

Sustainable Consumption Institute & Gastronomica Seminar



Watching Mold Grow: Facts, Politics and "Processed Food" Lesson Plans

Dr Charlotte Biltekoff

University of California, Davis

Tuesday 17 February 2015

Sustainable Consumption Institute,
188 Waterloo Place

3.30 – 5.00 pm (tea & coffee from 3.15 pm)

The Sustainable Consumption Institute is pleased to host this seminar in conjunction with Gastronomica: The Journal of Critical Food Studies whose Editor Melissa Caldwell (Professor of Anthropology, University of California, Santa Cruz and currently Simon and Hallsworth Visiting Professor at University of Manchester) will be chairing the session.

Abstract

Should we fear or celebrate bread that does not get moldy after 3 days inside a moist plastic bag? This talk explores educational materials competing to define "processed food" and the industrial food system for US school children in order to shed light on the ideological contours of a larger cultural contest taking place between the food industry and "concerned consumers." As a way of pinpointing the trouble spots in this larger cultural dialogue, my analysis focuses on competing interpretations of the meaning of "farm to fork," the adequacy and use of available information about food, and whether individuals or corporations and / or the government is responsible for ensuring the health and safety of American diets. Thinking about these curricular materials through the lens of framing contests helps to explain why competing sides in the processed food framing contest find each others arguments entirely unconvincing.

Biography

Charlotte Biltekoff is Assistant Professor of American Studies at the University of California at Davis, where she also holds an appointment in Food, Science and Technology. She is the author of *Eating Right in America: The Cultural Politics of Dietary Health* (Duke University Press, October 2013) and her research program focuses on the cultural aspects of dietary health.

To book your place or if you have any queries please contact Katrina Farrugia, katrina.farrugia@manchester.ac.uk

how do we align our personal desire for a better life with a shared need for a better future?