



# Culture, Food, & Agriculture

## Anth/Soc 3204 - Spring 2010

**Professor:** Donna Chollett  
**Office:** 205 Imholte Hall  
**Phone:** 589-6215  
**Email:** [cholledmorris.umn.edu](mailto:cholledmorris.umn.edu)  
**Office Hours:** Monday & Wednesday, 10:30-11:30  
1:00-2:00  
and by appointment



### Course Objectives:

This course examines the globalization of agri-food systems utilizing political economy and political ecology perspectives to understand global and local dimensions of food production, marketing, and consumption. Emphasis will be on historical, sociocultural, economic, and political dimensions involving relations of power among the various actors in the global food system. The course examines the paradox of hunger in an abundant world, historical processes in the creation of industrialized agriculture, genetic engineering, impacts on health and the environment, and local efforts to achieve sustainability.



## COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

### Attendance

This course requires substantial reading; with the exception of week 1, please complete the week's readings **before** classes begin each week. I reserve the right to add, omit, or substitute readings. Given the volume of material, you are advised to read for breadth and significant insights, rather than detail. Come to class prepared to participate in discussions. The readings will be supplemented with occasional lectures and films, but the primary intent is to create a participatory classroom environment. Class attendance is **mandatory**; for each unexcused absence, 3.5% of the course grade will be deducted; Students with five unexcused absences will be dropped from the course.

- During the course of the semester, an effort will be made to arrange visits to organic/sustainable farms or other agricultural-related enterprises.

## TEXTS:

*Paradox of Plenty: Hunger in a Bountiful World*

1999 Douglas H. Boucher, Ed. Oakland: Food First Books

*Stolen Harvest: The Hijacking of the Global Food Supply*

2000 Vandana Shiva. Cambridge: South End Press

*Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal*

2002 Eric Schlosser. New York: Houghton Mifflin

*The Death of Ramón González: The Modern Agricultural Dilemma*

1990 Angus Wright. Austin: University of Texas

*Corn & Capitalism: How a Botanical Bastard Grew to Global Dominance*

2003 Arturo Warman. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina

*¡Que vivan los tamales! Food and the Making of Mexican Identity*

1998 Jeffrey M. Pilcher. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico



## Book Critiques

Four of the above texts, *Fast Food Nation*, *The Death of Ramón González*, *Corn & Capitalism*, and *¡Que Vivan Los Tamales!* will complement the other course readings, but may not always overlap. The assigned textbook readings each week will be the subject of a one-page weekly **BOOK CRITIQUE PAPER**. In this paper, you will identify two significant issues that can generate class discussion. Book critique papers are due each Friday (unless otherwise scheduled). Week 1 and week 2 papers will be due Friday week 2. The paper should not exceed 1 page in length, but must reflect your reading of the assigned material. Each BOOK CRITIQUE (12) is worth 10 points. Please select issues from different chapters and formulate your paper in the following manner:

### I. Issue one

- A. one possible response to your issue
- B. an alternative or opposing response

### II. Issue two

- A. one possible response to your issue
- B. an alternative or opposing response



## Supplemental Readings & Class Presentations

Supplemental readings (generally of 15-20 pages each), compliment the textbook readings assigned on the course schedule. Students will sign up from a list of supplemental readings and carefully read one article during the semester and present the readings to the class (where the syllabus indicates “AND” you will read two shorter articles). In other words, you are the facilitator for your article and will be responsible for conveying the key concepts, significant issues, and insights to the class. **STUDENT PRESENTATIONS** should be brief, limited to 15 minutes, yet capture the important points either via a “mini-lecture,” power point presentation, handouts, or any other pedagogical media. I will assist with scanning and copying if material is requested well in advance. This will allow all students to benefit from a variety of materials from the growing literature on culture, food, and agriculture, so consider this an exercise in sharing and cooperative learning. Your presentation will be uploaded on the course web site at:

<http://www.morris.umn.edu/academic/anthropology/chollett/index.html>

(academics / anthropology / Chollett / Anth/Soc 3204); if you choose not to present a power point, please provide me with an electronic copy of your outline or other presentation material. Each STUDENT PRESENTATION is worth 40 points. You will need to take class notes on all lectures, presentations, and films in order to compose your think pieces (below).

All students are highly encouraged to read many of these most interesting supplemental articles. The endnotes and reference pages for each article are not scanned; however, a list of the full reference sources may be consulted on the course CD. Note: For the scanned files, the course schedule lists only those pages actually read, not including unscanned reference pages. On a few articles, portions of the article are excerpted to decrease length, thus pages may be missing on the scanned document.

## **Think Pieces**

To encourage you to learn from the student presentations, required readings from the other two texts, *Paradox of Plenty* and *Stolen Harvest*, and any occasional lectures, power point presentations, and films, students will prepare weekly **THINK PIECES**. The criteria for these will be handed out in advance, and these should be turned in on Friday, along with your book critique. Think pieces should be 2 single-spaced pages in length. Each THINK PIECE (14) is worth 10 points. Week 1 Think Piece is due Wednesday of week 2 and Week 2 Think Piece is due Friday of week 2.

Basically, the intent of the above-listed requirements is to ensure that you complete all of the readings and think about their content. Your main effort for this course is to critically examine the issues involved in the global food system and reflect on these as you participate in class discussion. The hand-in work should assure me that you have done so. Please word process all your papers. **Late papers will not be accepted!**

## **Research Paper**

Each student will research one food item or commodity that will be the basis of a **RESEARCH PAPER**. Research papers should be 10 single-spaced pages in length and are worth 100 points. The selection of your food item must be made by Monday of Week 5. Turn in a sheet that identifies your food item, along with an initial list of at least 10 bibliographic resources that you will use; your final paper will have a minimum of 15 references. The final two weeks of the course, Weeks 15 & 16, will be dedicated to student Power Point presentations of their research. Each student will have 15 minutes to present their research. Carefully consider the analytic approach in Warman's text *Corn & Capitalism*, as it provides a model of research on a single commodity. You will be graded on effort, content, and application of the principles learned in the course to your chosen topic. Every student is expected to attend all presentations. The expectation is that your paper (and Power Point, in more abbreviated form) will include the following criteria:

- a historical perspective, including your food item's place in the global economy
- issues regarding land use, production, technology, and economic factors.
- the food's linkage to the sociocultural system (nation, labor, class, gender, ethnic, cultural)
- health, safety, and environmental aspects of the food's production
- the role of transnational corporations, marketing and consumption of your food item
- how the food may/may not fit into alternative strategies such as sustainable agriculture, organic production, community supported agriculture

## **Alternative Service Learning Project**

Students may choose, individually or in a small group, to engage in a **SERVICE LEARNING PROJECT** as an alternative to the Research Paper. However, you must identify and develop your own project and present a prospectus to me by Monday of Week 5. You will be required to explain the rationale for your project, outline the methods you will use to carry it out, and write up what you accomplished. Examples might be assisting the local food coop with a mutually-defined project, aiding organic farmers in documenting a history of their farm and publishing it (on the web, newspaper, etc.), identifying obstacles faced by participants in the local farmers' market and helping them

to find solutions, and so forth. The service learning project should be written up in a 10 page single-spaced paper with a minimum of 15 references and relate it to course literature. It is worth 100 points

**Grading Scale**

Course Points			Grading Scale	
12 BOOK CRITIQUES	120		A A-	93 – 100% 90 – 92%
14 THINK PIECES	140		B+ B B-	87 – 89% 83 – 86% 80 – 82%
1 SUPPLEMENTAL READING PRESENTATIONS	40		C+ C C	77 – 79% 73 – 76% 70 – 72%
RESEARCH PAPER or SERVICE LEARNING PROJECT	100		D+ D D-	67 – 69% 63 – 66% 60 – 62%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>400</b>		F	59 and under

**Expected courtesies and academic protocols in this class:**

- You are here to excel—make that your priority!
- Accept the course requirements as a *challenge*, rather than a task that must be performed; college scholars are intellectually interested and seek to gain new knowledge about the world around them
- Show respect to both the professor and your classmates
- Value differing points of view
- Turn your cell phones off before class—they are disruptive! Answer calls after class
- Arrive at class on time—you not only miss important information, but disturb others; remain in class until class is over
- Avoid chatting with your classmates or passing notes during class—it disturbs those around you and the professor
- Refrain from sleeping, reading or doing work for other classes during class time
- Laptops must be used only for in-class activities




## COURSE SCHEDULE

<b>THE PARADOX: HUNGER IN A BOUNTIFUL WORLD</b>	
<p><b>WEEK 1</b> Jan 20-22</p> <p><a href="#"><u>Paradox of Plenty</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Fast Food Nation</u></a></p>	<p>NOTE: Required course texts are <u>underlined</u>. All other materials are required reading available as PDF files</p> <p>Intro (ix-xvi) Beyond Guilt &amp; Fear (4-44) Children: Poor People's Source of Power (71-82) Hunger in a Fertile Land: Paradox (238-249)</p> <p>Introduction, Ch. 1-4</p>
<b>GLOBALIZATION &amp; THE WORLD FOOD SYSTEM</b>	
<p><b>WEEK 2</b> Jan 25-29</p> <p><a href="#"><u>Paradox of Plenty</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Fast Food Nation</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Stolen Harvest</u></a></p> <p><b>Columbus to Conagra</b></p> <p><b>Food Is Different</b></p>	<p>Why People Can't Feed Themselves (61-70) Slicing up the Rain Forest on Your Breakfast Cereal (84-98) Latin America: Going to Extremes (Susan George, 208-216) Development Debacle (Bello, Kinley, Elinson, 217-226) Creating a Wasteland: Impact of Structural Adjustment on the South, 227-233)</p> <p>Ch. 5-8</p> <p>The Stolen Harvest of Seed (79-93)</p> <p>Transnational Corporations &amp; the Globalization of the Food System (Hefferman &amp; Constance, 29-49)</p> <p>Dumping &amp; Subsidies (Rosset, 36-51)</p>

	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PRODUCTION: INDUSTRIALIZATION OF AGRICULTURE GREEN REVOLUTION FARM CRISIS</b></p>
<p><b>WEEK 3</b> Feb 1-5</p> <p><a href="#"><u>Paradox of Plenty</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Fast Food Nation</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Stolen Harvest</u></a></p> <p><b>Eat Here</b></p> <p><b>Food and Culture</b></p>	<p>The Faustian Bargain: Technology &amp; the Price Issue (Strange, 163-171)</p> <p>Ch. 9-10, Epilogue, Afterword</p> <p>Soy Imperialism &amp; the Destruction of Local Food Cultures (21-33)</p> <p>Where Have All the Farmers Gone? (Halweil, 59-76)</p> <p>Bread as World: Food Habits &amp; Social Relations in Modernizing Sardinia (Counihan, 283-293)</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>BIOTECHNOLOGY AGROCHEMICALS GENETIC ENGINEERING</b></p>
<p><b>WEEK 4</b> Feb 8-12</p> <p><a href="#"><u>Paradox of Plenty</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Death of Ramon Gonzalez</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Stolen Harvest</u></a></p> <p><b>Environment Under Fire</b></p> <p><b>Pesticide Detox</b></p> <p><b>Cultivating Crisis</b></p>	<p>The Circle of Poison (127-150) Getting Off the Pesticide Treadmill (Collins, 285-290)</p> <p>Ch. 1-3</p> <p>Genetic Engineering &amp; Food Security (95-114)</p> <p>Poisoning for Profit (Faber, 85-115)</p> <p>Corporations &amp; Pesticides (Dinham, 55-69)</p> <p>Pesticides &amp; Social Inequity in Nontraditional Agriculture (Murray, 74-97)</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>CONTINUED...</b></p>

<p><b>Women Working the NAFTA Food Chain</b></p> <p><b>Culture &amp; Agriculture</b></p>	<p>The Poisoning of Indigenous Migrant Women Workers and Children: From Deadly Colonialism to Toxic Globalization (Martínez-Salazar, 99-109)</p> <p><b>AND</b></p> <p>Gender &amp; Agricultural Imagery: Pesticide Advertisements in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Agricultural Transition (Kroma, 5-12)</p>
<p><b>EXPORTING INDUSTRIAL AGRICULTURE—THE “FREE MARKET” I</b></p>	
<p><b>WEEK 5</b> <b>Feb 15-19</b></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Paradox of Plenty</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Death of Ramon Gonzalez</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Stolen Harvest</u></a></p> <p><b>Agribusiness in the Americas</b></p> <p><b>Tangled Routes</b></p>	<p>Question: Don't US Food Aid Programs Channel American Abundance to Hungry People? (179-193) New Food Aid: Same as the Old Food Aid (195-206)</p> <p>Ch. 4-6</p> <p>The Hijacking of the Global Food Supply (5-18)</p> <p>-The US Grain Arsenal: Food as a Weapon (Burbach &amp; Flynn, 63-79) -Harvest of Profits: The World Empire of Cargill, Inc. (Burbach &amp; Flynn, 231-252)</p> <p>Across Space &amp; Through Time: Tomatl Meets the Corporate Tomato (Barndt, 7-24)</p>
<p><b>EXPORTING INDUSTRIAL AGRICULTURE—THE “FREE MARKET” II</b></p>	
<p><b>WEEK 6</b> <b>Feb 22-26</b></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Death of Ramon Gonzalez</u></a></p> <p><b>Global Restructuring of Agro-Food Systems</b></p> <p><b>Rethinking Sustainability</b></p>	<p>Ch. 7-10</p> <p>The Restructuring of Third World Agro-Exports; Changing Production Relations in the Dominican Republic (Raynolds, 214-234)</p> <p>Free Trade or Sustainable Trade? An Ecological Economics Perspective (Harris, 117-132)</p>

<b>HEALTH &amp; NUTRITION</b>	
<p><b>WEEK 7</b> Mar 1-5</p> <p><a href="#"><u>Paradox of Plenty</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Corn &amp; Capitalism</u></a></p> <p><b>Food Politics</b></p> <p><b>Food Nations</b></p>	<p>Warning! Corporate Meat &amp; Poultry May Be Hazardous to Workers, Farmers, Environment &amp; Your Health (155-162)</p> <p>Ch. 1-6</p> <p>-Politics versus Science: Opposing the Food Pyramid (Nestle, 51-66) -Influencing Government: Food Lobbies &amp; Lobbyists (Nestle, 95-110)</p> <p>Inventing Baby Food: Gerber &amp; the Discourse of Infancy in the US (Bentley, 92-109)</p>
<b>ENVIRONMENT</b>	
<p><b>WEEK 8</b> Mar 8-12</p> <p><a href="#"><u>Corn &amp; Capitalism</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Stolen Harvest</u></a></p> <p><b>Environment Under Fire</b></p> <p><b>Monocultures of the Mind</b></p> <p><b>Unsettling of America</b></p> <p><b>Sustainable Agriculture</b></p>	<p>Ch. 7-10</p> <p>The Stolen Harvest Under the Sea (37-54)</p> <p>Poverty, Injustice, and the Ecological Crisis (45-81)</p> <p>-The Non-Sustainability of Monocultures (Shiva, 50-62) <b>AND</b> -From Bio-Imperialism to Bio-Democracy (Shiva, 88-92)</p> <p>-The Ecological Crisis as a Crisis of Character (Berry, 17-26) <b>AND</b> -The Ecological Crisis as a Crisis of Agriculture (Berry, 27-38)</p> <p>-Reality Cheques (Pretty, 51-57) <b>AND</b> -Agroecology &amp; Agroecosystems (Pretty, 104-113)</p>
<p><b>WEEK 9</b></p>	<p><b>SPRING BREAK!</b> </p>

<b>NATION, CLASS, GENDER, ETHNICITY</b>	
<p><b>WEEK 10</b> <b>Mar 22-26</b></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Corn &amp; Capitalism</u></a></p> <p><b>Food Nations</b></p> <p><b>Cultural Politics of Food &amp; Eating</b></p> <p><b>Food &amp; Culture</b></p> <p><b>Anthropology of Food &amp; Body</b></p>	<p>Ch. 11-15</p> <p>As American as Budweiser &amp; Pickles? Nation-Building in American Food Industries (Gabaccia, 175-190)</p> <p>-China's Big Mac Attack (Watson, 70-79) -Globalized Childhood? Kentucky Fried Chicken in Beijing (Lozada, 163-175)</p> <p>-Que Gordita (Massara, 251-255) <b>AND</b> -Soul, Black Women, &amp; Food (Hughes, 272-279)</p> <p>What does it Mean to Be Fat, Thin, &amp; Female? (Counihan, 76-92)</p>
<b>CONSUMPTION: COMMODITIES, PART I</b>	
<p><b>WEEK 11</b> <b>Mar 29-Apr 2</b></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Que Vivan los Tamales</u></a></p> <p><b>Global Restructuring of Agrofood Systems</b></p> <p><b>Eat Here</b></p> <p><b>Tangled Routes</b></p> <p><b>Human Organization</b></p> <p><b>Cultural Politics of Food &amp; Eating</b></p>	<p>Introduction, Ch. 1-2</p> <p>The Global Fresh Fruit &amp; Vegetable System: An Industrial Organization Analysis (Friedland, 173-188)</p> <p>The Transcontinental Lettuce (Halweil, 23-40)</p> <p>Picking &amp; Packing for the North: Agricultural Workers at Empaque Santa Rosa (Barndt, 165-168, 174-190, 193-195)</p> <p>-Negotiating Contract Farming in the Dominican Republic (Raynolds, 441-449) <b>AND</b> -Bananas, Are They the Quintessential Health Food? A Global/Local Perspective (Andreatta, 437-447)</p> <p>The Rise of Yuppie Coffees &amp; the Reimagination of Class in the United States (Roseberry, 122-141)</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>CONTINUED...</b></p>

<b>Food &amp; Culture</b>	Time, Sugar & Sweetness (Mintz, 357-368)
<b>CONSUMPTION: COMMODITIES, PART II</b>	
<b>WEEK 12</b> <b>Apr 5-9</b>	
<a href="#"><u>Que Vivan los Tamales</u></a>	Ch. 3-4
<a href="#"><u>Stolen Harvest</u></a>	Mad Cows & Sacred Cows (57-75)
<a href="#"><u>Paradox of Plenty</u></a>	Like Driving a Cadillac (103-122)
<b>Slaughterhouse Blues</b>	Ch. 1-4 (Stull & Broadway, 9-64: Setting the Table, From Roundup to Restructuring, Chicken Little Chicken Big, Hog Heaven)
<b>Human Organization</b>	"Those Bastards Can Go to Hell!" (Grey, 169-175)
<b>Beyond Beef</b>	<b>AND</b> The Automated Jungle (Rifkin, 132-145)
<b>ALTERNATIVES I</b>	
<b>WEEK 13</b> <b>Apr 12-16</b>	
<a href="#"><u>Que Vivan los Tamales</u></a>	Ch. 5-7, Epilogue
<a href="#"><u>Stolen Harvest</u></a>	Reclaiming Food Democracy, Afterward (57-127)
<b>Civic Agriculture</b>	Toward a Civic Agriculture (Lyson, 61-83)
<b>Food in the USA</b>	Growing Food, Growing Community: Community Supported Agriculture in Rural Iowa (Wells and Yoder, 401-408,) <b>AND</b>
<b>Human Organization</b>	Community-Supported Agriculture: A Sustainable Alternative to Industrial Agriculture? (Abbott and Myhre, 187-196)
<b>Mediating Sustainability</b>	Dealing With & In the Global Economy: Fairer Trade in Latin America (Tiffen and Zadek, 163-180)
<b>Eat Here</b>	Taking Back the Market (Halweil, 105-118)

	<b>ALTERNATIVES II</b>
<b>WEEK 14</b> <b>Apr 19-23</b>  <a href="#"><u>Paradox of Plenty</u></a>  <b>Unsettling of America</b>  <b>Essential Agrarian Reader</b>	Land Reform from Below: Landless Worker's Movement in Brazil (Langevin, Rosset, 323-328) Afterword: Food & Justice in the New Millennium (Rosset, 330-335)  <b>EVERYONE MUST READ THE REMAINING ARTICLES:</b>  The Unsettling of America (3-14)  -The Agrarian Standard (23-33) -The Mindset of Agrarianism...New & Old (52-61) -Foreword (ix-xvii)
<b>WEEK 15</b> <b>Apr 26-30</b>	<b>STUDENT PRESENTATIONS (2 days/week, 15 min. each)</b>
<b>WEEK 16</b> <b>May 3-7</b>	<b>STUDENT PRESENTATIONS (2 days/week, 15 min. each)</b>