INTA2803

Global Food Politics: Feeding Atlanta, Feeding the World

Mondays and Wednesdays, 1:35-2:55 pm Clough 323

Instructor: Barbara D. Lynch, barbara.lynch@inta.gatech.edu Office hours: Wednesday 3:15-4:30 pm, 116B Habersham

Introduction

This interdisciplinary honors program course will introduce students to our global food regime and to the cultural, social and political and social practices and policies that have shaped it. It is primarily a social science course, but we will also learn about the art and science of domestication, cultivation and pastoralism as it is practiced in different social and political environments. The course has two parallel components:

- (1) An historical introduction to our contemporary global food system with an emphasis on the politics of food production and distribution in the global south. Topics include domestication; land tenure and "traditional" farming systems; plantation agriculture; agricultural modernization, the Green Revolution and the gene revolution; the rise of global agribusiness; famines and food aid; sustainable agriculture and food movements in Europe and South America; fishing and fish farming; and livestock production.
- (2) Individual and group projects on Georgia's food regime. Students will learn about indigenous farming systems, ante-bellum plantation agriculture, fishing, and agribusiness in Georgia; food distribution in Atlanta; and local food movements. To the extent possible, we will meet with people engaged in food production and distribution in Georgia including representatives of Georgia Organics, Slow Food, urban agriculture, food vendors, and local farmers. The culmination of the course will be a workshop on Georgia's place in the global food system featuring experts selected by the class.

Learning objectives

In this course it is expected that students will

- 1. learn how the global food system works;
- 2. master the basic agroecological concepts needed to appreciate the importance of agrobiodiversity and the pastoral and agricultural practices that sustain it;
- 3. learn about Georgia's place in the world food system and its implications for food access in Atlanta neighborhoods, and local campaigns to improve food access;
- 4. learn about the institutions governing food distribution in developing countries and in the United States and about the role of food aid in international politics; and
- 5. hone their critical thinking, writing, organizational and public speaking skills through written and oral presentations.

Course Requirements

Varied class formats will offer opportunities for different kinds of participation (oral and written, individual and collaborative, large and small group), and students will be graded on both the quality and quantity of required contributions to the seminar.

Reading and discussion of readings (35 percent). Informed, active participation in seminar is a requirement. We will use readings to analyze the institutions, ideas, interests, and social movements that shape the global politics of food. During class I will rarely lecture. My role will be to make sure that class discussions

stay on track. Beyond that, the floor is yours. The more engaged you are, the more interesting the class will be. Read the assigned readings carefully; take notes; come prepared to discuss and to relate to your own experiences. Most required readings can be found on the web or in the resource on our T-square site. I have asked that you buy six books. If you use electronic versions of these books, I will ask that you jot down interesting passages or questions you may have about an author's account, noting page numbers so that those of us with hard copies can follow along.

Books to buy:

Carney, Judith and Richard N. Rosomoff. 2009. *In the Shadow of Slavery* Blatt, Harvey. 2008. *America's Food* Greenberg, Paul. 2010. *Four Fish: the Future of the Last Wild Food* Estabrook, Barry. 2011. *Tomatoland* Wright, Angus. 2005 [1990]. *The Death of Ramon Gonzalez, revised edition* Cullather, Nick. 2010. *The Hungry World*

Assignments on Georgia Agriculture (45 percent). No readings on Georgia's food production and distribution have been assigned. The collective task of the class will be to build a package of resources on this topic through a set of individual and group assignments. These assignments will parallel our discussion of global food politics. Some will involve direct observation, so you will need to get out into Atlanta's neighborhoods, supermarkets and markets to complete them. It is also expected that students will attend the Georgia Organics Conference in late February. The culmination of our Georgia work will be a student-organized panel on a topic to be chosen by the class. Depending upon the topic, the panel might include food producers and distributors, activists, extension agents, nutritionists, agronomists, and/or plant and animal breeders.

Comparative final paper (20 percent). A 10-page final paper, due May 1, will explore both the global and local dimensions of a contemporary food issue to be chosen by the student. Examples would include farmers' rights and the adoption of GMOs; competition for farmland; urban agriculture; the impacts of water pollution on in-shore fisheries; fair trade and sustainability initiatives; efforts to preserve agrobiodiversity; food movements in Europe and the US; water and agriculture. Papers should discuss the global dimensions of the issues that they have selected, discuss similarities and differences in local manifestations, identify responses to the issue in each case, and speculate about why responses differ or not. Papers that build on earlier Georgia assignments are welcome. Students must present their written research questions and tentative bibliographies to the class by March 25.

Academic Integrity

Students are encouraged to read widely and to work in collaboration with classmates. However, you must clearly differentiate your work from that of others. Complete and accurate representation of direct quotations and paraphrased materials is essential, including delineation of the materials used and documentation of sources. This applies both to printed and internet-based materials. Student conduct should comply with the Georgia Tech Honor Code. Any student found to violate the policy on plagiarism will receive a failing grade for the assignment and will be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the Code.

DISABILITY AND MEDICAL ACCOMMODATION

Attendance and full participation in class discussion is expected of all students. Students with disabilities or special medical needs should make an appointment at the beginning of the semester so that we can adapt the learning environment appropriately. Please tell us about any emergency medical information that we should know of, or if you need special arrangements in the event the building must be evacuated. Students who are absent for an extended period due to illness must provide information about the nature of the illness and make plans for completing all course requirements.

Course Calendar

Introduction

JANUARY 7: The World Food Regime

The intent of this introduction to our course is to help you think about the ways in which scholars and policy makers are thinking about food production and distribution, past and present. How do the ways in which we frame our analyses of food systems shape food policies, and ultimately rural and urban landscapes?

Required readings:

WED Friedmann, Harriet. 2000. What on earth is the modern world system? Foodgetting and territory in the modern era and beyond.

Cullather, Hungry World. Introduction, Ch 1

JANUARY 9, 14: Domestication and Farming Systems

This week's reading and discussion will introduce (1) processes of plant and animal domestication, (2) agrobiodiversity and (2) the ways in which diverse farming systems, many of which were highly knowledge-intensive and closely attuned to environmental conditions, contributed to agrobiodiversity. What made non-Western farming systems sustainable? In what ways were they fragile or lacking resilience? What kinds of relations do we see between farming systems and political systems? Why have colonial and modern nation-states been so critical of shifting cultivation and pastoral nomadism?

Required readings:

MON Estabrook, Tomatoland. Roots

Carney, Judith. In the Shadow of Slavery, Chapters 1-3

Kingsbury, Noel. Hybrid. Chapter 2: Landraces

WED New York Times. 10/19/2012

Carney, Shadow of Slavery, Chapters 4,5,7,10

Related works for avid readers:

Mann, Charles. *1493: Uncovering the New World Columbus Created*, Chapters 5,6 Klinkenborg, Verlyn. 2012. Did farmers of the past know more than we do? *N Y Times*. Nov 3 Oldfield, Margery and Janis Alcorn. 1987. Conservation of traditional agroecosystems. *Bioscience 37* (3): 199-208 Brush, Stephen. *Farmers' Bounty*. Ch 2

Georgia Assignment I (INDIVIDUAL): "Traditional" farming systems in the Southeast. Write a 2-page (12 pt double spaced, 1 inch margins) review of the literature on *either* pre-Columbian farming systems or Afro-American provisioning grounds in what is now the Southeastern U.S. Your essay should indicate what the archaeological record tells us about how farming systems evolved in the region, when particular crops were domesticated, and about external influences (notably from Mesoamerica, Africa and Europe) on local farming systems. Your essay may refer to animal as well as plant domestication.

As you write, pay attention to organization. Does your essay begin with an introductory paragraph? Does it end with a conclusion? Does each paragraph begin with an introductory sentence? Do all sentences in a paragraph relate to one another? Check your grammar, spelling and punctuation as well. Lastly, please make sure that you are conforming to the Institute's ethical guidelines on citation.

PRODUCTION

JANUARY 16, 23: Land Tenure and Land-Labor Relationships

Modes and relations of agricultural production vary, but historically attention has focused on large, often unproductive holdings or latifundia on the one hand and rural landlessness and near-landlessness on the other. What were the impacts of the "latifundia-minifundia" pattern of land tenure? Why did this pattern become the focus of agrarian reform? What kinds of land-labor relationships have accompanied different land tenure arrangements? How have the costs and "benefits" of diverse land-labor relationships--slavery, contract labor, sharecropping, collective farms, coops, community and individual tenure--been distributed across national, class, ethnic and gender lines?

Required readings:

MON Scott, James. *Moral Economy of the Peasant.* Chapter 2. Paige, Jeffery. *Agrarian Revolution*. Chapter 3. Peru: hacienda and plantation

WED Watts, Michael. Life under contract: contract farming, agrarian restructuring and flexible accumulation.

Blatt. Chapter 1

Related works:

Scott, James. Seeing Like a State. Chapter 8, Taming Nature. Geertz, Clifford. Agricultural Involution
Mayer, Enrique. Ugly Stories of the Peruvian Agrarian Reform
Boserup, Esther. The Conditions of Agricultural Growth

JANUARY 28,30: The rise and spread of plantation agriculture

Plantations are *latifundia* devoted to the monocultural production of export crops—sugar, tea, rubber, bananas, hennequin. In many ways plantations were the vanguard of agricultural modernization. What kinds of land labor relationships characterized plantations; how and why did these change over time? What were the destinations of plantation produce? What kinds of structures emerged to guarantee an uninterrupted flow of plantation products to urban and industrial consumers in Europe and North America?

Required readings:

MON Carney, Chapters 6,8
Mintz, Sidney. Sweetness and Power. Chapter 2

WED Group presentations

Related readings:

Ayala, Cesar. *American Sugar Kingdom*. Benitez-Rojo, Antonio. *The Repeating Island* Lemoine, Maurice. *Bitter Sugar* Plant, Roger. *Sugar and Modern Slavery*

Georgia Assignment II (GROUP): Land-labor relationships in Georgia. Each student should prepare a 2-3 page (double-spaced) essay on one aspect of the group's topic. Each group should select a spokesperson to present findings for the group in a roundtable to take place January 30.

Group A. Plantation agriculture in colonial and antebellum Georgia. Compare 18th and 19th c. plantation agriculture in Georgia with that in one of the following countries: Malaysia, Jamaica, Brazil, Haiti, Cuba, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, the Canary Islands.

Group B. Land tenure and land-labor relationships during after abolition. Compare patterns that emerged in Georgia with those described by historian Rebecca Scott in her work on Louisiana, Cuba and Brazil.¹

Group C. Land tenure and land-labor relationships in the late 20th and 21st centuries. Are there noticeable regional differences in land tenure in different parts of the state? Is information on farm size available? Do farmers cultivate their own land? Did the Great Migration reshape land-labor relationships in 20th century Georgia?

FEBRUARY 4, 6: Agricultural modernization I: agriculture as the engine of economic growth.

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had saw industrialization of the plantation agriculture, a growing emphasis on scientific plant and livestock breeding in Europe, the enclosure acts in Great Britain, and the introduction of farm machinery, the Homestead Act and the rise of the land grant university system in the U.S. Thomas Malthus predicted that while the world's population would grow exponentially, its food supply would only grow arithmetically. Was agricultural modernization a response to Malthusian predictions? To what extent were modernization projects undertaken with objectives other than food security?

Required readings:

MON Death of Ramon Gonzalez, Chapters 1-3 Hungry World, Chapters 1,2

WED Group presentations

Georgia Assignment III: Written outlines and brief presentations on experiment stations, extension and their impacts on Georgia Agriculture.

Group A. Review web sites and web based publications on Georgia's experiment stations. What kind of research is being done at the stations and on what crops are being studied. Reading between the lines, who do you see as the audience for experiments? What makes a good farmer? An unproductive farmer?

Group B. Describe the structure of Georgia's extension system. What do extension agents do? With whom do they work? Do some farmers get more attention than others from the extension system? Can you tell from extension websites and publications what the system views as a good farmer? A good farm family?

FEBRUARY 11, 13. Agricultural Modernization II—The Green Revolution

The Green Revolution, which began in Mexico as a project of the Rockefeller Foundation, was a technological approach to agricultural improvement. A hero of the revolution was plant breeder Norman Borlaug who developed short-stemmed wheat. In the 1960s, American foundations, American land grant colleges and USAID encouraged the spread of Green Revolution practices to India, the Philippines and other countries. What did adoption of the new high-yielding varieties require? Were the achievements of the Green Revolution due to technology or to political and social factors? Did the Revolution have negative as well as positive impacts? How did it change the nature of agriculture in the Global South?

¹ See R. Scott, Defining the Boundaries of Freedom in the World of Cane. American Historical Review 99 (Feb 1994): 70-102; Exploring the Meaning of Freedom: Postemancipation Societies in Comparative Perspective. Hispanic American Historical Review 68 (Aug 1988): 407-428; Comparing Emancipations. Journal of Social History 20 (Spr 1987): 565-584; and Explaining Abolition: Contradiction, Adaptation and Challenge in Cuban Slave Society, 1860-1886. Comparative Studies in Society and History 26 (Jan 1984): 83-111.

Required readings:

MON Death of Ramon Gonzalez. Ch 6, 7, 9

Hungry World. Ch 2

WED Kingsbury, Noel. Hybrid. Chapter 12, The Green Revolution—Can Plant

Breeding Save the World.

Wharton, Clifton. 1969 The Green Revolution: cornucopia or Pandora's box? Foreign Affairs (April).

Hungry World, Chapter 6

Related works:

Yapa, Lakshman. 1993. What are improved seeds? An epistemology of the Green Revolution. Economic Geography 69 (3): 254-273

FEBRUARY 18,20. Ag modernization III— The Gene Revolution, plant patenting and agribusiness consolidation

The third wave of agricultural modernization was marked by the growth of the biotech sector and production of genetically modified organisms (GMOs), by the increasing dominance of large agribusiness enterprises, is the globalization of agricultural governance by the WTO. What have been the implications of this wave of modernization for small farmers, consumers, and agroecosystems? What have been its implications for household and national food security?

Required readings:

MON Ploeg, Jan Douwe van der. 2010. The food crisis, industrialized farming and the Imperial Regime. Journal of Agrarian Change 10 (1) 98–106.

Kloppenburg, Jack. Still the seed: plant biotechnology in the twenty-first century. In *First the Seed, 2nd edition*. Chapter 11:

WED *Tomatoland.* Matters of Taste *America's Food.* Chapters 5, 10

Related works:

McMichael, Philip. 2009. A food regime analysis of the 'world food crisis.' Agriculture and Human Values 26: 281-295

Brush, Stephen. Farmer's Bounty. Chapter 10

Kingsbury, Hybrid. Chapter 14

Wield, David et al. 2010. Issues in the political economy of agricultural biotechnology. *Journal of Agrarian Change 10* (3): 342–366.

Georgia Assignment IV: Attend and write a 1-page briefing memo on **Georgia Organics Conference, Feb 22, 23.** Your memo should briefly describe the range of panels and events, attendance, nature of the audience. Did you find some panels or presentations particularly interesting? Which ones? How did they contribute to your understanding of either local or global food issues? Did the conference give you any ideas about emerging food issues? For our final panel?

FEBRUARY 25, 27: Livestock: nomads, feedlots and meat packing plants

In much of the world, raising larger domesticated animals from reindeer to sheep and cattle has involved transhumance—movement from summer to winter pastures--in some cases, crossing national borders. More recently, animals are spending more time CAFOs or confined feeding operations, raising ethical questions about the treatment of animals. Slaughtering, too, has moved from the farmstead and local abattoirs to the

meatpacking plants that we know today. What are the political forces that have contributed to this consolidation? With what implications for the environment? For employment?

Required readings:

MON Shadow of Slavery, Ch 9 America's Food. Ch 6

Dauvergne, Peter. The Shadows of Consumption. Section IV: Beef.

WED Discussion of meat production in the American South

Related works:

America's Food. Ch 7

Brighter Green. Skillful Means: The Challenges of China's Encounter with Factory

Farming. (www.brightergreen.org)

Fast Food Nation

Film: What's for Dinner (brightergreen)

Georgia Assignment V (Group 1). The social and environmental impacts of CAFOs and meat packing in the Southeastern US. Using the case of a single CAFO or slaughterhouse, tell us what modernization of meat production has meant for the areas in which they are located. What are the implications for community life, for employment, and for environmental quality?

MARCH 4,6: Fish

In the late twentieth century, conventional wisdom held that we could rely on limitless ocean resources to meet our food needs. More recently, however, the sustainability of the global fishing industry has been questioned. Three responses to declining fish stocks have been (1) increasing emphasis on aquaculture, (2) attempts to control overfishing through national and transnational regulatory measures, and (3) growing interest in what were previously seen as "trash fish." What factors have affected marine resource sustainability, what kinds of governance measures can help to reverse alarming trends, what kinds of biological efforts have succeeded in restoring fish and marine animal populations. Is sustainable management of marine resources possible?

Required readings:

MON Greenberg. Four Fish. Introduction, sections on sea bass and tuna, conclusions, epilogue. America's Food. Chapter 8

WED Georgia Fisheries discussion

Related works:

Duarte, Carlos et al. 2009. Will the oceans help feed humanity? Bioscience 59: 967-976 Pikitch, Ellen. 2012. The Risks of Overfishing. Science 338 (26 October): 474-476

Georgia Assignment V (Group 2). Briefing memo on the state of Georgia's fisheries. Discuss the threats to their sustainability, the likelihood of continuing production, and policy interventions designed to enhance long-term sustainability. Are the policies working?

DISTRIBUTION AND CONSUMPTION

MARCH 11, 13 Famine and the politics of food aid.

Famine is often seen in Malthusian terms or attributed to weather events. A 1891 report by Britain's colonial government concluded that while the poorest Indians were most affected by famine, if relief measures were to prevent their deaths, they would continue to breed, making future famines more likely. In contrast, scholars now see famines as outcomes of political choices. Famine became a potent justification for food aid to

developing countries after World War II. To what extent have international food aid programs addressed the fundamental causes of famine? What other factors have shaped food assistance policies and programs?

Required readings.

MON Sen, Amartya. *Poverty and Famines*. Ch 4 Cullather, *Hungry World*. Ch 3, 5

WED Hungry World. Ch 7-9

Related works:

Woodham-Smith, Cecil *The Great Hunger: Ireland: 1845-1849* Yang Jisheng. *Tombstone: The Great Chinese Famine, 1958-196* Sen, *Poverty and Famines,* Chapters 6-9 Mukerjee, Madhusree. *Churchill's Secret War* Snyder, Timothy. *Bloodlands.* Chapter 1: The Soviet Famines

MARCH 17-22 SPRING BREAK

MARCH 25,27: Feeding cities: markets and supermarkets

An uninterrupted flow of affordable food is essential to maintaining urban peace. Many cities grew up around markets; others established wholesale markets on the urban edge; still others absorbed market towns that were once removed from the urban area. How do markets work? Why have so many cities moved markets out of the center? How have systems for provisioning cities changed since the mid-20th century?

Required readings:

MON Zola, Emile. The Belly of Paris, pp. 24-26; 90-96; 120-122; 156-160; 162-68.

Bestor, Ted. Visible hands: auctions and institutional integration in the Tsukiji Wholesale Fish Market, Tokyo. Center on Japanese Economy and Business, Columbia University. Working Paper 63

WED Patel, Raj. *Stuffed and Starved.* Chapter 8. Checking out of Supermarkets Gottlieb, Robert and Anupama Joshi. *Food Justice*. Chapter 2

Related works:

Bestor, Theodore. Tsukiji: The Fish Market at the Center of the World Food Chain Workers Alliance. The Hands that Feed Us.

Assignment VI: Food Access in Atlanta. Each group will compile a set of 3-page briefing memos and come prepared to discuss them in class.

Group A: Trace the origins of meat and fresh produce in Atlanta supermarkets. How can you tell where these products come from? Are some markets better than others about giving you this information?

Group B: Map supermarket locations in Metro Atlanta, which neighborhoods have best access to supermarkets? The worst? Visit a neighborhood with poor supermarket access. What are the alternatives?

Group C: Compare supermarket food offerings and prices in one wealthy neighborhood and in one poor neighborhood in Metro Atlanta. Do some have a wider selection of fresh fruits and vegetables? Junk food? Organic or fair trade products? Are these items placed differently in different markets?

THE NEW FOOD POLITICS

APRIL 1, 3 Food policy in an era of globalization

International agricultural policies have shifted markedly since the 1960s when food policies emphasized the role of agriculture as an engine of national economic growth, food security, food as a cold war weapon, and integrated rural development, which was intended to stem migration from the countryside to cities. How do contemporary policies differ? To what extent are these policies a reflection of a more globalized economy or neoliberal ideology? To what extent do they respond to new concerns about food security at a time when the supply of available arable land is diminishing?

Required readings:

MON Hungry World Chapter 10
Clapp, Jennifer. 2004. The Political Ecology of Genetically Modified Food Aid

WED World Bank. World Development Report 2008: Agriculture for Development. Overview Oya, Carlos. 2009. The World Development Report 2008: Inconsistencies, silences, and the myth of win-win scenarios. J. Peasant Studies 36 (3): 593-601

Assignment VI: Food Movements in Metro Atlanta (CLASS PROJECT). Organize panel with representatives from Georgia Organics, CSAs, Community Gardens, Sevananda and/or other "foodie" organizations. You might want to include restaurants and retailers as well as NGO representatives.

APRIL 8, 10: Land grabs, food security and food sovereignty in the 21st Century

Walden Bello and other commentators see the world as engaged in a series of battles for control over the world's food supply in an era of food crisis. Food sovereignty has become a growing concern for many in the nations of the global south as international investors are adding farmland to their portfolios. Is there a clearcut relationship between globalization of food markets, industrial concentration and food security? Between food security and food sovereignty? Why are so many scholars and activists concerned about "land grabs?" Is foreign ownership of farmland a positive or a negative development? Is it a new problem?

Required readings:

MON Bello, Walden and Mara Baviera. 2009. Food Wars. *Monthly Review*, Jul-Aug Patel, Raj. 2009. Grassroots voices: What does food sovereignty look like? *J. Peasant Studies 36* (3): 663-706

WED Mann, Howard and Carin Smaller. 2010. Foreign land purchases for agriculture: what impact on sustainable development? UN Sustainable Development Innovation Briefs. Issue 8 (Jan). Deininger, Klaus et al. 2010 Rising Global Interest in Farmland. World Bank. Overview

Related works:

Hall, Derek. 2011. Land grabs, land control, and Southeast Asian crop booms. *J. Peasant Studies* 38 (4): 837-857

De Schutter, Olivier. 2011. How not to think of land-grabbing. J. Peasant Studies 38(2): 249-79

APRIL 15, 17 Producer Movements: the MST and the Coalition of Immokalee Workers

One response to the global concentration of food production has come from rural workers. Of these, the most celebrated is the MST, the Brazilian movement of landless rural workers. In the US, farmworker movements have been heavily influenced by the Latin American experience. What do the Brazilian and US movements have in common? Where do they differ? How are they changing global agricultural landscapes? While unionization was a goal in the 1960s and 1970s, today's movement is more complex. Why don't the tactics

developed by Cesar Chavez in California work in on Florida's tomato farms? What tactics has the Coalition of Immokalee Workers to improve farmworker conditions, and how do these reflect recent changes in the global food system?

Required readings:

MON Holt-Giménez, Eric and Annie Shattuck. 2011. Food crises, food regimes and food movements: rumblings of reform or tides of transformation? *Journal of Peasant Studies 38* (1): 109-144 Wright, Angus. The origins of the Brazilian movement of landless rural workers. (unpublished ms).

WED Estabrook, Barry. Tomatoland. Pp. 35-138

Related works:

Wittman, Hannah. Reframing agrarian citizenship: land. *Journal of Rural Studies 25*: 120-130 Bowe, John. 2003. NOBODIES: Does slavery exist in America? *New Yorker* (April 21)

APRIL 22, 24 Consumer movements: locavores, vegans and foodies

As farm workers demand just wages and secure access to land, consumers worry about the origins and quality of the foods they eat. They reveal their preferences in choices to eat organic, fair trade or local products; join CSAs; demand new forms of food labeling; raise their own chickens; and shop at farmers' markets. New alliances of growers and consumers are emerging. Slow Food, a global NGO with Italian roots, is the preeminent example. The questions we will ask of the readings and of our panelists have to do with emerging issues, the bases for coalition building, obstacles encountered in the coalition building process, and the achievements of movement organizations globally and here in Atlanta. What do the movement organizations see as the tasks that lie before them?

Required readings:

MON Petrini, Carlo. *Slow Food*. Slow Food Manifesto and Chapter 1 Estabrook, *Tomatoland*. Tomatoman

WED Food Movements in Metro Atlanta: Panel Presentation

WEDNESDAY, MAY 1: Final papers due