

SOCIOLOGY 579/679
FOOD, JUSTICE, AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS
Winter 2023
Tuesdays 2:00-4:50pm
Zoom link: 757 912 1091

Dr. Daniel Jaffee

Associate Professor of Sociology

Email: jaffee@pdx.edu

Office hours: Wednesdays 9:00-10:30 am, or by appointment.

(Sign up at <https://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/ogixl> ; join Zoom link 757 912 1091)

This graduate seminar examines the vibrant and growing range of social movements around food and agriculture, with an emphasis on social inequality and social justice. We begin by examining several theoretical and conceptual frameworks for understanding historical changes and current dynamics in the global food and agriculture system, and multiple approaches to conceptualizing food justice and food movements. We then explore different positions in the fraught debates around population growth, hunger, and the role of industrial agriculture and biotechnology versus low-input, small-scale peasant agriculture in feeding a growing global population. We examine issues of agricultural and food labor at multiple sites in the food system. We then examine the dynamic frameworks of food sovereignty and agroecology that have emerged in recent decades from international agrarian movements, and look at the current phenomenon of new land grabs and social movement responses to them. We conclude with a look at alternative food movements including organic agriculture and fair trade, as well as efforts to defend seed diversity and sovereignty. Overall, the course focuses on food justice movements within both the global North and the South, as well as transnational movements bridging South and North.

Course Objectives:

By the end of this course, you should be familiar with:

- Theoretical and conceptual frameworks for analyzing the food system and its social effects, in the context of economic globalization and neoliberalism.
- Frameworks for understanding the major historical transformations that food production and consumption have undergone globally, including food regime theory.
- A range of critiques of the dominant industrial or conventional food and agriculture system, including but not limited to issues of social inequality and justice, labor, and environmental sustainability.
- Different positions in debates on the root causes of hunger, famine and food insecurity and the best ways to address these problems.
- The multiple causes of global food price crises and the phenomenon of global land grabs, as well as the social and environmental effects of these dynamics.
- A range of responses and alternatives to the dominant food and agriculture system, from agrarian, peasant, consumer, environmental, and other social movements.
- Multiple perspectives in debates over the meanings of food sovereignty and food justice.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. WEEKLY RESPONSE POSTINGS:

For six (6) class sessions during the quarter (weeks 2 and 3 are *required*), you should write a thoughtful response/reaction incorporating all of that week's major assigned readings. These should be very short papers, between 600-800 words. **They should be posted to our course Canvas site no later than 11:59pm Monday (the evening before class)**, so that everyone in the class can read each other's postings and begin the discussion online before we meet. Late posting policy: Responses posted between 11:59pm and 8:00am will receive 65% credit; no credit will be given for postings after 8:00am.

- **Posting a Response:** On the Canvas site, under "Discussions," click on "Reply." Compose your response in a word processing program, select the text of your response, copy it, and paste it into the text window for the posting. Please do not attach a file. (Avoid composing directly on Canvas.)
- **Replying to Others' Postings:** In order to facilitate an online discussion, please read all the other postings, and write/post at least one reply to another student's posting, before class time. *To respond to a posting, click on the posting, click "Reply," and type your response into the box.*

In these responses, you may criticize or praise the readings, question key ideas, tease out points of divergence or convergence, propose alternative approaches or clarifications, identify weaknesses, relate them to your own experience, examine their theoretical or methodological approach or underlying values and assumptions, pose questions they raise for you, and/or compare them to other readings. *Overall, the key point is to critically and thoughtfully engage with and respond/react to the ideas in all of the main readings (except for very short readings); the posting should not be merely a summary of the authors' arguments.*

- Quotes from the readings, and/or references to specific passages (with an in-text reference in parentheses) are necessary evidence of your engagement. If you include a direct quote, please provide page number references—e.g. (Rossett 2019, p. 54). No reference list is necessary.
- At the end of your posting, please include one or more questions about the readings (in bold type) that will help frame our discussion. These will be collected by that week's "question gatherer."

Regardless of whether you post a response for a given week, you are expected to come to class prepared to discuss all of the readings. I will read your postings and respond to you on Canvas with one of these comments:

- ++ Especially strong response—keep it coming!
- + Good response; you interacted meaningfully with the readings.
- Unsatisfactory; you didn't engage sufficiently with the readings.

All response postings that receive either + or ++ will count equally toward this portion of the grade.

2. SCHOLARLY BOOK REVIEW or FOOD MOVEMENT RESEARCH PAPER

You can choose one of two options for your substantial written project:

A. Scholarly Book Review:

This assignment will be a review of a recent book (published in 2020 or later) broadly related to food-related social movements, which will be submitted for publication to an academic journal by the end of the term. Your choice of book should reflect your own research interests and goals, as well as topics and analytical perspectives from the course. Books should be single- or dual-authored; please *do not* choose edited volumes with multiple contributors.

For the book review, you should do the following within the first 1-2 weeks of the term:

- 1) Consult the “[List of Agri-food-related Journals](#)” [Google Doc](#) (link is on Canvas), and look online at the contents of several journals most relevant to your interests.
- 2) Read several (at least 8-10) published book reviews in different journals to familiarize yourself with the review approach and format. Go beyond the sample reviews that are posted on Canvas.
- 3) Identify both the book you wish to review and a journal to which you hope to submit the review. Confirm that your target journal currently does accept/publish book reviews.
- 4) Run your book and journal choices by me first (via email) for a “thumbs-up” before proceeding. Then note your book and (tentative) journal info on the “Book review sign-up sheet” [Google Doc](#).
- 5) After approval, email the book review editor (or the general editor) of your target journal to ask/confirm that they are open to receiving your review. If no luck, try again. *Please approach only one journal at a time.* Once the book review or general editor approves your book review submission, please note that on the Book review sign-up sheet [Google Doc](#).

Note: Please make sure to consult the “[Book review sign-up sheet](#)” [Google Doc](#) (link is on Canvas) to ensure that no more than two people are approaching any given journal, and no more than two people are reviewing any given book. We will discuss this assignment further in the early weeks of the quarter. Please consult individually with me about your book choice and your journal selection, or with any questions about the assignment in general.

B. Food Movement Research Paper:

This will be a substantial (roughly 5,000 words, double spaced) individual research paper. Depending on the stage and focus of your graduate work, the paper may be structured as either a draft journal article, part of your master’s thesis, a dissertation proposal or a dissertation chapter, a conference paper, a research report for a non-governmental organization, or some other format (upon consultation). The paper should focus either on one specific agrarian or food-related social movement, or potentially an issue cutting across multiple food movements, that is relevant to your own research interests/goals. The paper should incorporate both readings from the course and additional bibliographic resources, and it should demonstrate critical engagement with the key course themes and analytical frameworks. Meet with me individually very early in the term to discuss potential topics.

For both options, there will be a set of sub-deadlines:

- Paper Proposal or Book Review Confirmation (title & journal): due by **Weds., Jan. 25**, 11:59pm (by email).
- Complete First Draft (email to reviewers & post on Canvas): due **Weds., Mar. 1** (11:59pm)
- Peer Review Responses to Authors: due by **Weds., March 8** (11:59pm).
- In-Class Presentations: **Tues., March 14**
- Final Review/Paper: due by **Sat., March 17**, 11:59pm (post both on Canvas discussion forum and upload as assignment).*

During the final course meeting (**March 14**), students will present a summary of their book review (or the results of their research paper) to the entire class, in approximately 5 to 7 minutes, in a conference presentation format. We will discuss this assignment further during the quarter. Feel free to consult with me individually about the book review or research paper. ***Note:** Final book reviews must be accompanied by a copy of proof of submission to the journal (email or screen shot).

3. PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE

This is a small, discussion-based graduate seminar. Your presence and active participation are essential for the learning experience of everyone in the course. You are expected to attend all class sessions, and

actively participate in discussion. *Missing more than one class session will affect the participation portion of your course grade.* Everyone should arrive in class having completed all the required readings, and having read the other students' postings. Incomplete preparation deprives everyone of the benefit of your insights and analysis, and in a small seminar such as this one, that is especially detrimental.

EVALUATION

The final course grade will weigh the above assignments/requirements in the following way:

- Reading Response Postings: 35%
- Discussion Participation: 30%
- Book Review or Research Paper: 35%:
 - Submit proposal/confirmation by due date: 5%
 - First draft by due date: 5%
 - Peer review response by due date: 5%
 - In-class presentation: 5%
 - Final book review or research paper by due date: 15%

READINGS

Downloadable E-book to Purchase (for Week 6, but order early):

Tanya Kerssen. 2013. *Grabbing Power: The New Struggles for Land, Food, and Democracy in Northern Honduras*. Oakland: Food First Books.

(\$10 from Food First:

http://shop.aer.io/Food_First/p/Grabbing_Power/9780935028447-1782)

Readings on Canvas: All the remaining readings are posted in electronic form on the course Canvas site (under the “Modules” link, under “Readings”).

Supplementary Readings: The readings listed as “supplementary” for each week are *optional*, for those who want to read more deeply into a topic, or as potential research sources. If you are very unfamiliar with the topic or theory covered, you may benefit from reading one or more of these pieces.

Documentary Films: There are several documentary films listed in the Supplementary section of the reading list (with links on the Canvas course site) that are paired various course topics. These films are optional, but I do encourage you to watch at least some of them prior to the class sessions for which they are assigned. Most are available either via the PSU Library website or online (sources are indicated on syllabus). Feel free to incorporate the content of these films into class discussion.

•

PSU Sexual Harassment Policy: As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment for my students and for the campus as a whole. I also have the responsibility to report any instances of sexual harassment, sexual violence and/or other forms of prohibited discrimination. If you would rather share information about sexual harassment, sexual violence or discrimination to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can find a list of those individuals at: <https://www.pdx.edu/sexual-assault/get-help>. For more information about Title IX, please complete the required student module “Creating a Safe Campus” in your Canvas.

Access and Inclusion for Students with Disabilities: PSU values diversity and inclusion. We are committed to fostering mutual respect and full participation for all students. My goal is to create a learning environment that is equitable, inclusive, and welcoming. If any aspects of instruction or course design result in barriers to your inclusion or learning, please notify me. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) provides reasonable accommodations for students who encounter barriers in the learning environment. If you have, or think you may have, a disability that may affect your work in this class and feel you need accommodations, contact the Disability Resource Center to schedule an appointment and initiate a conversation about reasonable accommodations. The DRC can be reached at: 503-725-4150, drc@pdx.edu, <https://www.pdx.edu/drc>. If you already have accommodations, please contact me to make sure that I have received a faculty notification letter and to discuss your accommodations.

•

SCHEDULE OF READINGS

(There may be slight changes to these readings, which I will announce in advance.)

JAN. 10 (Week 1): Setting the Table: Background and Key Themes

Alison Hope Alkon and Julie Guthman. 2017. Introduction. 1-27 in Alkon and Guthman (eds.), *The New Food Activism*. University of California Press.

Kathryn Demaster and Saru Jayaraman. 2020. Introduction. 1-11 in Jayaraman and Demaster (eds.), *Bite Back*. University of California Press.

JAN. 17 (Week 2): Historical and Conceptual Foundations: Food Regimes, Globalization of Food Systems, Concentration, Neoliberalism

Eric Holt-Giménez. 2019. *Can We Feed the World Without Destroying It?* Introduction (p. 1-4). Polity Press and Food First Books.

Dara J. Bloom. 2019. "Globalization of Food: The World As a Supermarket." 133-146 in Jason Konefal and Maki Hatanaka (eds.), *Twenty Lessons in the Sociology of Food and Agriculture*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Philip H. Howard. 2019. "Increasing Corporate Control: From Supermarkets to Seeds." 117-131 in Konefal and Hatanaka (eds.), *20 Lessons in the Sociology of Food and Agriculture*.

Walden Bello. 2009. *The Food Wars*. New York: Verso. Chapter 1, "Capitalism Versus the Peasant."

IPES Food Panel and ETC Group. 2021. Report: "A Long Food Movement: Transforming Food Systems by 2045." (Executive Summary), 1-12.

Gabriela Pechlaner and Gerardo Otero. 2010. "The Neoliberal Food Regime..." *Rural Sociology* 75(2): 179-208. [*NOTE: **Read pages 182-185 on food regimes; the remainder is optional.**]

Johanna Bockman. 2013. "Neoliberalism." *Contexts* 12(3): 14-15.

Supplementary:

Documentary Film: "Food, Inc." [\[LINK\]](#) (Warning: graphic images of meat processing.)

JAN. 24 (Week 3): Conceptualizing Food Justice

Eric Holt-Giménez. 2011. "Food Security, Food Justice, or Food Sovereignty? Crises, Food Movements, and Regime Change." 309-330 in Alison Hope Alkon and Julian Agyeman (eds.), *Cultivating Food Justice: Race, Class, and Sustainability*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

E. Melanie DuPuis, Jill L. Harrison, and Michael Goodman. 2011. "Just Food?" 283-307 in Alison Hope Alkon and Julian Agyeman (eds.), *Cultivating Food Justice: Race, Class, and Sustainability*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Alison Alkon. 2014. "Food Justice and the Challenge to Neoliberalism." *Gastronomica* 14(2):27-40.

Joshua Sbicca. 2018. *Food Justice Now! Deepening the Roots of Social Struggle*. 1-21, "Introduction: Food Justice as Social Politics." Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Supplementary:

Duke World Policy Food Center. 2020. "Identifying and Countering White Supremacy Culture in Food Systems."

JAN. 31 (Week 4): Hunger, Scarcity, Neo-Malthusians, and Anti-Malthusian Critiques

Garrett Hardin. 1974. "Lifeboat Ethics: the Case Against Helping the Poor." *Psychology Today* (Sept)

Also: Southern Poverty Law Center. (n.d.): [Garrett Hardin](#).

Vandana Shiva. 2005. *Earth Democracy*. Boston: South End Press. 53-61, "The False Tragedy of the Commons" and "Myths About and Reasons for Overpopulation."

Frances Moore Lappé and Joseph Collins. 2010. *World Hunger: 10 Myths*. NY: Grove. 1-33, "Too Little Food, Too Many People."

Jahi Chappell. 2018. *Beginning to End Hunger: Food and the Environment in Belo Horizonte, Brazil and Beyond*. University of California Press. 1-33, Introduction.

Andrew Fisher. 2017. *Big Hunger: The Unholy Alliance Between Corporate America and Anti-Hunger Groups*. 1-10, Introduction.

Andrew Jacobs and Matt Richtel. 2017. "How Big Business Got Brazil Hooked on Junk Food." *New York Times*, Sept. 16, 2017.

Frances Moore Lappé. 2009. "The City That Ended Hunger." *Yes Magazine*, February 13.

Supplementary:

Gerardo Otero. 2018. "Introduction: Obesity and the Neoliberal Diet." 1-25 in *The Neoliberal Diet: Healthy Profits, Unhealthy People*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

FEB. 7 (Week 5): Agricultural Labor; Immigrant and Farmworker Justice; Black Farmers

Laura Anne Minkoff-Zern. 2017. "Farmworker-Led Food Movements Then and Now." 157-178 in Alkon and Guthman (eds.), *The New Food Activism*. University of California Press.

Also: Radio interview with L.A. Minkoff-Zern: <https://kpfa.org/episode/against-the-grain-december-17-2018/>

Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) website: <https://ciw-online.org/about>

Deborah Barndt. 2004. "Fruits of Injustice: Women in the Post-NAFTA Food System." 37-51 in Gerardo Otero, ed., *Mexico in Transition: Neoliberal Globalism, the State and Civil Society*.

Joshua Sbicca, L.A. Minkoff-Zern, and Shelby Coopwood. 2020. "'Because they are connected': Linking structural inequalities in farmworker organizing." *Human Geography* 13(3): 263-276.

Monica M. White. 2018. *Freedom Farmers: Agricultural Resistance and the Black Freedom Movement*. Chapel Hill: UNC Press. 3-27, "Black Farmers, Agriculture, and Resistance."

Supplementary:

Documentary Film: "Food Chains" [\[LINK\]](#)

Joshua Sbicca. 2018. *Food Justice Now!* 111-140 (Chap. 8), "Immigration Food Fights: Challenging Borders and Bridging Social Boundaries."

FEB. 14 (Week 6): Land Grabs and Social Movement Responses

E-Book:

Tanya Kerssen. 2013. *Grabbing Power: The New Struggles for Land, Food, and Democracy in Northern Honduras*. ([Read entire book](#)).

***Purchase E-book at Food First:**

http://shop.aer.io/Food_First/p/Grabbing_Power/9780935028447-1782

On Canvas:

(Choose one of the following two readings):

Giuliano Martiniello. 2015. "Social Struggles in Uganda's Acholiland: Understanding Responses and Resistance to Amuru Sugar Works." *Journal of Peasant Studies* 42(3-4): 653-669.

Fred Pearce. 2012. *The Land Grabbers: The New Fight Over Who Owns the Earth*. Boston: Beacon Press. vii-16.

Supplementary:

Saskia Sassen. 2013. "Land Grabs Today: Feeding the Disassembly of National Territory." *Globalizations* 10(1): 25-46.

FEB. 21 (Week 7): Food Sovereignty, Agroecology, and Peasant Movements in the South

Guest Speaker: Dr. Jahi Chappell, Professor and Director, Center for Regional Food Systems, Michigan State University.

Colin Anderson, Michel Pimbert, and Csilla Kiss. 2015. "Building, Defending, and Strengthening Agroecology: A Global Struggle for Food Sovereignty." ILEIA and Centre for Agroecology, Water, and Resilience, Coventry University.

Video: "Agroecology: Vision, Practice, Movement": [LINK](#) (Note: watch "long" version.)

Jahi Chappell and Mindi Schneider. 2017. "The New Three-Legged Stool: Agroecology, Food Sovereignty, and Food Justice." 419-429 in M. Rawlinson and C. Ward (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Food Ethics*.

Frances Moore Lappé and Anna Lappé. 2016. "Fields of Hope and Power." 3-41 in Vandana Shiva (ed.), *Seed Sovereignty, Food Security*. Berkeley: North Atlantic Books.

Peter Rossett and María Elena Martínez Torres. 2010. "La Vía Campesina: The Birth and Evolution of a Transnational Social Movement." *Journal of Peasant Studies* 37(1): 149-175.

Peter Rossett. 2003. "Food Sovereignty: Global Rallying Cry of Farmer Movements." *Food First Backgrounder* 9(4).

Lisa Held. 2021. "Is Agroecology Being Co-opted by Big Ag?" Civil Eats, April 20.

Supplementary:

Peter Rosset. 2011. "Food Sovereignty and Alternative Paradigms to Confront Land Grabbing and the Food and Climate Crises." *Development* 54(1): 21-30.

FEB. 28 (Week 8): Alternative Food Movements: Organics and Fair Trade

Brian Obach. 2015. *Organic Struggle: The Movement for Sustainable Agriculture in the United States*. Cambridge: MIT Press. (Introduction and Chapter 6)

Whenona Hauter. 2012. *Foodopoly*. The New Press. 98-115, "Organic Food: The Paradox."

Daniel Jaffee. 2014. *Brewing Justice: Fair Trade Coffee, Sustainability, and Survival (Updated Edition)*. Berkeley: University of California Press (Excerpts).

Daniel Jaffee and Philip H. Howard. 2010. "Corporate Cooptation of Fair Trade and Organic Standards." *Agriculture and Human Values* 27(4): 387-399.

***View infographics** on food industry consolidation on Phil Howard's website (<http://philhoward.net>):
Organic industry: <http://philhoward.net/2020/09/24/organic-processing-industry-structure-2020/>
Remaining independents: <https://philhowardnet.files.wordpress.com/2017/05/organicind11.pdf>

Civil Eats. 2020. "After 10 Years of Rapid Growth, What Does Organic Mean Today?"

Fair World Project. 2020. Guide to Fair Trade and Worker Justice Certifications. **[CONTINUED➔]**

Supplementary:

Documentary Film: “Black Gold” [\[LINK\]](#)

Fair World Project website: www.fairworldproject.org

Julie Guthman. 2007. “The Polanyian Way? Voluntary Food Labels as Neoliberal Governance.” *Antipode* 39:456–77.

MARCH 7 (Week 9): Defending Seeds: Seed Sovereignty

Guest Speaker: Dr. Carol Hernández Rodríguez, Researcher, Program in Bioethics, National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM).

Carol Hernández Rodríguez (2022): “Seed Sovereignty as Decommodification: A Perspective from Subsistence Peasant Communities in Southern Mexico.” *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 1-28.

Birgit Muller. 2020. “Flux, Unrelenting: The Struggle for Local Seed Sovereignty In Nicaragua.” *Journal of Peasant Studies* 47(4): 720-740.

Vandana Shiva. 2016. “Seed Sovereignty, Food Security” and “Sowing Seeds of Freedom.” vii-xxi and 287-296 in Vandana Shiva (ed.), *Seed Sovereignty, Food Security: Women in the Vanguard of the Fight Against GMOs and Corporate Agriculture*. Berkeley: North Atlantic Books.

Supplementary:

Film: “Seed: The Untold Story”: <http://watch.plex.tv/movie/seed-the-untold-story>

Wattnem, Tamara. 2016. “Seed Laws, Certification and Standardization: Outlawing Informal Seed Systems in the Global South.” *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 43(4): 850-867.

MARCH 14 (Week 10): Wrapping Up: Food Scholar-Activism

➔ Student Book Review/Paper Presentations

Saturnino (Jun) Borrás. 2016. “Land Politics, Agrarian Movements, and Scholar-Activism.” Inaugural Lecture, Transnational Institute. April 14. (Also, link to video of talk)

Charles Z. Levkoe, N. McClintock, L. Minkoff-Zern, A. Coplen, J. Gaddis, J. Lo, F. Tendick-Matesanz, & A.M. Weiler. 2016. “Forging Links Between Food Chain Labor Activists and Academics.” *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development* 6(2):129-142.

Maywa Montenegro de Wit, et al. 2021. “Operating principles for collective scholar-activism: Early insights from the Agroecology Research-Action Collective.” *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development* 10(2): 319-337.

Supplementary:

Neva Hassanein. 2003. “Practicing Food Democracy: A Pragmatic Politics of Transformation.” *Journal of Rural Studies* 19: 77-86.