

**Sociology 3113 / Women's Studies 3111
Gender & Food**

**Tuesday / Thursday 8:30 - 10am
Room 1021**

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Office Hours: Thursday 10-11am

*"Tell me what you eat and I will tell you what you are." --
Anthelme Brillat-Savarin (1755-1826)*

Welcome to Gender & Food! In this course we will explore the social construction of gender, femininity and masculinity, in relation to all matters of food. We will focus on the **socio-cultural** domain of food, and examine social differences that are produced and reproduced through everyday food practices. We will explore the relationship between gender, food and health, and in particular, the responsibilities we have for food and making 'good' food choices while navigating food risk, and food insecurity. We will also examine the **corporeal**, or embodied relationships we have with food, and the **material** domain, which considers the labour that is performed in the food system. We will ask critical questions about food politics and think about how food consumption and production overlap. Throughout this course, you will be asked to critically engage with intersectionality theory, that is, think about the various dimensions of identity and the power relations that accompany varying social locations such as race, ethnicity, social class, age (life course), sexuality, geography or where one lives and how these differences shape our individual and shared experiences of food.

COURSE WEBSITE, READINGS & RESOURCES

This course has an accompanying D2L website, where you will find readings and course materials. You can access the course site through **MyCourseLink** on either the Lakehead University homepage or through your **MyInfo** account.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Reflect on the meanings of food and eating in relation to identity and everyday life
- Develop a critical understanding of food in relation to femininity and masculinity as relational, social constructs;

- Understand that food is a lens through which to think about food and food-related activities not as nutrition but as complex social, cultural, political and symbolic phenomenon;
- Examine contemporary debates about food and gender
- Employ intersectionality to understand the complexity of social identities (social class, race, ethnicity, age, ability, sexuality), social inequality and power relations in relation to food;
- Develop research, analytical, presentation and writing skills.

HOW THE COURSE IS ORGANIZED

This course is offered twice a week - Tuesday and Thursday from 8:30-10am. It is a discussion-based class and therefore *essential* that you come to class with the readings done. Your learning is dependent on your participation! Your participation mark is based on your attendance, your engagement with the course materials and your completion of various in-class activities such as quizzes, activities and group work. Our class time will be comprised of lectures, class discussions, small group work, presentations and film. Please review the Weekly Readings Schedule for details about weekly topics.

If you have questions, at any time during this course, please visit me in my Office Hours (as listed above) or contact me through email at: barbara.parker@lakeheadu.ca

Please note: I will only respond to emails sent from a Lakehead university email account. When emailing me, please put either SOC 3550 or WOME 3550 in the Subject Heading, depending on which section you are registered in. I will do my best to reply to your emails within 24 hours.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE: As a courtesy to your peers and the instructor, please turn off or mute all phones and be advised that tablets and laptops are only to be used in the classroom for note-taking purposes.

LEARNING ACCOMODATIONS: Lakehead University is committed to achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities. Part of this commitment includes arranging academic accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure they have an equitable opportunity to participate in all of their academic activities. If you think you may need accommodations, you are strongly encouraged to contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) and register as early as possible. For more information, please visit: <http://studentaccessibility.lakeheadu.ca>

PLAGIARISM & ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT: Plagiarism is a serious academic offence. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with what it means to

plagiarize the words or ideas of others and your responsibilities as a student at Lakehead University. From the Course Calendar:

<http://navigator.lakeheadu.ca/Catalog/ViewCatalog.aspx?pageid=viewcatalog&catalogid=21&chapterid=3506&loaduserredits=False>

Plagiarism shall be deemed to include:

1. Plagiarism of ideas as where an idea of an author or speaker is incorporated into the body of an assignment as though it were the writer's idea, i.e. no credit is given the person through referencing or footnoting or endnoting.
2. Plagiarism of words occurs when phrases, sentences, tables or illustrations of an author or speaker are incorporated into the body of a writer's own, i.e. no quotations or indentations (depending on the format followed) are present but referencing or footnoting or endnoting is given.
3. Plagiarism of ideas and words as where words and an idea(s) of an author or speaker are incorporated into the body of a written assignment as though they were the writer's own words and ideas, i.e. no quotations or indentations (depending on format followed) are present and no referencing or footnoting or endnoting is given.

The following rules shall govern the treatment of candidates who have been found guilty of attempting to obtain academic credit dishonestly.

(a) The minimum penalty for a candidate found guilty of plagiarism, or of cheating on any part of a course will be a zero for the work concerned.

(b) A candidate found guilty of cheating on a formal examination or a test, or of serious or repeated plagiarism, or of unofficially obtaining a copy of an examination paper before the examination is scheduled to be written, will receive zero for the course and may be expelled from the University.

If you have questions, consult the professor.

EVALUATION & ASSIGNMENTS:

1) Class Participation.....	10% (ongoing)
2) Seminar Facilitation.....	15%
3) Cookbook Analysis.....	20% (due: Oct 18)
4) Food Journal / Autoethnography.....	25% (due: Nov 3)
5) Research Paper	30% (due: Dec 1)

*** Late Penalty** Students are reminded that late assignments will be penalized 5% per day, including weekends and holidays, unless PRIOR approval for an extension has been obtained. All written work will be evaluated based on

organization, presentation, grammar and clarity as well as content. For your own protection, keep a hard copy of all work submitted for this course.

EVALUATION INFORMATION

All assignments must be double-spaced, and written in 12 font.

Assignments are due in-class on the due date.

All assignments will be discussed in class and you will have the opportunity to ask questions about expectations.

1. Class Participation (10% ongoing)

The class participation mark will be based on your attendance, your engagement in class discussions, and your completion of various in-class activities, quizzes, and group work. You will have an opportunity to self-evaluate on the final day of the class, and your feedback will be taken into consideration for your mark.

Note: Everyone is allowed to miss two classes during the term without penalty. If you will be missing more than two classes during the term, please provide appropriate documentation so that your participation mark is not compromised.

2. Seminar Facilitation (15%)

In Weeks 5-12, we will address a variety of themes; choose one where the content particularly interests you and, in groups of 4-5, facilitate a 45-minute session in our class. This assignment provides you with an opportunity to explore an area of interest to you as well as to try out the role of group leader. We will decide in Week 2 how the presentation weeks will be allocated.

For the seminar, group members are expected to:

- 1) Summarize the main ideas, themes, and/or questions raised in the readings of the week, and consider how the ideas are interconnected;
- 2) Provide a critical response to the readings, including insights, arguments, disagreements, questions and further analysis; and
- 3) Develop a minimum of three creative, thought-provoking questions based on the readings.

As a general guideline, the presentation portion (points 1 and 2 above) should be no longer than 20 minutes, leaving the remainder of the time for class discussion.

3. Cookbook Analysis (20%)

Due: Oct 18 in-class

Cookbooks reflect popular culture and offer us a glimpse into the socio-cultural and historical contexts in which they were produced. Cookbooks are often glossy, but many are also produced by community groups, churches, non-profit organizations, and as family projects. To this end, cookbooks do more than teach us to cook; they shape beliefs about gender, race, ethnicity, social class, age, family and other aspects of identity.

- 1) Choose a favourite cookbook and undertake a critical analysis of the content paying particular attention to the concepts/themes covered in the readings for the course. Pay particular attention to the content covered in Week 3: **Reading Cookbooks Through a Critical Socio-historical and Intersectional Lens**

In Week 4 (Sept 29th) in-class, we will hold a “Reading Cookbooks” Workshop. This workshop requires that you bring at minimum of one cookbook (or 2 or 3!) to class, where we will take class time and work in small groups to unpack the social meanings communicated through the cookbooks we have brought to share.

Questions we will consider include:

- a. What type of cookbook is it? (e.g. community compilation, specialty e.g. “just desserts,” celebrity chef author, etc.)
- b. Who is the author of this cookbook? What do we know about him/her?
- c. When was this cookbook published? What about that time period might be relevant?
- d. Who is the intended readership for this cookbook? (e.g. novice versus experienced cook)
- e. What do we know (and not know) about the cookbook’s readers?
- f. What ingredients, forms of measurement, technology, utensils, and techniques are called for in the recipes? How do these relate to the historical context? What might they also tell us about the assumed cooking ability and class status of the cookbook’s readership?
- g. What does this cookbook tell us about the identity of the author and of the reader? How are gender roles prescribed and transgressed within the text? What does this cookbook tell us about other categories of identity like race, ethnicity, class, religion, and/or region?

This workshop will aptly prepare you to undertake the Cookbook Analysis assignment!

4. Food Journal / Autoethnography (25%)

Due: Nov 3 in-class

Autoethnography is “research, writing, story and method that connect the autobiographical and personal to the cultural, social and political” (Ellis, 2004, p. xix). Autoethnography is powerful because you will connect your personal experiences; in this case your own food practices, with ‘public issues’ or structural constraints that are social, cultural and political. To do this assignment well, you will need to be reflexive while referencing course readings, and consider the many facets of food that you may never have considered before. I encourage you to ask questions either in class or see me in my office hours!

This assignment requires that you keep a food journal for 3 days! The data you collect over this time period will be the basis for your autoethnographic analysis. You must include a minimum of one (1) weekend day in your data collection.

Data Collection:

- 1) Write down everything you eat and drink for three days, including one weekend day. Record your data either electronically or in a notebook. Be sure to include places, dates and times you eat or drink!

Recommend: Don't put the journal together at the end of the day because you will inevitably forget some items.

You are required to hand in the journal with the paper. If you recorded electronically, type it up in Word to hand in.

The Analysis & Write-Up:

- 2) For each day select three (3) food items you ate and think about what these foods means to you.

Questions to consider:

- a) Do you have a childhood association to them?
- b) Are they treats or things you think you should eat?
- c) Are they connected to the media? How?
- d) What gender/sex, class, race, ethnic, age, ability associations do you have with the food?
- e) Is there a geographic association with the food?

- f) In what ways do these foods express your identity? Are there foods that do express your identity that are unavailable on campus or in the area?
- 3) Include the context of your meal or snack time at which you ate this food.

Questions to consider:

- g) Did you eat it at home, in a restaurant, or at someone else's house?
 - h) Did you eat alone or did you share your meal/snack?
 - i) How did you feel about either being alone or with other people for the meal?
 - j) What associations do you have to either eating alone or with other people?
 - k) What gender/sex, class, race, ethnic, age or ability implications do these contexts have for you? For example, do you think it is more difficult for women to eat alone than it is for men?
- 4) Make substantive references to at least three different readings for the course. Inserting a quote from the author is not a substantive reference. I expect you to show an understanding of the main thesis of the article or chapter and use that to make your argument.

5. Research Paper (30%)

Due: Dec 1 in-class

This assignment is an opportunity for you to explore, through a written research paper, a topic that relates to food and gender! You are expected to engage with scholarly, peer-reviewed work in the field and develop your written communication skills. I expect that you will use course materials as a starting point.

Please note, that once you have chosen your topic, I expect that you will meet with me or the GA to discuss your research paper plans.

Your paper must be developed around a thesis statement and include an introduction, main body, conclusion and reference list. Please remember that your reference list and in-text citations must follow an approved Referencing Style.

Your paper will be 8-10 pages in length, typed double-spaced in 12 font. You will cite a minimum of 8 peer-reviewed journal article or book sources.

I strongly encourage you to visit the Writing Centre, located in the Library and talk with a Writing Coach if you are having difficulty with your paper or would like a second set of eyes to review it before handing it in.

We will discuss the final research paper further in-class.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE:

WEEK 1 - Sept 6 & 8th

Introduction: Why Study Food & Gender?

Review Syllabus; discuss course expectations and talk about how the class will be organized

Reading (for Thursday class):

1) Guptil, A., Copelton, D., and Lucal, B. (2013). Food and Gender Identity, *Food & Society: Principles and Paradoxes*, (31-35) Malden, MA: Polity Press.

WEEK 2 - Sept 13 & 15th

Gender & Food: Introducing Intersectionality Theory

***Sign Up Sheet available for dates to facilitate seminar**

Readings:

1) Brady, J. Glngras, J. and Power E. (2012). Still Hungry: A Feminist Perspective on Food, Foodwork, the Body and Food Studies, In Koc, M., Sumner, J. and Winson, A. (Eds), *Critical Perspectives in Food Studies* (122-135), Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press.

2) Hillsburg, H. (2013). Towards a Methodology of Intersectionality: An Axiom-based approach, *Atlantis*, 36(1): 3-11.

WEEK 3 - Sept 20 & 22nd

Food & Identity: Thinking through Autoethnography as Method

1) Read Marcel Proust's famous story of the madeleine:

<http://www.haverford.edu/psych/ddavis/p109g/proust.html>

Then write and bring to class a 1-2 page “food story”. This can be a story or description of a significant food memory (like Proust’s); a special family food or meal; the best or worst meal you’ve ever had; a recent meal; or an event in your life in which food or food-related activity played a significant part. Using Proust as an example, try to write as vividly as possible, describing the circumstances, your emotions, sensations, thoughts and interactions. Be prepared to share your story with a partner. In pairs, students will read each other’s story, ask questions of clarification and provide feedback.

2) Ellis, C., Adams, T. E., and Bochner, A. P. (2010). Autoethnography: An Overview [40 paragraphs]. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 12(1), Art. 10, Available at: <http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs1101108>.

Optional Reading:

1) Lupton, D. (1994). Food, Memory and Meaning: The symbolic and social nature of food events, *The Sociological Review*, 42(4): 664-685.

WEEK 4 - Sept 27 & 29th

Reading Cookbooks Through a Critical Socio-historical and Intersectional Lens

Readings:

1) Newhaus, Jessamyn. (1999). The Way to a Man's Heart: Gender Roles, Domestic Ideology, and Cookbooks in the 1950s, *Journal of Social History*, 32(3): 529-555.

2) Inness, Sherrie. (2006). Boredom is Quite Out of the Picture”: Women’s Natural Food Cookbooks and Social Change. *Secret Ingredients: Race, Gender and Class at the Dinner Table*, (83-104), New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

3) Tipton-Martin, Toni. https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/food/black-recipes-matter-too-why-i-wanted-to-break-the-jemima-code/2015/09/14/00c072ee-5673-11e5-b8c9-944725fcd3b9_story.html

Note: Sept 29th Thursday Class - ‘Reading Cookbooks’ Workshop

Please bring a cookbook (or two!) to share with classmates, as we will work together to unpack the social meanings and structural implications of these texts in this class.

WEEK 5 - October 4 & 6th

Women, Race and Food: Historical Perspectives

Readings:

1) Allen, Patricia & Sachs, Caroline (2007). Women and Food Chains: the gendered politics of food, *International Journal of Sociology of Food and Agriculture*, 15(1): 1-23.

Or

2) Voski Avakian, A. & Haber, B. (2005). Feminist Food Studies: A Brief History, In Voski Avakian, A. & Haber, B. (Eds.), *From Betty Crocker to Feminist Food Studies: Critical Perspectives on Women and Food* (1-26). Amherst & Boston, MA: University of Massachusetts Press.

AND

3) Inness, Sherrie. (2006). "More American than Apple Pie": Modern African-American Cookbooks fighting White Stereotypes", *Secret Ingredients: Race, Gender and Class at the Dinner Table*, (105-125), New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

WEEK 6 - Oct 11 & 13th

NO CLASS - FALL READING WEEK

WEEK 7 - Oct 18 & 20th

Constructing Femininity & Masculinity through Food Practices

*** Due in-class Oct 18 Cookbook Analysis**

Readings:

1) Cairns, K. and Johnston, J. (2015). Thinking through food and femininity: A conceptual toolkit, *Food and Femininity*, (23-41), New York: Bloomsbury:

2) Szabo, M. (2012). Foodwork or Foodplay? Men's Domestic Cooking, Privilege and Leisure, *Sociology* 47(4): 623-638.

3) Carrington, C. (2013) Feeding Lesbian Families, In Counihan, C., and Van Esterik, P., (Eds), *Food and Culture: A Reader* 3rd Edition, (187-210), New York and London: Routledge.

4) Listen to podcast (13:52min):

<http://www.renderfoodmag.com/blog/2014/4/24/introducing-the-feminist-fork-does-it-really-matter-who-pays-for-dinner>

WEEK 8 - Oct 25 & 27th

Oct 25 - Film TBA

Oct 27 - No Class - Please use this time to work on either your Autoethnography or Final Research Paper

WEEK 9 - Nov 1 & 3rd

Family Food Practices & Responsibility

*** Due In-Class Nov 3rd Food Journal / Autoethnography**

Readings:

1) Beagan, B., Chapman, G., D'Sylva, A., and Bassett, B. R. (2008). 'It's Just Easier for Me to Do It': Rationalizing the Family Division of Foodwork, *Sociology*, 42(4): 653-671.

2) Szabo, M. (2014). Men nurturing through food: Challenging gender dichotomies around domestic cooking, *Journal of Gender Studies*, 23(1): 18-31.

3) Lupton, D. (2000). "Where's Me Dinner?": Food Preparation Arrangements in Rural Australian Families', *Journal of Sociology*, 36(2): 172-86.

WEEK 10 - Nov 8 & 10th

Constructing Femininity and Masculinity through Food, Health & the Environment

Readings:

1) Cairns, K. and Johnston, J. (2015), Choosing health: embodied neoliberalism, postfeminism and the "do-diet", *Theory and Society*, 44: 153-175.

2) Harper, B. (2010). Social Justice Beliefs and Addiction to Uncompassionate Consumption, In A. Breeze Harper (Ed). *Sistah Vegan: Black Female Vegans Speak on*

Food, Identity, Health and Society, (20-41), Brooklyn, NY: Lantern Books.

3) Gough, B. (2007). 'Real men don't diet': An analysis of contemporary newspaper representations of men, food and health. *Social Science & Medicine*, 64, 326-337.

WEEK 11 - Nov 15 & 17th

Nov 15 - Discussion with Professor about Final Research Papers

Nov 17th - Our GA will be running a Research Paper Tutorial during class time

WEEK 12 - Nov 22 & 24th

Gender and Global Food Systems

Readings:

1) Dolan, Catherine (2004). On Farm and Packhouse: Employment at the Bottom of a Global Value Chain, *Rural Sociology* 69 (1): 99-126.

2) Hovorka, A. (2013). The Case for a Feminist Foodscapes Framework: Lessons from research in urban Botswana, *Development*, 56(1): 123-128.

3) Barndt, D. (2013). On the Move for Food: Three Women Behind the Tomato's Journey, In Counihan, C., and Van Esterik, P., (Eds), *Food and Culture: A Reader* 3rd Edition, (472-481), New York and London: Routledge.

4) Sachs, C. and Patel-Campillo A. (2014). Feminist Food Justice: Crafting a New Vision, *Feminist Studies*, 40(2): 396-410.

WEEK 13 - Nov 29 & Dec 1st

Final Thoughts and Breakfast Potluck

*** Due In-Class Dec 1 - Final Research Paper**

With notice from the Professor, please note that the readings / reading schedule may change