

# History and Political Economy of Food

O'Neil Center Advanced Undergraduate Reading Group Syllabus

Fall 2020

## Primary Readings

Abigail Carroll. 2013. *Three Squares: The Invention of the American Meal*. New York: Basic Books.

Tyler Cowen. 2012. *An Economist Gets Lunch: New Rules for Everyday Foodies*. New York: Dutton.

Rachel Laudan. 2013. *Cuisine & Empire: Cooking in World History*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

James E. McWilliams. 2009. *Just Food: Where Locavores Get It Wrong and How We Can Truly Eat Responsibly*. New York: Back Bay Books.

F. Bailey Norwood, Pascal A. Oltenacu, Michelle S. Calvo-Lorenzo, and Sarah Lancaster. 2015. *Agricultural & Food Controversies: What Everyone Needs to Know*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

## Secondary Readings

Rosling, Hans. 2018. *Factfulness: Ten Reasons We're Wrong About the World* –

#### 4. The Globalization of Modern Cuisine

Laudan Ch. 8, p. 308-360

Laudan, Rachel. 2001. "A Plea for Culinary Modernism." Reprinted many times, see here:  
<https://www.jacobinmag.com/2015/05/slow-food-artisanal-natural-preservatives/>

Rosling, p. 53-56

#### 5. Is American Food Actually Bad?

Carroll Ch. 8 and Conclusion, p. 191-220

Cowen Ch. 2 and 9, p. 17-38 and 187-210

Smith, Kyle. 2013. "The Greatest Food in Human History." *New York Post*,  
<https://nypost.com/2013/07/28/the-greatest-food-in-human-history/>

Steingarten Ch. 8, p. 92-106

*(Skim, but do not skip)* Cutler, David M., Edward L. Glaeser, and Jesse M. Shapiro. 2003. "Why Have Americans Become More Obese?" *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 17, no. 3: 93-118.

#### 6. Cowenian Prescriptivism I

Cowen Ch. 1, 3, 4 and 5, p. 1-16 and 39-113

#### 7. Cowenian Prescriptivism II

Cowen Ch. 6, 10, and 11, p. 114-140 and 211-260

Steingarten Introduction, p. 3-15

#### 8. Locavorism and Climate Change

Cowen Ch. 8, p. 167-186

Norwood et al. Ch. 4 and 7, p. 42-58 and p. 99-109

McWilliams Ch. 1, p. 17-51

*(Skim, but do not skip)* McWilliams Ch. 4, p. 117-154

#### 9. Development, Trade, and GMOs

Cowen Ch. 7, p. 141-166

McWilliams Ch. 3, p. 81-116

Norwood Ch. 5, 58-86

## 10. Further Topics

Norwood et al. Ch. 2, 3, and 8 p. 1-41 and 110-146

McWilliams Ch. 6, p. 185-212