, 2009, 138-144.
- William Arens, excerpt from *The Man-Eating Myth: Anthropology and Anthropophagy*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1979, 10-40.
- Don Gardner, Anthropophagy, Myth and the Subtle Ways of Ethnocentrism, in Laurence Goldman (ed), *The Anthropology of Cannibalism*, Westport, USA: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1999, 27-49.

Week 4. Gendered symbols, gendered roles.

Thursday August 20

Studying food inevitably involves studying gender relations. We will talk, first, about the symbolic associations that certain foods themselves have – foods and also drinks come to symbolise the qualities which a particular culture associates with masculinity, and the qualities a particular culture associates with femininity. These symbolic associations vary across cultures. Second, we will talk about gender and the allocation of certain roles surrounding food production, cooking, shopping and serving. Power emerges as central to our discussion of gender and food.

Required readings:

- Anne Allison, Japanese Mothers and Obentos: The Lunch Box as Ideological State Apparatus, In Carole Counihan and Penny van Esterik (eds), *Food and Culture: A Reader*, Routledge: New York and London, 1997, 296-314.
- Anna Meigs, Food Rules and the Traditional Sexual Ideology, In *Food, Sex, and Pollution*, New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 31-44.

Further reading:

- Jeffrey Sobal, Men, Meat, and Marriage: Models of Masculinity, *Food and Foodways*, 13:1-2, 135-158.
- Alex McIntosh and Mary Zey, Women as Gate Keepers of food consumption: a sociological critique, *Food and Foodways*, 1989, 3:4, 317-332.

Week 5. Global entanglements: sugar and coffee

Thursday August 27

How did sugar come to be so ubiquitous, and why do we continue to eat it even while knowing it is bad for us? This week we will discuss the way a single commodity such as sugar or coffee involves complex global entanglements. The history of the trans-Atlantic slave trade and the use of indentured South Sea islander labour in the Queensland sugar fields; the spread of sugar into a nutritionally deficient English working diet; the use of sweetness to mark the new rhythms of industrial capitalism and the boundary between work and rest; the current status of sugar in Western diets are all intertwined in our exploration of the sweet stuff. In the second half of the lecture we will turn our attention coffee's entanglements. We will survey the rise of cafe culture and the way food preferences express and reflect social class; the nature of the relationship between rural coffee growers and urban consumers; globalisation, commodity chains and debates about economic regulation of global markets.

Required reading:

- Sidney Mintz, Time, Sugar and Sweetness, in Carole Counihan and Penny van Esterik (eds), *Food and Culture: A Reader*. Routledge: New York and London, 1997, 91-103.
- Paige West, Making the Market: Specialty Coffee, Generational Pitches, and Papua New Guinea. *Antipode*, 2010, Vol.42, no. 3, 690-718.

Further reading:

- Alison James, The Good, the Bad and the Delicious: the Role of Confectionery in British Society, *Sociological Review*, vol. 38, 1990, 666-688.
- William Roseberry, The Rise of Yuppie Coffees and the Reimagination of Class in the United States, in J. L. Watson and M. L. Caldwell (eds) *The Cultural Politics of Food and Eating*, USA, UK, Australia: Blackwell Publishing, 2007, 122-143.

- James Carrier, Protecting the Environment the Natural Way: Ethical Consumption and Commodity Fetishism, *Antipode*, 2010, vol. 42, no. 3, 672–689.
- Film: Black Gold: Wake up and smell the coffee (2007) Marc and Nick Francis.

Week 6. High food, low food; fast food, slow food. Part one

Thursday September 3

This week we deal with the rise of the industrialised global food system in the post WW2 period. We will cover the centrality of corn in the American food chain, the rise of fast food, and industrialised methods of animal slaughter. We will also talk about the labour practices associated with industrialised food production, focussing on Australia's Seasonal Workers Program.

Required reading:

- Timothy Pachirat, excerpts from *Every Twelve Seconds: Industrialized Slaughter and the Politics of Sight.* New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 140-161
- Michael Pollan, The Meal, In *The Omnivore's Dilemma*. England: Penguin Books, 2007,109-119.

Further reading:

- Julie Guthman, Healthy to Eat, Unhealthy to Grow, *The Conversation*, 2018: https://theconversation.com/healthy-to-eat-unhealthy-to-grow-strawberries-embody-thecontradictions-of-california-agriculture-86907
- Angela Stuesse, A Bone to Pick, in *Scratching out a living: Latinos, Race and Work in the Deep South*, Berkeley: University of Cal. Press, 2016, 120-146.

Week 7. High food, low food; fast food, slow food. Part two

Thursday September 10

Last week we discussed the industrialised global food system, learning of its environmental impact, its reliance on precarious racialised labour, and the ethics of animal slaughter. This week we continue the exploration begun last week. We shift our attention to various food movements that have emerged as a response to this system. What is the relationship between pleasure, eating and time, according to the Slow Food movement? How does punk food invert and challenge a broad range of social hierarchies. Why do people embark on the Paleo diet?

Required reading:

- Catie Gressier, Identity and Taboo among Australian Paleo Dieters, in *Illness, Identity, and Taboo among Australian Paleo Dieters*, Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 1-30.
- Dylan Clark, The Raw and the Rotten: Punk Cuisine, *Ethnology*, vol. 43, no. 1, 2004, 1-30.

Further reading:

- Alison Leitch, Slow Food and the Politics of 'Virtuous Globalization', in David Inglis and Debra Gimlin (eds) *The Globalization of Food*. Oxford: Berg, 2009, 45-64.
- Julie Guthman, Bringing good food to others: investigating the subjects of alternative food practice. *Cultural Geographies,* vol. 15, 2008, 431-447.
- Julie Guthman, Can't Stomach It: How Michael Pollan et al. Made Me Want to Eat Cheetos. *Gastronomica* vol. 7, 2007, 75-79.

September 14-25: Mid-semester recess.

Week 8: Bigger bodies

Thursday October 1

Since the 1990s, the Australian media has talked of an 'obesity crisis'. The lecture will explore various lenses through which to view bigger bodies and through which people with bigger bodies might view themselves. Curves, fat, cellulite – all are attributed different status across cultures and within cultures. Homing in on Australia, we will canvass a public health perspective; and the issue of obesogenic environments. We will consider cultural theorist Lauren Berlant's notion of 'slow death'. And importantly we will learn of the rise of a 'fat pride' movement, which challenges fat shaming and reclaims a range of body sizes as a source of beauty and pleasure.

Required reading:

- Megan Warin, Information is not knowledge: Cooking and eating as skilled practice in Australian obesity education, *The Australian Journal of Anthropology*, 2018. vol. 29, 108–124.
- Pierre Bourdieu, excerpts from The Habitus and the Space of Life-Styles, In *Distinction:* A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984, 183-186; 193-20.

Further reading:

- Michael Hobbes, Everything You Know About Obesity is Wrong, *Huffington Post*, 2018: https://highline.huffingtonpost.com/articles/en/everything-you-know-about-obesity-iswrong/
- Yates-Doerr, Emily. The Weight of the Self: Care and Compassion in Guatemalan Dietary Choices, *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*, Vol.26(1), 2012, 136-158.
- Murray, Samantha. The 'Normal' and the 'Pathological': 'Obesity' and the Dis-eased 'Fat' Body, in *The Fat Female Body*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008, 44-68.

- Lauren Berlant, Slow Death (Sovereignty, Obesity, Lateral Agency), *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 33, no. 4, 2007, 754-780.
- Megan Warin et al. Short horizons and obesity futures: Disjunctures between public health interventions and everyday temporalities, *Social Science & Medicine*, Vol.128, 2015, .309-315.

Week 9. Research Essay Week

Research essays are due on Sunday October 11. There is no lecture or tutorials this week: use the time to focus on your research essay.

Week 10: The way to a person's identity is through their stomach

Thursday October 15

In this lecture Tomas Wilkoszewski will talk about his fieldwork among Uyghur immigrants in Turkey. Tomas will talk about the connection between food and migration. Food not only plays an important role in the migrants' home building, the preparation of food is also a skill that might enable migrant groups to gain a livelihood in the host country. Garnished with examples from Istanbul, Tomas will furthermore discuss the narration as well as the preparation of food as a marker for a distinct nationalism extending an everyday life activity into the realm of political discourses.

Required reading:

- Emma-Jayne Abbots. 'It Doesn't Taste as Good from the Pet Shop': Guinea Pig Consumption and the Performance of Transnational Kin and Class Relations in Highland Ecuador and New York City. *Food, Culture & Society*, vol.14(2), 2011, 205-223.
- Arjun Appadurai. How to Make a National Cuisine: Cookbooks in Contemporary India. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 30, no. 1, 1988, 3-24.

Further reading:

- David Sutton. *Remembrance of Repasts: An Anthropology of Food and Memory*. Oxford: Berg, 2001.
- Roberta James, The reliable beauty of aroma: staples of food and cultural production among Italian-Australians, *The Australian Journal of Anthropology*, vol. 15, no. 1, 2004, 23-39.
- Mandy Thomas, Transitions in Taste in Vietnam and the Diaspora, *The Australian Journal of Anthropology*, vol. 15, no. 1, 2004, 54-67.
- Jean Duruz, Eating at the Borders: Culinary Journeys, In Amanda Wise and Selvaraj Velayutham (eds), *Everyday Multiculturalism*, Basingtstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, 105-121.

 Ghassan Hage, At Home in the Entrails of the West: Multiculturalism, Ethnic Food and Migrant Home-Building, In H. Grace, G. Hage, L. Johnson, J. Langsworth and M. Symonds (eds), *Home/world: Space, Community and Marginality in Sydney's West*, Pluto Press: Annandale, 1997, 99-153.

Week 11. Hunger

Thursday October 22

According to United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation estimates, about 795 million people of the 7.3 billion people in the world, or one in nine, 'were suffering from chronic undernourishment in 2014-2016'. Global hunger is a serious issue, however it is not our exclusive focus this week. We will explore a broad range of settings and scenarios in which people go hungry. Anthropologist Maggie Dickinson works with recipients of food stamps in New York City. And Megan Warin conducted ethnographic research with anorectics undergoing treatment, in order to understand the meanings they attributed to their own bodies. Fiona Wright explores her own relationship with this illness. An extended reading deals with series of Turkish political prisoners' hunger strikes: you will learn more in the lecture about the history of the hungry body as a political weapon. We are not seeking to compare these experiences of hunger but to learn more about why hunger forms part of the human experience even in societies where access to food is not considered a problem.

IMPORTANT: The essay by Fiona Wright and the excerpt from Megan Warin are potentially disturbing. You may elect to read the Maggie Dickinson article instead, if you do not wish to read content related to anorexia. Do not hesitate to reach out to Eve if you need support. The Butterfly Foundation has a helpline - a free and confidential service which provides information, counselling and treatment referral for eating disorders, disordered eating, body image and related issues. Call 1800 ED HOPE (1800 33 4673).

Required reading:

• Maggie Dickinson, Working for food stamps: Economic citizenship and the post-Fordist welfare state in New York City. *American Ethnologist,* 2016, vol. 43, no. 2, 270–281.

OR

- Megan Warin, a short excerpt from *Abject Relations: Everyday Worlds of Anorexia*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2010,130-134.
- Fiona Wright, On Increments, in *Small Acts of Disappearance,* Artamon, NSW: Giramondo, 2015, 73-94.

Further reading:

 Susan Bordo, Anorexia Nervosa: Pyschopathology as the Crystallization of Culture, In Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture and the Body, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993.

- Banu Bargu, Prisoners in Revolt, in *Starve and Immolate,* Columbia University Press, 2016.
- Micah Trapp, You-Will-Kill-Me-Beans: Taste and the Politics of Necessity in Humanitarian Aid. *Cultural Anthropology*, 2016, 31, 412-437.

Week 12. Food, cooking, eating and exercise during COVID-19

Thursday October 29

In Week 12 we will turn out attention to the final reflective assessment task. We will discuss COVID-19's relationship to food and eating: from the controversies surrounding wet markets to the panic buying of pasta and the slew of insta posts regarding baking.

Required reading:

- David Sutton, The Mindful Kitchen, The Embodied Cook, Material Culture Review.
- Jennifer Lofgren, Food Blogging and Food-relate Media Convergence, *M/C Journal*.

Further reading:

Lynn Z. Bloom, Consuming Prose: The Delectable Rhetoric of Food Writing, *College English*, vol. 70, no. 4, 2008, 346-362.

Week 13. Conclusion

Thursday November 5

This concluding lecture will draw together the themes of the course. There are no tutorials this week: the lecture will be delivered in an interactive format.

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from Policy Central (https://staff.m q.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-centr al). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- Academic Appeals Policy
- Academic Integrity Policy
- Academic Progression Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Fitness to Practice Procedure
- Grade Appeal Policy
- Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public

• Special Consideration Policy (Note: The Special Consideration Policy is effective from 4 December 2017 and replaces the Disruption to Studies Policy.)

Students seeking more policy resources can visit the <u>Student Policy Gateway</u> (https://students.m <u>q.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway</u>). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

If you would like to see all the policies relevant to Learning and Teaching visit Policy Central (http s://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/p olicy-central).

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/study/getting-started/student-conduct

Results

Results published on platform other than <u>eStudent</u>, (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in <u>eStudent</u>. For more information visit <u>ask.mq.edu.au</u> or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <u>http://stu</u> dents.mq.edu.au/support/

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to help you improve your marks and take control of your study.

- Getting help with your assignment
- Workshops
- StudyWise
- Academic Integrity Module

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- Subject and Research Guides
- Ask a Librarian

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the **Disability Service** who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

If you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <u>http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/</u>offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the <u>Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy</u>. The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.