

GASTROSOPHIA

A Philosophy of Food

Dr. Ryan J. Johnson
Mon./Wed. 1:40-3:20pm

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PHIL 461A

Office: Spence Pavilion-112
Global Building D, Room 110



Paul Cézanne

Epicurus writes, “...even as men choose of food not merely and simply the larger portion, but the more pleasant, so the wise seek to enjoy the time which is most pleasant and not merely that which is longest.” (“Letter to Menoeceus”)

Emmanuel Levinas says, “It is interesting to observe that Heidegger [the arch-philosopher of the twentieth-century] does not take the relation of enjoyment into consideration. The implement has entirely masked the usage and the issuance at the term—the satisfaction. [The human] in [philosophy] is never hungry. Food can be interpreted as an implement only in a world of exploitation.”

Rousseau says, “...the most suitable means for governing children is to lead them by their mouths.”

Overview: This class is designed to provoke, over the course of a semester, a conceptual and practical inversion: a movement from a “philosophy of food” to “eating as philosophy.” We begin the traditional genres and themes passed down and established by the history of philosophy. Often, philosophy is seen as a tool or instrument that is used in order

to interpret, analyze, elucidate, the philosophical themes contained in other things. Philosophy is “applied” to other things. To do this, philosophy must remain *external* to the objects it engages. We will begin this class in line with the tradition by using various categories, concepts, arguments, positions, schools of thought, etc. that are circulated and popularized in the philosophical canon. While we will begin in the domain of the classic model of philosophy, we will not stay there. The whole aim of beginning squarely within the discipline and history of philosophy is to try to take the concepts you all have learned over the course of your career at Elon and push them as closely as possible to food. This is more than mere application. This is an attempt to force an encounter between two seemingly opposed things: thought and matter, food and concepts. As we hoist concepts onto objects, there is no telling what we may find, and we must remain open to the results of our experiment. We may find that, in the face of the food, the concept simply breaks down; perhaps the concept simply does not fit the food object. Or we may find that the concept overwhelms the food, over-determining it such that the materiality of the food seems to spread out and disappear beneath the weight and breadth of the concept. The hope is that as concepts and food continue to approach each other, where we will try to actually jam a concept inside an apple or filet of fish, a productive tension will emerge that will transform how we do philosophy and how we eat.

Through this encounter between thought and things, we will, if successful, invert the order of priority so that we are not applying philosophy to food and eating. Instead, we will begin with the concrete practice of eating and try to engage the philosophy within, or perhaps to force the philosophical to emerge out of the act of eating. We can phrase this like a question: *What if we try to overcome the philosophy of food and instead **make eating itself a philosophical act**, akin to any other work of philosophy? What if a food held as much philosophical value as we find in, say, Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason or Plato’s Republic? What if we erase the distance between philosophy and food such that philosophy is no longer an external tool applied to a problematized object but is instead a re-conception of food as itself a philosophy object and philosophy as something you grow, harvest, eat, and expel? Just as not every book is a philosophy book, but only some; just as not every discussion is a philosophical discussion, but only some; what if some meals, but not all, could themselves be ways of doing philosophy? It is one thing to philosophize about food, to do the philosophy of food, but it seems like a very different thing to think about the act of eating as itself a philosophical act and of philosophy as a kind of eating. Is there a way, we asked, for us to eat together so that it became an act of philosophy akin to reading or discussing Kant or Plato? If philosophy truly is a way of living, then eating, an undeniable element in living, must also be philosophical. The is our claim: *it is not a matter of doing a philosophy of food but of actualizing the philosophical potential in our ordinary lives.* Our task is thus this: *How do we make eating itself, in every essential dimension, a philosophical act?*¹ Now, in the last year of your philosophy major at Elon, we will make this claim and take up this task. As we do so, remember the words of the wonderful Ralph Waldo Emerson, ““I cannot remember the books I’ve read any more than the meals I have eaten; even so, they have made me.”*

Learning goals of the class:

- 1) To reflect on your time as a philosophy major at Elon and articulate what it means to *do* philosophy.
- 2) To pose and answer the fundamental philosophical question – What is philosophy? – through the theme and practice of food and eating
- 3) To see what it means to prepare and eat a meal in full consciousness of what was involved in its production and consumption
- 4) To look as far into the food systems that support us as we can look in order to recover, if possible, the fundamental realities (material, biological, ethical, political, etc.) that are obscured by modern practices of eating
- 5) To collectively and personally track down and interrogate the vast web of relations with other species that we collect under the verb “eating,” dig up the essential elements and structures, and look at it directly in order to see whatever there is to see

¹ This is another way to think of it: To put it in the form of the old cliché, we will first take seriously what it means for *food* to be *for thought*, a concept is inspired by Nietzsche’s observation that language and grammar shape our most foundational and meaningful ideas. Given a grammar that emphasizes the role of the grammatical subject, such as English, there is a corresponding emphasis, or overemphasis, on the function of human subjectivity or selfhood. Similarly, Nietzsche notices, the stresses in cuisine or diet of a person or culture shapes what is stressed in thought. The second half will then flip this formula on its head and ask what it means for *thought* to be *for food*.

“The whole of nature, as has been said, is a conjugation of the verb ‘to eat,’ in the active and passive tenses.” - William Ralph Inge

ASSIGNMENTS

1) Food and Reading Journal (20% of grade)

You must write one journal entry per class, with two parts each:

Part I: The first entry should list of the meals you have eaten since your last entry/class. This means that you should keep track of every meal you eat this semester (or if we are being realistic, as many as you can; please do your best). Each entry should include the following:

- 1) The name or contents of the dish (e.g., trout, tomatoes, toast, etc.)
- 2) *When* it was eaten
- 3) *Where* it was eaten
- 4) *With whom* (if anyone) you dined

Part II: A reflection on the reading.

(1) *Select a passage that is relevant to your project*

- a. While reading our texts, try to remain sensitive to those elements of these philosophies that *speak to your project*. Gather them together and then copy down the one or two passages into your journal, including a citation (page number, author, title), that truly strike your interest, passion, curiosity, anger, etc.

(2) *Next, ruminate on the passage*

- a. Let's strive to practice reading as a kind of eating: *reading as rumination*. Nietzsche puts it this way: a text “has not been deciphered when it has simply been read; rather, one has then to begin its exegesis, for which is required an art of exegesis...To be sure, one thing is necessary above all if one is to practice reading as an *art* in this way, something that has been unlearned most thoroughly – nowadays – and therefore it will be some time before my writings are ‘readable’ – something for which one has almost to be a cow and in any case *not* a ‘modern man’: rumination.” (Preface to *Genealogy of Morals*)
- b. Etymologically, to ‘ruminate’ means “to chew the cud.” Cud is a portion of food that returns from a chewers stomach to the mouth in order to be chewed a second time. Like chewing on a cud, I ask you to “chew” on a passage until it becomes soft enough for you to swallow and digest. Record this process in writing.

(3) *Finally, formulate insights*

- a. Once you have ‘chewed on’ a poignant passage for a while, you should distill your ruminations into precise, sophisticated, and insightful bites. Give the class a taste of what you cooked up. Impress us all with the high-level of your thinking. Sometimes you will want to zoom in on the details of a single concept or phrase (we might call this “analysis”), other times you will want to zoom out and gather together large sets of concepts (we could call this “synthesis”). But *always produce at least one insightful, informed, philosophically interesting question that you can share with our class.*

2) Two Philosophical Meals (10% each; 20% total)

As a class, we will gather, make, and eat two meals together, each with the same goal: To do philosophy in the form of eating; or: To eat philosophically. We can think of it as a sort of “philosophagy.” Or if you appreciate a little more word play, we will act as “philosovores.”

The goal of these meals is to make and test various rules of philosophical eating. There are three steps:

- 1) Prior to the meal, each person will construct a philosophical rule for eating. You will write a 2-page essay on this rule in which you explain *why* it is philosophical and *how* it might change how we do and think about philosophy. Your essay should be informed and inspired by the texts we have read and conversations we have had during the semester. You must use at least two

- philosophical ideas, concepts, or arguments in your short essay. Bring this short essay to the meal
- 2) During the meal, each person must present the rule he or she formulated to the rest of the class. Teach us to follow your rule. Make us see the philosophical power contained therein. Tell us why it is *philosophical* and not just another rule for eating. Help us critically evaluate your rule.
 - 3) After the meal, you should write a 1-page reflection on your rule, in light of the conversation during the meal. Submit this before the beginning of the next class meeting.

3) Seminar Project (40% of grade)

As this is a senior seminar, you are required to write a formal seminar paper. This can be on any topic of your choosing. There are so many ways to engage food, and our class will only be able to touch upon a few of these. Your seminar paper is then your opportunity to either extend a class focus or take up another one; it should act as your own personal lens, whatever that may be, into the philosophy of food and eating. One key requirement: Whatever lens you choose, it must remain distinctly *philosophical*. This paper will be due on the last day of class, on the day of the final meal. The goal of the paper is to show that you have made progress in thinking philosophically about food and of eating as a way of philosophizing.

This work should be written as if it were to be presented to an audience of faculty members, made up of both philosophers and non-philosophers. This means that it needs to be very well crafted and that it needs to carefully use technical terms and names of philosophers — and where these are used, the technical language/philosophers' names need to be explained in a way that intelligent non-philosophers will be able to make sense both of what you are saying and why you are using the technical language/philosophers' names. It also needs to be tightly argued, “acceptable” to the most critical of audience members. (By the way, I am using the term “acceptable” here technically to mean that it is something worth taking up and discussing, including to argue against; the goal is not merely to convince others that you are right, but to engage them in a way that they would want to take up the issues/interpretations as presented to agree with or to disagree with or something else.²)

In order to ensure that you are making progress, you are required to consult with one other member of the philosophy department or the visiting speaker for the Reynolds Lecture Series. I *strongly* advise you to take full advantage of the visit from other faculty members to our class. Engage these visits fully, and follow up afterwards. This other philosopher will must be able to perform the following roles:

- 1) This philosopher must be available to help you as you formulate your topic, write early drafts, and think through the issues involved, and consult with you through the revision process (other than an initial meeting, this is all up to you to determine; you can use this philosopher more or less, depending on your needs);
- 2) This philosopher must read your draft and will consult with me as I make the determination that your paper is “philosophically significant and informed”;
- 3) This philosopher will consult with me as I determine the final grade for your paper.
- 4) You must share a meal with this philosopher. It could be a cup of coffee, lunch, dinner, ice cream, whatever. But you must engage your paper while eating or cooking.

(Note: Throughout, while you will be getting help from another member of the department and I will be consulting with person, *I*, as the instructor of record, am the one who ultimately will determine your grade based on the criteria we discuss in class.)

² Stanley Fish, “What makes an interpretation acceptable?” in his *Is There a Text in This Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1980), pp. 338-354.

Stages of your seminar paper: In order to ensure continuous progress, the writing of the seminar paper must be done in stages.

First Stage: Memory Thesis. In class on Sept. 21, you will state your project from memory. During the last 30 minutes of class, you will spend three minutes writing out answers to these questions:

- a) What is the project of this paper? What are you trying to achieve overall?
- b) What intermediate tasks did you/will you have to accomplish to achieve your overall goals?

Now, *from memory*, write down your thesis statement, in complete sentences in less than 30 words. Don't worry if it turns out substantially different from your original thesis; try to reconstruct it as best you can. This will be your *Memory Thesis*.

Second stage: Abstract and Resources. On Sept. 28th, you should print off seven copies of the following, and bring these to class (your abstract should be at least one-page long, not including references):

- a) The guiding question/problem to be addressed
- b) A hypothesis or projected answer to this question/problem
- c) A map about how you are going to go about this research
- d) Separately, at least two resources you will consult in your research (the list of resources does not count toward the one-page minimum).

When you leave class, you should have a copy of every person's abstract. Before the next class, I want you to write out answers to the following questions about each person's abstract (it should be about a paragraph for each person):

- a) What is the main goal of the project? What is the writer's overall aim?
- b) Is there a thesis that outlines the project? Does it prepare the reader for the rest of the project?
- c) What is the least clear part of the project?
- d) If you could give *only one* bit of constructive criticism to the writer, what would it be?

Third stage: By Oct. 24th at the latest, you should share your 5-6-page draft with the philosopher with whom you will work on your seminar paper. Ask this person to prepare some questions for you, which s/he will share with you on the day Dr. Valgenti's visit to our class. **Do not be late on this**, as it will greatly inconvenience the person who so generously agreed to work with you.

Fourth stage: A 5-page draft. At this point in the semester, most of your research should be completed and you should be able to articulate your findings, arguments, and position. You are highly encouraged to use this time to cook, share food, etc. in order to fully present your paper ideas. Your philosophical interlocutor will respond (in whatever fashion you two deem fitting for your project) in class, in front of all attendees. This will coincide with Dr. Valgenti's visit to our class (Nov. 2nd), the day after his formal presentation as the next installment of the Reynolds Philosophy Lecture Series (Nov. 1st).

Fifth stage: Final Paper. This is the final version of your paper. It can be no more than 5553 words (not counting the abstract and not counting references, which is roughly 14 pages,) and you are required to use at least 4 sources (though you may, and are encouraged, to use more).

4) A Seven Course Philosophical Meal (20% of grade)

We will end the course with one final meal together, which will also be your final project. For this, we will prepare a *seven course philosophical meal*. Why seven? Because there are seven students in our class. Each student will design, present, and guide one course. Together, we will conduct a full philosophical meal. We

will invite the whole Philosophy Department, and any other special guests we might want to include, to this event. We will teach all those present how to eat as a philosophical act.

There is a writing assignment attached to this, of course. But rather than a usual final paper, we will write a menu. Each person will be in charge of the section that corresponds to his, her, or their section, but you will all write the introduction and conclusion to the meal together, along with the organization or ordering of the meal. But let's use menu language. A different person will be in charge of one course – e.g., hors d'oeuvres, plat principal, dessert, etc. – but you will co-write the *entrée* (as in, “entrance into the meal”) and the *sortie* (or “exit from the meal”). It will be a sort of gastronomical deduction, physiological inference, or a degustation of philosophy, wherein we will guide our table partners through a philosophical movement through food.

Grade distribution and calculation table: The total possible points for this class is *1000 points*.

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Possible Points</i>	<i>Your earned points</i>
Journal	200	
1 st Philosophical Meal	100	
2 nd Philosophical Meal	100	
Seven-Course Meal	200	
Seminar Paper	400	
<i>Total</i>	1000	

Grade scale:

B+ = 88% to 89%	A = 92% to 100%	A- = 90% to 91%
C+ = 78% to 79%	B = 82% to 87%	B- = 80% to 81%
D+ = 68% to 69%	C = 72% to 77%	C- = 70% to 71%
	D = 60% to 67%	



Lernert and Sander

Nietzsche on eating

“The belly is the reason man does not so easily take himself for a god.”³

“That which translates worst from one language to another is the tempo of its style, which has its origin in the character of the race, or, expressed more physiologically, in the average tempo of its ‘metabolism.’”⁴

Required text

Rick Dolphijn, *Foodscapes: Towards a Deleuzian Ethics of Consumption*. Delft: Eburon, 2004.

Some decent philosophy texts on food and eating

Raymond Boisvert, *I eat, therefore I think*

Raymond Boisvert and Lisa Heldke, *Philosophers at Table: On Food and Being Human* (Reaktion Books, 2016)

Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, *The Physiology of Taste: Or Meditations on Transcendental Gastronomy*

Michel de Certeau and Luce Girard, *The Practice of Everyday Life, Volume II: Living and Cooking*

Alix Cohen, “The Ultimate Kantian Experience: Kant on Dinner Parties”

Collapse: Volume VII (a volume of a philosophy-art journal on “Culinary Materialism”)

Cooking, Eating, Thinking, Deane W. Curtin and Lisa Heldke (eds.) (Indiana UP, 1992)

Epicurus, *The Epicurus Reader*

Food and Culture: A Reader, Carol Coulihan (ed.) (NY: Routledge, 1977)

Food and Philosophy, Fritz Alhoff and Dave Monroe (eds.) (Blackwell Publishing, 2007)

Michel Foucault, “Dietetics,” in *The Use of Pleasure*

Leon Kass, *The Hungry Soul: Eating and the Perfection of Our Nature* (The Free Press, 1994)

Michael Korthals, *Before Dinner: Philosophy and Ethics of Food* (Springer, 2004)

Claude Levi-Strauss, *Raw and the Cooked*

Michel Onfray, *Appetites for Thought: Philosophers and Food*

The Philosophy of Food, David M. Kaplan (ed.) (University of California Press, 2012)

Robert Valgenti (<http://www.lvc.edu/religion-philosophy/valgenti.aspx>)

<http://www.heritageadionetwork.com/episodes/3788-Taste-Matters-Episode-74-A-Gastronomic-Event->

Some (supposedly) “Nonphilosophy” texts on food and eating

Honoré de Balzac, *The Belly of Paris*, “The pleasures and pains of coffee,”

Dan Barber, *The Third Plate*

Abigail Carroll, *Three Squares: The Invention of the American Meal* (Basic Books, 2013)

Arite Cuisine, *Jailhouse Cookbook: The Prisoner’s Recipe Bible* (GoodReadBooks, 2013)

“Edible Geographies,” a blog written by Nicola Twilley

M.F.K. Fisher, *The Art of Eating*

Jean-Louis Flandrin, *Food: A Culinary History from Antiquity to the Present*, 1999

Peter Gamsey, *Food and Society in Classical Antiquity*

Marvin Harris, *Cows, Pigs, Wars, and Witches: The Riddles of Culture*

Ernest Hemingway, *A Moveable Feast*

Mark Kurlansky, *Salt: A World History*

Michael Pollan, *The Botany of Desire, Cooked: A Natural History of Transformation, Food Rules: An Eater’s Manual,*

Omnivore’s Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals,

Prison Ramen: Recipes and Stories from Behind Bars (Workman Publishing Co, 2015)

Krishnendu Ray, *The Ethnic Restaurateur* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2016)

Laura Shapiro, *Perfection Salad: Women and Cooking at the Turn of the Century* (Modern Library, 2001)

Thug Kitchen Cookbook, (Rodale Books, 2014)

Katherine Leonard Turner, *How the Other Half Ate: A History of Working-Class Meals at the Turn of the Century*,
University of California Press, 2014

³ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, section 141.

⁴ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, section 28.

John Wilkins and Shaun Hill, *Food in the Ancient World*
Bee Wilson, *Consider the Fork*

Resources

[*The Philosophy of Food Project*](#)

[*Gastronomica: The Journal of Cultural Food Studies*](#)

<http://www.essachess.com/index.php/jcs/issue/current>

NPR's The Salte

<http://food.berkeley.edu/edible-education-101/>

<http://nymag.com/scienceofus/2016/06/the-weird-way-you-can-hear-your-foods-flavor.html?mid=full-rss-scienceofus>

<http://learn.uvm.edu/foodsystemsblog/>

http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/nutrition/courses?utm_source=nutrition-homepage&utm_medium=homepage-program-listing&utm_campaign=courses

<http://carnivoracollective.tumblr.com/>

<http://blog.ciat.cgiar.org/origin-of-crops/#>

[History of Peanut Butter](#)

[Recipes Organized into Component Parts in Food Styling Photos](#)

https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/cuccagna-italy-food-tradition?utm_source=facebook.com&utm_medium=atlas-page

[Nadia Berenstein's writings](#)

[The Allure of Animated Food](#)



Brittany Wright

Class Schedule

Aug. 31: *What kind of thing is food? What kind of act is eating?*

READ for this class:

Wendell Berry, "The Pleasures of Eating"

Food and the History of Philosophy, Part I

READ for this class:

Epicurus, "Letter to Menoecus"

Michael Symons, "Epicurus, the Foodie's Philosopher"

Wendell Berry, “Nature as Measure”

1. _____ is bringing the food!

Food and the History of Philosophy, Part II

READ for this class:

Robert Valgenti, “Nietzsche and Food”
Chloe Taylor, “Foucault and the Ethics of Eating”

2. _____ is bringing the food!

Food and the History of Philosophy, Part III

READ for this class:

Rick Dolphijn, *Foodscapes: Towards a Deleuzian Ethics of Consumption* (all)

3. _____ is bringing the food!

Food and the History of Philosophy, Part III

READ for this class: Dorothée Legrand, “Ex-nihilo: Forming a Body out of Nothing,” *Collapse VII*, 499-560

First Stage of Seminar Paper Due: Memory Thesis

4. _____ is bringing the food!

Subnature

READ for this class:

Thomas Parker, “Subnature and Culinary Culture”
Book IX of Homer’s *Odyssey*
From Book IV from Plato’s *Republic*

Bring in a subnatural object for us to eat

Disgust

READ for this class:

Paul Rozin’s “Disgust” and “Perspective of Disgust”
Carolyn Korsmeyer, “Introduction” to *Savoring Disgust*

Bring in a disgusting object and make us eat it

Loy Farm visit:

- 1) Work and think on the farm (30 minutes)
- 2) Break (5 minutes)
- 3) Talk and tour with Jessica Bilecki (20 minutes)
- 4) Map one thing and imagine the coincidence of systems (30 minutes)

FIRST MEAL

Breastfeeding & (breast)milkshakes

READ: “Intro” & “Ch.1” of Alison Bartlett’s *Breastwork: Rethinking Breastfeeding*

SECOND MEAL: TBD

The Temporality of Food

READ for this class:

Slow Food manifesto “The Central Role of Food”

“Food” from *Deep History: The Architecture of Past and Present*, eds, Andrew Shryock and Daneial Smail

Rules for the Perfect Meal (from *The Futurist Cookbook*, pp. 36-40)

Birth of Cooking

READ for this class:

Brillat-Savarin “Philosophical History of Cooking” from *The Physiology of Taste: Or Meditations on Transcendental Gastronomy*

Richard Wrangham “Introduction: The Cooking Hypothesis” and “When Cooking Began” from *Catching Fire: How Cooking Made us Human*

5. _____ is bringing the food!

Aramark and Eating at Elon: Meal with chefs of Aramark

Waste and the end of food

READ for this class:

Circular Economy, Upcycling, Waste as a human product

Slavoj Zizek, “Hegel and Shitting” in *Hegel and the Infinite*, eds. Slavoj Zizek, Clayton Crocket, and Creston Davis (Columbia UP, 2011) 222-232.

6. _____ is bringing the food!

Philosophy as foodmaking and recipes

READ for this class:

Lisa M. Heldke, “Foodmaking as a Thoughtful Practice” and “Recipes for Theory Making,” from *Cooking, Eating, Thinking*

7. _____ is bringing the food!

Prepare for final project

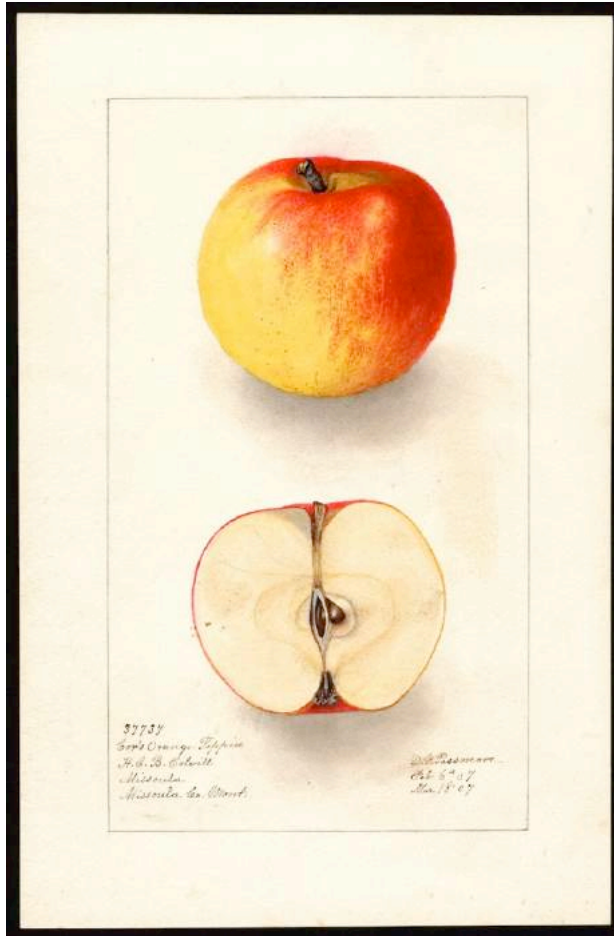
READ for this class:

“David Chang’s Unified Theory of Deliciousness”

Vanina Leschziner and Andrew Dakin, “Theorizing Cuisine from Medieval to Modern Times,” from *Collapse VII*, 347-378

8. _____ is bringing the food!

Final Project: A Seven Course Philosophical Meal



University Policies and Resources

Elon Honor Code

Elon's honor pledge calls for a commitment to Elon's shared values of Honesty, Integrity, Respect and Responsibility. To be clear about what constitutes violations of these values; students should be familiar with code of conduct policies in the student handbook, including violations outlined at <http://www.elon.edu/e-web/students/handbook/violations/default.xhtml>. Students with questions about the specific interpretation of these values and violations as they relate to this course should contact me immediately. Violations in academic-related areas will be documented in an incident report which will be maintained in the Office of Student Conduct, and may result in a lowering of the course grade and/or failure of the course with an Honor Code F. (In fact, my policy is that any violation of the honor code results in an immediate grade of "F" for the course, RJ.) Violations specifically covered by academic honor code policies include: plagiarism, cheating, lying, stealing and the facilitation of another's dishonesty. Multiple violations will normally result in a student's temporary suspension from the University.

Elon Disabilities Services

If you are a student with a documented disability who will require accommodations in this course, please register with Disabilities Services in the Duke Building, Room 108 (278-6500), for assistance in developing a plan to address your academic needs. For more information about Disabilities Services, please visit the website http://www.elon.edu/e-web/academics/support/disabilities_services.xhtml.

Elon Writing Center

Elon's Writing Center in the Center for Writing Excellence is staffed by trained peer-consultants who can help you with all of your writing projects (for any class or major and for any extracurricular, personal, or professional purposes), so take advantage of this excellent academic resource and include a visit to our Writing Center as part of your own writing process. In one-on-one, 45 minute sessions, our consultants will work with you on any kind of writing (such as research or analysis papers, PowerPoint

or poster presentations, resumes, or job applications) at any stage of the writing process (such as understanding an assignment; brainstorming, drafting, revising, and editing; developing a research question or starting your research; or writing in-text citations and bibliographies/works cited). We have two multimedia production studios so you can create and work with a consultant on your multimedia and visual texts (such as PowerPoint or Prezi presentations, videos, or websites). Visit our presentation practice room where you can easily record and critique yourself giving a presentation and get feedback from a consultant on your accompanying visuals. The main Writing Center, located in Belk Library, is open extensive hours: M-Th: 10am-10pm; Fri: 10am-4pm; Sun: 2pm-10pm. The Writing Center also staffs satellite Writing Centers in CREDE and in the Business School. If you have questions, please contact The Writing Center Director, Dr. Paula Rosinski at prosinski@elon.edu or X5842. (<http://www.elon.edu/writingcenter>)

Religious Holidays Policies

In supporting religious diversity, Elon has a policy and procedures for students who wish to observe religious holidays that are in conflict with the academic calendar, allowing students an excused absence. Students who wish to observe a holiday during the semester must complete the online Religious Observance Notification Form (RONF), available at the following website within the first two weeks of the semester: http://www.elon.edu/e-web/students/religious_life/ReligiousHolidays.xhtml. This policy does not apply during the final examination period. Students are required to make prior arrangements with the instructor for completion of any work missed during the absence. Once the completed RONF is received, the Truitt Center will confirm the excused absence with notification to the instructor and the appropriate academic dean, along with a copy to the student. Students may contact the Truitt Center staff with any questions (336-278-7729).

Student Options Related to Enrollment in Your Course

Enrollment: Students should confirm their enrollment in this course through their On-Track account. Students who do not appear on the course roll or do not show the correct course/section listed on On-Track should consult with their instructor immediately.

Policies on Dropping or Withdrawing from this Course

- Students may drop a course during the designated drop/add period through their On-Track account. A course that is dropped during the designated drop/add period will not appear on the student's transcript or grade report.
- After the designated drop/add period, students may withdraw from a course without penalty through the first half of the semester, following dates published in the academic calendar. Withdrawing from a course during this period will result in a mark of "W" that will appear on the student's academic transcript. Students may withdraw by using the online process located at <http://www.elon.edu/e-web/administration/registrar/DropAddClassesOnline.xhtml>
NOTE: Students should not assume that they will be officially withdrawn from a course based on their failing to attend class or their notifying a faculty member of their intent to withdraw. The student has the responsibility for following the official process of withdrawing from a class. Students who do not properly withdraw from a course will receive a grade of F.
- Students may not withdraw from a course after the published deadline. Any exception to this policy is the responsibility of the appropriate academic dean's office. When granted, withdrawal from a course after this time will result in a grade of "W" or "F" depending on the student's grade at the time. For additional information on university course policies, students should consult their Academic Catalog: <http://www.elon.edu/e-web/academics/catalog/>

OTHER POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES

a) Semiotics of the Store (à la Roland Barthes) (5% of grade)

Go to a store that sells food (grocery store, convenience store, gas station, etc.) and "read" the ways in which food is presented to you. Look for things like the following :

- Color photos of organic farmers, maybe with a first name mentioned (e.g., Johnny's Family Farm)
- Story of the history of that food (e.g., place of origin)
- Ingredients (Are they conspicuously or inconspicuously presented?)

- Are certain colors or words dominant?

The goal is to *read beyond* the surface meaning of how food is presented to you in order to make inferences that say much more about the food economy in which we are embedded.

Each person will do this, write up a two page philosophical essay on this experience, and present this to the class. Each person will sign up for a day on which to do this at some time during the semester.

b) Track that food (5% of grade)

Select a single item of food, preferably one that regular shows up in your life, and trace it as far back as possible. Start with the ingredients list, if there is one. Investigate these ingredients. Find out as much about them as you can, following it as far back to their respective origins as possible. Along the way, keep track of the companies that manufacture, grow, distribute, house, and sell these ingredients. Try to find out the exact path of how that food went from where it originated (in a farm, a plant, mill, etc.) and into your body. But do not stop at the origin, for that origin has an origin. If it came from a farm, look into that farm. Whence does it get its seeds, fertilizer, water, animal feed, etc. Track those items. If there is a patent on something, look into that. In a sense, you are creating a *genealogy of a piece of your body*. Once you have done all of this, you should then step back and reflect on this genealogy. What does it say about you, about our modern American food system, about the treatment of matter and the earth. Draw some inferences from this genealogy. In short, do a *philosophy of a single item of food*. Then, finally, eat it, and think about that. How many of things that you philosophize about end up becoming part of you.

Each person will do this, write up a two page philosophical essay on this experience, and present this to the class. Each person will sign up for a day on which to do this at some time during the semester.