

“Eating is an Agricultural Act”?: The Ethics of Food Socratic Seminar

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

1. How do we characterize America’s relationship with food? What are political and economic factors that shape this relationship? What are the **ethics** driving how we produce and consume food?
2. Compare and contrast the **paradigms** (worldviews/ideological perspectives) behind the industrial system and local sustainable systems. How does each show a different "ethic," that is to say, a different kind of thinking about the human relationship with our food and the human relationship with the Earth and her resources?
3. How *should* we produce and consume food at this point in our history/evolution? What might be some future solutions?
4. How would you characterize your personal “FOOD ETHIC”? What factors influence this ethic (ie. financial, health, environmental, cultural, moral, etc.)? How does your personal relationship with food impact your happiness and well being? How do you navigate your own personal omnivore’s dilemma?

TEXTS:

ESSAY: “[The Pleasures of Eating](#)” by Wendell Berry

BOOK: Selections from *The Omnivore’s Dilemma*

FILMS: [Food, Inc.](#), [Fed Up](#)

ARTICLE: “[Food Miles and Packaging: A Contrarian View](#)” by Aaron Brody

TED TALK: Ron Finley “[A Guerilla Gardener in South Central LA](#)”

INFORMATIVE ILLUSTRATION: “[Feeding Nine Billion](#)”

SEMINAR PREP:

1. We will be preparing for this seminar for the first 3 weeks of the project. **ANNOTATE** all the seminar texts as we go, and hold on to your materials! Remember that text references are seminar wizardry!
2. Throughout the course of the project, we will **FREEWRITE** on questions related to the seminar essential questions. Save these freewrites! You may choose to do them electronically or on paper, but they will become part of your seminar prep!
3. **THINK** about the essential questions at the top of this document. You don’t need to necessarily answer them in full paragraphs, but you should jot down some bullet points and ideas before the seminar. Having answers to these questions will help you have a good seminar.
4. Come up with 1 or 2 seminar **QUESTIONS** based on the seminar texts and your own thoughts about the ethics of food.

REVIEW THE [SEMINAR RUBRIC](#)

If you are new to Animas or want a refresher in seminar expectations, let Jessica know.

SEMINAR REFLECTION (due Friday, April 22)

1. Reflection/Self-Assess: Reflect on the outcome of the seminar. Consider your own performance and the seminar overall. How did you do personally and how did the group do collectively? **Based on the [rubric](#), what grade do you deserve on the seminar?**

2. React to your peers' ideas (be specific) and the knowledge you all constructed together. Was there anything that enlightened you? Something you particularly disagree with? How did your thinking about the topics change as a result of this seminar?

3. DEVELOP YOUR TALKING POINTS FOR THE DINNER PARTIES

- How would you characterize your personal "FOOD ETHIC"? What factors influence this ethic (ie. financial, health, environmental, cultural, moral, etc.)? How does your personal relationship with food impact your happiness and well being?
- What are some major takeaways you have from this project? What have you learned about the ethics of agriculture and eating?
- What changes might you make in your relationship with food, now or in the future?