

Whither the Pineapple? World History on Students' Plates

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FOOD IS PERFECTLY POSITIONED to link students' lives to the deep and broad historical forces around them. Like everybody else, students procure and consume food on a daily basis, use it to mark special occasions, share it with friends, enjoy or dispute it with families, all perhaps without ever considering its potential for historical analysis. Quotidian, embodied, and affective, food is a central part of our lived experiences.¹ It also, of course, has a history. The individual ingredients themselves, as well as the customs of obtaining, preparing, and consuming foods—customs collectively known as “foodways”—are traceable through the human past. This traceability is teachable, and the pedagogical possibilities of food have not gone unnoticed. Food history and food studies more broadly are becoming increasingly prominent in post-secondary education.² Specific cases have been made for using food to teach about the histories of communities or ethnic groups,³ enhance cultural understandings in language studies,⁴ and attract visitors to public history sites.⁵

The pedagogical example that we are describing here uses a lesson on food history to help students understand the significance of early modern contact.⁶ The “Columbian Exchange” refers to the

transfer of plants, animals, and microbes across the Atlantic—and, later, around the globe—in the wake of Christopher Columbus’ voyages at the end of the fifteenth century. In the years since Alfred Crosby first coined the term in 1972, historians and ecologists have produced a large body of research showing how the Columbian Exchange was transformative to ecologies and cultures.⁷ We use this as a central topic in our “Worlds Colliding” course, which explores early modern contact both historically and ecologically. We have found that a particularly effective introduction to the early years of the Columbian Exchange can be found on the students’ plates.

The Lesson: “Whither the Pineapple?”

The “Worlds Colliding” course is an undergraduate seminar at the University of Toronto Mississauga, a large public university in Canada. It is taught by two faculty members: one an ecologist whose appointment is in the Department of Biology, the other a historian whose appointment is in the Department of Historical Studies. We began teaching the course in 2019 as “UTM290: Launching Your Research: Across the Atlantic and Back.” It was one of a series of courses administered by the Centre for Student Engagement. Students were mostly in the second or third year of their undergraduate degrees, and they needed to apply for the course after having completed one of several first-year seminars designed for students arriving with academic scholarships. They were, therefore, a select group and specializing in a very wide variety of subjects ranging from mathematics to forensic science to English literature. As of 2022, the course moved into the biology and historical studies departments as a joint course between the two. It was relisted as “JBH471: Worlds Colliding: The History and Ecology of Exploration, Contact, and Exchange,” a fourth-year course that students in biology can count as a biology credit, and that students in history can count as a history credit. Enrollment is by application and capped at twenty. The course runs as a discussion-based seminar, meeting for two hours each week with short lectures to introduce topics followed by both individual and group activities to consolidate ideas.

The course examines contact in world history through both an ecological and a historical lens. As we teach it, it focuses especially on the early years of Trans-Atlantic contact on the island of

Hispaniola, with consideration also given to the ecological legacies of that contact today. We designed the course with four goals:

1. Understand the basic outlines of how ecologies and societies changed as a result of the “Columbian Exchange.”
2. Engage with current debates and uncertainties in the fields of ecology and history.
3. Make use of primary and secondary sources to interpret the past, and make use of records of the past to understand the present.
4. Develop a sense of stewardship for the past, a sense of responsibility for our role in the present, and an ethical engagement with the politics of historical memory and environmental impact.

Correspondingly, our learning objectives for the course are that students should be able to:

1. describe and analyze the significance of people and events that shaped exploration, contact, and exchange in the early modern world;
2. interpret evidence from multiple perspectives;
3. read primary and secondary sources with a sympathetic yet critical eye; and
4. create and present a clear and persuasive research project.

All the readings and discussions in the course integrate history with ecology. As one example, when the students read a historical primary source on what crops the Spanish tried planting during their first years on Hispaniola, they think about the ecological consequences of introducing new organisms. As another example, when the students read papers on restoration ecology, they consider how historical evidence can be used in determining past ecological states. They also critique the colonial logic underlying a presumption that pre-Columbian ecologies were “natural” in an overly simplistic sense that either excludes the presence of humans or their interactions with the environment. The overall organization for the first part of the course is chronological, starting in the mid-fifteenth century and concluding around the time of the Haitian Revolution. The second part of the course turns more to the ecological consequences of early modern historical developments.

JBH471 Food Table

Choose a day between now and our first day of class. Then fill out Column A of this food table with all the foods that you eat on that day. When a food contains more than one ingredient, please list not just the finished product but, insofar as possible, all of the ingredients. For example, if you have black coffee, you can list just “coffee”; if you have tomato sauce from a jar, list all of the ingredients like this: “tomato sauce, containing tomatoes, water, onions, red bell peppers, basil, salt, olive oil, apple cider vinegar, concentrated lemon juice, jalapeño peppers.”

Leave Columns B-E blank for now, and we’ll discuss what to do with them in class.

A. Foods Consumed in a Day	B.	C.	D.	E.

Figure 1: Food Table handout sent to students before the start of semester.

- What do you call this?
- If you know a language other than English, what do you call it in that language?


A photograph of two pineapples. The one on the left is whole, showing its characteristic diamond-patterned brown and yellow skin and a crown of green spiky leaves. The one on the right is cut in half, revealing the bright yellow, segmented flesh and the central core.

Figure 2: Lecture slide to stimulate discussion.

Step 1: Before the Course Begins

Prior to our first meeting of the semester, we send a message to the students instructing them to keep track of everything they eat during a single day. We provide a “Food Table” handout (**Figure 1**) and ask the students to fill in the first column with a list of the foods they have consumed over the course of the day. In making the list, the students should include not just the finished products of what they have eaten (e.g., “a bagel with cream cheese”), but, insofar as possible, all the individual ingredients of each dish (e.g., “water, sugar, oil, yeast, egg, honey, salt, wheat flour, sesame seeds; milk, salt, carob bean gum, cheese culture”). The students are asked to bring the Food Table to our first meeting with the first column completed, and are also told that we will talk about the remaining columns on the first day of class.

Step 2: What’s in a Name?

Following introductions of instructors and students, our first activity on the first day of class is “Whither the Pineapple?” We begin this activity by showing students a picture of a pineapple and asking them what this food is called in English and in any other languages they speak (**Figure 2**). The students at our university know many languages, so the list of words can become quite long. Because we are unable to predict exactly which languages the students in any given session of our course will speak, or which

Whither the Pineapple?	
• Amharic: አናናስ (ānanasi)	• Irish: anann
• Arabic: أناناس ('ananas)	• Nahuatl: matzatl
• Basque: anana	• Korean: 파인애플 (pain-aepeul)
• Chinese: 菠蘿 (Bōluó)	• Russian: ананас (ananas)
• French: ananas	• Spanish: piña
• German: Ananas	• Swahili: mananasi
• Hindi: अनानास (anaanaas)	• Tamil: அன்னாசி (Anṇāci)
• Icelandic: ananas	• Turkish: Ananas

Figure 3: Words for “pineapple” in various languages.

they are willing to share, we also compile a list of words for this fruit in different languages ahead of time to show during the lesson (**Figure 3**). We ask the students to consider the lists of words in different languages and look for patterns. They quickly note that most languages seem to share similar or even identical words for the fruit, and that these words are very different from the English name. Students usually ask why the English word is so unlike most other languages. We show them the online entry for “pineapple” in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, and point to the word’s etymology (**Figure 4**). This entry explains the origin of the word in English and its relation to the word “pinecone.” For information on why the English name took a different route from most languages, we turn to John Ayto’s *The Diner’s Dictionary* (2012):

When first brought back to Europe from tropical America..., pineapples were called *ananas*, after *anānā*, the name for the fruit in the Guarani language of Bolivia and southern Brazil. The term has stuck in most European languages, but English soon abandoned it. In England, people were quick to notice a resemblance between the exotic and delicious ananas and the humble pinecone, which from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries was known as a *pineapple*, and so the fruit inherited the pinecone’s name. Early on it was also known simply as the *pine*; John Evelyn notes in his *Diary* for 9 August 1661: ‘The famous Queen Pine brought from Barbados...the first that were ever seen in England were those sent to Cromwell four years since.’⁸



Figure 4: Screenshot of entry for “pineapple” in the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

We ask the students how this fruit and the words we use when naming it are connected to the main theme of the course—that is, the history and ecology of exploration, conquest, and exchange. Their answers coalesce into two main areas: efforts to integrate new things into old systems, and an interest in the exotic and the intriguing. Both areas, we tell them, will be further discussed throughout the semester.

Step 3: Historicizing the Pineapple

We deliver a brief illustrated lecture on the pineapple’s history, with a focus on the early modern period. This lecture explains that the pineapple has long been cultivated by people in parts of South America and the Caribbean, as is suggested by the Guaraní name; that Christopher Columbus first tasted the pineapple in 1493 and, confounding his uncertainty about the plant’s appearance with confusion about where in the world he was, called it “*piña de Indes*” (Figure 5); that Europeans in the Americas and in Europe quickly decided that they liked the flavor very much and the fruit came to

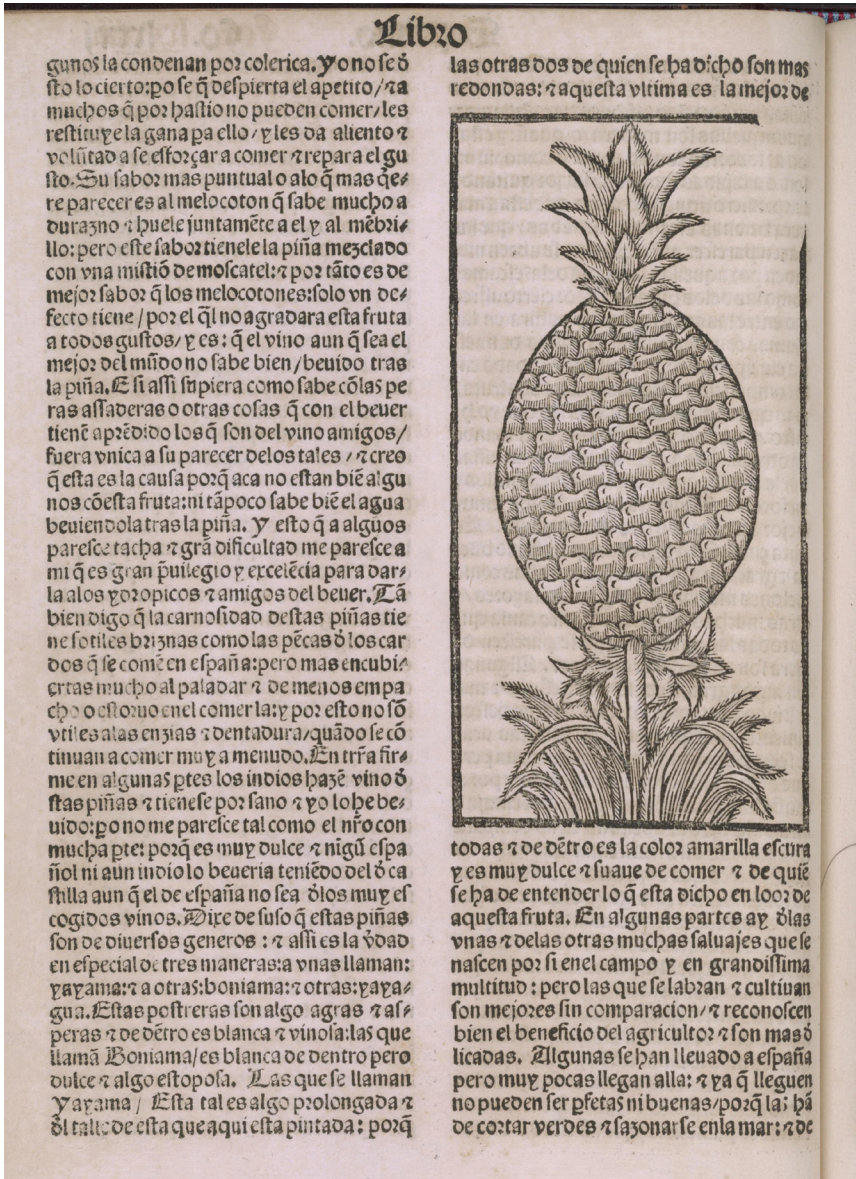


Figure 5: Illustration and description of “la piña” from Fernández De Oviedo Y Valdés, Gonzalo, and Juan Cromberger, *La Historia General delas Indias: Con Priuilegio Imperial* (1535). Library of Congress, Rare Book and Special Collections Division, <<https://www.loc.gov/item/04006809/>>. Image 166 of 402.



Figure 6: Charles II Presented with a Pineapple, ca. 1675-1680, RCIN 406896. King Charles II “is shown in this painting receiving a pineapple from a kneeling man, possibly one of his gardeners.” Courtesy of the Royal Collection Trust / © His Majesty King Charles III 2023, <<https://www.rct.uk/collection/406896/charles-ii-presented-with-a-pineapple>>.

be a high-status food in Europe (**Figure 6**, **Figure 7**, and **Figure 8**); and that it would continue to occupy this high status until faster shipping and artificial refrigeration allowed the pineapple to be transported across long distances in large numbers, and then canning and plantations in Hawaii made the pineapple available and affordable all year long (**Figure 9**).⁹

Step 4: Filling in the Food Table

At the conclusion of the brief lecture on the history of the pineapple, the students are told what to do next with their Food Tables to complete the remaining columns (**Figure 10**):

- Students are asked to title Column B as “Prediction: Where was this first eaten?” They are given about five minutes in class to provide their best guess about where humans first ate each food in Column A of their table without looking up any additional information.



Figure 7: Andrew Moore, Side Table, ca. 1698-1699, RCIN 35301. Commissioned by King William III, the table features a “casting of a plant native to South America in silver mined and imported from that continent.” Courtesy of the Royal Collection Trust / © His Majesty King Charles III 2023, <<https://www.rct.uk/collection/35301/side-table>>.



Figure 8: The Pineapple, near Falkirk, Scotland. The structure “was built in 1761 by the Earl of Dunmore as a summerhouse where he could appreciate the views from his estate. At this time, pineapples were among Scotland’s most exotic foods.” Courtesy of the National Trust for Scotland; David Robertson.



Figure 9: Pineapple advertisement from the materials for the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition of 1909, held in Seattle, ca. 1909. Digital image uploaded to Wikimedia Commons by user “Dcoetzee” on April 25, 2009, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Souvenir_Taft_Day_official_program_-_Back_cover.jpg>.

- Students are also asked to complete the rest of the table before the following class by researching the histories of the foods listed. Column C is “Where humans first ate this food.” Students should fill in this column with information they find in their research, being as specific as possible (e.g., “the Andes” rather than “the Americas”). Column D is “Where humans were eating this food by 1491.” Students should fill in this column with information about where each food had spread by 1491. Column E is “If I were in [location] in 1491, could I have eaten this food?” For this column, students may use whatever location they like—for example, where they currently live, where they were born, a place that they find especially interesting—and then, using information in the other columns, determine whether a person in that location could have eaten each food in 1491.

We recommend some sources for students to use in researching the information that they are going to write on the Food Table,¹⁰ but also encourage them to use whatever sources they find on their own and think are reliable.

JBH471 Food Table

Choose a day between now and our first day of class. Then fill out Column A of this food table with all the foods that you eat on that day. When a food contains more than one ingredient, please list not just the finished product but, insofar as possible, all of the ingredients. For example, if you have black coffee, you can list just “coffee”; if you have tomato sauce from a jar, list all of the ingredients like this: “tomato sauce, containing tomatoes, water, onions, red bell peppers, basil, salt, olive oil, apple cider vinegar, concentrated lemon juice, jalapeño peppers.”

Leave Columns B-E blank for now, and we’ll discuss what to do with them in class.

A. Foods Consumed in a Day	B. Prediction: Where was this first eaten?	C. Where humans first ate this food	D. Where humans were eating this food by 1491	E. If I were in [location] in 1491, could I have eaten this food?

Figure 10: Food Table handout with discussion prompts added to column headings.

Step 5: Analyzing a Day's Diet

At our next meeting, we take up the completed Food Tables. Students assemble into small groups and discuss some common or especially interesting points that they have learned about the history of what they eat. They then choose an example of one food from their Food Table. On a map of the world, they plot where that food was first consumed, and outline where it was being consumed by the year 1491. We widen the discussion to the whole class, asking groups to share interesting or surprising points that came up in their small-group discussions. We answer questions and correct misinformation.

Once all the students have had the opportunity to share their own findings or interesting points that emerged during their group's discussion, we turn their attention back to the map and ask them to identify something about what this distribution of foods tells us about the world in 1491. The students discern that between some regions, there was a great deal of interaction; between others, little or none. Significantly for this course, there was no sustained communication between the hemispheres of the Americas and Afro-Eurasia, and only difficult communication along the North-South axis of the Americas. We then guide the discussion to finding connections between where the wild ancestor of a food was found, trade routes, and where that food had spread by 1491. For example, there was no wild wheat native to the Americas, so no Indigenous peoples in the Americas were eating wheat. There were no wild potatoes native to Eurasia or Africa, so no Europeans or Asians or Africans were eating potatoes. Maize had spread long distances across the Americas, but over a very long period of time. We help students understand that farmers in the Americas worked for many generations to transform a wild grass into a crop that could flourish across different climatic zones. We ensure that this discussion of where foods were consumed before 1492 also includes some of the meats and animal products that students have researched. We talk about what characteristics in wild animals make them more or less likely candidates for domestication, and let the students know that we will be returning to the significance of this pattern later in the course when we learn about epidemic diseases.

The remainder of the session is spent discussing the following three questions:

1. How has the Columbian Exchange shaped something as quotidian as your regular diet?
2. What surprised you the most?
3. Did anyone eat a meal that could have been consumed in any one place in the world in 1491?

Adapting the Lesson to Other Course Subjects and Settings

This lesson was designed as an opening for our particular course, but with some adjustment could fit into any secondary, college, or university course with early modern history content. We have chosen the pineapple as a specific example in our lesson because it can be found in numerous primary and secondary sources, and because it is familiar in some ways, yet strange in others: students have likely encountered the pineapple already, but they are unlikely to know much of its history. For these purposes, the tomato, the potato, and the peanut could work equally well. Instructors teaching a different historical period could place a different food at the lesson's center.¹¹ If they consider also how the cultivation, preservation, transportation, and trading of the chosen food item changed over the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, their lesson could address subjects of industrialization, global capitalism, and neocolonialism. Instructors could make other changes to the lesson to render it suitable for classes with a larger number of students than what we have in our small seminar. For instance, students' work could be shared in small groups rather than with the whole class, or perhaps their responses could be aggregated, such as into word clouds, to provide a general sense of what students are learning about the histories of their foods. Larger classes could also be divided into smaller groups exploring different food items, with each group reporting back to the whole class for comparison and further discussion.

What Students Learn

The most basic content that students learn in this lesson is where their food comes from, historically speaking. The students obviously know the immediate source of where they obtained their food, whether at a grocery store or at one of the dining halls on campus; their assumptions about where foods were first consumed, however,

are usually incorrect. In a sample of forty-four foods that students listed on their tables, their guesses about where the foods were first consumed were wrong in thirty-two instances. Put another way, the students were correct about the historical origins of their foods only about a quarter of the time. Their tendency was to choose a location most often associated with a food today and presume that place to be the food's origin point. Sometimes, this method provided accurate guesses (for example, with Brazil nuts being from South America), but more often did not (for example, guessing that coffee was first consumed in Nicaragua, potatoes in Ireland, and sugar in the Caribbean). Students were enthusiastically surprised to learn the real places of origin for their typical foods, with one student expressing:

Honestly, I loved this as an intro assignment because it really helped break preconceived [ideas] and even stereotypes around food and their origins. Similar to the pineapple, I wouldn't have had a clue about where some of these foods actually came from or how colonization/technology evolved to allow for their "quick" exportation to different corners of the world.

In researching where their foods were first consumed, and where these foods had reached by 1491, the students start to think about continuity and change, a central preoccupation of historians. By comparing the diets of people in 1491 with their own meals, the students also gain insights into how their experiences today are conditioned by historical forces. Notably, for both them and us, they find that they almost never eat a meal that could have been consumed in any single location in 1491. As one student wrote after the conclusion of the course, "I personally remember liking the last column, it really provides 'food for thought' (haha) about how global our diets have become." Students were often surprised at how different people's diets were in the past from what they are accustomed to eating today. Even dishes or cuisines that they thought of as "traditional," it turned out, had been deeply affected by early modern exchange. As one student put it, "I remember being surprised that so many of the foods I attribute to different cultures worldwide, including my own as an Italian Canadian, only came to exist during and after this exchange." Another told us, "those Egyptian dishes my mom makes that I grew up with are no longer just Egyptian... At the back of my head, I always think about where each component comes from."

These students were identifying a phenomenon often noted by historians of food. As Jeffrey Pilcher has written, “Attention to historical change is essential to understanding how foods have helped shape human societies. The most basic associations of culinary identity, including Irish potatoes and Chinese tea, are historical artifacts—often of surprisingly recent vintage.”¹² In the context of early modern exchange in particular, Rebecca Earle has demonstrated that “Clearly, a world untouched by the Columbian Exchange would look (and taste) very different from the world we know.”¹³ When students see for themselves how different their meals are today from what people anywhere in the world were eating prior to 1492, they reconsider what “traditional” means, and perhaps start to take a more critical view of overly nostalgic presentations of supposedly unchanging cultural traits.

Beyond content knowledge of the origins and early modern movement of foods, students also start to develop important academic skills through this lesson. It helps them perceive the “disciplinary unconscious”—meaning those things understood and conveyed silently by experts that are deeply ingrained yet invisible to most students in most situations.¹⁴ For example, this lesson demonstrates some of the considerations students should make when choosing sources for their research. Knowing that students come to the course with uncertainty about what criteria to apply in selecting sources, and even with different ideas about what constitutes a “primary” versus a “secondary” source, we devote time in class to discussing how to identify and choose suitable sources for their research.¹⁵ This introductory lesson provides examples that we can draw upon to illustrate what forms good sources can take, and different options for where to seek the best sources.

Connected to the skill of selecting sources, this lesson further helps students start to think about how to interpret the sources that we use to understand the past. Later readings in the course include challenging primary source documents from the early modern world alongside advanced scholarship by historians and ecologists. For example, among the primary sources that students read are entries from Christopher Columbus’ log and one of Columbus’ letters,¹⁶ a papal bull,¹⁷ lists of supplies requested by and sent to early Spanish settlements in the Caribbean,¹⁸ accounts by Catholic missionaries,¹⁹ and a journal from a slave ship.²⁰ The students also use the

Slave Voyages and *First Blacks in the Americas* databases.²¹ Among their secondary sources are articles on African rice,²² colonial anxieties about foods and bodies,²³ and calls for Indigenizing and decolonizing ecological approaches and conservation policy.²⁴ These readings are not easy for students to analyze, especially when set in juxtapositions that seem to present contradictions in the historical record and disagreement among scholars. Starting the course with a lesson that uncovers the unexpectedly complicated history of something they might have thought was very simple—the pineapple—and then inviting them to reconsider historical forces connected to various foods on their plates—via the Food Table—a space opens up for more complex thinking. The lesson helps students move beyond simplistic binaries so that they can acknowledge the contested past that they are studying. It also encourages them, at the very start of the course, to recognize and accept that they will make mistakes in their interpretations, and to see how these mistakes are not only acceptable, but even desirable as part of the learning process. With careful research and helpful support, the students can learn from their own errors and develop a fuller understanding of what they are studying.²⁵ They also need to think clearly about how they describe their insights, noting that the very words we use to discuss the movements of food in the early modern period imply presumptions about human agency in the past: did food practices “spread” and “diffuse” among different human societies, or were they “carried” and “borrowed”?²⁶

Moving deeper still into ways of thinking, this lesson provides students with an introduction to analytical processes that are going to be used throughout the course, supporting the development of more relational and extended abstract thinking.²⁷ The students’ realizations that they did not know the historic origins of foods—perhaps that they had never even thought about such questions—leads them towards an awareness that everything has a history.²⁸ Many of the students in the course are not “history students” in the sense of having declared history as a major or specialist area of concentration for their degree. Even among those who are registered as history students, many are unaccustomed to subjecting things from their daily lives—like their typical diet—to historical inquiry. With this lesson at the start of the course, students begin to historicize what they may have previously taken for granted as

unchanging or inevitable. This historicization certainly sparks curiosity and, in the case of food, helps students think about new ways to ponder the deep pasts of their everyday present. As one student explained, “exploring the origins and exchanges of different edible plants and animals between North America, Africa, and Europe served as a familiar and common starting point in a class of varying prior exposure to the history of the Columbian Exchange.” In historicizing their diets, the students practice identifying and deploying the necessary intellectual skills on something fairly easy before they attempt it with something more difficult.²⁹ By the time discussion in the course turns to how race, capitalism, and colonization have histories too—and were not predestined to be as they are today—the students will already have had some experience in thinking historically. Starting the process with the palatable example of food affords them a gentle introduction to the premise that all events and materials and ideas can be subject to historical inquiry. This introduction then eases their path into the often emotionally fraught process of historicizing ideologies so common in their world that people are often inclined to think of them as universal or natural rather than constructed over time.

Students who find themselves especially inspired by this lesson can extend their curiosity further still into the history of food and early modern contact when working on their research projects by exploring questions of taste and status, other foods that played an important role in the Columbian Exchange, or legacies of historical contact in twenty-first-century ecologies.

What the Instructors Learn

Beginning this course with a lesson on the students’ foods helps instructors learn too. Most simply, it provides shared talking points that we can use with students in the first weeks as we get to know each other. More broadly, the lesson reveals students’ eagerness to connect what they study in the course with their aspirations for the world beyond. As one student described the connection:

As an individual who has not travelled much, constructing this food journal was like embarking on a voyage. Before this assignment, I had taken for granted the journeys that ingredients took before arriving in my kitchen. Eating food from continents that I had never

visited left me in awe of the cultural exchange and assimilation that was facilitated by the Columbian Exchange. The interdependence of nations on imports has truly made the world a diverse mosaic of food and culture. However, while the Columbian Exchange introduced crops of the New World, such as potatoes and corn, to the Old World, it also had devastating impacts on human lives through transatlantic slavery and the transmission of novel and fatal diseases. Although food continues to connect people from different cultures, it also remains the avenue for the subjugation and exploitation of people, animals, and environments around the world. Constructing this diary encouraged me to be hyperconscious of what I consume so that I do not facilitate the preservation of systems of oppression and exploitation.

We as instructors gain a better sense of what students already know and what they would like to learn more about. The conversations in this lesson, and the discussions that develop subsequently, allow us to understand how students deal with the complexities and contradictions inherent in historical analyses. Rather than looking for simplistic explanations or obvious conclusions, students turn their attention towards these more difficult aspects and grapple with their own views and assumptions. This insight into students' backgrounds and expectations makes us more effective in supporting the development of good habits of historical thinking.

This lesson additionally allows us to signal to students at the very start of the course that we are interested in *their* ideas and *their* goals. When faced with learning “difficult histories”—difficult both in the sense of discussing encounters with traumatic historical events and also in the sense of pursuing historical analyses that threaten to undermine strongly held political and religious beliefs—students benefit from knowing that their instructors are listening to them while promoting critical disciplinary practices that help them overcome or move through emotional reactions.³⁰ Doing this listening has taught us to be more thoughtful about creating a “caring classroom” where we model how the construction of historical knowledge is shaped by the participants' personal stories and individual perspectives.³¹ Our opening lesson sets the tone for the rest of the semester: we are learning with our students. We are participating in the same activities, consulting the same evidence, and working together through the same challenges.

By presenting students with a simple task linked to everyday practices, asking them to investigate the histories of what they eat, and integrating their findings into larger themes from studies of the Columbian Exchange and early modern mobility, this lesson can do a lot to prepare everyone in the class for meeting course goals. It historicizes the everydayness of food and shows how events from centuries ago influence personal tastes, patterns of consumption, and widespread ecological changes today. It trains students in fundamental points of historical thinking, including the importance of choosing good sources and the value of diverse perspectives. Most obviously, and quite importantly, it provides an engaging entryway into our collective efforts to understand the world of the past and recognize how historical forces have shaped the world we share in the present.

Notes

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1. On some of the many functions of food in human lives, see Paul Rozin, "Food Is Fundamental, Fun, Frightening, and Far-Reaching," *Social Research* 66, no. 1 (Spring 1999): 9-30.

2. A discussion of successes and challenges in teaching food history can be found in Beth Forrest, Erica J. Peters, Megan J. Elias, Fabio Parasecoli, and Jeffrey M. Pilcher, "Teaching Food History: A Discussion Among Practitioners," *Global Food History* 3, no. 2 (2017): 194-208. On the teaching of food studies more generally in post-secondary humanities and social science courses, see Jonathan Deutsch and Jeffrey Miller, "Teaching with Food," in *The Oxford Handbook of Food History*, ed. Jeffrey M. Pilcher (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2012), 191-205.

3. Michael P. Marino and Margaret S. Crocco, "Pizza: Teaching US History through Food and Place," *The Social Studies* 106, no. 4 (2015): 149-158; Valerie J. Matsumoto, "Teaching Asian American History and Foodways," *Amerasia Journal* 32, no. 2 (2006): 74-78.

4. Lara Anderson and Meribah Rose, "A Taste of the Past: Teaching Spain's Culinary and Cultural History," *Global Food History* 2, no. 1 (2016): 74-84.
5. Megan Elias, "Summoning the Food Ghosts: Food History as Public History," *The Public Historian* 34, no. 2 (May 2012): 13-29.
6. On using food history to teach early modern mobility, see Mairi Cowan and Whitney Hahn, "Food History as an Ingredient in Teaching Early Modern Mobility," *Dublin Gastronomy Symposium* (2022): 68-73. The authors discuss adding food history to introductory lessons or survey courses to historicize the everydayness of food, show students how to work responsibly with sources, ease the way into difficult histories, and open discussions into larger themes and historical questions.
7. Alfred W. Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492*, 30th Anniversary Edition (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2003); Noble David Cook, "The Columbian Exchange," in *The Cambridge World History, Volume 6: The Construction of a Global World, 1400-1800 CE, Part 2: Patterns of Change*, ed. Jerry H. Bentley, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, and Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 103-134; Charles C. Mann, "Columbian Exchange," in *The Routledge Handbook to the History and Society of the Americas*, ed. Olaf Kaltmeier, Josef Raab, Michael Stewart Foley, Alice Nash, Stefan Rinke, and Mario Rufer (Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge, 2019), 67-74.
8. John Ayto, *The Diner's Dictionary: Word Origins of Food and Drink* (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2012), 278.
9. Most of the information in the lecture comes from Kaori O'Connor, *Pineapple: A Global History* (London, United Kingdom: Reaktion Books, 2013); Gary Y. Okihiro, "Of Space/Time and the Pineapple," *Atlantic Studies* 11, no. 1 (2014): 85-102; and Nina-Sophie Miralles, "The Strange History of the 'King-Pine,'" *The Paris Review*, April 25, 2018; supplemented with primary sources.
10. Kenneth F. Kiple and Kriemhild Coneè Ornelas, eds., *The Cambridge World History of Food* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Ayto, *The Diner's Dictionary*.
11. Mobility and contact, of course, are important not only to the early modern period of history. Patrick Manning has described "migratory movement as a human habit" and "thread running through the full extent of our history as a species." Patrick Manning, *Migration in World History*, third ed. (London, United Kingdom: Routledge, 2020), xi.
12. Jeffrey M. Pilcher, *Food in World History* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 2.
13. Rebecca Earle, "The Columbian Exchange," in *The Oxford Handbook of Food History*, ed. Jeffrey M. Pilcher (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2012), 341.
14. Leah Shopkow, Arlene Diaz, Joan Middendorf, and David Pace, "The History Learning Project 'Decodes' a Discipline: The Union of Teaching and Epistemology," in *The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in and Across Disciplines*, ed. Kathleen McKinney (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2013), 93.

15. We tell students that in history, primary sources “originate in the time and place that historians are studying.” They are “fundamental to any good historical investigation.” Secondary sources in history “reflect on earlier times. Typically, they are created by writers who are interpreting primary sources to make sense of the past.” William Kelleher Storey and Mairi Cowan, *Writing History: A Guide for Canadian Students*, fifth ed. (Toronto, Canada: Oxford University Press, 2019), 22-23. In comparison, scientific sources are defined by their distance between the author(s) and the original data. Primary sources “originate with the people actually doing the work, and directly report on the experiments and results of the work.” Secondary sources are “about what people do with primary literature once it’s published,” such as compacting, reviewing, or repackaging. Michael H. Schmidt, *Being A Scientist: Tools for Science Students* (Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2020), 67-68.

16. Christopher Columbus, “Selected Entries from the Log, August 3, 1492-March 15, 1493,” in *Christopher Columbus and the Enterprise of the Indies: A Brief History with Documents*, ed. Geoffrey Symcox and Blair Sullivan (Boston, MA: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 65-83; “1493. Columbus’ Letter to Santángel,” in *New Iberian World: A Documentary History of the Discovery and Settlement of Latin America to the Early 17th Century, Vol. II*, ed. John H. Parry and Robert G. Keith (New York: Times Books, 1984), 58-62.

17. “Inter Caetera (1493),” in *New Iberian World: A Documentary History of the Discovery and Settlement of Latin America to the Early 17th Century, Vol. I*, ed. John H. Parry and Robert G. Keith (New York: Times Books, 1984), 271-274.

18. “Memorial on Supplies to be Sent to the Indies,” in *New Iberian World, Vol. II*, 185-187; “List of Things Required by the Admiral and his Household,” in *New Iberian World, Vol. II*, 187-188.

19. Bartolomé de las Casas, “Hispaniola” and “The Kingdoms of Hispaniola,” in *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies*, ed. and trans. Nigel Griffin (London, United Kingdom: Penguin, 1992), 14-17 and 18-25.

20. “Journal from the ship *Mary*, 1795-1796,” in *Documents Illustrative of the History of the Slave Trade to America, Volume III: New England and the Middle Colonies*, ed. Elizabeth Donnan (Washington, DC: Carnegie Institute of Washington: 1932), 360-377.

21. *Slave Voyages* at <<https://www.slavevoyages.org>>. *First Blacks in the Americas* at <<http://www.firstblacks.org/>>.

22. Judith A. Carney, “African Rice in the Columbian Exchange,” *The Journal of African History* 42, no. 3 (2001): 377-396.

23. Rebecca Earle, “‘If You Eat Their Food...’: Diets and Bodies in Early Colonial Spanish America,” *The American Historical Review* 115, no. 3 (June 2010): 688-713.

24. Tyler D. Jessen, Natalie C. Ban, Nicholas XEMFOLTW Claxton, and Chris T. Darimont, “Contributions of Indigenous Knowledge to Ecological and Evolutionary Understanding,” *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment* 20, no. 2 (March 2022): 93-101; Lara Domínguez and Colin Luoma, “Decolonising Conservation Policy: How Colonial Land and Conservation Ideologies Persist

and Perpetuate Indigenous Injustices at the Expense of the Environment,” *Land* 9, no. 3 (March 2020).

25. Much has been written recently on the value of failure for learning and on the detrimental effects of students’ fear of failure. Two influential examples are Peter C. Brown, Henry L. Roediger III, and Mark A. McDaniel, *Make it Stick: The Science of Successful Learning* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), especially pp. 90-94; and Joshua Eyler, *How Humans Learn: The Science and Stories behind Effective College Teaching* (Morgantown, WV: West Virginia University Press, 2018), especially pp. 171-217.

26. Donna R. Gabaccia, “Food, Mobility, and World History,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Food History*, ed. Jeffrey M. Pilcher (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2012), 305; Manning, *Migration in World History*, 129.

27. John Biggs and Catherine Tang, *Teaching for Quality Learning at University*, fourth ed. (New York: Society for Research into Higher Education and Open University Press, 2011); John B. Biggs and Kevin F. Collis, *Evaluating the Quality of Learning: The SOLO Taxonomy (Structure of the Observed Learning Outcome)* (New York: Academic Press, 1982).

28. James Grossman, “Everything Has a History,” *Perspectives on History* 53, no. 9 (December 2015).

29. David Pace, “Controlled Fission: Teaching Supercharged Subjects,” *College Teaching* 51, no. 2 (Spring 2003): 42-45.

30. Tsafrir Goldberg, “‘On Whose Side Are You?’ Difficult Histories in the Israeli Context,” in *Teaching and Learning Difficult Histories in International Contexts: A Critical Sociocultural Approach*, ed. Terrie Epstein and Carla L. Peck (New York: Routledge, 2018), 145-159; Tsafrir Goldberg, “‘It’s in My Veins’: Identity and Disciplinary Practice in Students’ Discussions of a Historical Issue,” *Theory & Research in Social Education* 41, no. 1 (2013): 33-64.

31. Maia G. Sheppard, “Creating a Caring Classroom in which to Teach Difficult Histories,” *The History Teacher* 43, no. 3 (May 2010): 411-426.



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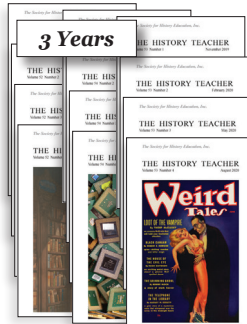
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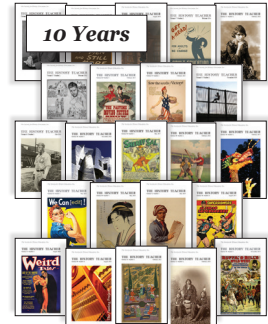
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