

Western University
Department of English and Writing Studies
English 9185B: Early Modern Food from Shakespeare to Milton
Winter 2022

Western University is located on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton Nations, on lands connected with the London Township and Sombra Treaties of 1796 and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum.

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Course Location: UC 3415

Course Day/Time: Thursdays 9:30-12:30

Course Description

Food is part of our everyday lives, but how do representations of food and food practices in literature illuminate political, cultural, social, and ecological attitudes, choices, practices, and relationships? This class opens up the rich and expansive field of food studies through the lens of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. We'll take a new look at familiar texts, such as Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*, with its final scene of unwitting cannibalism, and Milton's *Paradise Lost*, with its depiction of a world destroyed by an act of eating. But we'll also consider lesser-known material, such as Margaret Cavendish's *Poems and Fancies*, in which death is likened to a cook, and Thomas Deloney's *Jack of Newbury*, in which hospitality and commensality are central to a weaver's rise to fame. We'll also examine the recipe book—a genre central to early modern food studies—to discuss theories and practices of cookery; we'll try our hands at historical cooking; and we'll dive into archival research at the Western Archives.

Course Objectives

Learn about the field of early modern food studies

Engage critically and creatively with canonical and non-canonical literature through discussion, writing, research, and practice

Become acquainted with archival research

Develop critical analysis through both academic (written and oral) and personal/experiential perspectives

Communicate with clarity, respect, and care in class discussions and written work

Course Ethos

Our class will honour the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion. We will use each other's preferred and chosen names and pronouns; we will engage in respectful and generous conversation with each other; we will avoid language that is hurtful, violent, or exclusive. We will also acknowledge that we may make mistakes, and that learning from each other and questioning ourselves is part of the EDI process.

Required Texts

Available at the bookstore

Thomas Deloney, *Jack of Newbury*, Broadview Press.

Robert Greene, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, University of Nebraska Press.

John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Penguin.

William Shakespeare, *Titus Andronicus*, Simon and Schuster (Folger Shakespeare Library).

Any edition of Milton or Shakespeare may be used.

Secondary and selected primary readings available on OWL or EEBO (Early English Books Online).

NOTE: I've downloaded EEBO texts to OWL for you (these will be listed as OWL/EEBO). I'd encourage you to explore EEBO, nonetheless.

Evaluation

Participation: 15%

Seminar: 20%

Secondary source evaluation 10%

Cooking mini-paper 15%

Archives worksheet 5%

Proposal 5%

Final paper: 30%

See full syllabus on OWL.