

# CITYFOOD SYMPOSIUM

A Political and Cultural History of Street Vending



**APRIL 4TH-6TH**

**PRESENTED BY NYU**

---

Institute for Public Knowledge (IPK)  
2nd floor, Room 222  
20 Cooper Square, New York, NY, 10003



**NYU**

NYU OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE, NYU

NYU STEINHARDT

NYU CENTER FOR THE HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF NUTRITION AND FOOD STUDIES, NYU STEINHARDT



## **WELCOME TO CITYFOOD SYMPOSIUM: A POLITICAL AND CULTURAL HISTORY OF STREET VENDING**

As scholars have developed a rich repertoire of research on immigrant street vendors in global cities, food peddlers in newly industrialized countries, and hawkers in nineteenth-century Europe, it has brought us to a threshold of productive conceptualization, with its attendant challenges of communication between scholars, practitioners and policymakers. The current state of knowledge provides opportunities to launch cross-national and cross-temporal comparisons, develop conceptualization, appraise methods, investigate data collection processes across disciplines, and recommend best practices. Focused comparison will strengthen our understanding of how global and local forces are shaping the political, economic, social, and spatial elements of street food vending. This interdisciplinary work aims to reinforce the relationship between cities and street vendors, and ensures that such mobile entrepreneurs continue to thrive as vital components of our urban economies, by interrogating the historical and contemporary relationship between the legal environment, livelihoods of mobile people, and the liveliness of cities.

New York University's global network, which includes the Washington Square Park, Shanghai and Abu Dhabi campuses, in conjunction with the University of Toronto Scarborough, is hosting a symposium to provide an opportunity for a more integrated network of scholars and collaborators on street food research. The symposium is designed to establish an analytical framework where street-foodscapes become central to our understanding of cities from a socioeconomic, political, cultural and urban planning context. The body of work brought together through the symposium will ultimately help generate new understandings of street food vending and help promote sustainable urban development and equitable public policy.

Outcomes:

- Develop and sharpen the conceptual frame and widen the comparative scope.
- Plan and execute the next iteration of CityFood in 2018.
- Over the next two years edit a special issue of a journal, produce a book, and a collaborative website.

We're excited to bring together this interdisciplinary collaboration of global scholars and we look forward to the insight and discussions your participation will produce.

*Sincerely,*

**CityFood Symposium Organizing Committee**  
Spring 2017

**EVENT INFO**

CityFoodSymposium@nyu.edu  
Department of Nutrition and Food Studies  
411 Lafayette St, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10003  
(212) 998-5580



**HOTEL**

Holiday Inn Lower East Side  
150 Delancey St , New York, NY 10002  
(212) 475-2500  
lowermanhattannychotel.com

**SYMPOSIUM PANELS**

Institute for Public Knowledge (IPK)  
2nd floor, Room 222  
20 Cooper Square, New York, NY, 10003



**RECEPTION, MONDAY, APRIL 3RD**

Maiden Lane  
162 Avenue B, New York, NY 10009  
(at the corner of E 10th St.)

**RECEPTION, TUESDAY, APRIL 4TH**

The WREN  
344 Bowery, New York, NY 10012  
(at the corner of Great Jones Street)

**DINNER, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5TH**

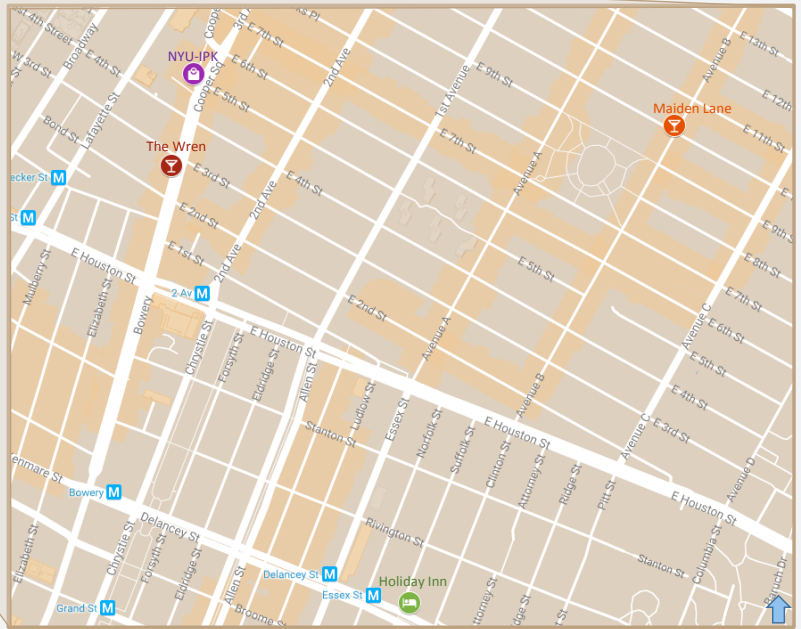
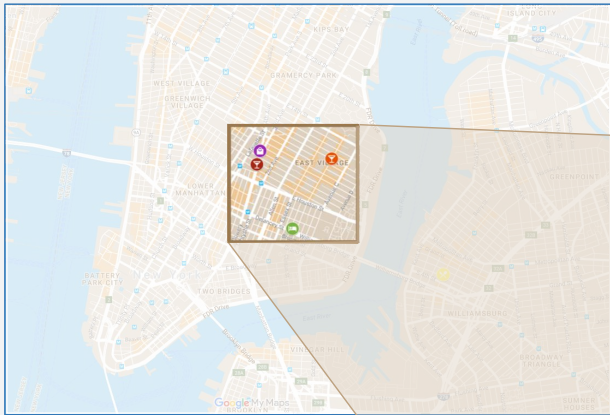
Wild Brooklyn  
340 Bedford Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11211  
(between S 2nd and S 3rd St.)

**PUBLIC EVENT, THURSDAY, APRIL 6TH**

IPK, 20 Cooper Sq, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10003

# MAPS

## getting around the east village & the lower east side



**NYU-IPK**  
20 Cooper Square  
2nd Floor  
New York, NY, 10003

**Holiday Inn**  
150 Delancey St, New  
York, NY 10002

**Maiden Lane**  
162 Avenue B, New  
York, NY 10009  
April 3

**The Wren**  
344 Bowery, New  
York, NY 10012  
April 4

From the  
Holiday Inn

### DINNER DIRECTIONS

From  
NYU-IPK

1) From the Delancey St/Essex St Station, take the Brooklyn-bound J/M train one stop to Marcy Street Station.

2) From the Marcy St Station, walk west on Broadway, then make a right (north) on Havemeyer Street. Make a left (west) on S 3rd Street and then a right (north) onto Bedford Avenue. Wild is on the left hand side.



**Wild Brooklyn**  
340 Bedford Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11211  
(between S 2nd and S 3rd St.)  
(347) 599-0699

1) From IPK, make a left onto 3rd Avenue and walk north to 14th Street.

2) Enter 3 Avenue Station and take the Brooklyn Bound L train two stops to Bedford Avenue

3) Exit station, turn left from 7th Street onto Bedford Avenue and walk south for approx. 10 minutes. Wild will be on your right hand side.

## SCHEDULE

### MONDAY, APRIL 3RD, 2017

18:00 – 20:00

#### **Kick-off reception at Maiden Lane**

[www.themaidentlane.com](http://www.themaidentlane.com)

162 Avenue B, New York, NY 10009

(at the corner of E 10th St.)

*From the hotel: Walk north on Suffolk St. After crossing Houston St., continue north on Ave. B (to the right across Houston). Restaurant will be on your left.*

### TUESDAY, APRIL 4TH, 2017

09.00 – 09.30

#### **Arrival and coffee**

09.30 – 10.00

#### **Welcome and introduction**

- Krishnendu Ray (New York University)  
*Welcome and introduction of the project*
- Anneke Geysen (New York University)  
*Street food research: State of the field*

10.00 – 12.30

#### **Panel 1: Method and meaning**

Discussant: Martina Kaller (Stanford University)

- Jo Sharma (University of Toronto Scarborough)  
*Cries and sights: Finding histories of street foods and vendors*
- Jeffrey Pilcher (University of Toronto Scarborough)  
*Cobblestone kitchens: Notes on the world history of street food*
- Manpreet Kaur Janeja (University of Copenhagen)  
*Rethinking street foods. Street food hospitality in contemporary Calcutta*
- Jonathan Shapiro Anjaria (Brandeis University)  
*Material, metaphor, metonymy: Street food and other objects of the city*

12.30 – 13.30

#### **Lunch break**

Lunch provided by Lighthouse Outpost

241 Mulberry St, New York, NY 10012

13.30 – 15.30

#### **Panel 2: Heritage making**

Discussant: Mark Swislocki (New York University)

- Daniel Bender (University of Toronto Scarborough)  
*Dipping in the common sauce pot: Satay vending and good taste politics in colonial and post-colonial Singapore*

*Panel 2 continued on following page*



## SCHEDULE

- Lynne Milgram (OCAD University)  
*What happens when we take the “street” out of “street food”?: (Re)fashioning Philippine street foods and vending*
- Fabio Parasecoli (The New School)  
*Reshaping Italian foodways: From cibo di strada to street food*

15.30 – 16.00

### Coffee break

16.00 – 18.00

### Panel 3: Gender

Discussant: Sharon Zukin (CUNY Brooklyn College)

- Robert Ji-Song Ku (SUNY Binghamton University)  
*Beyond pojangmacha: Edae food Carts and the future of Seoul’s social gastronomy*
- James Farrer (Sophia University)  
*Street drinking: The reinvention of public drinking in a Tokyo commuter station*
- Daniëlle van den Heuvel (University of Amsterdam)  
*The freedom of the streets: Gender and Urban Space in Europe and Asia (1600-1850)*

18.00 – 20.00

### Drinks at The Wren

[www.thewrennyc.com](http://www.thewrennyc.com)

344 Bowery, New York, NY 10012  
(at the corner of Great Jones Street)

*From the conference: Walk south on Cooper Square (past W 4th St.). Restaurant is two blocks down on your right.*

## WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5TH, 2017

09.30 – 10.00

### Arrival and coffee

10.00 – 12.00

### Panel 4: Community and identity

Discussant: Donna Gabaccia (University of Toronto Scarborough)

- Hasia R. Diner (New York University)  
*Buying and selling food on the “Jewish street”*
- Scarlett Lindeman (CUNY Graduate Center)  
*Comida callejera en CDMX: When the fringe becomes the mainstream*
- Anneke Geyzen (New York University)  
*A comparative ethnohistory of street food vendors in Brussels and New York (19th – 20th centuries)*

12.00 – 13.00

### Lunch break

Lunch provided by Taim

45 Spring St, New York, NY 10012



## SCHEDULE

- 13.00 – 15.30 **Panel 5: Urban space/the city**  
Discussant: Ken MacDonald (University of Toronto Scarborough)
- Anna Greenspan (New York University)  
*Deep mapping Shanghai's street food*
  - Amita Baviskar (Institute of Economic Growth, University of Delhi)  
*Street food and the art of survival: Migrants and space in Delhi*
  - Jaclyn Rohel (New York University)  
*Urban indigestion: Paan, public sociality and the politics of the street*
  - Noah Allison (The New School)  
*Mapping the unmapped: sidewalk vendors along New York City's Roosevelt Avenue*
- 15.30 – 16.00 **Coffee break**  
16.00 – 18.00 **Panel 6: Gentrification**  
Discussant: Nancy Foner (CUNY Hunter College)
- Kathleen Dunn (Loyola University Chicago)  
*The lady selling churros in the subway: The border beneath the gentrification frontier*
  - Amy Hanser (University of British Columbia)  
*Good food in the city: How cultural ideas about food influence food vending*
  - Edward Whittall (York University)  
*Olé! strategies, tactics, and the street theatre of food trucks*
- 19.30 – 21.30 **Dinner at Wild Brooklyn**  
[www.eatdrinkwild.com/locations/williamsburg](http://www.eatdrinkwild.com/locations/williamsburg)  
340 Bedford Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11211  
(between S 2nd and S 3rd St.)  
*From the conference: Take the 6 train from Astor Place uptown to Union Square (one stop). Change for the L train to Brooklyn. Get off at Bedford Ave (three stops) and head south on Bedford Ave. The restaurant is located between S 2nd and S 3rd St.*

## THURSDAY, APRIL 6TH, 2017

- 09.00 – 09.30 **Arrival and coffee**
- 09.30 – 12.30 **Panel 7: Regulations and agency**  
Discussant: Joseph Heathcott (The New School)
- Ryan Devlin (John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY)  
*Contesting neoliberal spatial policy: Food vendors, public space, and the limits of revanchism in New York*

*Panel 7 continued on following page*



## SCHEDULE

- Tiana Bakić Hayden (New York University)  
*Permitting uncertainty: A discussion of street vending licenses and the meaning of the law in Mexico City*
- Mark Vallianatos (Independent scholar)  
*More than a meal: How street vending helped shape the Los Angeles region*
- Annette Miae Kim (Sol Price School of Public Policy, University of Southern California)  
*The social reconstruction of (im)migrant urbanisms: Narrating legitimacy and standing in Los Angeles, Ho Chi Minh City, and Beijing*

12.30 – 14.00

### **Roundtable and lunch**

Moderator: Krishnendu Ray (New York University)  
Lunch provided by Lighthouse Outpost  
241 Mulberry St, New York, NY 10012.

15.00 – 19.00

### **Public event and reception**

- **Keynote:** Alfonso Morales (University of Wisconsin-Madison)
- **Film screening:** Sarah K. Khan's "Queens Migrant Kitchen"

### **Moderated discussion 1: Street food representations**

Moderator: Sam Sundius (New York University)

- Jack Tchen  
New York University
- Sarah K. Khan  
Independent Scholar and Filmmaker
- Dave Cook  
Writer and blogger at "Eating in Translation"

### **Moderated discussion 2: Street food regulations and policy**

Moderator: Noah Allison (The New School)

- Sean Basinski  
The Street Vendor Project
- Barbara Turk  
Director of Food Policy for the City of New York
- Heather Lee  
New York University
- Joseph Heathcott  
The New School





## ABSTRACTS

### NOAH ALLISON

The New School  
Urban space/the city

#### **Mapping the unmapped: Sidewalk vendors along New York City's Roosevelt Avenue**

The changing nature of immigration in the United States has led scholars to recognize that immigrant settlement patterns in urban areas have become noticeably complex, finely differentiated by class, race, ethnicity, identity and interests. The city street is therefore subject to constant renegotiation amongst its residents and businesses to reestablish boundaries—both physical and meta-physical—of the local, social, economic, political, cultural and linguistic landscape. As such, “border crossing” emerges as a critical part of everyday urban experience in streets, schools, markets, restaurants, gardens, and parks, where the negotiation of space, identities, values, and rights occur through encounters with others. Identifying how and where sidewalk vendors along and near Roosevelt Avenue in Queens (re)negotiate the spaces that are not overtly public or private will add to Edward Soja's spatial justice construct by analyzing the interplay between global and local forces and the influence of the state and its municipals. Focusing specifically on sidewalks along Roosevelt Avenue additionally illuminates what the purpose of public space is in the context of urban development, who has the legitimate right to use it, for what kind of activities, and when, providing a framework to examine the placemaking practices that immigrant sidewalk vendors play in the growth of New York City in a post-industrial economy.

### JONATHAN SHAPIRO ANJARIA

Brandeis University  
Method and meaning

#### **Material, metaphor, metonymy: Street food and other objects of the city**

Where does the significance of street food lie? In the social processes it uniquely represents? In its ubiquity? Or in its taste? Street food, it seems, has multiple functions: as metaphor, metonymy and as a material force in the city. Street foods are said to symbolize a city's unique character, they function as a central feature of its social life and, of course, they generate pleasure. Whereas food writing often implicitly privileges one perspective over the others, this paper examines how we might grasp these multiple functions together. I focus on Mumbai's vada pao, a richly spiced fried potato fritter that is ubiquitous, is said to represent the city's entrepreneurial spirit and has many obsessive fans. I show how street food makes, and doesn't make, meaning in the city. By not just interpreting street food as a sign of social processes—as a bearer of meaning—but also as physical thing whose presence itself produces meaning, we might be able to think more think more expansively about the relationship the city and the objects found within it.

### AMITA BAVISKAR

Institute of Economic Growth, University of Delhi  
Urban space/the city

#### **Street food and the art of survival: Migrants and space in Delhi**

Urban order is predicated on the regulation of city spaces and the social and economic practices that animate them. Street food, like other forms of vending, disrupts and defies a modernist conception of orderly urban space and is thus frowned upon by planners, municipal officials and the bourgeois public, even as it is accommodated through an ‘informal’ cultural politics that includes complicity and corruption, tolerance and sympathy. How do street food vendors, especially migrants who cannot muster much social and economic capital, negotiate their way through an unequal city? In this paper, I use ethnographic vignettes to argue that, as much as the differences between street food vendors and other, more established, sellers of food, it is the differences between vendors that account for their heterogeneous survival strategies. These differences relate to histories of migration and ethnic identities, as well as to the variegated space of the city. Understanding and addressing the heterogeneity of urban spaces as well as street food vendors is essential for devising any policy that aims to secure their rights.



## ABSTRACTS

### DANIEL BENDER

University of Toronto Scarborough  
Heritage making

#### **Dipping in the common sauce pot: Satay vending and good taste politics in colonial and post-colonial Singapore**

This paper examines oral histories and visual representations of satay vendors and consumption from the colonial era to the post-colonial era. It uses these sources to understand how Singaporeans created origin myths surrounding a symbolically-important food sold by hawkers and shared across many of the island's different religious and ethnic communities. The way they depict and recall satay vending provided a way to reflect upon the rapid urban changes of Singapore as it moved from multiethnic colony to global financial hub. Singapore once had a bustling street food culture in which the very rhythms of daily life were dictated by the passage of street vendors as they made their way around the colonial city. The movement of street vendors into covered hawker centres was a priority of the People's Party and a critical form of social engineering in building the multiethnic and capitalist city state. My goal is not to find the 'true' roots – the original satay – but to understand how the Singapore colony, then nation, depended for sustenance and pleasure on a food that was both shared across ethnic lines and a speciality of mobile peoples.

### RYAN DEVLIN

John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY  
Regulations and agency

#### **Contesting neoliberal spatial policy: Food vendors, public space, and the limits of revanchism in New York**

Street vendors have been a part of the landscape of New York City for centuries. Despite their ubiquity and historical lineage, the right of vendors do business on the sidewalks and streets of New York is one that has been hotly contested over the years. The late twentieth century was a particularly contentious time for street vendors. Amid a broader shift toward neoliberal forms of urban governance and aggressive strategies of public space management, street vendors were targeted for strict regulation, even elimination by business and real estate interests and their allies within city government. In fact, nearly every current law regulating street vending in New York was enacted between 1977 and 2000. This paper will examine the struggle over street vending and public space during these years, paying particular attention to the ways in which vendors contested their exclusion. It will show how, drawing on decidedly liberal discourses of historical rootedness, entrepreneurialism, market competition, and fairness vendors were able to push back against attempts to regulate them out of space. Rather than put forth radical critiques of the city under capitalism, vendors utilized internal critiques of neoliberal urban policies in order to defend their place in the city. While this approach left many aspects of neoliberal ideology unchallenged, it nevertheless served as a powerful and destabilizing critique of the broader neoliberal project of urban governance.

### HASIA DINER

NYU Skirball Department of Hebrew and Judaic Studies  
Community and Identity

#### **Buying and selling food on the “Jewish street”**

This paper investigates the relationship between food and identity through the lens of Jewish peddlers who migrated from Europe and the Ottoman Empire to the New World (America) from the 1820s through the 1920s. On the one hand, the Jewish peddlers sold foods to other Jews that represented the tastes and smells of back home, with the savory knishes as prime example. These foods were not sold or eaten in the street back home, but became street food in America. On the other hand, they also sold food that had not been part of their repertoire back home, but that became incorporated into New World Jewish foodways, like seltzer water, fruits and vegetables, hot dogs, ice cream, and roasted chestnuts. Jewish community building and identity construction were based on these foods sold outdoors. Food Peddling offered immigrant Jews and their children direct, visceral exposure to tastes of home but also new foods, be they bananas, roasted chestnuts, soda, or frankfurters. Such selling also gave Jewish women a chance to earn money on the one hand, but allowed other women, the housewives to bargain, cajole, shout and barter in ways that they could not in real stores. The peddling of food on the street became a political issue as city governments sought to drive the sale of food from the streets to the interior of shops. This then emerged as an internally divisive matter within Jewish communities as some leaders and segments of the public sided with the food peddlers and others with those who owned stores and seemed to be more respectable. The history of Jewish food peddling in its many immigration destinations provides a window into their transplantation, urbanization, and economic activities.



## ABSTRACTS

### KATHLEEN DUNN

Loyola University Chicago  
Gentrification

#### **The lady selling churros in the subway: The border beneath the gentrification frontier**

While global cities maintain elite status by attracting a transnational capital class, poor and working class immigrants play a crucial but subordinated role in sustaining these urban economies as well. This paper takes a relational view of the division of labor that produces the global city to illuminate the productive value of immigrant marginalization. Drawing on extensive fieldwork among New York City street vendors, I focus on the dialectical relationship between the conditions of low-income Latina street food vendors and those of gourmet food truck owners, a new class of native-born and highly educated entrepreneurs who have gentrified street food vending in global cities around the world. Here I focus on how the state's production of lower-income immigrant street vending as an urban problem facilitates gentrification. I argue that the border, understood as state practices of surveillance and militarization directed at labor migrants, is a constituent element of the gentrification frontier. Latina food vendors in particular face intense criminalization, while native-born gourmet food truck owners help to resolve the 'problem' of the lady selling churros in the subway by innovating food vending into a practice more reflective of cosmopolitan elites. The relationship between border and frontier constitutes an increasingly important mechanism of immigrant marginalization in the global city.

### JAMES FARRER

Sophia University  
Gender

#### **Street drinking: The reinvention of public drinking in a Tokyo commuter station**

In post-war Japan vast black market districts surrounded urban commuter train stations with warrens of small-scale retail, food and alcohol vendors. Most were bulldozed and remade into modern shopping districts based on covered arcades and department stores. Only a few of these dense warrens of pedestrian alleyways survived into the 21st century. Recently there has been a widespread revival of these vintage market streets, but sometimes with a radically new organization of public and private space. One of the most important trends is the opening up of building fronts and the use of the alleyway, sidewalk and street corner itself as a space of eating and drinking. The movement from private and intimate indoor spaces of post-war bar culture to the street level night-market style of drinking represents several simultaneous trends. One is a challenge to the public-private divide in Japanese consumer culture, with people eating and drinking in public. Another is the transformation in the gendered culture of drinking from private male-oriented bars to mixed gendered consumer models. Finally there is the appropriation of public street space for food and alcohol consumption. At the same time, it is important that these are primarily seen as spaces for public drinking and not simply eating. Drinking in public implies an informalization, "intimizing," and sexualization of public space in Japan. The use of city space for public drinking should also be considered as an important feature of the foodscape of global cities. This paper will be based on ethnographic observations and interviews in four alleyway drinking streets in Western Tokyo.

### ANNEKE GEYZEN

New York University  
Community and identity

#### **A comparative ethnohistory of street food vendors in Brussels and New York (19th – 20th centuries)**

My paper investigates street food vendors' identities from a comparative ethnohistorical perspective. Historians have indirectly approached street food vending in broader analyses of migration trajectories and retail networks in European and North American cities between the 16th and the first half of the 20th century. Building on the repeated use of legal and police records, they have produced a canon of the phenomenon as an informal stop-gap economy for marginal groups in search for subsistence. Recent studies, however, have raised questions the current canon cannot answer. New research on migrant entrepreneurship in global cities, for instance, questions the informality paradigm that dominates historiography. The interpretation of the trade as an informal economy reveals a top-down approach that hardly acknowledges street food vendors' economic function as community entrepreneurs and food retailers to low-income consumers. This paper abandons historians' top-down approach and proposes a comparative ethnohistory of street food vendors' commercial activities and socio-economic background. The analysis builds on two case studies, namely Brussels between 1845 and 1856, and New York between 1898 and 1906. This periodization finds justification in Brussels' and New York's micro-contexts of street food. During these respective periods, both cities witnessed an increase in



## ABSTRACTS

the number of pushcarts on the streets, but they dealt with this growth in different ways. Brussels was a liberal municipality and developed regulations in light of a free market economy during the second half of the 19th century, while New York spent the first decades of the 20th century investigating if pushcarts should be abolished or not. Consequently, the question at issue is what street food vending looked like and who the vendors were in these contrasting contexts. I will answer this question by means of the integrated use of several sources, namely official reports, commerce and market registers and population and census records.

### **ANNA GREENSPAN**

NYU Shanghai

Urban space/the city

#### **Deep mapping Shanghai's street food**

Scholars like Ananya Roy and Jennifer Robinson have argued that there is a geographical prejudice in urban theory such that our understanding and ideas about some modern cities has become the model for all. The 'historical experience and cultural conditions of a few 'great' cities,' writes Roy, 'have come to stand in for all conceptualizations of the urban.' Under this theorization, Shanghai, China's largest and most cosmopolitan city, is doomed to backwardness and can only aspire, mimic or catch up with another model of urban modernity that has already happened elsewhere.

This paper participates in a rethinking of the modern city by focusing on the contemporary metropolis of Shanghai. It does so by concentrating on street markets, street culture, street life and street food. It argues that while Shanghai's officials and urban planners often equate urban development with 'cleaning up the streets,' the snacks (xiao chi 小吃) that are sold from the small shops and mobile stands - dumplings steamed in wooden baskets, nighttime barbecues, carts selling stir-fried noodles - are an integral part of the liveliness and livability of the 21st century megacity.

The paper is based on Moveable Feasts (<http://www.sh-streetfood.org>) an ongoing project in the digital humanities, which aims to investigate Shanghai's shifting street food landscape.

Moveable Feasts is a platform for experimental practices in critical cartography, which uses new digital cartographic tools to map the impermanence of the informal city. In doing so, it seeks to challenge mapping's role as a method of authoritarian control, and use it instead as process of exploration, discovery and - hopefully - future possibility.

### **AMY HANSER**

University of British Columbia

Gentrification

#### **Good food in the city: How cultural ideas about food influence food vending**

In cities across North America, sidewalk street vending is highly restricted and in many cases has been regulated out of existence, yet in recent years many cities have begun to welcome a particular form of street vending—food trucks and carts—to formerly forbidden urban spaces. This paper argues that food, and cultural values associated with food, provide an important piece of the explanation for this seeming reversal on street vending policies. Based upon case studies of Portland, Oregon and Vancouver, British Columbia, I demonstrate that the many virtues associated with food, both moral and aesthetic, have provided the "key" that has unlocked city streets to a new form of street commerce. I argue that these developments are tied to the popularization of gourmet food culture as well as to the expanding cultural and moral reach of numerous food-related social movements, which together have combined to make food a highly valued commodity in the contemporary North American city.

### **TIANA HAYDEN**

NYU Graduate School of Arts & Sciences

Regulations and agency

#### **Permitting uncertainty: A discussion of street vending licenses and the meaning of the law in Mexico City**

Street vendors in Mexico City are a controversial but persistent feature of urban life, and have been subject to numerous, often contradictory, attempts at regulation by the state. These inconsistent and ultimately unsuccessful attempts have resulted, on the one hand, in the association of street vendors with corruption and lawlessness, and on the other hand in the proliferation of legal and bureaucratic mechanisms dedicated to dealing with them. This paper analyzes how this complex legal landscape



## ABSTRACTS

appears in everyday debates over street workers' rights in Mexico City's largest wholesale market. I document efforts by formal merchants to lobby local authorities to remove street vendors from the market, as well as vendors' endeavors to claims to legal recognition and their right to work in the streets. In analyzing the diversity of appeals to both legal and non-legal normative orders which these actors employ in staking their positions, I identify different temporalities and scales which they use to describe legitimate versus corrupt state interventions into street vending. Drawing attention to this ongoing tension between legitimacy/corruption, I discuss the challenges of legal regulation in the "informalized state."

### **MANPREET KAUR JANEJA**

University of Copenhagen

Method and meaning

#### **Rethinking street foods: Street food hospitality in contemporary Calcutta**

Studies of street hawkers and vendors that focus on the urban 'informal' economy, labour protection policies, street vending regulations, and gender, ethnicity and geographies of urban food distribution, tend not to problematize the processual delineations of street foods. In contrast to such studies, this paper describes what emerge as street foods in hospitality transactions in the city of Calcutta in the Indian state of West Bengal. It draws on an ethnographic analysis of taut negotiations of what constitutes street-food vis-à-vis normal home food in Bengali middle-class Hindu households, rendering visible the dynamics of (dis)trust, risk and uncertainty in which these contextual engagements are entangled. In the process, it explores the ways in which current hospitality practices of preparation, consumption, marketing, and distribution are reconfiguring formations of the inside/outside in an Asian 'worlding' city caught in the throes of redefining itself. In doing so, it reveals street-food hospitality as an event for negotiating differences across scale in collaborative forms.

### **ANNETTE MIAE KIM**

Sol Price School of Public Policy, University of Southern California

Regulations and agency

#### **The social reconstruction of (im)migrant urbanisms: Narrating legitimacy and standing in Los Angeles, Ho Chi Minh City, and Beijing**

### **ROBERT JI-SONG KU**

SUNY Binghamton University

Gender

#### **Beyond pojangmacha: Edae food carts and the future of Seoul's social gastronomy**

Across Seoul, countless tented food stalls called pojangmacha (literally "covered wagon") have for generations purveyed cheap, tasty fare into the wee hours of the night. The foods that typically appear under the tent are tteokbokki, sundae, odeng, gimhap, and other familiar nosh that can be washed down with beer or soju. But while these foods are as popular as ever, other sorts of gilgeori eumsik (literally "street food") that are decidedly more "fusion" or "international" have recently competed for the ever-diminishing real estate that is legally available to street vendors. One such place is Ewhayeodae Street that leads to the front gate of Ewha Women's University. While other locations are better known for street food, this place helps us to assess two particular facets of contemporary Korea's on-going social, cultural, and economic transformation: first, the status of women, especially young women, such as those who attend Ewha University, and second, the rise in the number of foreign tourists, especially from China. By examining this one small slice of Seoul's expansive street food culture, this project hopes to demonstrate that the gilgeori eumsik of Ewhayeodae Street signals more than just a changing culinary taste of Korea. Rather, by offering new and innovative foods that appeal simultaneously to young Korean women and Chinese tourists, the Edae food carts anticipate an urgent social reality: As much as any other factors, the future of Seoul continues to hinge on both the ongoing evolution of the role of women and the internationalization of the country.



## ABSTRACTS

### SCARLETT LINDEMAN

CUNY Graduate Center  
Community and identity

#### **Comida Callejera en CDMX: When the fringe becomes the mainstream**

This paper provides a comprehensive survey of comestibles purchased and consumed in public space, ie. street food, in contemporary Mexico City. As one of the cornerstones of Mexican foodways and daily urban life, street food provides millions of residents with readily accessible, affordable, and nutritious daily meals. The production and consumption of the federal district's street food reflects issues regarding social hierarchy, power of the city and state, and larger flows of political economy and migration. Major questions include: What is the relationship of city entities to street vendors regarding legality and enforcement over contested public space and commerce? How do public foods and kitchens impact the construction of regional, national, and transnational identities? How do transnational tastes and globalization shift the terrain of street commerce?

### LYNNE MILGRAM

OCAD University  
Heritage making

#### **What happens when we take the “street” out of “street food”? (Re)fashioning Philippine street foods and vending**

The recent Canadian Broadcasting Company article (August 16, 2016) heralding the Michelin Star awarded to a Singapore food hawker highlights the current pursuit for culinary alternatives such as street food vending and dining. Yet governments position such street activities as “illegal” privileging instead sanitized private spaces. Disrupting livelihoods that have long provisioned urbanites' food security and work choices challenges realizing a diverse “cityness” (Robinson 2006) that can meet residents' varied needs. This paper engages these issues by analyzing how street food vendors in Baguio, Philippines reconfigure the constraints of government street clearances to emerge as successful entrepreneurs and food innovators.

I argue that to protest street vending restrictions, Baguio's food vendors operationalize “everyday” and “advocacy” politics (Kerkvliet 2009) that materialize “gray spaces” (Yiftachel 2012) of operation and transform everyday “hunger” foods into “heritage” specialties (Van Esterik 2005) sought by consumers across classes. Some vendors banned from ambulant street sales, for example, have rented sites in a “legalized” night market and through performance-cooking – preparing meals amid flames and music – have become the market's main attraction. Other prohibited street vendors have relocated to leased storefronts where they tailor the quotidian Philippine street snack food, suman, (rice, coconut milk and cane sugar wrapped in banana leaves) into creations that capture distinctive provincial styles, while shopping mall kiosks have usurped street-sold “native rice cakes” to offer them in “modernized” forms and settings. By refashioning street food preparation and sales, Baguio's food vendors remain integral to the city's street-scape. Their edgy enterprises thus problematize understanding street economies and the caché of street foods causing us to rethink what “the street” means in “street food.”

### FABIO PARASECOLI

The New School  
Heritage making

#### **Reshaping Italian foodways: From cibo di strada to street food**

Food has been prepared, sold and consumed on the streets of Italy and other public places for centuries, as it is the case in many other countries. In this short communication, I will outline the development of street food –cibo di strada - in Italy since the end of World War II, focusing in particular on its evolution in the past decade. Food on the street used to constitute a cheap alternative to cooking and eating at home, carrying connotations of simplicity and low social status, while elevating some specialties into expressions of communal local identities, often experienced as tradition. From the period of the economic miracle to the roaring 1980s street food almost fell into oblivion, with few exceptions cherished as almost archaeological remains. However, in recent years the reevaluation of the culinary past in all its aspects, including the humblest ones, has generated new, hip interpretations that are now in fact called “street food” in English. Many young chefs and entrepreneurs offer tongue-in-cheek versions of classics that rely on high-quality ingredients, great techniques, and well-designed presentations, from packaging to the spaces in which these foods are produced and consumed. Not only the profile of who makes street food but also the expectations and practices of consumers have profoundly changed.



## ABSTRACTS

### JEFFERY PILCHER

University of Toronto Scarborough  
Method and meaning

#### **Cobblestone kitchens: Notes on the world history of street food**

Although the field of food history is now well established, cultural analysis has tended to focus on well-documented foods of the elite—court cuisines and fine dining. By contrast, the foods of the lower classes have more often been treated as mere calories, divorced from all consideration of taste or choice. Yet there is ample historical evidence that street foods were a focus of plebeian sociability and pleasure in cities such as Imperial Rome, Kaifeng (China), Tenochtitlan (Mexico), and Edo (Tokyo). This talk (not paper) seeks to outline a comparative world historical approach to recover these popular cuisines of the premodern past.

### JACKIE ROHEL

New York University  
Urban space/the city

#### **Urban indigestion: Paan, public sociality and the politics of the street**

Stimulants such as coffee and tobacco had shed their exotic status through the conjoined emergence of capitalism and the public sphere in modern Western Europe, where intersections of sociability, consumption and citizenship crystallized in the institution of the coffeehouse. Despite a long and illustrious history in Asia, betel quid (Hindi: paan) never entered mainstream consumption in the West. Yet, this comestible's continued popularity within South and Southeast Asian communities cuts across class, ethnicity, gender and geography; now almost one-fifth of the global population chews it. As a stimulant and digestive aid, it has been central to sociality in homes and in informal economies of the street, across Asia and, increasingly, in global cities beyond the Subcontinent. This paper examines the relationship between paan vending and public sociality on London's streets by focusing on the site of the paanwallah (paan-maker/vendor). For some, the making and chewing of paan on the street is a social activity; this comestible forges a local community by bringing people together in shops, in doorways and out into the sidewalk. But the public sociality – and 'ethics of hospitality' – enabled through communal chewing and spitting is at odds with dominant Western constructions of hygiene and health, cleanliness and productivity. This critical ethnography of London's paanwallahs and his publics therefore examines dyspeptic politics in the belly of the global city. It shows how emergent concerns about toxicity and idleness, refracted through the practice of timepass, reconfigure ethnic, classed and gendered publics at these streetside stalls. In doing so, this paper contributes to scholarship on the politics of multiculturalism and civil society on city streets.

### JO SHARMA

University of Toronto Scarborough  
Method and meaning

#### **Cries and sights: Finding histories of street foods and vendors**

This paper forms a preliminary stage of a project to historicize global street foods and vendors through a lens on representations and regulations. It explores imagery about street food hawkers and vendors, its production and circulation and the social and political transformations via changing technologies, urban life, consumer culture, and state policies. Examples range across Britain, the US, India, Syria, China, and Russia.

The paper briefly delineates how the next stage will study such representations in the light of urban regulatory regimes on street foods. Finally, the paper discusses how the recent advent of digital archives has made it possible for scholars to explore histories of street vending in a global context, the limitations and potentials of such archives, and how the City Foods project might curate such histories more widely.

### MARK VALLIANATOS

Independent scholar  
Regulations and agency

#### **More than a meal: How street vending helped shape the Los Angeles region**

Like a fluorescent tag injected into the boulevards of a transforming metropolis, street vending in Los Angeles has marked the evolution of the region and mapped out boundaries of neighborhoods, cultures and legitimacy. To contribute to understanding



## ABSTRACTS

vending's role in "city building" I will examine how street vending has reflected - and helped shape - changes in the demography, economy, and sense of place of the Los Angeles region.

Vending and regulation of vending were impacted as immigration from Latin America and Asia transitioned LA from the whitest big city in the United States into one of the most diverse. Food vending helped enable the rapid industrialization of L.A. during World War II and the cold war, and then adapted as heavy manufacturing declined. The fate of vending and vendors has also long been bound up in the region's transportation patterns.

To explore these histories, I will examine the origins, development and regulation of three types of street food vending - food carts, prepared meal trucks, and ice cream trucks - in the Los Angeles region. By exploring vending's roles in demographic change, industrialization, and transportation, I hope to help raise street vending's profile as a building block of a metropolitan region. I also want to underscore how vending remains an active force in influencing how we use and regulate streets and public space, how low-income residents join the formal economy, and how we interact with people from different backgrounds as neighborhoods change.

### **DANIËLLE VAN DEN HEUVEL**

Universtiy of Amsterdam

Gender

#### **The freedom of the streets: Gender and urban space in Europe and Asia (1600-1850)**

This paper introduces a new research project. The project analyses the gendering of urban space in the early modern city. It is widely held that between 1600 and 1850, women gradually withdrew from the public sphere of the street and moved to the private sphere of the home. This powerful narrative, linked to theories of modernisation, has created a conceptual stranglehold that sees public space as exclusively male and private space as entirely female, thereby obscuring the actual workings of gender in pre-industrial urban societies.

This project offers a pioneering approach to the study of gendered urban space, enabling for the first time to move beyond the public/private dichotomy and analyse women's access to pre-industrial streets in full. Through an analysis of the ownership of streets, both formally by authorities and informally through daily use, it uncovers how urban space was gendered in the run up to the nineteenth century. It hypothesises that the extent to which women could own the street depended on gender norms, local governance, urban fabric, and the everyday use of streets and squares. As such, this programme uniquely enables a cross-cultural comparison that connects the material and immaterial city, as well as for women's agency to play a central role in the analysis.

In four closely-related subprojects, this project systematically compares the gendering of urban space in pre-modern Asia and Europe. Based on extensive visual and textual sources, Projects 1 and 2 provide in-depth studies of Edo and Amsterdam, two major pre-modern cities with distinct cultures, architecture, and governance. Project 3 digitally visualises gendered movement in these two cities, thereby providing a complementary spatial analysis, as well as an important tool to engage with wider audiences. Project 4 builds on Projects 1-3 and analyses how the access of women to pre-industrial streets was shaped in contrasting European and Asian urban communities.

### **EDWARD WHITTALL**

York University, Toronto

Gentrification

#### **Olé! strategies, tactics, and the street theatre of food trucks**

Charting the career arc of one of Toronto's better known street food vendors, who goes by the nom de guerre "Fidel Gastro", this paper uses Michel de Certeau's "strategies" and "tactics" as a starting point for thinking about street food vending as a form of street theatre, like the pop-up, site-specific performance, and radical street theatre. Doing so offers a rich critical language to describe the spatial and social interventions made by street food vendors and their customers who collude to form temporary communities in off-spaces and transitional areas of the urban landscape. I argue that these formations allow us not only to resist dominant narratives of urban order, but also to construct and perform ideals of the relationships that we desire to have with each other, the food we eat, and the city it beckons us to ingest and transform.





## LIST OF ATTENDEES

### SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Noah Allison  
Doctoral Candidate, Public and Urban Policy, The  
New School, allin115@newschool.edu

Stefani Bardin  
Artist in residence, NYU Tisch, stefanib@nyu.edu

Camille Bégin  
Research Associate, University of Toronto  
Scarborough, begin.camille@gmail.com

Daniel Bender  
Director, Culinary Research Centre, University of  
Toronto Scarborough,  
debender@utsc.utoronto.ca

Jennifer Berg  
Director, Graduate Food Studies Program, NYU  
Steinhardt, jennifer.berg@nyu.edu

James Farrer  
Professor of Sociology, Sophia University,  
j-farrer@sophia.ac.jp

Anneke Gezyen  
Postdoctoral Fellow, NYU Steinhardt,  
anneke.gezyen@gmail.com

Anna Greenspan  
Assistant Professor of Media, Culture, and  
Communications, NYU Shagnhai, ag158@nyu.edu

Heather Lee  
Assistant Professor of Global China Studies, NYU  
Shanghai, hrlee@mit.edu

Jeffrey Pilcher  
Professor of Food History, University of Toronto  
Scarborough, jeffrey.pilcher@utoronto.ca

Krishnendu Ray  
Department Chair, Nutrition and Food Studies, NYU  
Steinhardt, krishnendu.ray@nyu.edu

Jackie Rohel  
Doctoral Candidate, Food Studies, NYU Steinhardt,  
jackie.rohel@nyu.edu

Jo Sharma  
Associate Professor, History and Global Asia Studies,  
University of Toronto Scarborough,  
js288uk@gmail.com

Sam Sundius  
Master's Candidate, Food Studies, NYU Steinhardt,  
sam.sundius@nyu.edu

Mark Swislocki  
Associate Professor of History, NYU Abu Dhabi,  
mark.swislocki@nyu.edu

### INVITED PARTICIPANTS

Jonathan Shapiro Anjaria  
Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Brandeis  
University, janjaria@brandeis.edu

Sean Basinski  
Director, Street Vendor Project, Urban Justice Center,  
sbasinski@urbanjustice.org

Amita Baviskar  
Professor, Institute of Economic Growth, University of  
Delhi, amita.baviskar@gmail.com

Dave Cook  
Writer, *Eating in Translation*, davemcook@gmail.com

Katarzyna Cwiertka  
Professor of Modern Japan Studies, Leiden  
University, k.j.cwiertka@hum.leidenuniv.nl

Ryan Devlin  
Assistant Professor of Public Administration, John  
Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY,  
rdevlin@jjay.cuny.edu

Hasia Diner  
Professor of Hebrew and Judaic Studies and History,  
NYU Skirball Department of Hebrew and Judaic  
Studies, hasia.diner@nyu.edu

Kathleen Dunn  
Assistant Professor of Sociology, Loyola University  
Chicago, kdunn6@luc.edu

Nancy Foner  
Distinguished Professor of Sociology, CUNY Hunter  
College, nfoner@hunter.cuny.edu

Donna Gabaccia  
Professor of History, University of Toronto  
Scarborough, donna.gabaccia@utoronto.ca

Amy Hanser  
Associate Professor of Sociology, University of British  
Columbia, hanser@mail.ubc.ca



## LIST OF ATTENDEES

Tiana Bakić Hayden  
Doctoral Candidate, Sociocultural Anthropology, NYU  
Graduate School of Arts & Sciences, tbh222@nyu.edu

Joseph Heathcott  
Associate Professor of Urban Studies, The New School,  
joseph@newschool.edu

Manpreet Kaur Janeja  
Associate Professor of Cross-Cultural and Regional  
Studies, University of Copenhagen, wz827@hum.ku.dk

Robert Ji-Song Ku  
Associate Professor of Asian and Asian American  
Studies, SUNY Binghamton University,  
jku@binghamton.edu

Martina Kaller  
Distinguished Austrian Chair Professor, Freeman Spogli  
Institute for International Studies, Stanford University,  
mkaller2@stanford.edu

Annette Miae Kim  
Associate Professor of Public Policy, Sol Price School  
of Public Policy, University of Southern California,  
annetek@usc.edu

Sarah K. Khan  
Independent Scholar and Filmmaker, sarahkkhan.com,  
sarahkhurshidkhan@gmail.com

Scarlett Lindeman  
Doctoral Candidate, Sociology, CUNY Graduate Center,  
scarlett.lindeman@gmail.com

Ken MacDonald  
Associate Professor of Geography and Program in  
Planning, University of Toronto Scarborough, kenneth.  
iain.macdonald@gmail.com

Lynne Milgram  
Professor of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Ontario College of  
Art & Design University, lmilgram@faculty.ocadu.ca

Alfonso Morales  
Professor of Urban and Regional Planning, University of  
Wisconsin-Madison, morales1@wisc.edu

Fabio Parasecoli  
Associate Professor and Director of Food Studies  
Initiatives, The New School,  
fabio.parasecoli@newschool.edu

Jack Tchen  
Co-founder of the Museum of Chinese in America,  
founding director of the A/P/A Studies Program and  
Institute at NYU, New York University,  
jack.tchen@nyu.edu

Barbara Turk  
Director of Food Policy for the City of New York, Office  
of the Director of Food Policy for the City of New York,  
nycfood@cityhall.nyc.gov

Mark Vallianatos  
Policy Analyst and Advocate, Independent Researcher,  
mvalli@oxy.edu

Daniëlle van den Heuvel  
Professor of History, University of Amsterdam,  
d.w.a.g.vandenheuvel@uva.nl

Edward Whittall  
Doctoral Candidate, Theatre and Performance Studies,  
York University, Toronto, ewhittallyorku@gmail.com

Sharon Zukin  
Professor of Sociology, CUNY Brooklyn College, zukin@  
brooklyn.cuny.edu



*Special thanks to: Siera Dissmore, Pamela Stewart, Kelila Jaffe, Allie Wist*

