

Focus

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..Writing the Food Studies Movement

WITH A RESPONSE BY W. ALEX MCINTOSH OF
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ABSTRACT

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Is it time to establish a food studies canon? In recent years, the field of food studies has come into its own as a means to investigate critical questions about production and consumption. This commentary explores the written sources of two academics' interest in food, and the books that have sparked the food studies movement and today's food revolution. As a topic for readers' consideration, it asks whether food studies has progressed to a stage of development at which it is now possible to identify a core list of books that can be considered to define the field.

Food,
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&
Society

Keywords: food, food studies, food movement, food bibliography, food sociology

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Introduction

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Within my academic lifetime, the use of food as a means to examine critical questions about the causes and consequences of production and consumption has grown dramatically. Indeed, the growth of scholarly interest in food has been so rapid and extensive that the various approaches to such questions—historical, cultural, behavioral, biological and socioeconomic—are now often grouped under the rubric *food studies*. As such, food studies can be considered to constitute a new movement, not only as an academic discipline but also as a means to change society (Berg *et al.*, 2003).

Food studies has deep roots in foodways and other aspects of the humanities and social sciences. Nevertheless, it was only in 1996 that this collective term began to describe a legitimate field of academic study. That year, my department at New York University (NYU) recruited Amy Bentley as its first food studies professor and admitted its first undergraduate, masters, and doctoral students to food studies programs accredited by New York State.

How we were able to create programs under this title was a matter of fortuitous circumstances and a certain amount of preparation. The department, then known as Nutrition, Food, and Hotel Management, already offered courses in food and nutrition. The administrative transfer of its hotel programs to another school at NYU created a vacuum that new food programs could fill. A few years earlier, Julia Child had inspired development of the gastronomy master's program at Boston University. We thought we could do something similar but more academically focused at NYU. Because "studies" would be consistent with existing programs in such fields as Africana, cinema, French, gender and liberal studies, we were certain that the title "food studies" would work better at NYU.

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From the start, we considered food studies to encompass foodways, gastronomy and culinary history, as well as discipline-based approaches to investigating critical social questions about food production or consumption. Today, NYU food studies students can specialize in either food systems (production) or food culture (consumption).

Also from the start, this broad definition of food studies immediately raised questions about its scope, methods and content. To deal with such questions, our department's advisory committee suggested that we identify a food studies "canon"—a set of books that every food scholar should be expected to read, understand and use. In our innocence of the minefields of such a suggestion, we embarked on the project. For some months, we sent out questionnaires, collected suggestions, and struggled with the responses. At the end of this process, beyond *Sweetness and Power* (Mintz 1985), we could not agree on which books—or whose—should be in or out, and we abandoned the idea, some of us more reluctantly than others.

Now, more than a decade later, I wonder whether it is time to reconsider the notion of a common intellectual core. I suggest this on the basis of my own academic history as well as on how the field has progressed, how journalists and writers have used the themes of food studies for advocacy purposes, and how our food studies doctoral candidates have approached the problem of what they need to know. Let me begin this discussion with some remarks about my own experience.

Some Personal Reflections

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My personal interest in this field dates back to a time when nearly everyone considered food far too common and quotidian to be taken seriously as a field of study, let alone as an agent of social change. As a high school student, I was interested in food but knew only two options for studying it: agriculture and dietetics. A city girl, I did not understand the relevance of agriculture to important social questions, and it took years before I did. That left dietetics. I entered Berkeley to major in dietetics, lasted precisely one day (too much home economics), and fled into science.

Later, during my first university teaching job in the Biology Department at Brandeis University, I was assigned to teach an undergraduate nutrition course. It was like falling in love, and I have never looked back. At last I could return to food. That first course made it clear that it was only possible to understand why people eat the way they do if you also understand how food is produced. My mid-1970s class read *Food for People, Not for Profit* (Lerza and Jacobson 1973), a revelatory collection of short essays about agriculture, food, nutrition and health that was well ahead of its time. They read *Diet for a Small Planet* (Lappé 1971), the now classic book linking

health to plant-based agricultural systems. I also had them read two lengthy and stunningly prescient essays from the *New York Review of Books* by the late historian Geoffrey Barraclough: “The Great World Crisis” and “Wealth and Power: The Politics of Food and Oil” (Barraclough 1975a, 1975b). Both dealt with systemic problems in global policies related to the ways in which money, energy and food are interconnected.

I went on to teach clinical nutrition to medical students at the University of California School of Medicine in San Francisco and to work as a nutrition policy advisor in the federal government. I could not get back to food in any serious way until I came to NYU in 1988. Even then and with tenure, it was not easy to establish a non-science academic career based on food. Universities typically discouraged doctoral students and instructors from wasting time on anything so intellectually trivial. Never mind that *The Jungle*, Upton Sinclair’s muckraking account of the horrors of the Chicago stockyards, impelled Congress to enact food safety laws in 1906. That book appeared nearly a century ago. In the late 1980s, it seemed impossible to imagine that books about food could spark academic and popular social movements. But they have now done exactly that.

From my personal perspective, three books from quite separate genres—cooking, scholarship and journalism—revolutionized popular (and, therefore, academic) thinking about the way food is produced, consumed, and studied. These books not only influenced my own thinking, but also brought food into the mainstream of advocacy for social change. They opened doors for others—scholars as well as journalists and food writers—to examine the profound implications of the way food is used in modern society. All three of these books were best-sellers in their respective fields and are still widely used.

First on my list is *Mastering the Art of French Cooking* (Child *et al.* 1961). This “mere” cookbook completely changed my generation’s understanding of food. The pages of my own copy are yellowed with age and spattered with the results of early experiments with bouillabaisse (pretty terrific, if I remember correctly), soufflés (tricky but worth it) and Hollandaise (never mind). Late in 1991, a most reluctant Julia Child signed it for me the night I had dinner at her house in Cambridge. That event had been arranged by Nancy Harmon Jenkins under the fantastic misapprehension that if Julia met me, she might think better of nutritionists. This did not work. But, as Laura Shapiro (2007) makes clear in her splendid *Julia Child, Mastering* was a monumental work of research that transformed the entire cookbook genre from being viewed as trivially unimportant to occupying a position as a respected cultural indicator worthy of serious scholarly investigation.

Mastering was revolutionary in another way. It made many of us realize how impoverished we were with respect to foods that were readily available anywhere in France or Italy. Alice Waters’ insistence that Chez Panisse serve

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fresh, seasonal ingredients also served to expose the weaknesses of industrialized agriculture. The connection between the way food is produced and how it tastes on the table became the central theme of her cookbooks as well as the rationale for contemporary accounts of the Alice Waters phenomenon, such as *The United States of Arugula* (Kamp 2006) and *Alice Waters and Chez Panisse* (McNamee 2008).

The second book on my list is the consensus favorite, Sidney Mintz's *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History*. I bought a copy when it first came out in 1985. Mintz tells me it is now in its thirty-fifth printing. Then, I was teaching nutrition to medical students in the hope of convincing them that some knowledge of food might improve their ability to help patients. *Sweetness and Power* is an anthropologist's examination of sugar as a means to understand the development of slavery as an institution and the plight of the working class during the industrial revolution. This book sets a standard for how to use food to make complicated political and social issues interesting and accessible to scholarly audiences in many fields.

I credit the third book for kicking off the current frenzy of interest in food issues among the general public. This has to be *Fast Food Nation*, the journalist Eric Schlosser's exposé of the "dark side" of hamburgers and French fries (Schlosser 2001). His account turned masses of readers into food advocates eager to transform the current food system into something healthier for people, food animals and farm workers, as well as for the environment.

Food as a Social Movement

Along the way, such books encouraged new generations of writers—academic and not—to promote food advocacy. Here, I mention just a few examples. On the academic side, *Appetite for Change: How the Counterculture Took on the Food Industry* (Belasco 1989) establishes the historical basis of the food advocacy movement. *Stuffed and Starved* (Patel 2007) analyzes the causes and consequences of today's globalized food system as a basis for promoting food change. Although I must leave the assessment of their impact to others, I intended my own works—*Food Politics*, *Safe Food, What to Eat* and *Pet Food Politics*—to provide a research basis for advocacy for improvements in the quality and safety of food consumption and production.

As for the non-academic side, I continue to be astonished by the number and range of books about food issues produced each year, a phenomenon that itself deserves serious study. The extraordinary popularity of *Omnivore's Dilemma* (Pollan 2006) has made Pollan one of the two leading US advocates for food system reform, along with Alice Waters. Waters, for

example, surely deserves the ultimate credit for inspiring the newly-elected Obama administration to plant organic gardens on the grounds of the White House and US Department of Agriculture. Gardens may not address fundamental food system reforms, but their symbolic value is a powerful incentive to keep advocating for such reforms.

Mr Pollan appears as the leading narrator of three professionally produced, highly instructive and quite entertaining documentary films about food system issues released in 2009: *Food, Inc.*, *Fresh*, and a film based on one of his earlier books, *Botany of Desire*. These and other food documentaries, most notably *Future of Food*, *Our Daily Bread*, and the delightful *King Corn*, have the potential to reach masses of non-readers and are worth serious critical attention in their own right as instigators of food advocacy.

In a food sociology course that I taught with the sociologist Troy Duster, we asked whether food advocacy constituted a social movement. Although we saw little evidence of an organized movement in the traditional sense of those for civil rights, women's rights, or environmental protection, we were impressed by the number and range of mini-movements aimed at improving specific aspects of the health of people, farm animals and the environment. Table 1 lists some examples of these mini-movements and gives just one example of a book that informs the topic. Each of these movements is part of the long tradition of American grassroots democracy—of the people, by the people, for the people. Each constitutes a topic for further scholarly investigation.

TABLE 1. *Examples of Food Advocacy Mini-movements and Related Literature*

Food Advocacy Movement	Related Literature
<i>Production</i>	
Good, clean, fair food	Farm Aid, <i>A Song for America</i> (2005)
Slow Food	Carlo Petrini and Gigi Padovani, <i>Slow Food Revolution</i> (2006)
Farm animal welfare	Peter Singer and Jim Mason, <i>The Way We Eat</i> (2006)
Organic food	Samuel Fromartz, <i>Organic, Inc.</i> (2006)
Local food ("locavore")	Brian Halweil, <i>Eat Here</i> (2004)
Agricultural policy reform	Dan Imhoff, <i>Food Fight</i> (2007)
<i>Consumption</i>	
Community food security	Mark Winne, <i>Closing the Food Gap</i> (2008)
Anti-food marketing	Michele Simon, <i>Appetite for Profit</i> (2006)
Anti-obesity	Kelly Brownell, <i>Food Fight</i> (2004)
School food	Janet Poppendieck, <i>Free for All: Fixing School Food in America</i> (2010)

Food Studies as an Academic Movement

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When we started our food studies programs in 1996, we knew we were breaking new ground. We hoped others would follow. But we had no idea how rapidly the field would expand. The first sign was the publication of food encyclopedias, practically at yearly intervals starting in 1999: The *Oxford Companion to Food* (1999), the two-volume *Cambridge World History of Food* (2000), the three-volume *Encyclopedia of Food and Culture*, the two-volume *Oxford Encyclopedia of Food and Drink in America* (2004), and Praeger's *Critical Food Issues*, also in two volumes (2009). Next came the various series of books on food and culture from academic presses at the University of California, Columbia and the University of Illinois; these have greatly expanded opportunities to publish scholarly works in the field.

Suddenly, library collections of books about food have become viewed as treasures rather than dust collectors, at least at some institutions. William Cagle's catalog of the thousand or so rare international books on food and drink housed at Indiana University is an example of how appreciation of such collections has grown (Cagle, 1999).

In seeking ways to support research in our emergent food studies programs, we had another lucky break. The Fales Special Collections section of the NYU Library chose food studies as a new focus. Since 2003, the Fales has acquired more than 20,000 books about food and cooking and more than 5,000 pamphlets, and is actively engaged in collecting restaurant menus, food brochures, personal papers, oral histories and other such documents. Unlike most libraries at NYU, this one is open to any researcher by appointment.

Most gratifying has been the expansion of food studies into the academy in the United States and elsewhere. I have visited the programs at the University of Adelaide and the University of Gastronomy in Italy. In addition to NYU's food studies programs and the gastronomy program at Boston University, new programs, some formal and some relatively informal, have emerged at the New School in New York (general studies) and at Indiana University (anthropology). Others are under development in Minnesota, the University of California, Davis, and elsewhere. Dillard University in New Orleans has appointed food scholar Jessica Harris to the Ray Charles Chair at the new Institute for the Study of Culinary Cultures. Although I don't have data, I have plenty of anecdotal evidence that it is much easier for doctoral students in humanities and social sciences to develop food dissertation projects now than it was in 1996 when we started all this at NYU.

Doctoral Research at NYU: The Food Studies Reading List

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This brings us back to the question of a canon or, if you are among academics who object to this term, a core reading list. The mere idea raises questions that are difficult to address, not only about the works that are included or excluded, but also about level and depth of scholarship, core versus specialization, and the intended audience of the books under consideration.

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The NYU food studies doctoral program requires candidates to define a list of twenty books in each of three areas: core, methods, and specialization. Over the years, our four doctoral graduates and ten current students (as of the 2009–10 academic year) have attempted to define a core list of works that all of them ought to read. To prepare for their candidacy examinations, they must select a minimum of ten books from the core list. They may pick the remaining ten from that list or choose others. The appendix gives the current core list.

This list necessarily reflects the breadth of interests of NYU faculty as well as of the food scholars who routinely attend the department's Feast and Famine Colloquium, ongoing for more than a decade now. I am pleased to find my own work on our doctoral students' core list, but I suspect that such a list would look quite different at other institutions. I present this list as a starting point for discussion. Should such a list exist at all? If so, what process should be used to develop it? What criteria should be used for inclusion? What books would others nominate? How should such a list be organized? Should core readings be defined for specialty areas? If so, how? And, most critical, are such questions worth pursuing as food studies matures as a field? I look forward to hearing readers' responses as do the editors of *Food, Culture, and Society*.

And to end on another personal note: I am proud to have had the opportunity to contribute to the Food Studies Movement. Long may it flourish!

Acknowledgments

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Appendix: Core Readings for NYU Food Studies Doctoral Students' Candidacy Examination

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W.Alex McIntosh

Introduction

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I am grateful for the opportunity to share some thoughts about food studies, but I will do so in a general way. To begin with, I have come largely to praise Cesar not to bury him. I think the growth and development of food studies programs represents the health of our interdisciplinary efforts. The work of my colleagues in food studies has caused me to think far more broadly than when I began to call myself a “sociologist of nutrition.” I am now more likely to call myself a sociologist of food, but I hope I have transcended the confines of sociology in order to take the broader approach food studies offers.

My plan of action is to place food studies in a broader context of an intellectual movement towards cultural studies found in both the social sciences (and particularly sociology) and the humanities. As a food scholar, I feel a particular debt to my colleagues in the humanities for putting food on the map—or, if you will, as the first course on the main table. I have spent over 30 years endeavoring to create this kind of visibility and feel I have failed miserably. So again, thank you, colleagues.

The Cultural Turn

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The “cultural turn” (I am not using the original intention of this concept here) is a movement back towards the notion of the centrality of culture in society. At the same time, it has meant a new start with regard to the study of cultural artifacts such as literature. Some in this movement have taken a feminist stance while others have hewed towards postmodernism. With regard to the latter, this has meant a rejection of the standard categories used in the study of literature. Still others have taken their criticism from Marx and Gramsci.

Cultural studies stands for greater interdisciplinarity and food studies follows this line of thought. We now count as work in our field the full range of analyses that tell us more about the relationship between people and food, both culturally and socially. Many like me who teach some sort of food course find ourselves using work from not only our own disciplines but also from others as well—my syllabus contains the work of historians and American studies scholars, anthropologists, political scientists, English scholars, and so on. In addition, some of us cast a wider net into the worlds of agriculture and nutrition research in our work.

Culture Studies Begets Food Studies

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I believe it is no accident that food studies ends in “studies.” In fact, Marion mentions in her paper that as there were already “existing programs in such fields as Africana, cinema, French, gender and liberal studies” at NYU when a new direction in her department was under consideration. This can be traced to approximately 30 years ago when interest in and academic programs about culture began to blossom in the United States. (In a comment to this paper, Wesley Dean reminded me that cultural studies began even earlier in England, with E. P. Thompson’s work on food and culture in the everyday lives of commoners in the eighteenth century.) Cultural studies scholars distinguished themselves to an increasing degree from anthropology and sociology, the two social sciences most interested in cultural phenomenon. Some have argued further that cultural studies grew out of a reaction to several ideas prevalent at that time, including, among others, French structuralism and modernism (Ashley *et al.* 2004). Postmodernism is one of the drivers behind cultural studies; a second is the loss of agency represented by many social science perspectives on human behavior. Jeffrey Alexander has characterized cultural studies as “the use of their [the humanities] philosophical, literary, and historical approaches to the social construction of meaning” (Becker and McCall 1990: 4). Some have described cultural studies as a rejection of “the ‘canon’, the homogeneous ‘period,’ the formal properties of genre, the literary object as autonomous and self-contained” (Katz 1995: 1).

Cultural studies is described by Marshall (1998) as an area of academic interest, lying at the interface between the social sciences (notably sociology) and humanities (most obviously literature). It is principally concerned with the nature of mass culture and the workings of culture industries. Others would add that it also contains political goals. Thus, in 2009 the cultural studies program at Columbia College in Chicago describes its content as being best understood “as the *politically* committed, *theoretically* informed, *radically* self-reflexive, and historical-materialist analysis of culture processes and practices ... commitment to a more humane, more democratic society.”

I have examined the food studies programs I was able to locate on the web and they vary to some degree in their overall philosophy and in terms of the kinds of disciplines involved. This is not a bad thing; indeed, it offers students (and faculty) a choice of curricula to better suit their particular interests. Of course, this diversity does not aid consensus about a variety of issues across food studies. This will be evident when I suggest an expanded list of the “food studies” books and articles that I think my students should read.

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Food Studies: A Social Movement or an Intellectual Movement?

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Is food studies a social movement or merely an intellectual one? I use these terms with caution because intellectual movements have an important history. Most of you reading this come from a discipline with one or more intellectual heritages. Randall Collins (1998) has developed what he refers to as a “global theory of intellectual change.” He includes for example the Vienna Circle and the German Idealist Movement and describes these in terms of “sets of overlapping movements [which] have constituted a theory of ideas. Admittedly his examples have to do with philosophy but I would argue that most academic disciplines have their roots in one or more philosophical communities. He speaks of intellectual communities and I think that food studies can be described in these terms. He speaks of intellectual creativity and defines it as the combining of existing ideas. This is a fitting description for food studies, which combines theories and perspectives from multiple disciplines in the humanities and social sciences.

However, we still might “frame” food studies as a cultural social movement. It is clear that this movement is both about ideas (and teaching those ideas) as well as a political project. But, as in the case of many “new social movements,” it is clear that the goals are cultural as well as political and that the movement does not speak with one voice. Even traditional social movements, such as the US agrarian movements during the nineteenth century, used a multitude of frames held by groups promoting “agrarian fundamentalism,” “competitive capitalism,” and “producer frames” (Mooney and Hunt 1996).

I do not dispute the claim that certain individual efforts outside academe have stimulated interest in food to a wider public than would be the case with academic programs or publications. Thus, I agree that *Fast Food Nation* has made the general public aware of many of the ills of this industry. However, these more public efforts represent what Warren Belasco (1993; 1997) has documented in the form of food scares that often arise in times of discomforting social and cultural changes. We once again find ourselves confronting changes such as globalization and over-consumption (see Schor 1998). Globalization and outbreaks of food-borne illness have led to fears regarding the safety of the food supply and have fueled a desire to seek more local sources. Do people consider this a move back to simpler, safer times (which of course may be largely imagined)? Outbreaks of food-borne illness may appear more numerous today when in fact the appearance of greater frequency is due to improved reporting. Reports of an obesity epidemic and its links to “over-consumption” drive additional food fears.

Berg *et al.* (2003) suggest that multiple perspectives and methods can be drawn from the various schools of thought found in the disciplines that contribute to food studies. I agree fully and would like to mention a few

specific theoretical approaches I think are useful. For example, theories about social movements, particularly those that deal with so-called “new social movements” or that consider culture as an important feature of such movements, ought to be required reading for our students. Social construction and standpoint theories are two others. World systems theory and theories of globalization provide macro-level hypotheses about food production and consumption and should also be recommended. At a more micro-level, the household production model from economics and role-strain theory from sociology are useful means of theorizing household/family relationships.

The Great Books Issue

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What books may have triggered cultural studies scholars to turn their attention to food? I agree with Professor Nestle that Pierre Bourdieu’s *Distinction* would certainly play a major part, as would Sidney Mintz’s *Sweetness and Power* and Amartya Sen’s *Poverty and Famine*. Sociologists interested in food studies would probably add Ritzer’s various books on the McDonaldization of society (e.g. Ritzer 2003). None of this work existed when I began my own “food studies” odyssey forty years ago.

I have trouble getting my mind around the idea of there being only twenty books and articles that must be read. To begin with, I concur with almost every book on Marion’s list. I would, however, never recommend anything by Jared Diamond—I find many of his ideas derivative, yet unreferenced. In *Guns, Germs, and Steel* (Diamond 1999), he at least sidesteps this criticism by providing a list of recommended reading. Thus, anyone looking for good scholarship would be advised to read those books rather than his. In fact, anyone interested in arguments about the role of food in societal evolution would be advised to start with *Ecological-Evolutionary Theory: Principles and Applications* (Lenski 2005) and *Overshoot* (Catton 1980). If nothing else, Diamond provides a great example to students of how not to reference the work of others while using their ideas.

Having Bourdieu on the list is fine, but the most compelling evidence in his delineation of the cultural capital of the French class systems lies in his data on the arts, yet most of us are interested in his work with food. Given the lack of distinction in his tabular data, his claims about “distinctions” in meat selections demand scrutiny. And if Bourdieu can sit at the table, perhaps he should share dinner with a colleague or two (e.g. Foucault and Baudrillard). For example, John Coveney (2000) provides ample reason to make use of Foucault when considering the history of the nutrition sciences. In the *Economy of the Sign*, Goldman (1992) demonstrates the utility of Baudrillard’s approach (Baudrillard 1981) in his discussion of food

advertising, providing a wonderful dissection of the McDonald's "family-oriented" commercials of a decade ago.

I must admit that Eric Schlosser deserves credit for making the general public aware of the dark sides of fast food, but again his discussion of labor practices can be found to some extent in two books (books that began as ethnographies for dissertations) by Robin Leidner (*Fast Food, Fast Talk*, 1993) and Esther Reiter (*Making Fast Food*, 1991). In addition, he is hardly the first to raise issues regarding the healthfulness of fast food. Ann Hertzler, an early member of the Association for the Study of Food and Society and one of the first set of editors of this journal (then named *Journal of the Association for the Study of Food and Society*), published a paper on the healthfulness of such food in the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* (Hertzler and Frary 1992). Before this, Tim Lang (1992) raised questions about the high amount of sugar contained in milk shakes. I have a similar reaction to some of Michael Pollan's work: "Haven't I read this elsewhere?" He too should be credited with making a broader audience aware of changes in agriculture and their relationship to changes in food consumption, but I would like to have seen him cite work by social scientists and others who have raised questions about such issues much earlier than he (for similar concerns, see Guthman 2007). Bill Heffernan, Fred Buttel, Larry Busch, Bill Lacy, Tom Lyson and Gil Gillespie represent a small sample of those who have long drawn attention to the consequence of a changing agricultural sector.

In fact Marion's list pays little attention to the politics of food (other than her own excellent work in *Food Politics*) despite the wonderful collection of studies generated by Friedland *et al.* (1993), Jan Poppendieck (1986), and so on. And what about the great work on food chains by Harriet Friedman (1991)?

As a sociologist I can't help but wonder why the work of Jeff Sobal is absent from this list. His work on socioeconomic status and obesity (Sobal and Stunkard 1989) has been cited over 800 times. There should also be references to the role of the mass media in promoting food products on one hand and supporting, if not creating, food scares on the other. Marion's own *Food Politics* (Nestle 2002) and the work of Mary Story and Simone French (2004) are good starting points.

I was particularly surprised by the absence of the centrality of gender from this list. Granted some of the works list deal with gender, but except for Laura Shapiro's *Perfection Salad* (Shapiro 1986), there is nothing that makes gender its main focus. So I would nominate *Feeding the Family* (DeVault 1991) and *Food, Gender and Family* (Charles and Kerr 1988). The household division of labor is distinguished by food roles and conflict over food is a central form of family disagreements (Ann Murcott made us aware of this several decades ago). I also think that while the work on US ethnic groups

and their foods by Gabaccia (1998) and Diner (2001) belong on our list, they fail to capture the diversity of American food cultures. Marion's inclusion of *Que Vivian los Tamales!* (Pilcher 1998) is a step in the right direction. However, I would add the works of some of our colleagues. For example, *Building Houses out of Chicken Legs* (Psyche Williams-Forsen 2006) illustrates the role that slaves played in developing not only black cuisine but that of whites as well. Her work plays prominently in my sociology of food/nutrition courses as does *The Migrant's Table* (Ray 2004).

Anthropologists and sociologists have long distinguished societal types according to their principal means of making a living. These early stages involve distinctions in food production (see Lenski, 2005). Food is such an important factor for human survival that it dwarfs all other forms of production in earlier stages of human development. And speaking of stages of development, shouldn't some of the works of Marx and Wallerstein be on the list? Crosby's groundbreaking *The Columbian Exchange* (Crosby 2003) certainly gets the ball rolling, but it seems to me that a broader perspective is needed in which to position Crosby's work, which also includes the wonderful *Ecological Imperialism* (Crosby 1986).

The only economist to make the list is Sen, whose work on famine and income has changed the way I look at the world. But what about Gary S. Becker? His development of the "household production model" in the paper "A theory of the allocation of time" helped him win a Nobel Prize for Economics (see You 2008) and his model has been applied to children's nutrition. The recent book *Fat Economics* (Mazzocchi *et al.* 2009) does a nice job of illustrating economic aspects of food.

World systems theory and dependency theory are worthy approaches to the impact of powerful economic institutions on the ability to consume food by members of low-income countries, as demonstrated in *Free Markets and Food Riots* (Walton and Seddon 1994). And if the work of Walton and Seddon is mentioned, so should be the work of E. P. Thompson (1971), who develops the idea of a moral economy as a cultural and social phenomenon in the everyday lives of people. Thompson makes good use of this concept in his study of food riots in eighteenth-century England. Speaking of world systems theory, globalization needs greater representation on such a list.

Food Studies Programs

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I won't say much about these other than to echo Marion's point that there are a growing number of them. Using Google, I counted fifteen before the site began to give me more traditional nutrition and food science programs. A persistent theme in the descriptions of these programs is an interest in

sustainable food production and sustainable farming. In addition, some are tied to what sound like cultural studies. Thus the UC Davis description states:

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With the close guidance and supervision of a faculty committee, students in the program pursue interdisciplinary research in areas including studies of comparative and critical race, ecocriticism, fashion, queer theory, media and popular cultural representation, science and technology, Marxist theory, travel and tourism, food, physical and cognitive abilities, cultural geography, transnational culture and politics, globalization, religion, rhetoric, performance, and critical theory. (University of California at Davis 2008: 1)

Related to this, as Berg *et al.* (2003) state, there has been an explosion of books we can classify as food studies in nature; again I think this phenomenon can be traced back to the explosion of cultural studies books and journals. For example, the publisher that produces this very journal, Berg, appears to produce nothing but cultural studies products.

Is Food Itself a Social Movement?

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I think the answer lies in Marion's text. She describes a number of movements and refers to these as mini-movements, but I think the Slow Food Movement and the Sustainable Food Movement are full social movements. Each likely contains mini-movements made up of people, organizations, goals and values that differ in specifics but share perhaps more overarching goals and values. But this is a quibble. These movements overlap to a certain degree with the Food Studies Movement.

I end this discussion by referring the reader to my own list of books and articles (found in the appendix) I recommend to students.

Acknowledgments

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I greatly appreciate Wesley Dean's comments and suggestions, particularly about cultural studies and reminding me to give credit to E. P. Thompson's work on food, culture and food riots.

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Appendix: Recommended Readings

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Below I have listed some of the work I recommend to my students. The political, social and cultural history of agriculture is important subject matter. Much of this work has to do with labor conditions; others deal with the impact of large-scale agriculture on local communities. Note that I do not repeat works from Marion's list, but I would include most of them on my own.

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Food,
Culture
&
Society

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MOTHERS/MEALS/FAMILIES

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