

E33.2291.001: Food and Culture: Intensive Graduate Seminar in New Orleans,

March 11-18, 2006

Course Description:

New Orleans, with its rich history, unique geography and distinctive culture, is a prime location to study the intersection of food, identity and culture. As a city at the crossroads of culture, race, and ethnicity, New Orleans has both shaped and been shaped by an idiosyncratic set of food practices, rituals, and beliefs. Through a first-hand study of the city, its history, its people, and its foodways, students will gain a thorough understanding not only of food and culture in New Orleans, but will examine more general questions as well: How do people use food to define themselves as individuals, groups or whole societies? How is culture transmitted and preserved through food? How can food have different meanings and uses for different people? How does food function both to foster community feeling and drive wedges among people? Specific topics include the role of race, ethnicity and religion in the development of southern food; restaurants, performance and tourism; contemporary sustainable agricultural movements and farm-to-table initiatives in the Greater New Orleans area. This year a major focus of the course will be the current crises and challenges regarding nutrition, clean water, and health as a result of Hurricane Katrina.

Hotel information: Country Inn and Suites, 315 Magazine Street, NO, LA 70130. (504) 324-5400. www.countryinns.com/neworleansla □

Course Itinerary: Please note that the syllabus is subject to change...

Friday, March 3: Pre-trip class:

5-7 p.m. room 1078 of the Education Building

Saturday March 11: Arrival/Orientation

7-9:00 p.m. Welcome reception (at hotel)

Sunday March 12: Introduction to New Orleans

10-11 a.m.: hold open for group meeting

11-12:30: panel discussion: History, environmental status and mental health issues of post-Katrina New Orleans

1:30-4:30 Bus tour of NOLA

7-9 p.m. Dinner with all groups: TBA □

Monday March 13: New Orleans Community Gardens

Meet in lobby at 8:45 a.m.

9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Guest Lecture/Discussion: "The Cultural and Ethnic History of New Orleans," by Dr. Wilbur Menneray, Assistant Library Dean for Special Collections, Tulane University (at Tulane, travel by bus)

Buses take us back to hotel. (Lunch from nearby deli)

1-5: Community gardens post Katrina. Speaker and guide: Max Elliott, New Orleans Food and Farm Network. Tour of two community gardens in New Orleans (bus)

God's Vineyard 2:30

Earl Antwine-Garden Mentor

918 Felicity

Lower Garden District

God's Vineyard is an at-risk youth garden, where young men from the former St. Thomas Housing Development come to grow food and feed their neighbors. They also raise a wide variety of animals including rabbits, geese, and chickens. With the help of the community gardening organization, Parkway Partners, they grow hot peppers for their award winning St. Thomas Seven Pepper Hot Sauce.

To learn more check:

<http://www.gardeners.com/2003-Garden-Crusader-winner/default/5551.page?SC=> ☐

Fleur D'Eden Garden 3:30

Jeanette Bell-Owner

2111 Baronne

Central City

Fleur D'Eden is a wonderfully diverse urban garden and

more specifically 'a rose lovers paradise.' Jeanette purchased this adjudicated lot from the city several years ago and has transformed the landscape and the entire block in the process. Along with her hundreds of rose bushes, she grows a wide variety of culinary herbs, fruits and vegetables. She sells flowers and value added garden products, such as her famous Fig jam, at the Crescent City Farmers Market. And she was recently featured in an article in the NY Times.

Before coming, Please look at her web site:

<http://www.fleurdeden.com/> □

6: 30: Cocktail party at Elizabeth Pearce's house

Evening: Jazz at Preservation Hall with jazz class (optional)

Tuesday March 14: New Orleans Slow

8:30 a.m. -12 p.m.: Uptown Crescent City Farmers' Market (bus)

Presentations by Nicole Taylor, Market Manager and Poppy Tooker, Slow Food New Orleans Convivium leader.

1 p.m: Presentation on New Orleans cemeteries (at hotel): The cemeteries are only open until 3 p.m., so if there is time we may be able to dash out to visit a cemetery, or students may visit later on their own time).

Rest of afternoon and dinner: on own

8-9:30 p.m.: French Quarter Haunted Ghost Tour

10 p.m.: Rebirth band at Snug Harbor with jazz class (optional)

Wednesday March 15: Agriculture/fisheries field trip

Guide: Laura Westbrook, Louisiana State folklorist

7:45: Board bus at hotel

8:00 - Tour of P&J Oysters

10:30 - Cooking Experience - cook and eat oysters, lunch

12:30 - Drive to Plaquemines, passing through St. Bernard Parish
(which was hard hit by the storm)

1:30 - L'Hoste Organic Citrus Farm - presentation, tour, workday

5 or 5:30 - head back to N.O. □

Evening on own

Possible evening option: Fister Sisters at the Spotted Cat 6:30-9:30
(no cover)

Thursday, March 16: Sugar/Acadiana field trip

Guide: Elizabeth Pearce, Southern Food and Beverage Museum

6:45 a.m. Busses arrive at hotel

7 a.m. Leave New Orleans with a bag breakfast from La Spiga

9 a.m. - 9:45 a.m. LeJeune's –bakery in Jeanerette, LA, the oldest bakery in

Louisiana and only one on the National Register of Historic Places (1884). They still use original brick ovens. (337-276-5690), 510 W. Main Street.

10:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. Behind the scenes tour of the Tabasco plant on Avery Island

1 p.m. - 1:45 p.m. Tour of Lever-St. John sugar working sugar plantation in Breaux Bridge, LA.

2 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Late lunch at Cafe des Amis/lecture by food writer Marcelle Biennu in Breaux Bridge.

7-ish p.m.: Back to the hotel

Evening on own_

Music Options: Donna's (\$10 cover, at midnight they bring out the chicken and red beans and rice)

Friday, March 17: Traditional Music and Food

9:30-10:45 a.m.: Restaurants post-Katrina, David Beriss, anthropology, University of New Orleans (hotel)

11 a.m.-1 p.m.: History of jazz, Dr. Bruce Raeburn, Curator, Hogan Jazz Archives, Tulane University (hotel)

1 p.m.: Lecture: Elizabeth Pearce, Curator, Southern Food and Beverage Museum. Discussion on upcoming exhibit on restaurants post-Katrina.

2:30 p.m.: Group lunch at Galatoires (PLEASE NOTE--time and place not yet confirmed) ☐

5-6:30 p.m.: Class discussion/debriefing—reflections on the week

Evening options:

St. Patrick's celebration at Parasol's

10 p.m. Ellis Marsallis at Snug Harbor (jazz group)

Saturday, March 18: early morning visit to the downtown (Central Business District) farmers market

7 a.m.: meet Richard McCarthy

One last order of café au lait and beignets and then off to airport
(transportation on own)

Course Readings

Lonely Planet: World Food New Orleans (2000) (to be used as a reference guide)

All other readings are available through Blackboard as .pdf files.
Please download and read prior to arrival in New Orleans.

New Orleans and Food Bibliography

History of New Orleans:

Gaudet, Marcia. "The New Orleans King Cake in Southwest Louisiana." Mid-America Folklore, vol. 17, issue 2 (1989): 114-21. **(Kingcake.pdf)**

Gutierrez, Paige. "Cajuns and Crawfish." In Brown and Mussell, eds. Foodways... (University of Tennessee Press, 1984): 169-182.
(Gutierrez.ethnic.symbolic.foodways.pdf)

Hall, Gwendolyn Midlo. "The Formation of Afro-Creole Culture." In Arnold R. Hirsh and Joseph Logsdon, eds. Creole New Orleans: Race and Americanization (Louisiana State University Press, 1992): 58-87.

(photocopied handout)

Jenkins, Virginia Scott. Bananas: An American History (Smithsonian Institution Press, 2000): Chapter 3. **(bananas.pdf)**

Johnson, Walter. Soul by Soul: Life Inside the Antebellum Slave Market (Harvard University Press, 1999): Introduction. **(Johnson.pdf)**

Reeves, Sally K. "Making Groceries: Public Markets and Corner Stores in New Orleans." Gulf Coast Historical Review, vol. 16, issue 1 (2000): 20-47. (**MakingGroceries.pdf**)

Culinary Tourism

Long, Lucy. "Introduction." In Lucy Long, ed. Culinary Tourism (University of Kentucky Press, 2004): 2-19. **(Long.pdf)**

Urry, John. "The Tourist Gaze' Revisited." American Behavioral Scientist. Vol. 36, No. 2(Nov. 1992): 172-186. **(Tourist.gaze.pdf)**

Gender and Ethnicity

Schell, Heather. "Gendered Feasts: A Feminist Reflects on Dining in New Orleans." In Sherrie Inness, ed. Pilaf, Pozole, and Pad Thai: American Women and Ethnic Food (University of Massachusetts Press, 2001): 199-221. **(Shell.pdf)**

St. John, Warren. "Greens in Black and White." New York Times, October 6, 2004. **(Greens.In.Black.And.White.pdf)**

Geography

Pillsbury, Richard. No Foreign Food: The American Diet in Time and Place (Westview Press, 1988): Chapter 10. **(Pillsbury.pdf)**

Shortridge, James R., and Shortridge, Barbara G. "Patterns of Rice Consumption 1955 and 1980," *Geographical Review*, vol. 73, no. 4 (October 1983): 417-429. (**Shortridge.pdf**) □

Poor Boys

Cohen, Hennig. "The History of the 'Poor Boy,' the New Orleans Bargain Sandwich." *American Speech*, vol. 25, no. 1 (Feb. 1950): 67-69. (**poboy.history.pdf**)

Edge, John T. Article on Poor Boys. (sent by the author, not sure where published). (**Edge.PoorBoy.pdf**)

Virgets, Ronnie. "Preserving the Po-Boy." *Gambit Weekly* (October 12, 2004)

<http://www.bestofneworleans.com/dispatch/2004-10-12/views-virgets.html> - top

(**po.boy.preservation.pdf**)

Restaurants

Anderson, Brett. "Creole Contretemps." In Corn Bread Nation 2. Lolis Eric Elie, ed. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004): 151-159. (**Creole.pdf**)

Beriss, David. "Authentic Creole: Tourism, Style, and Calamity in New Orleans Restaurants." (unpublished paper)
(**Beriss.Authentic.Creole.doc**)

Johnson, Pableaux. "End of the Lines?" In Corn Bread Nation 2. Lolis Eric Elie, ed. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004): 186-198. (**Uglesichs.pdf**)

Roots of Creole Cuisine: NYT article and heated response

Reed, Julia. "Creole Cuisine's Roots." New York Times, February 20, 2005 (Creole Kitchens. Julia Reed.pdf)

Response to Julia Reed's article by Lolis Eric Elie (Creole Cuisine's Roots.pdf) □

Post-Katrina Newspaper articles and publicity

Many newspaper articles available in Course Documents on the Blackboard site. □

Assignments/Grading:

1. Participation (including class before and after the week in New Orleans). (20%)
2. Journal (keep a journal—jot ideas, observations, paper data, etc.) Turn in at the end of the week for me to look at briefly and I'll return quickly. (10%)
3. Response papers: Choose four, write 1-2 pages on each. Turn in either at the end of the week, or the following week at the latest after the trip (20%)
4. Research paper (10-15 pp) on topic of choice. Due May 10. (50%)

Research papers may be spin offs of topics below. Should be comprised of both secondary/scholarly readings as well as primary data gathered during the week (menus and other written materials, participant/observation, interviews, photos, products, etc.) Should conform to standard expectations of a research paper.

Response paper topics (choose 4 to write about):

#1 It is often said that in order to understand the character and gestalt of New Orleans, the city needs to be seen as less an "American" city than a city resting on the northernmost edge of the Caribbean. Explain how this could be so, with regard to food as well as other cultural and material elements.

#2 At the same time, people often characterize New Orleans as more "European" than "American." In what ways would this be true (again, with regard to food as well as other elements).

#3 But wait, New Orleans, is after all, a city in the United States, though clearly with elements that make it different from other large urban areas. What makes New Orleans identifiably "American" (through food and other)?

#4 Because of the dramatic and incredibly destructive damage done by Hurricane Katrina and the ensuing levee breaks it is almost impossible for us to examine any aspect of New Orleans food and culture without noting a "pre" and "post" hurricane state (ex: restaurants, St. Joseph's Day alters, agriculture and seafood production pre and post Katrina). Chose one aspect of NOLA food and culture we've explored on the trip, and offer some pre- and post-Katrina comparisons. Is there any aspect of NOLA culture that remains untouched by the hurricane?

#5 It is impossible to understand NOLA culture and society without understanding the area's long history of occupation and colonialism, especially the legacy of slavery. The city's history is fraught with remarkable pain, yet remarkable also in the congeniality and intimacy that has crossed class and racial boundaries. New Orleans music as well as its food, are direct products of this history. Pick one of NOLA's signature dishes, drinks, or food products and show its connection to the city's multi-layered history.

#6. John Urry's article "The Tourist Gaze 'Revisited'" explores the multi-faceted nature of the tourist experience. Urry explains, "the

tourist experience involves something that is visually different and distinguished from otherwise mundane activities" and that the "tourist gaze endows the tourist experience with a striking, almost sacred, importance." He notes that "tourist gazes"--places, objects or views that are designated as signs or symbols of something larger and thus their meaning is amplified—are first, often self-consciously organized by professionals; second, are authorized by different discourses of tourism (health, or education); and third, can take various forms, including "romantic," "collective," "spectatorial," "environmental," and "anthropological" (184). Employ Urry's "tourist gaze" to your own experience as a tourist in New Orleans. How does New Orleans "perform" itself to and for tourists? How does this differ (or is similar to) how New Orleans is lived and consumed by its residents? How does Katrina affect the tourist gaze? □

#7. Extend your analysis of the tourist gaze specifically to food and restaurants. Much is made of New Orleans iconic foods, but really, is anyone eating a muffuletta? We all can think of examples of iconic foods that perhaps are not eaten with regularity but are held up as regional specialties, even by locals themselves. Such iconic foods appear frequently in promotional photos and are mentioned on menus, but may or may not be eaten regularly (by locals, by tourists, or both). Does it matter whether the food/drink is consumed everyday, on occasion, or not at all? Choose one iconic NOLA food (gumbo, po boys, etc.) and examine in this light.

#8. In her introduction to the book Culinary Tourism, Lucy Long examines the various ways that food can be manipulated so as to be more "familiar" or more "exotic" to groups, depending on their orientation. New Orleans, a place that has helped define the meaning and practice of culinary tourism, is full of examples of both practices (especially in the areas that cater to tourists). Choose one or two dishes/foods (or non-food items) to illustrate how something can be made more "strange" as well as more "familiar."

#9. What else is important/prominent/significant about food and

culture in New Orleans that hasn't been addressed in the other questions? State your observations and analyze. □

Research Paper and Presentation:

For your culminating project you are to write an approximately 15 page research paper on a topic of your choice, accompanied by an oral presentation (approx. 6-7 minutes) on April 28th, the day we meet back in New York City.

Topic

You may choose to pursue further a idea from a response paper, or examine an related topic of personal or academic interest. The following is a list of suggested topics, though you are by no means limited to these. Perspectives on:

- contemporary issues in nutrition or public health
- Comparison of some issue or phenomenon pre and post Katrina
- food and politics
- a prepared food or method of processing
- an important person
- a food event (Mardi Gras, St. Joseph's alters)
- food/nutrition/public health issues in historical context
- religion, ethnicity and food

Procedures and Requirements

1. Conduct a thorough search in the library (or elsewhere) for material on your topic. Check with the reference librarian, do a Bobcat/ONLINE search, explore the Internet, look through encyclopedias, magazines, newspapers, archives, interview people, do an ethnographic analysis, etc. Having "too much" information, if such a thing is possible, is much less of a problem than too little. See me for ideas, visit the reference desk at the library, talk to anyone who might be of help.

2. Gather information while you are in New Orleans. This may include interviews, ethnographic observation, collecting NOLA material culture, photographs, menus, and so on.

Base your bibliography on a substantial number of sources, at least twenty (20). These can be drawn from a variety of materials (books, scholarly journals, popular magazines, newspapers, cookbooks, internet) but a substantial number (over half) must be books and articles of a scholarly nature (peer-reviewed, footnotes, relatively independent of advertising, usually plain-looking with few photographs). Beware of Internet sites—not all are created equal. Be skeptical, for example, that a corporate website will tell the whole story about its product(s).

3. You must incorporate primary data of some kind. While I realize it is impossible to conduct a substantial amount of primary research in such a short time, it is important to include, to your best ability, some element of primary data, whether old newspaper/magazine/advertisements, old cookbooks or recipe cards, restaurant menus, diaries, statistical records, interviews, or ethnographic data generated by yourself. I assume you have discussed definitions of primary and secondary data, but we will go over these in class as well.

4. Your project must be original. I will not accept a topic that you have used/are using for another class.

Mechanics

1. As with all college papers I expect your paper to be typed, double-spaced. Your paper should be stapled (no slick covers, etc), and pages numbered. It should also have a title.
2. **Make sure you have a clearly-stated thesis that provides an argument, encapsulates the scope and framework of analysis of the entire paper.** Provide examples and evidence to support any claims you make; be careful to provide citations to indicate the origin of your quotes and paraphrased references. Information, even if not directly quoted, needs to be cited with footnotes or parenthetical endnotes. I will expect at least 10 scholarly references (books, scholarly articles), as well as any other materials you use (newspapers, popular magazines, surveys, pamphlets, etc.), for a total of at least twenty sources.
3. **Check the rules of plagiarism.** NYU has a clearly stated policy on plagiarism—read and follow it please. Bottom line: changing a word or two of a sentence and then passing it off as your own (without quotation marks) is plagiarism.
4. Papers need to be free of typographical errors and grammatical disasters. Consult a style manual if you have questions, and make use of the Writing Center.
5. And finally, please turn your paper in on time; late papers receive a drop in grade.

Presentation

The presentations should be of exceptional quality. You should be well-prepared, and should do your best to make the presentation interesting, informative, and worth the time of your classmates and myself. Practice beforehand so you know how much time it takes to get through, dress as if you are trying to make a good overall

impression. You should include in your presentation anything that will help explain your project to the rest of the class: slides, photos, other objects, handouts, etc. Avoid the "um" syndrome. Use notecards to help you through the material. Try not to read material, but "talk" it to the audience. Look up and out to the audience, instead of down at your notes. Don't worry, your classmates will provide encouragement, support, will listen attentively, and will clap at the end of your presentation.