

Martha Bayless
 Spring 2015
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FLR 410/510: The Medieval Feast in Theory and Practice

People often study only one aspect of the Middle Ages at a time: the literature alone, or the people, or the food, or the entertainment. In this course we'll study the breadth of late medieval life, centered on a particular occasion in a particular time and place: a feast held at Barley Hall, in York, England, in 1483. We'll look at the images, literature and meaning of medieval feasts, incorporating other aspects of medieval life such as clothing and entertainment, thinking about all these aspects from the point of view of anthropology, history, and cultural analysis, and culminating in an actual reenactment of the feast.

Required texts:

Barley Hall (guidebook; to be bought in class)

Bridget Ann Henisch, *Fast and Feast: Food in Medieval Society* (at Duck Store)

Recommended:

Raffaella Sarti, *Europe at Home*. Not ordered for Duck Store; available used at Amazon.com and Half.com for \$2.95+. The assigned excerpts will be on Blackboard, but you may want to buy this very interesting book to read and refer to.

All other texts will be on Blackboard or available in class.

Note that participation in the final feast is *required*, and there will be an additional monetary charge (to be determined by the class) for the feast. The date and time of the feast will also be determined by the class.

Learning Outcomes for this Course

- Identify, explain and analyze food behavior in the Middle Ages, especially in comparison with modern food practices
- Identify, explain and analyze common cultural practices of the late Middle Ages and early modern period, especially as regards domestic matters
- Reflect on and analyze modern expressions of medieval culture

Grading:

Undergraduates:

Option A: Short papers

Preparation and participation: 20%

Midterm and final quizzes: 10% each

Average of 3 short assignments: 30%

Capstone paper (10 pages): 30%

Option B: Longer project

Preparation and participation: 20%

Midterm and final quizzes: 10% each

Average of 3 short assignments: 20%

Long project (15-20+ pages): 50%

Graduates:

Same as option B above

Note that all work done from this class should be original and your own (apart from group projects as assigned). Plagiarism/academic dishonesty will result in an F for the course. For more on plagiarism and academic dishonesty, please see <http://library.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/index.html>.

If you have a documented disability, you're invited to see me about how we can arrange for you to receive accommodations for this class. If you think you may need to receive official documentation for a disability, check with the Accessible Education Center at aec.uoregon.edu.

Schedule:

Week 1: Thinking About Food

March

M 30: Introduction to food and feasting; outline of the course

April

W 1: Thinking and unthinking the Food Rules

Read before class: "Food Rules in the United States" (on Blackboard)

Week 2: Medieval Feasting

M 6: Feasting detective work: the basics of the medieval feast
(an art-historical detective exercise)

Reading: Nichola Fletcher, "The Golden Age: Medieval Feasting"
(from *Charlemagne's Tablecloth*) (on Blackboard)

W 8: Fasting and Feasting: the concepts. Capstone paper and longer paper assignments handed out.

Reading: Nichola Fletcher, "The Renaissance: Evolution of European Banquets"
(from *Charlemagne's Tablecloth*)

Caroline Walker Bynum, "Fast, Feast, and Flesh: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women" (both on Blackboard)

Week 3: Medieval Food, Medieval York, and Barley Hall

M 13: Salt and pepper: a case study (lecture). Daily life in the Middle Ages. Reading: Henisch, ch. 2, "Mealtimes," and ch. 3, "Fast and Feast"

W 15: Medieval York, medieval England, and 1483. Barley Hall and its inhabitants. Assignment of identities. Reading: *Barley Hall* (purchased). Due: preliminary submission on capstone or longer assignment.

Week 4: Life in a Medieval Household

M 20: The development of the house in the Middle Ages. Sewing assignment handed out. Reading: Raffaella Sarti, ch. IV, "The Home" (from *Europe at Home*), (on Blackboard).

W 22: Cooking and eating: cauldrons, cutlery, and more

Reading: from Bee Wilson, *Consider the Fork* (on Blackboard)

Week 5: Medieval Food and Meals

M 27: Theories and practicalities of medieval food. Cooking & eating assignment passed out.

Reading: Raffaella Sarti, ch. V, "Food" (*Europe at Home* pp. 148-78),
Nichola Fletcher, "The Feast of St Antony: Pigs — The Peasant's Feast" (from
Charlemagne's Tablecloth) (both on Blackboard)

W 29: What to eat and how to make a feast. **Midterm quiz**

Reading: Hensch, *Fast and Feast*, ch. 5, "Methods and Menus," ch. 7, "Feasts"

Week 6: The Hands-On Middle Ages

May

M 4: Sewing & reading day. Written component of sewing assignment due. *Bring your sewing project to class to work on.*

W 6: Eating day. *Bring your medieval dish to eat during class.* Written component of cooking assignment due.

Week 7: Medieval Entertainment

M 11: Medieval entertainment and celebrations

Reading: from Ronald Hutton, *Stations of the Sun: A History of the Ritual Year in Britain* (on Blackboard)

W 13: *This class will not meet today. Instead, do something medieval!*

Week 8: Feast planning

M 18: Reports from the Clothing and Entertainment Groups; in-class planning

W 20: Report from the Marshall and Food Groups; in-class planning

Week 9: Authentic and Inauthentic Feasts

M 25: Discussion of *The Boko of Nurture* and medieval account books

Reading: excerpts from *The Boko of Nurture* (on Blackboard)

W 27: "Medieval Times" and Movies: Spot-the-Anachronism Day
No reading.

Week 10: The Oregon Feast

June

M 1: Feast logistics: in-class exercise. Bring your "power analysis" to class.

W 3: Analysis, conclusions and congratulations. Final quiz. Capstone paper due.

There is no final exam in this class. Longer projects and graduate papers are due Tuesday, June 9, at 5 pm, by e-mail to mjbayles@uoregon.edu.