African and African American Studies E-119
Chocolate, Culture, and the Politics of Food

Department: African and African American Studies, Harvard Extension School
Semester: Spring Term 2016
Hours: Wednesdays 5:30-7:30pm
Location: Byerly Hall 013
Course website: https://canvas.harvard.edu/courses/8130
Course blog: http://chocolateclass.wordpress.com/

Instructor: Carla D. Martin, PhD, http://carladmartin.com
Contact: cdmartin@post.harvard.edu
Office hours: By appointment. Book here: http://carladmartin.youcanbook.me/

This course will examine the sociohistorical legacy of chocolate, with a delicious emphasis on the eating and appreciation of the so-called “food of the gods.” Interdisciplinary course readings will introduce the history of cacao cultivation, the present day state of the global chocolate industry, the diverse cultural constructions surrounding chocolate, and the implications for chocolate’s future of scientific study, international politics, alternative trade models, and the food movement. Assignments will address pressing real world questions related to chocolate consumption, social justice, responsible development, honesty and the politics of representation in production and marketing, hierarchies of quality, and myths of purity.
Goals

Gain subject matter expertise:
- on the history, culture, and taste of cacao and chocolate;
- on slavery, global trade, and business ethics; and
- on big, pressing questions related to labor rights, corporate social responsibility, the politics of representation in advertising, social attitudes toward food, and food politics.

Develop skills:
- to engage profoundly with a large body of interdisciplinary primary and secondary sources of varying quality;
- to conduct historical, ethnographic, and multimedia research;
- to better understand analog and digital scholarship and media and how we store/find/share/create knowledge; and
- to communicate critically and thoughtfully through discussion, writing, and multimedia.

Create knowledge:
- by working on our own and in a collaborative, hands-on environment;
- by documenting the history and anthropology of chocolate; and
- by critically analyzing pressing problems in the chocolate industry and making these analyses available to chocolate companies and the general public.

Requirements and Grading

Detailed guidelines and rubrics will be provided for all assignments throughout the semester. Required assignments are weighted into the final grade as shown.

- ☝️ Quizzes (4) 35% February 10, March 2, March 30, April 20
- ☝️ Blog posts (3) 30% due February 19, March 11, April 8
- ☝️ Participation* 15% ongoing
- ☝️ Final multimedia essay 20% due May 11

*Through class participation, you demonstrate your engagement and intellectual growth during the semester. Together, we will create a comfortable space amongst peers to speak with confidence about our knowledge and opinions and to respectfully hear those of others. All of the following impact the individual student participation grade: digital participation (via the course blog or website), adequate preparation to discuss weekly readings, thoughtful commenting and listening, technological etiquette, attendance, and communication with instructors via email and in office hours.
Course Policies

Academic Integrity: Discussion and the exchange of ideas are essential to academic work. For written assignments in this course, you are encouraged to consult with your classmates on the choice of essay topics and to share sources. However, you should ensure that any individual written work you submit for evaluation is the result of your own research and writing and that it reflects your own approach to the topic. You must also adhere to standard citation practices in this discipline and properly cite any books, articles, websites, lectures, etc. that have helped you with your work. If you receive any help with your writing (feedback on drafts, etc), you must also acknowledge this assistance. For more information on conforming to the Extension School’s policies, see Student Responsibilities.

Citations: In this class, you may use the citation style with which you are most comfortable (e.g. MLA, Chicago), as long as you use it consistently. The Harvard Guide to Using Sources contains detailed information on writing with sources.

Late Work and Extensions: Students must communicate with the teaching staff prior to turning in late work. Work submitted late will drop one grading increment per 24-hour period (e.g. an A assignment submitted within 24 hours after the due date will not receive a grade higher than an A-, within 48 hours no higher than a B+, and so on). Extensions will be granted only in the case of documented illness or emergency.

Communication: You are responsible for maintaining communication with course teaching staff, both in person and via email. You should check the course website and your email account regularly for any announcements and plan to respond to messages in a timely manner.

Accessibility: Students needing academic adjustments or accommodations because of a documented disability must contact the Division of Continuing Education Accessible Education Office and speak with the instructor by January 20, 2016. Failure to do so may result in the instructor’s inability to respond in a timely manner. All discussions will remain confidential.

Food Allergies or Restrictions: We will occasionally taste cacao and chocolate in this class, though consumption is wholly optional. The instructor will offer buying recommendations for chocolate to students taking the class online. Students with food allergies or restrictions must alert the instructor by the end of the second week of the term, February 5, 2016. In the case of food allergies or restrictions, no decision to consume cacao or chocolate should be made without explicit direction from the student’s doctor.

Additional Support: The Writing Center
Required Readings, Website Explorations, and Film Viewings

All assigned readings, website explorations, and film viewings must be completed before the Wednesday lecture each week.

Readings: Approximately 100-150 pages of reading will be assigned each week. Readings are drawn from the fields of anthropology, history, African and African American Studies, critical food studies, business, psychology, and public health. The following books will be available for purchase at The Harvard COOP and on reserve at Lamont Library. All other readings will be available via the course website.


Website explorations: Each week, you will be referred to two or three websites relevant to the topic, for the purpose of multimedia exploration and research.

Film viewings (optional): Three of the five films are available to stream online for free.


Digital Tools and Apps

In this course, students will be required to use Wordpress.com to complete multimedia essay assignments. Training and guidance will be provided for this tool in section. It is essential to consider copyright, privacy, and ethics with this type of digital work; we will discuss these issues in detail together throughout the semester.
Schedule
Key: ⌘ read, ⇨ explore, 🎞️ watch, ✏️ quiz, ⌛ assignment due

Unit 1: Origins

**Introduction**: January 27


敔 Bittersweet Notes

**Mesoamerica and the “food of the gods”**: February 3


敔 Food Timeline, Map of Mesoamerica

**Chocolate expansion**: February 10


敔 A Concise History of Cacáo, MFA Collection Search: “Chocolate Pot”

✔ Quiz opens online Wednesday, February 10, at 5pm, due by Friday, February 12 at 11:59pm

**Sugar and cacao**: February 17


敔 The Cambridge World History of Food: Sugar, USDA/ARS, Cacao Genome Database, FDA Standards of Identity – Cacao Products

Ѿ First blog post due Friday, February 19 at 11:59pm
Unit 2: Growing Cacao, Making Chocolate, Selling Sin

**Popular sweet teeth and scandal**: February 24

- Candy Professor, Four Pounds Flour, Chocolate Around the World

**Slavery, abolition, and forced labor**: March 2

- The Image of the Black in Western Art, The Transatlantic Slave Trade, AfricaMap

**The rise of big chocolate and race for the global market**: March 9

- Cadbury, Nestlé, Hershey’s, Mars, Ferrero Rocher, National Confectioners Association

- Second blog post due Friday, March 11 at 11:59pm
Unit 3: Representation, Labor, and the Ethics of Trade

**Modern day slavery:** March 23
- Harkin-Engel Protocol [pdf], *Raise the Bar, Hershey!, The Hershey Company – Corporate Social Responsibility, World Cocoa Foundation*

**Race, ethnicity, gender, and class in chocolate advertisements:** March 30
- *Native Appropriations, How to Write About Africa I, Africa is a Country*

- **Quiz opens online Wednesday, March 30 at 5pm, due by Friday, April 1 at 11:59pm**

**Alternative trade and virtuous localization/globalization:** April 6
- Pilcher, Jeffrey M. 2012[2006]. “Taco Bell, Maseca, and Slow Food: A Postmodern apocalypse for Mexico’s Peasant Cuisine?” pp. 426-436
- *Fair Trade International, Fair Trade USA, Slow Food USA, Equal Exchange, Taza Chocolate, Askinosie Chocolate*

- **Third blog post due Friday, April 8 at 11:59pm**
Unit 4: Eating Chocolate

Health, nutrition, and the politics of food: April 13
- Taubes, Gary and Christin Kearns Couzens. “Big Sugar’s Sweet Little Lies.” http://www.motherjones.com/environment/2012/10/sugar-industry-lies-campaign
- Food Politics, Yale Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity, Appetite for Profit, Grist – Food, Politics of the Plate, Civil Eats, The Sugar Association

Psychology, terroir, and taste: April 20

Quiz opens online Wednesday, April 20 at 5pm, due by Friday, April 24 at 11:59pm

Haute patisserie, artisan chocolate, and food justice: the future?: April 27
- The Northwest Chocolate Festival, Fine Cacao and Chocolate Institute

Film viewing and guest visit: May 4

-final multimedia essay due Wednesday, May 11 at 11:59pm