

FALL
2013

THE GRAPEVINE

Teachers College, Columbia University

FALL 2013

THE GRAPEVINE
PROGRAM IN NUTRITION

In this issue...

[Letter from the Editor](#)**Page 2**[Fresh off the Vine](#)**Page 3**[Hot Topic](#)**Page 5**[Alumni Profile](#)**Page 6**[Alumni Notes](#)**Page 8**[Book Review](#)**Page 11**[Restaurant Review](#)**Page 11**[Work It Out](#)**Page 12**[Op-Ed](#)**Page 13**[Out and About](#)**Page 14**[Recipe Corner](#)**Page 15**

The Evolution of Cafeteria Food

by Jennifer Rock

A typical public school lunch often contains what one might call “kid friendly” foods. Hamburgers, grilled cheese, and tater tots have been on school menus since I was a kid, and pizza is almost guaranteed to be served every Friday at many schools across the country.

Some of the challenges school districts face include contracts with large scale food distributors and budget problems, as the cost and preparation of food on a large scale continues to rise. Complicating matters are the

attitudes toward introducing new foods to children - many people, both school administrators and parents, worry that if they don't provide foods that children are familiar with, children won't eat. The fight for improving school lunches has been arduous, but recently there have been positive changes to the system.

With child obesity concerns and trends shining new lights on healthy foods, there may be even more change on the horizon. Already, many schools across the country incorporate

continued on pg. 4

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Nutrition Students, Faculty, Alumni, and Staff,

I'd like to first thank everyone for their hard work, support, and help during my time as editor of The Grapevine. The Grapevine has been a great experience and it has led to several exciting opportunities, including continuing my editing career with the Greater New York Dietetic Association.

Graduates of the Teachers College Program in Nutrition have gone on to pursue a variety of exciting careers. Get a taste for life after graduate school in the Alumni Notes section, page 8.

This issue also explores some of the hot nutrition news topics of the last few months. In this edition's feature, you'll learn about the first vegetarian public school in New York City. Our Hot Topic (page 5) investigates the world of cultured meat. And our Op-Ed is a creative description of the often overwhelming food industry "carnival" (page 15).

Our Work It Out section on page 12 is written by The Grapevine's new editor, Stephanie Lang. Be sure to check out her advice on ways to stay in shape without breaking the bank, something many students can really use!

Thanks so much to all the students who have volunteered to write. The Grapevine is written by the students for the nutrition program community. I encourage all of you to get involved. Send your ideas to Stephanie Lang at sal2182@tc.columbia.edu.

Enjoy!

Jennifer Rock
Editor-In-Chief
Nutrition Education

STAFF

The Grapevine

Editors

Jennifer Rock
Nutrition Education

Stephanie Lang
Nutrition Education

Faculty Editor

Randi L. Wolf, M.P.H, Ph.D.

Faculty Advisor

Isobel R. Contento, Ph.D.

Contributing Writers

Stephanie Lang
Nutrition Education

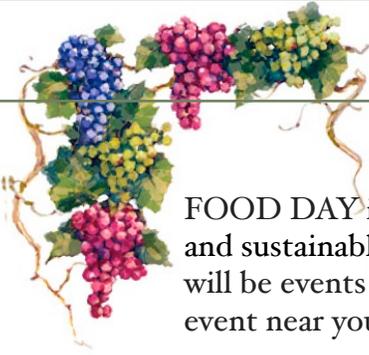
Lisa Hayim
Nutrition & Exercise Physiology

Jack Taliercio
Nutrition Education

Anthony Wind
Nutrition & Exercise Physiology

Ryan Renaud
Nutrition Education

Janna Guberman
Nutrition Education



Fresh off the Vine

FOOD DAY is October 24th! Food Day is a nationwide celebration of healthy, affordable, and sustainably produced food. It is a grassroots campaign for better food policies. There will be events all over the city to celebrate. Visit foodday.org to get involved and/or find an event near you!

The Program in Nutrition's Fall 2013 Book Club Gathering will be on Friday November 1, 2013 from 6:30pm-9pm at Dr. Wolf's apartment. The book is *Behind the Kitchen Door*, written by Saru Jayaraman. It is a behinds-the-scenes look at how restaurant workers live--taking a look at wages, working conditions, the discriminatory labor practices, and how those conditions affect the meals that arrive at our tables. Contact Tyffanie Ammeter for more information (tra2113@tc.columbia.edu).

The Greater New York Dietetic Association (GNYDA) Annual Dietetic Internship Fair will be held on November 16, from 12-4pm at the Lehman College Music Building in the Bronx. A great opportunity to learn about some of the other local internship programs offered. Visit the "Events Page" on the website, gynda.org to register.

Write for the Grapevine!

The Grapevine is always looking for new writers, and we encourage all students to contribute! Email your ideas on any of the following stories to sal2182@tc.columbia.edu

Feature Story - In-depth investigation of a pertinent topic or issue.

Hot Topic - Explore a topic in nutrition, physiology, and/or public health that is controversial and currently receiving public attention.

Out and About - Description of a food, nutrition, or exercise outing (could be a conference, summit, professional meeting, trip to a farm, etc.)

Op-Ed - Share your opinion on a current nutrition topic.

On the Internship Front - Describe where you interned, what you did on a daily basis, and how it felt to partake in the rotation.

Journal Watch - Summarize a scholarly journal article

Book Review - Provide a description of the book, highlighting the main points discussed, why the book is important, and any other interesting facts of the book that might entice the reader.

Film Review - Review a nutrition-based film, stating its themes, an overview of plot, and why the film is relevant to the field.

Restaurant Review - Review a restaurant with healthy, delicious food for under \$25 (appetizer, entree, and drink).

Exotic Tastes - An exploration of food through travel, describe the foods of another country's culture.

Work it Out - Investigate a current topic in exercise, physiology, or recreation; share a favorite workout tip, move, or routine.

Recipe Corner - Share your favorite nutritious recipes!

(The Evolution of Cafeteria Food, cont'd)

salad bars into their cafeteria set-up, have hands-on school gardens, and even nutrition and cooking classes. Furthermore, in January, 2012, the USDA issued its final rule on school meal nutrition standards, *Nutrition Standards in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs*. The rule went into effect during the 2012-2013 school year, with the intention of revising the meal patterns and nutrition requirements to follow more consistently with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

Community advocates have also been working with schools to renegotiate with their food providers for healthier products. According to US News & World Report, there has been a 13% decrease in the number of schools allowing soft drink companies to advertise on campus since 2006. And, at the end of June 2013, the USDA banned the sale of unhealthy snack foods, such as cookies, candies, chips, and sugary beverages in schools; an extension of the 2010 Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act.

PS 244 is one such school implementing positive changes. PS244 is an Elementary School of 400 students, pre-K to third grade, located in Flushing, Queens, NY. Since 2004, they have been incorporating meatless days, gradually expanding their program to as

many as 3-4 vegetarian days per week. They've also been steadily making improvements to the menu, such as offering meals low in sodium and calories. But as the school was incorporating these changes, they were quietly experimenting to expand their program in ways not seen in most of the US. Small groups of students were asked to do taste tests of the new foods, which provided feedback on a new, all-vegetarian menu. In January, 2013, PS 244 went completely vegetarian. The school was careful to ensure that all menu items complied with federal standards for protein, and provides meals such as falafel, baked BBQ tofu, roasted chickpeas, and black beans and rice. Principal Robert Groff, one of the school's founders, remarked, "We discovered early on that our kids were gravitating toward our vegetarian offerings, and we kept expanding the program to meet the demand. The vegetarian menu fits right in with our mission and we are thrilled that our students in Pre-Kindergarten all the way up to Grade 3 understand the importance of healthy and nutritious meals." Because of its location in Flushing, the school caters to many Asian and Hispanic families, where rice and beans, and tofu are staples. This made transitioning to an all-vegetarian menu much easier. The program also hires menu planners at the school to think

outside of the box, creating flavorful meals instead of falling back on old standbys. What's more impressive, Groff reports the menu change came at no extra cost to the school.

It's hard to say whether this school's remarkable culinary transformation will catch on nation-wide. Some critics react negatively to the perception that meat, or the choice to eat meat, is being "taken away" from children. Regardless of whether other schools will adopt an all-vegetarian menu, PS 244 sets an example that healthy changes are indeed possible. It shows that schools can work with children to develop healthy menus, even if they do contain meat, and that these changes are affordable and achievable. We hope to see even more positive changes to school food in the future.

References

Bidwell, Allie, *CDC Report Shows Progress in School Health Practices* retrieved on August 20th, 2013, from <http://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2013/08/26/cdc-report-shows-progress-in-school-health-practices>

Brady, Brittany, *New York School Goes All-Vegetarian*, retrieved on August, 20th, 2013, from <http://www.cnn.com/2013/05/02/health/new-york-vegetarian-school>

Chancellor Walcott Spotlights the First New York City Public School to Serve a Vegetarian Menu Five Days a Week retrieved on August 20th, 2013, from http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/mediarelations/NewsandSpeeches/2012-2013/043013_menufivedays.htm

Hot Topic

By Jennifer Rock

The scientific development of ways to feed an ever-increasing population has taken a truly science fiction turn: we now possess the ability to grow meat in a petri dish.

On August 5th, 2013, physiologist Mark Post of Maastricht University hosted a press conference and public taste test of the lab-grown protein, dubbed a “stem cell burger.”

The burger was grown over three months, and required the production of 20,000 small strands of protein, grown from a cow’s muscle cells. Three months prior, stem cells were extracted from two organically-raised cows, through a biopsy. The cells were used to grow muscle fibers individually, which turned into grey-white loops of protein, suspended in a gel growth medium with antibiotics and a serum extracted from cow fetuses. After a few weeks of growth, each loop was removed by hand, cut open, straightened, and pressed to the other strands to create a burger. The burger was then mixed with beet juice (for coloring), powdered egg, and breadcrumbs (for flavoring). The total cost of this “delicious”-sounding science experiment came to the tune of €250,000, or nearly \$350,000 (US), making it the most expensive burger in the world.

Post’s reasoning behind the cultured burger project was based around his beliefs of the future impact of feeding the world meat, as population growth continues to trend upward. At the press

conference, Post discussed his concerns about the future of global meat production, saying that meat consumption is expected to increase 75% by the year 2050. Post claims this increase will be costly to consumers and will have a major environmental impact contributing to both pollution and climate change.

In 2011, according to the USDA, the US consumed 25.6 billion pounds of beef. However, this rate has been trending downward since 2007. This could have something to do with the promotion of more balanced diets, or it could have more to do with fluctuating prices of meat, but it puts into question some of Post’s beliefs about the future of meat. One important question that hasn’t been asked, regarding the growing of meat in laboratories is, are there other, more cost-effective alternatives? For example, if cattle were to be allowed pasture, instead of confined to concentrated feeding operations, this would help to balance the environmental impact. The grass lands the cows roam would provide an outlet for the potentially polluting outputs of the cows. Further argument for grass-fed cows; meat farmed from animals that are allowed access to pasture tends to contain higher percentages of important nutrients, such as Omega-3 fatty acids and carotenoids. The stem-cell burger was absent of these nutrients, causing even more cost into production if the desired effect is a nutritiously rich protein.

Another important point to consider is the high consumption of protein in well-developed countries. For example, in the US, many people typically over-consume protein. Do we really need to increase meat production dramatically as population grows, or could we consider opening up a discussion about balancing diet to meet our needs?

With all of these important points to consider, the most common question I came across while researching the birth of the stem cell burger was this: How does it taste? Two people were allowed to try the stem cell burger during the press conference. Both complained of a definite lack of juiciness and the absence of flavor that fat provides. The summation of the experience was best worded by taster Hanni Rützler, who researches food trends for Future Food Studio, when she remarked, “If I had closed my eyes, I would have thought the cultured meat was definitely beef, rather than a vegetable-based substitute.”

Is this the future of food? I think we are still in need of a lot of dialogue among the food and nutrition community. It is important for the scientific advancement of food to continue, but I don’t believe we need to settle for test-tube food any time soon.

References

Jha, Alok, *Anyone for a Stem-Cell Burger?* The Guardian, August 5th, 2013

Jha, Alok, *Synthetic meat: how the world's costliest burger made it on to the plate.* The Guardian, August 5th, 2013

Alumni Profile

Jennifer Black, M.S., Ph.D., R.D.

We recently caught up with Teachers College Nutrition alumni, Jennifer Black. Jennifer received her Master of Science in Nutrition and Public Health from TC, and she completed TC's dietetic internship in 2002-3. Jennifer passed the Canadian-registered dietitian (RD) exam in 2010, and is currently living and working as an RD in Vancouver, Canada.

How did you come to TC and the field of nutrition?

I've always been interested in food and nutrition. It was perfect for me, because I couldn't decide whether I should study medicine, public health, urban planning, psychology, economics, education or politics – but through nutrition you can learn about all of those areas.

I was interested in studying in New York City, and was very lucky to find out that a woman named Marion Dickenson had endowed a scholarship for a graduate of the nutritional sciences major at the University of Toronto to study nutrition at TC. To my knowledge, nobody before me had ever taken this opportunity; but that funding really made it possible for me to take the risk and move.

What is your most memorable TC experience? Most memorable TC class?

My first memories of TC are indelibly marked by the events of 9/11 which happened just a few days after I moved to NYC to start graduate school. I had just moved into the TC dorms and didn't know many people in New York, and remember the student community, my new roommates and the faculty really coming together after being touched by those tragic days.

My most memorable classes were probably Nutritional Ecology and Strategies for Nutrition Education. The single lecture that always sticks out for me was learning about biotechnology in Joan Gussow's garden. A year earlier, my undergraduate lecture about genetically modified organisms had been given by a representative from Monsanto. I was struck at that moment by how different the key educational lessons are, depending on the teaching context.

Where do you currently work?

At the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada.

What are some of your current job responsibilities?

Assistant Professor in Food, Nutrition and Health Program in the Faculty of Land and Food Systems at the University of British Columbia.

I teach a variety of undergraduate and graduate courses relating to

research methods, community nutrition and public health topics. I also started a research program focused on examining how complex and intersecting social and contextual conditions shape dietary practices, population health, and health disparities.

My research focuses broadly on the social determinants of health and dietary choices.

I am a co-investigator on a large community-based research project called Think&EatGreen@School (our website is: thinkeatgreen.ca). The Think&EatGreen@School project is working with the local school board, and multiple community and academic partners to build healthy and sustainable school food systems in Vancouver.

I'm also the principal investigator of a related grant that collected survey data from students in grades 7 & 8, to learn more about students' dietary choices on school days, and how students' knowledge and attitudes towards food and the wider school food environment influence food choices.

What do you like most/least about your work?

I love the opportunity to work with students and collaborators who really want to make a difference and improve health outcomes and people's quality of life in our community and internationally. My colleagues are wonderful to work with, and

Alumni Profile

Jennifer Black, M.S., Ph.D., R.D.

engaged in research and teaching around issues from farm to fork.

I get to do a wide variety of things every day and it never gets boring.

Biggest challenges: there's never enough time to do all the things you want to do in a day.

What are your future career goals?

I think academia is a good fit for me – but I will continue to look for strategies to make my research and teaching more meaningful and applicable so they can contribute to core public health and nutrition issues.

What other jobs have you held besides your current position?

When I first graduated from TC, I worked as a community nutritionist at several family health clinics in the South Bronx run by a community-based organization

called the Institute for Urban Family Health.

I provided nutrition and health education services at four community health centers and worked on a number of grant funded projects aimed at reducing racial and ethnic disparities in health in underserved New York neighborhoods. The neighborhoods and patients we served had alarmingly high rates of type 2 diabetes, obesity, HIV, and cardiovascular disease. Moreover, deep-rooted social problems heavily impeded the prevention and treatment of chronic disease in these communities.

When I started my PhD research at NYU the following year, my research questions were geared towards understanding some of the core underlying issues that were shaping health and nutrition-related inequities in New York's neighborhoods.

I also had a variety of part-time on campus jobs before I got my

faculty position (research assistant, TAing lots of nutrition courses at TC and at NYU) and I had a post-doctoral fellowship in the Department of Sociology at the University of British Columbia.

What do you like to do in your free time?

I've started a small food garden on my front lawn and in planters on my balcony, and Vancouver is a great place for doing yoga on or near the beach. But these days nearly all of my free time is spent with my new son Noah, who joined our family in February 2013.

What advice or words of wisdom can you offer TC students?

Take advantage of all of the learning opportunities that TC and New York have to offer. It goes by so fast.



Alumni Notes

Lauren Au, MS, PhD, RD received her MS in Nutrition and Public Health in 2009. She recently completed her PhD at Tufts University for Food Policy & Applied Nutrition in 2013. She works for AAAS as a congressional fellow, providing scientific and technical support to legislators.

Elizabeth Avery, MS, RD, CSO, LDN, CNSC received her MS in Nutrition & Exercise Physiology in 2005. She is a clinical dietitian at Emerson College, working one-on-one with students. She is also starting a private practice and is working part-time in an oncology outpatient clinic and fitness center.
ElizabethAveryRD@gmail.com

Limor Baum, MS, RD received her MS in Nutrition Education in 2008. Limor works as a nutrition therapist with Nutrition Energy and Baum Nutrition, a private practice specializing in eating disorders.
baum.limor@gmail.com

Jennifer Black, MS, RD graduated in 2003 with an MS in Nutrition and Public Health. She works at the University of British Columbia as an Assistant Professor. Jennifer is impressed to find her work and research still draw from lessons learned from TC faculty Isobel, Toni, and Joan, and experiences working with the Earthfriends program at TC. j.black@ubc.ca

Elisa Bremner, MS, RD graduated in 2000, with her MS in Nutrition Education. She is an RD at Northern Westchester Hospital, in the Outreach and Youth Education Department, developing curriculum for nutrition education workshops and health fairs. During summers she works at Camp Wayne for Boys in the Poconos, dealing with special dietary needs and doing as much nutrition education as she can in cooking classes.

Greta Breskin, MS recently graduated in May, 2013. She is not currently an RD, but plans to take the exam soon. She is working as a dietitian at Greenwich Hospital, providing maternity relief for the surgical and medical oncology floors and hospital-wide weekend coverage. greta.breskin@gmail.com

Kira Cohen-Milo, MS graduated with an MS in Nutrition and Public Health in May 2013. Over the summer she directed a group of teenagers on a summer camp expedition throughout Greece and traveled around Europe and Israel. Upon return to The Big Apple she has continued teaching nutrition education classes, promoting regional agriculture through local farmers markets, and continues to search for new and interesting opportunities.
antigony@gmail.com

Sarah Feasel-Aklilu, MEd, RD, CNSC, CLC received her MEd in Community Nutrition Education in 2005. She works with Abbott Nutrition as a clinical specialist. Sarah welcomed her first baby on July 20th, 2013.
sarah.aklilu@gmail.com

Reyna Franco, MS, RD, CSSD received her MS in Nutrition & Exercise Physiology in 2004. She is the owner of a nutrition and exercise consulting firm, providing nutrition and exercise counseling to individuals and groups. She also develops and provides corporate wellness programs for organizations, and provides sports nutrition

Alumni Notes

seminars for sports clubs and teams, particularly for endurance events such as marathons and triathlons. reyna@reynafranco.com

Ann Gaba EdD, RD, CDN, CDE graduated in 2002 with her Doctor of Education. She is the Dietetic Internship Director for CUNY School of Public Health at Hunter College and runs all operational activities of the internship program. agaba@hunter.cuny.edu

Jerlyn L. Jones, MS, RD, LD graduated in 2009 with an MS in Nutrition Education. She is the Nutrition Education and Wellness Program Coordinator at Good Samaritan Health Center, working closely with the medical and dental health care professionals to develop, plan, and organize nutrition education and cooking classes, provide individual nutritional counseling, and maintain and coordinate events related to the teaching kitchen. She is also Secretary of Nutrition Education for the Dietetic Practice Group within the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

Melissa Buczek Kelly, MS, RD, CDN received her MS in Nutrition Education in 2004. She owns and runs Right Start Nutrition, LLC, her private practice, providing customized nutrition and wellness counseling and corporate wellness services, as well as medical nutrition therapy for a variety of health conditions, including heart disease, diabetes, gastrointestinal disorders, weight management, pre- and post-natal care, eating disorders, and child and family wellness. melissa@rightstartnutrition.com

Anyea Lovette, MS, RD graduated in 2006 with an MS in Nutrition & Exercise Physiology. She is the bariatric program coordinator at Medstar Washington Hospital Center. She and her husband welcomed their first son, Ellis Shepherd Flynn, on October 21, 2012.

Suzanna M. Martinez, MS, PhD received her MS in Nutrition Education in 2004. She then went on to receive her PhD in Public Health, with a concentration in Health Behavior. She works for the University of California, San Francisco as a postdoctoral scholar, researching determinants of pediatric obesity, including diet, physical activity, and sleep. smartini75@yahoo.com

Asako Miyashita, MS, RD graduated with an MS in Nutrition Education in 2009. Asako works as a registered dietitian for Manhattan Wellness Medical Care, and Nihon Medical Healthcare, providing nutrition counseling and marketing.

Maggie Moon, MS, RD received her MS in Nutrition Education in 2007. She is the senior communications manager at Paramount Farms, Inc., promoting the health benefits of pistachios. RD@maggiemoon.com

Angel Planells, MS, RD received his MS in Nutrition & Exercise Physiology in 2006. He works with Veterans Health Administration as a clinical dietitian for home-based primary care, providing home visits to veterans in the community, and education to patients, care-givers, and family members. Angel is happily married with two children, and is now residing in Seattle. He loves the outdoors and coaching and playing soccer. He is also the 2012-2014 Chair for the National Organization of Men in Nutrition (NOMIN). acplanells@gmail.com

Alumni Notes

Lizzy Pope, MS, RD graduated in 2008 with an MS in Nutrition and Exercise Physiology. She is starting as a post-doctorate researcher with Cornell University Food and Brand Lab, working with Dr. Brian Wansink. She is excited to be researching, writing, and teaching about how behavioral economic techniques can help people make better food choices. lizzypope@gmail.com

Danielle Press, MS, RD received her MS in Nutrition and Exercise Physiology in 2009. She works as a nutrition counselor at Riverfront Nutrition Associates. danielle00@gmail.com

Sari Schlüssel-Leeds, MS, RD received her MS in Nutrition Education in 2005. She is an adjunct professor of nutrition education at Westchester Community College and runs her own private practice, focusing on adult and geriatric patients. ssleedsrd@aol.com

Elizabeth Solomon, MS, RD received her MS in Nutrition Education in 2003. She is the Nutrition Education Program Manager for the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, overseeing nutrition education programming in child care centers throughout the city. elizsolo@gmail.com

Jennifer Vimbor, MS, RD, LDN received her MS in Nutrition Education in 2003. She works at the Biggest Loser Resort, helping guests learn how to change the way to approach, manage, portion, menu plan, and purchase food for the rest of their lives. She is also the founder and owner of Nutrition Counseling Services (NCS), a private practice dedicated to providing individualized nutrition counseling. jennifer@chicagonutritionist.com

Sheila Viswanathan, EdD, RD received her Doctor of Education in 2009. She is the manager for Health Education and Research at Safeway, Inc, in charge of corporate wellness. sheilav@alum.mit.edu

Dana Angelo White, MS, RD, ATC (certified athletic trainer) received her MS in Nutrition Education in 2007. She runs her own consulting firm, Dana White Nutrition, Inc., working as a nutrition consultant specializing in culinary and sports nutrition (<http://danawhitenutrition.com/about/>). She is also a full time faculty member at Quinnipiac University in Hamden, CT, teaching in the Athletic Training Department, Medical School, and School of Health Sciences, and is the Sports RD for the Division 1 Athletic Program. info@danawhitenutrition.com

Carla Wolper, EdD, RD received her Doctor of Education in 2007. She works as an assistant professor at the Columbia University Department of Psychiatry, in the Center for Eating Disorders Research. She is developing and delivering a weight loss curriculum for obesity research studies, while supervising feeding studies. She also works as a consultant to health care advertising agencies and their clients and maintains a private practice. cw115@columbia.edu

RESTAURANT REVIEW

By Ryan Renaud

Flat Top is the latest offering from restaurant group Gourmet Foundry, best known for satisfying the late-night ramen cravings of Columbia students at Jin Ramen. With Flat Top, Chef Charles Cho and company have created a charming bistro with thoughtful, eclectic cuisine.

Stepping inside Flat Top feels like you've been transported to a rustic West Village cafe. The restaurant is lined with shelves of worn books and other antique items. At the front is a communal table near large windows that are opened on a nice day. The main seating area is a cozy enclave off to the side that consists of small tables. A large mural of the Riverside Drive overpass highlights this area. Flat Top currently offers lunch and dinner service. Two selections I would recommend are the Farmers' Market House Salad and the Bibimbap. The salad (\$5-11 depending on the size and options you order) comes with seasonal greens and other vegetables, tossed with a house vinaigrette. Adding chicken or salmon is also possible. The Bibimbap (\$12) is marinated Bulgogi beef, carrots, spinach, daikon, bean sprouts, and shiitake mushrooms topped with a fried egg and chili sauce for an added kick. One thing I liked about their

menu is that the Bibimbap, along with several other items, can be made vegetarian upon request.

In addition to lunch and dinner fare, Flat Top serves Blue Bottle coffee and baked goods from nearby Chokolat Patisserie all day. I recommend their Iced New Orleans Chicory Coffee (\$4) for something a little different than your usual cup of joe. The added chicory, along with some simple syrup, results in a drink that tastes like a mocha without the chocolate.

For now, newcomer Flat Top is often quiet enough that I've been able to stop in without a reservation; however, with quality food at fairly reasonable prices in a prime area by campus, I suspect that sooner rather than later you'll have to call ahead. Put Flat Top on your must-eat list and get there before the crowds!



Flat Top

1241 Amsterdam Ave, Morningside Heights, NY 10027 (646) 820-7735
flattopnyc.com

Take the 1 train to 116th Street and walk 1 block east to Amsterdam Ave. Flat Top is on the corner of Amsterdam and 121 Street

Book Review

By Anthony Wind

Review of *Cooked: A Natural History of Transformation*, by Michael Pollan
Penguin Press HC, 1st edition (April 23, 2013)

Michael Pollan is an inspiring author who has written many books, including, *The Omnivore's Dilemma* and *In Defense of Food*. His latest book is called *Cooked*. Michael Pollan's new book walks the reader through 4 methods used to transform raw food into delectable dishes that are extremely nutritious and, in a sense, prepped for easy consumption and digestion. *Cooked* is unique because Pollan immerses himself, dedicating much of his time into learning the cooking process while explaining the science and history of each method. He is both a student and a teacher in this endeavor. He breaks cooking down into four well known procedures: Fire cooking and barbeque, pot cooking with water, bread making and cooking with air, and finally, fermentation and cooking with the earth.

FIRE

Fire cooking brings Pollan to one of the finest barbeque establishments in North Carolina, the Skylight Inn. You'll soon find out all about the process of real barbeque, and how much physical labor is involved in simply getting all those delectable cuts of pork on a plate, skin and all. Along with the details of the process of cooking and smoking and preparing the pig, Pollan informs the reader about the historical, scientific, and even mythological implications that barbeque and animal cooking has had on culture throughout the ages.

WATER

Water cooking, or pot cooking, brings Mr. Pollan back home to Berkeley, California. The reader is introduced to the world of mirepoix (onions carrots and celery sautéed in butter) Soffrito (onions, carrots and celery in olive oil; maybe with parsley or garlic) and braises. Pollan begins to build a greater appreciation for time, and how a cook's patience will allow all those spicy, sweet and savory ingredients inside that giant

cauldron on the stove to chemically meld to form something new and greater than the sum of its parts. Fittingly, as you patiently wait for his sweet and peppery onion soup to caramelize and then simmer in his own fresh vegetable stock (sourced from his garden), he spends quite a bit of time and detail explaining the importance of cooking fresh and local ingredients at home as opposed to microwaving after a long day at work. This is the section where he explains “secondary eating” and how it, among many other variables, is contributing to poor health and obesity. He finishes part 2 by proving that preparing and eating delicious food can be done in a timely manner with healthy ingredients.

AIR

The next section is my personal favorite, as Pollan learns how to perfect the crumb of his own homemade sourdough loaf. Pollan experiments with creating his own starter culture from local yeasts, and speaks of the history of the ancients and their practice of fermentation and cultivation of wheat and barley for bread (and even beer) to sustain life and to provide numerous nutritional benefits. He concludes his history lesson with a description of the process of the industrialization and processing of flour and its implications on world health.

EARTH

The final section brings the reader to an abbey full of nuns, one of which has a PhD in microbiology and is known for her cheese making. Pollan also learns how to pickle and preserve in the form of kimchi, sauerkraut, and canned vegetables. To conclude, he describes alcohol fermentation and how it was (and still is) an essential part of many cultures throughout the world, and how it very well could have started the agricultural system as we know it. This book is informational, fun, and very important. *Cooked* can inspire people to take the time to prepare their own foods, while at the same time avoiding processed foods and allowing the cook to be more mindful of their body. So get some fresh food, and cook with any method you may find suitable, and while you are waiting for your dinner to cook, find the time to read Michael Pollan’s new book, *Cooked*.

Work It Out: Group Fitness

by Stephanie Lang

When life gets busy, physical activity tends to get pushed to the curb. We all know we should move our bodies, so how do we hold ourselves accountable during both the hectic and the humdrum?

Scheduling a group fitness class a few times a week is a great way to devote a block of time to physical activity. These days, there are countless styles of fitness classes to alleviate boredom and fuel the body. Unfortunately, some of these classes cost upwards of \$20, even \$30 per class. Being on a student budget and living in New York City makes affording gym memberships and group fitness classes challenging. Rest assured, you can still get your sweat on for cheap, and the answer may be right under your nose.

Teachers College offers FREE group fitness classes each semester, taught by students trained in exercise physiology. Held in Whittier Café, classes range from half-hour ab workouts to hour-long Zumba, yoga, pi-yo, cardio kickboxing, or total body conditioning. A dynamic 1-hour exercise class can fly by when the music is bumping and the instructor challenges the class to keep moving. The social aspect of group fitness can be a motivator as well—“if everyone else in the class can commit, so can I.” Since these weekly fitness classes are held on the TC campus, you can workout before, in between, or after your academic courses and meetings. If none of the classes fit your schedule, the Columbia’s Dodge Fitness Center offers group fitness classes for a decent price. Keep an eye out for free workouts in the parks, too.

Nonetheless, sometimes, especially when the weather is crummy, it can be a struggle just to leave the house. Enter the world of free online at-home workout videos. A recent NY Times article titled, “Jane Fonda Tapes? Not for a YouTube Generation” discusses the

sensible thing to do when money is tight and being in shape is not negotiable: turn to YouTube videos. The article notes, “If you don’t mind the advertisements that typically run before each video, you can watch as many videos as you like as often as you want, without paying. (Many ads can be skipped after a few seconds anyway).” Just 5-10 minutes is all you need to set aside to get through the average video, but you can string together 3 or 4 videos and get in a solid 45-minute workout.

The article mentions the YouTube XHIT channel as a particularly appealing to a relatively young (13-35 year old) female audience, referencing fit celebrities or quick-burst workouts. And thanks to social media like twitter and Facebook, these fitness instructors can be reached for questions and even a few tips and tricks to achieve better results. Another popular site for videos is fitsugar.com, where well-known trainers make guest-appearances, condensing their workouts into 10-minute snippets of heart-pumping, muscle-toning moves.

Physical activity does not need to burn a hole in your wallet. However you decide to hold yourself accountable for moving your body, just remember to make it fun.

Fall 2013 Fitness Classes at Teachers College will be held September 9-December 19 (excluding Thanksgiving). Check the student activities page to find the updated schedule.

<http://www.tc.columbia.edu/admin/studentactivities/>

References:

- Dolan, Shawn, *Benefits of Group Exercise*, American College of Sports Medicine Jan 20, 2012
- Lawlor, Julia, *Jane Fonda Tapes? Not for a YouTube Generation*, The New York Times Aug 8, 2013

Op-Ed: Food Industry ‘Fun House’

An Artistic Interpretation

by Jack Taliercio

Consumers Have A Lot Of Choice

As I reflect on the modern day food system in the United States, my emotions take me on a passionate ride. When I first step into the food industry ‘fun house’, I am initially lured by the illusions, glamour, and fantastic promises. Governed by a sense of choice, most consumers are thrust upon the machine, guided, fastened, and forced to entrust their safety, wellbeing, and nourishment to the fun house. I am propelled through an enticing festival that rings attractive bells and whistles, enchanting tunes and commands the attention of all people within its realm. Supermarket isles filled with thousands of fancy packages, fast food and fast promises on every corner, and superstars telling me it is all ok. News of this glorious fun house is funneled to us by every conceivable medium. Indeed, it is inescapable.

Foods That Claim To Be Healthy That Are Not.

My emotional trek through the fun house usually starts with a slow teeter up the hill of anger at food industry’s deceptive practices and marketing strategies, especially the kinds aimed directly at children. I am particularly angry at the type of advertising and packaging that promotes junk food by highlighting an added vitamin or mineral. I am angry at a new industry trend called front-of-package labeling, which operates under the guise of providing more readily available information. It simply opened as new forum for food industry marketers to exploit. Working

within the processed food paradigm, front-of-package labeling is the type of illusion that unsuspecting consumers can easily fall prey to. A carton of artificially flavored and colored sugar water with “100% daily value of vitamin C” written on the front comes to mind. The fact that I now swim in a giant sea of constantly evolving objects and chemicals is another example of what makes me angry. Why should I be forced to expend ever-increasing amounts of energy just to avoid the traps of an industry bent on making me buy junk?

Government Regulations Are Not Set-up To Promote Health Or The Environment.

Continuing my journey, I go deeper into a room of sadness, induced by thoughts of the tremendous lapses in governmental policies related to food and agriculture. How much environmental damage or economic burden of healthcare will it take for policy makers to finally realize that subsidies are misplaced? How many sick children and hungry families? Of course, it is likely not a matter of realization at all, but one of corporate lobbying efforts and corruption. I am saddened by the fact that I contribute to the \$260 billion dollars in agricultural subsidies that go to the country’s largest farms, to grow just a few commodity crops, most of which are not directly eaten by humans.

Corporations Have To Please Their Shareholders

Moreover, in relation to corporate operations and their public image,

writer Joel Bakan, author of “The Corporation”, sums up my feelings perfectly when he writes, “A corporation can do good, only to help itself do well, a profound limit on just how much good it can do.” Social and environmental goals can never be pursued, by a corporation, as ends in themselves and it would be considered a violation of shareholder trust, and immoral to do so. This dilemma was illustrated beautifully in a case of a humble soap maker who supported human rights and other causes, turned corporate giant, and ultimately was forced to succumb to selfish corporate goals. Most corporations, food industry included, function in a narrow-minded system that is designed to maximize growth and profit for shareholders, and often without regard for long-term consequences. Perhaps, as sustainability issues become more and more of a threat to business as usual, we will see the appearance of an increasing number of businesses that choose to incorporate as “B Corporations”.

As my fun house expedition comes to a close, I cruise along some hopeful thoughts as well. For instance, I take some comfort in animal welfare reforms, localized food production efforts, and the increasing importance for the role of nutrition educators. I am also hopeful that a collective change is taking place at the community level, which is demanding more transparency and equality in the food system.

Out and About

By Lisa Hayim

I spent my summer working at Camp Shane, a weight loss overnight camp located in upstate New York. Since I am studying to complete my Master's in Nutrition and Exercise Physiology here at Teachers College, I felt working at a weight loss camp would be a great hands on experience in the field of both fitness and nutrition. I was hired as both a general counselor, and as the Pilates instructor. I taught three Pilates classes a day, with campers ranging between the ages of 8 years old to 22. To make it fun, and minimize the fear of exercising, I modified my classical training to better fit the needs of my new students. My goal was to keep the class as exciting as possible, and demonstrate that fitness doesn't have to be dreadful. I kept them smiling by adding simple dances, modifying the Pilates moves, and playing songs they liked. I even allowed the campers to make a play list that could be used during our time together.

At Camp Shane, the dietitians believe in providing the kids with all foods, but in moderation. They want the kids to feel they can still eat meals with their friends at home, but learn to control their own portions. Each day, they serve foods that get the kids excited, with the idea of avoiding making them feel "on a diet." They serve typical summer camp fare, like pizza, pasta, baked chicken nuggets, and hamburgers.

Healthy eating is not a concern during regular meal time, which, some would argue, does not teach kids the valuable lesson of choosing to eat more nutritious foods, nor does it introduce them to healthy foods during meal time. However, the kids attend nutrition education and cooking classes once a week on various topics. When they return home, they receive a monthly newsletter with new recipes and healthy facts. During the cooking classes, the campers are able to get a hands-on experience of how to prepare easy, healthy meals at home. The campers learn about new ingredients, and how to combine and cook them on their own. During one of our cooking classes, we made hummus from scratch, quinoa with feta cheese, and black bean brownies. The kids loved it!

The campers also receive cognitive behavior therapy a few times a week. During these sessions, the campers meet with a therapist to record their food, exercise, and emotions. The purpose of the therapy is to help the campers gain control, cognitive awareness, and provide them the tools for long term success. As a counselor, I was not allowed to sit in on these sessions to protect camper confidentiality.

During the course of eight weeks, I watched remarkable transformations. Some of the campers lost up to 60 lbs in just 9 weeks. This unique experience helped me to develop the necessary

tools for success in my future career.

The first, and hardest challenge was gaining the trust of my campers. For days, I worked to show the campers that I was on their side, and would support them in their journey no matter what setbacks they faced along the way. As someone who has never struggled with weight, I had to work even harder to gain credibility and show the campers that I could relate. I did this by explaining to them that even though someone doesn't struggle with the same issue, they too have their share of battles. I was able to win their love, trust, and became a strong leader within our small community that they could rely on.

I will forever value my time spent at Camp Shane and carry with me all the lessons it has taught me.





Recipe by Janna Grubner

RECIPE CORNER

Brown Rice Pumpkin Risotto

- 1 garlic bulb, roasted
- 1 tbsp. butter (or olive oil)
- 1 cup diced shallot or onion, diced
- 2 cups brown rice
- 2 cups diced fresh or canned pumpkin
- 4 ½ cups vegetable stock
- ½ cup dry white wine
- 2 handfuls chopped fresh basil
- ¼ tsp. nutmeg
- ½ cup toasted, chopped pecans or walnuts
- ½ cup grated parmesan cheese (optional)

Recipe:

Heat butter in a large pot. Add in shallot and cook until soft (about 5 minutes). Add in the rice, stir until coated and cook for another 2 minutes. Add in white wine and stir until almost evaporated. Stir in pumpkin. If using fresh, cook pumpkin for a few minutes, stirring occasionally. Add vegetable broth and bring to a boil. Turn down the heat, cover and simmer for 40 minutes or until risotto reaches your desired consistency. Stir risotto occasionally while it is cooking to make sure the rice is not sticking to the bottom of the pot.

Squeeze out roasted garlic cloves into cooked risotto. Stir in chopped basil and season with nutmeg, and salt and pepper to taste. Serve garnished with toasted pecans or walnuts and grated cheese.

Summer Asian Noodle Salad

- ½ lb soba noodles
- 2 bunches of bok choy, rinsed and sliced lengthwise
- ½ cup carrots, chopped
- ¼ cup radishes, chopped
- 2 eggs (optional)
- 1 Tbsp sesame oil
- 1 Tbsp mirin (rice wine)
- 1 Tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 1 Tbsp soy sauce

Cook the soba noodles in boiling water, 8-10 minutes, then remove using a slotted spoon, reserving the boiling water.

Add the bok choy and carrots for 30 seconds (or to desired tenderness). Remove and run under cold water to stop cooking process.

In a bowl, whisk the dressing ingredients together.

Place the noodles and vegetables in serving bowl and pour the dressing over, mixing to coat.

Optional: add poached or fried egg to complete the dish!

Jennifer adds fresh crushed basil leaves, scallion, and cilantro to the dressing before mixing it, to add a bit more flavor to this fresh salad!