Critical Consumption: The Future of Food Studies

Conference at Princeton University, April 1-2, 2016

Critical food studies is a growing interdisciplinary field that took root first in anthropology, geography, science studies, and history but has become a vibrant area for scholars of literature, new media, and rhetoric. Critical Food Studies is transforming scholarship in literary studies, environmental humanities, digital humanities, postcolonial, race and gender studies. The Program in American Studies at Princeton is proud to present this opportunity to explore the intersection of American cultures with food studies and to think about new work that confronts the meetings of literary and aesthetic theory, animal/human work, race and science, and technology studies.

This conference aims to foreground the newest ventures in this rich and rapidly expanding interdisciplinary field by showcasing the surprising directions that this field has taken in the last few years. Our focus will be less on the representation of food (in, for example, literature or art) of which there is much, but more specifically on how the field of food studies intersects with humanist inquiries to generate the kinds of critical inquiry and archives that are redefining the intersection of the humanities and the sciences.

The primary focus will be foregrounding innovative scholarship that demonstrates how food culture and food politics is engaging with recent critical movements in postcolonial and empire studies, history of science, science studies, new materialism, ecocriticism, queer theory, critical race theory, and affect theory. We aim to bring together an impressive but also unexpected collection of scholars who are redefining the parameters of critical food studies and, along the way, the humanities.