Chapter 1

Omnivorousness

Classifying Food
Why Study Food? 1

- Food is polysemic; therefore, it allows us to look at food in many contexts
  1. I chose food, in part, because of my training in nutritional anthropology (Read more at the Society for the Anthropology of Food and Nutrition).
  2. I also chose food for the cultural richness that underlies this topic.
  3. Mostly, food is the topic of this course because it is fun.
- Historical look at food
  - We will begin the course content with a historical look at the period of time where humans shifted from foraging for food to growing food.
  - For much of human existence, our ancestors survived by scavenging and foraging (hunting, gathering, fishing).
  - There have been many cultural revolutions of significance in human history. They have been:
    1. The Agricultural Revolution (also called the Neolithic Revolution by V. Gordon Childe) wherein humans began to control and alter their food supplies.
      - Famous example is the alteration of teosinte through human intervention.
      - Corn is a grass, but see how different it is now?
    2. The Urban Revolution where peoples for the very first time began to live in villages on a permanent basis and then enlarged this to form cities.
    3. The Industrial Revolution that changed how we manufacture our daily materials and shifted (again) us to even larger cities.
    4. The Information Revolution which began with the first printing presses, but really has taken off with the introduction of the computer.
  - The transition to food production, however, was a change more than just a new way to find food; these revolutions altered how humans interacted (think of Crowther’s discussion of tableware).
Maize Domestication

Teosinte → Intermediates → Modern corn
Why Study Food? 2

• **Introduction**
  • This author begins by stating that health food stores sell many of the oldest and latest foods.
  • How they are labeled is often:
    • By certain qualities: Organic, natural, whole, local, artisanal.
    • As **functional foods** or **nutraceuticals** (nutrition + pharmaceutical).
    • An exercise in ethnolinguistics suggests that Americans are interested in the links between health and food.
  • Other evidence for this interest can be seen in the touting of words such as “**superfoods**”, “foods with benefits” and “health fat”.
    • Currently **tomatoes**, **olive oil** and **coconuts** are seen as being in this category.
    • Non-fat foods are no longer in such favor, but in the 1980s they had a similar status.
  • This chapter links our discussion of food to the study of ethnolinguistics, looking at questions such as:
    • Why has one food been labeled a good (superfood) and another as bad (trans-fats)?
    • How can we make sense of all the news sources we hear and read?
    • Which interpretations should be trusted?
    • What does this all tell us about society?
  • This discussion is a classic example of how the biocultural model has value.
Humans are omnivores (“all devouring”), but our biology is geared towards a preference for fruits given our proto-ape heritage.

There is list of advantages for being an omnivore:
1. Can eat a greater variety of energy- and nutrient-rich food sources.
2. Less vulnerable than specialist eaters (think about the mastodons).
3. Propelled our ancestors into new environments in search of foods.

**Human evolution**
- To better understand omnivorousness it helps to take a look at *human evolution*.
- Human evolution is a main focus of biological anthropology, covering 8 million years.
  - For this chapter we will restrict the discussion to the last 3-4 million years.
  - *Homo sapiens* (the scientific name for our species) originated in Africa around 200,000 years ago.
    - Both changes in the way we locomotion (*bipedalism*) and our brains have influenced our dietary needs and food choices.
    - Bipedalism is the result of many anatomical changes. A few are:
      - The *foramen magnum* is repositioned farther underneath the skull.
      - The big toe of the human lies parallel to the other toes
      - The pelvis is *shaped in the form of a basin* to support internal organs upright walking.
      - The *femur* is angled inward.
      - The *spine* has two distinctive curves (called *lordosis*).
• **Human evolution (continued)**
  • Disadvantages of bipedalism include:
    • Slower movement and vulnerable if a leg breaks.
    • Easier for predators to see and harder to climb trees
  • Advantages of bipedalism include:
    • It is very cost efficient.
    • Frees hands for carrying and specialty behaviors (such as tool-making).
    • Allows one to see further.
  • Bipedalism may have prompted the advent of fire use. Fire gave humans many advantages (as discussed in Crowther Chapter 4).
  • The *human brain* is seen as an **expensive tissue** because it requires 20% of the body’s energy.
    • Our brain size averages as 1400 cc (900-2000 cc range). This is 4-5 times larger than a chimpanzee’s or recent fossil ancestors. Also, watch this TED talk: number of neurons differ.
  • Q: Why did the large brain evolve? A: Perhaps to facilitate social relations surrounding food sharing.
  • Q: How did the large brain evolve? A: Greater access to a higher density, higher quality diet.
    • Some argue the *scavenger scenario*: Eating the brain tissues of deserted kills.
    • Some argue for eating of red meat.
  • **Breaking news:** in 2015 announcement that *'Big brain' gene found in humans, not chimps* reported that this gene prompted more neurons in the neocortex of humans and their direct ancestors.
## Brain Size & Neuron Count

Cerebral cortex mass and neuron count for various mammals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fauna</th>
<th>Mass</th>
<th>Neurons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capybara</td>
<td>48.2 g</td>
<td>0.3 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhesus Macaque</td>
<td>69.8 g</td>
<td>1.71 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Gorilla</td>
<td>377 g</td>
<td>9.1 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human</td>
<td>1232 g</td>
<td>16.3 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Bush Elephant</td>
<td>2848 g</td>
<td>5.59 billion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Human evolution (continued)
  • Disadvantages and advantages:
    • Disadvantages of larger brains: 1) metabolically expensive; 2) lose heat more quickly; 3) can complicate child birth
    • For brain size to increase, the advantages of larger brains must have outweighed the disadvantages: 1) intelligence; 2) toolmaking and tool use; 3) technological skill; 4) problem-solving ability; 5) language ability; and 6) social intelligence.
  • Our gut is midway between that of herbivores and of carnivores.
    • We tend to smaller guts than our evolutionary heritage would suggest.
      • Some suggest that the enlargement of the brain was so very expensive that the gut had to reduce (both being so expensive metabolically).
      • A smaller gut would have been possible with this higher density, higher quality diet.
      • Also the ability to store fat would be another advantage during the lean times.
  • One aspect of our anatomy that indicates our dietary pattern is our dentition.
    • As primates, our teeth are generalized (compare to the teeth of your new kitten for instance).
    • Further, the teeth (and so the jaw) are now smaller than our ancestors.
  • Tools aided human evolution
  • Cooking also changed us physiologically and culturally. So much so a new term was coined: cookivores.
The Omnivore’s Dilemma

- Omnivorousness is the not the same as indiscriminate eating; it infers an openness to eating a wide range of foodstuffs.
- Food **neophilia** (love of new things) underlays the success of omnivorousness and is tempered by food **neophobia** (fear of the new)
  - Neophilia is not without risks; a new food may be poisonous.
  - Evolutionarily this was likely a trial-and-error process.
    - Famous commercial from the 1970s: *Life cereal*. The punch line was misquoted as “Give it to Mikey, Mikey will eat anything!”
    - *American kids try breakfasts from around the world.*
- Flavor is built on the **interaction of smell and taste**.
  - Taste buds sense: salty, sour, sweet, bitter and umami (savory).
  - Evolutionarily, humans are likely wired to like sweet tastes and those texture of fat (high energy foods) and to dislike bitter (poisons).
- **Paul Rozin** coined the term **omnivore’s dilemma**: As food generalists it a struggle to know what is edible. Information is gleaned from three sources:
  1. Biological heritage: omnivorousness, ancestry and individual genes.
  2. Individual experiences.
  3. Culture: Including food classifications and food rules.
- Culturally, world cuisines have become stable, successful food choices.
  - This lead to **gastonomes**: intelligently selecting and classifying foods that nourish tastes and bodies.
  - This contrasts with **gastro-anomie**: The anxiety felt by consumers faced with a wide range of foods to which they have no connective knowledge or rules to help determine choices.
Food Classifications & Rules 1

- Folk taxonomies
  - Both edibility and inedibility are cultural classifications or folk taxonomies.
    - Folk taxonomies are forms of local knowledge that organize aspects of people’s social and natural worlds, such as kinship and fauna and flora.
    - They are about identifying relationships, and about naming and defining behavior in response to these known components of life.
  - Classifications of food can be understood as folk taxonomies, revealing a culture’s system of meaning and value assignment.

- What is culture?
  - The most central of all anthropological concepts is culture; it is the single most important human adaptation.
    - Culture has many different meanings
    - One definition is “the socially acquired way of life in a social group” So understanding what a social group is comes first in our discussion.
  - Two or more organisms of the same species, engaged in patterned interaction, make up a social group (sociality).
  - Advantages (and disadvantages) to being social:
    - Facilitation of reproduction (Competition for partners).
    - Predator avoidance and defense (You risk your life to protect others).
    - Foraging for food (You have to share the food you find).
    - The learning process (You have to teach others what you learned).
    - Division of labor by age and gender (You are dependent on the skills of others).
Overlap between Sociality & Communication

Sociality

Communication

Culture ↔ Language
• What is culture? (continued)
  • *Ways human group together socially*
    • First thing to remember is that this is a **model** (a generalization for the purpose of discussion, not an absolute) of how people interact socially.
    • Aggregates, paragroups, and endogroups are the model we use.
    • **Aggregates**: Non-behavioral (-), non-interactive (-) groupings which many prefer to define as not really "groups" at all
      • Examples: All females; everyone with blue eyes, or everyone between five and six feet tall.
      • Of course this is really more of an abstraction than reality.
    • **Paragroups**: Behaviorally-defined (+), non-interactive (-) classes of people
      • Examples: All smokers, psychiatrists, or college students
      • Often of interest to social scientists; but some would consider them to not be genuine social groups
    • **Endogroups**: Behaviorally-defined (+), interactive (+)
      • Examples: All college students comprise a paragroup; but the current student body at EvCC is an endogroup.
      • Members of an endogroup are connected, directly or indirectly, by interaction with one another in at least one time and place.
What is culture? (continued)

How groups form over time

- This is another model. This one illustrates the idea of cultural transmission.
- So, let’s think of how groups form and then extend this over time. We use the terms idioclines, nomoclines, & permaclones based on the work of Marvin Harris.
- **Idioclone**: The social group is engaged in a common activity at a specific time and place.
  - The prefix idio- refers to the concept of “single”, or “alone”.
  - Example: The *impromptu* basketball game (idioclone).
- **Nomoclones** are thought of as reassembling idioclines
  - Nomoclones are created by bringing the same people together repeatedly
  - They have the capacity to develop a *customary way of doing things*: a culture.
  - Culture crops up in nomoclones such as households, where things like reproduction, childcare, and basic biopsychological well-being are at stake.
  - Example: Regular Friday game among original members (nomoclone).
- **Permaclones** are thought of as reassembling overlapping nomoclones
  - Includes the ability to outlast the lives of particular members.
  - Permaclones can live so long that we can talk of the cultural evolution (long-term cultural change) of a group.
  - Example: Friday night game, even if original members leave or died (permaclone).
• What is culture? (continued)
  • Memes are more than pics of cats
    • Related to all this discussion of permaclones is the concept of a meme.
    • The meme is the cultural analog of the gene in where an idea is inherited from another member of the social group.
    • The term meme was first coined as a term by a biologist, Richard Dawkins.
    • Of course the use of memes is as old as human existence.
      • The chimpanzees who learned to make spears from each other is an example.
      • Or gorillas using sticks to dig,
      • Those pictures of cats with cute phrases attached is another example of memes.
      • In fact, the cute cat pictures were very popular during the Victorian Age (the new term is “LOL cats”).
    • Memes can change too.
    • This site allows you to make your own meme
  • Key terms
    • These terms are foundational to the study of culture.
    • Remember that beliefs (your worldview) create your values, and your values determine (ideally) what you do and do not do (norms)
      • Beliefs are the conceptions of reality and prepositions about how the universe works
      • Values are conceptions about what is desirable and undesirable, good or bad.
      • Norms are the rules, principles, or standards of behavior.
• What is culture? (continued)
• Characteristics of culture
  1. Culture is a mechanism for responding to the environment
      • Culture influences how people respond to the opportunities and constraints that environments impose.
      • Culture influence how a society produces, prepared and distribute food needed for human life. Three means of responding to the environment: technology, social organization and ideology
  2. Culture is learned. The process by which we learn beliefs, attitudes and behavioral standards, and even body movements, is called enculturation.
      • The family is the major vehicle of enculturation.
      • Much of our enculturation occurs in the first years of life so that our behaviors appear to be instinctual and automatic; what we tend to call “human nature” is actually not natural, but normal.
  3. Culture is like a mental map. It guides us in our decision-making.
      • Similar mental maps means that behaviors can be predictive.
      • The mental map is constructed from beliefs, values and norms.
  4. Culture is expressed through behavior and artifacts. An excellent analysis of artifacts in the U.S. is the book called Stuff: The secret lives of everyday things
  5. Culture is a functionally integrated system
      • These systems are loose integrations of values, beliefs, and norms.
      • This means that the social groups.
  6. Cultures exhibit intracultural variation (not everyone is the same).
• Social value of food
  • The Bay of Bengal Andaman Islanders, during the early 1900s, classified their foods through the meanings and values associated with foods. The classification reflected their core social values of hard work and generosity.
  • The most prestigious foods were those that were rare and dangerous to catch, such as the dugong.
  • The lowly were those that were most easily acquired, such as shellfish and these were eaten when there was nothing else.
  • Among the Moli of Guadalcanal one sees food classified as well.
  • Store-bought food had high prestige.
  • Yams and taro were “good foods”, while sweet potatoes were of lower status.
  • Some foods were only ever eaten during famines.
  • The knowledge of edibility for some foods was lost to the younger members of this culture.

• Food as part of a rites of passage
  • One of the most common forms of ritual worldwide is the rite of passage.
  • Rite of passage: any life-cycle rite that marks a person’s or group’s transition from one social state to another.
  • This idea was first described by Arnold van Gennep (1908) in his work, Rites of passage.
  • These rituals are probably evident in many of the events students have experienced (i.e.; graduation).
• Food as part of a rites of passage (continued)
  • There are three phases in a rite of passage:
    • Rites of separation is the stage that results in one’s removal from the group.
    • Transition rites ("liminal period"): ritual reversals of ordinary life take place.
      • Symbolic ambiguity of the social positions.
      • Period of transition marked by strange behavior.
    • Rites of incorporation (now called reincorporation) is where one is welcomed back into the community in new role.
  • There are other types of rites that cultures observe and for which food is also a part.
    • Rites of intensification
      • Ceremonies that dramatize and reaffirm the social network.
      • They are intended to validate one’s status, not change it.
        • Prototypical ceremony is funeral.
        • Other examples are weddings, baptisms, family reunions, and so forth.
    • Rituals of inversion
      • Where the community creates a change to ignore the norms.
      • Example: Mardi Gras, Halloween (I might add Spring Break in Fort Lauderdale).
  • Analyzing rules and classifications
    • Food classifications and rules are passed down through generations as advice about what to eat to make a “proper meal”.
    • This ancestral diet is thought to represent solutions to energy and nutritional needs,
• Analyzing rules and classifications (continued)
  • Cuisines can be examined as evidence of local culinary knowledge based upon a long-term relationship with an environment’s range of food sources.
  • These advisory rules can be so well learned as part of socialization that they aren’t even thought about, becoming habit.
  • Classifications and rules importantly allow us to begin to understand how food choices change.
  • Underpinning these are cosmological justifications that lend legitimacy and authority to a group’s dietary specialists and their advice, which convinces people to follow the rules.
  • The specialists of dietary advice range from mothers to shamans, priests, doctors, bureaucrats, marketers, and gourmets, all of whose authority lends legitimacy to the cultural rules of eating properly.
  • These are the voices heard while deciding what to eat, being part of the ongoing public food discourse, airing old and new advice, and engaging in wider ideological discussions about food.
    • Public food discourse: Ongoing freely given discussion and advice surrounding issues of social and cultural importance. It is never unified and instead is full of discord,
    • Everyday life is guided by public discourse, but it is also beyond the scope of individuals to shape its content.
    • Public discourse can reveal the dominant ideologies operating in society, and its peddling advances the interests of some power holders, whose identity may or may not be revealed.
  • At present there are four themes resonating through the Western food discourse: 1) nutrition; 2) culinary interests; 3) gastronomic distinction; 4) and sustainability—both environmentally and socially.
• **Food prohibitions**
  - Dietary taboos are found in many cultures and many religions, such as Judaism, Islam, and religions of smaller cultural groups.
    - All have **food proscriptions (prohibitions)** and **food prescriptions** (what you should eat).
    - As a result, in any particular society, resources are overlooked, technology is not developed, and human reject items for ideological reasons.
  - The taboos designate some foods as pure, safe, clean and fit to be eaten, and others as polluted, unsafe, unclean, and not to be eaten.
  - The prohibition rests upon there being a consequence for disobedience.
• **Judaism & Islam**
  - Judaism draws its dietary rules, in part, from the Old Testament (Leviticus and Deuteronomy).
    - Jewish **halakha** (Jewish law) requires that food be **kosher** (clean, fit).
    - **Treif** food is not consumable.
      - May not consume the mother (meat) with the infant (milk)
      - Do not eat animals with cloven hooves: hare, **hyrax**, camel, and the pig.
      - Food with blood that was not properly prepared.
      - No animals with wings.
      - Fish must have both scales and fins.
    - **Shechita** is the term for animals slaughtered by manner dictated by Jewish law.
  - Islam prohibits the consumption of blood, pork, and any meat that is **haram**.
    - Haram (forbidden meat) comes from animals not slaughtered in the correct Muslim manner.
    - **Halal** refers to permissible, as it follows the practices dictated of the Qu’uarn.
    - These terms – **haram** and **halal** – apply to other foods as well.
Hinduism

Marvin Harris: Let’s get practical (stomachs-first)

Probably the most widely known Hindu taboo is against eating cattle, which is part of the practice of non-violence or *ahimsa*, and has received enormous scholarly attention.

- For instance, anthropologist Marvin Harris, in his work *India’s sacred cow*, argued the veneration of cattle had to be understood in ecological terms rather than as a religious tradition.
- Cows, in Harris’s cost-benefit analysis, are low-cost and high-benefit contributors to India’s agricultural communities.
- An estimated 80 million cattle roam through India, mostly males, which are used for ploughing, and a smaller number of cows, which are milked; all provide manure for agriculture and fuel.
- His ideas are based on the theory called *cultural materialism*, that ecological needs shape culture.
- “Cow love” was a mechanism that supports pragmatic needs.
- They protect against short-terms needs overriding the long-term survival of the farmers.
Mary Douglas: Life is more than practicalities (minds-first)

An alternative way of explaining food classification and rules is found in the work of Mary Douglas.

Douglas’s work is concerned with the way humans impose meaning on the messy world around them, placing people and things into categories that then organize people’s behavior.

- Food rules thus reflect people’s mental understanding of the world, symbolizing and reinforcing the social order.
- She was interested in how people think about their world, with food and eating becoming just one dimension of the cultural patterns people use to organize themselves and others.
- She examined the food classification and arising rules found in the Old Testament books of Leviticus (v. 11) and Deuteronomy (v. 14).
- Douglas explains the taboos as a fear of creatures whose characteristics cannot be fitted into meaningful cultural categories.

These two theorists have different starting points to explain dietary taboos—Harris begins with the environmental, the material basis of existence, while Douglas begins with the cognitive processes of cultural classification and its ordering of the world.

- These could be contrasted as a “stomachs first” versus a “minds first” approach; eating enables thought or thoughts enable eating.
- Both have qualities to commend them, but it would therefore be difficult to isolate one or even two explanations why some foods were accepted or rejected.
- However, what is apparent is that all cultures tell themselves “this is what we eat,” and why, and “this is what we shouldn’t eat,” and why.
Eating for Health 1

- **Humoral classifications -- Hinduism**
  - The medicinal use of food is part of the Ayurvedic “knowledge (or science) of life”.
  - This humoral system divides the universe, people, and food into five cosmic elements—earth, water, fire, air, and ether—which are variously combined as three dhatus (see Table 1.1 for details of kapha (earth and water), vatha (air and ether), and phitta (fire).
  - The elements are found in all things, in different combinations, which create a person or thing’s disposition based on one or two doshas being most active. The three doshas or bodily humors are bile, phlegm, and wind.
  - Food is transformed into these humors when it is eaten, and is classified according to its potential effect on the body.
  - The Ayurvedic system places diet as the most important means to achieve the harmonious well-being of body, mind, and spirit.

- **Humoral classifications -- Christianity**
  - The cosmology of medieval Europe was based on two concepts)
    1. *Doctrine of Signatures*, is of Greek origin and is based on the concept of affinity.
    2. For Greeks there were 4 humors: Blood which was hot and wet (air, sanguine, spring); Phlegm which was cold and wet (water, phlegmatic, winter); Black bile which was cold and dry (earth, melancholic, autumn); Yellow bile which was hot and dry (fire, choleric, summer).
  - Because Europeans admired the Greeks, they borrowed these concepts.
  - They saw the body is filled with fluids that need to be in balance were 4 humors (see below) that governed life, based on two qualities: hot/cold and moist/dry.
Nutritional classifications

By late 1500s and onwards, experimental science, emerging from alchemy, began to look at chemical explanations of foods.

- Gradually, knowledge about the inner workings of the body expanded, with ideas about the speed of the pulse, and the role and composition of gastric juices, becoming fused with humoral ideas (Estes 2000, 1538).
- Food took on a different classification from this point onwards, becoming reducible to chemical compounds and calories.
- Yet the role of diet in maintaining health was still important, and it was implicated in directing people’s behavior through food rules for classes and for the energy needs of workers.

The mid-1800s medical tomes offered public advice:
- Such as extolling the virtues of meaty diets for working men.
- Or the virtues of meatless diets, for those with a more sedate existence.

The later discovery of the quantifiable energy values of food (calories) was motivated by a desire to ensure that the poor in the United States could use their limited funds to get enough to eat.

- This led to foodstuffs being classified by calories and macronutrient content, beginning with the work of Justus von Liebig and later Wilbur Atwater.
- This nutritional classification of food as macronutrients — protein, fat, and carbohydrates — and micronutrients, such as vitamins, is another example of how humans come to classify food and then use this understanding to shape their food choices.
- A faith-based folk taxonomy about food has been replaced with science-based folk taxonomy.
States are involved in the provision of food through agricultural policies, subsidies, export and import controls, and the societal infrastructure for the production, distribution, and retail of food to its citizen consumers.

State dietary guides
- Any type of governmental nutritional advice faces the challenge of translating scientific nutritional categories into foodstuffs that are actually available, affordable, and considered familiar food.
  - Perhaps the best known of these efforts has been the food pyramid, but it is important to note who promotes this program (the National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) and other dairy groups).
  - The same is true of the newer 2010 version: MyPlate
  - Why the highly visible place given to milk, given that for many Chinese milk is indigestible due to lactase impersistence?
  - It can be argued that state-based nutritional advice erodes culinary diversity through the presentation of a classification of food and consumption rules that reflect those of the dominant ethnic groups in society.
  - The rules of portion sizes, meal structure, and references to snacks are all aspects of the cultural construction of eating traditions, and locate them firmly within Western society.
• State dietary guides (continued)
  • Problems
    • As mentioned there are cultural issues, often addressed by creating specific “specialty” pyramids or when no attention is given to ethnic diversity.
    • Related to this is the concept of “ethnic food” as food of the other.
      • I remember living in a grad dorm with fellow students from 40 Asian and Pacific Islander countries.
      • We traded recipes; I taught everyone how to make “American apple pie” because they kept asking for it. (We substituted green papaya for the apples).
    • All food is ethnic by its very definition.
  • Emphasis on dairy and red meats.
  • Do not seem to be effective, given the higher intakes of carbohydrates, fats, and protein.
  • These guides reduce food to nutritionism: Term used by Michael Pollan to describe the dominant ideology of breaking food down into its nutritional parts.
    • The notion of superfoods and nutraceuticals attests to this way of thinking.
    • This approach also tends to emphasize single, beneficial nutrients in certain foods while ignoring other nutrients found in the same foodstuffs.
    • Pollan argues that all food is much “more than the sum of nutrient parts,” and that such an attitude removes the pleasure of eating.
  • This ideology of nutritionism has made contemporary society obsessed with food as purely a source of quantifiable nutrients, and places value on food as specific sources of nutrients deemed to be beneficial to our bodies.
Do-it-yourself diets
- DIY diets represent individuals’ efforts to establish a pattern to their eating; they are just not organized into a dominant overarching cuisine.
  - For example, the wholesale domestication of olive oil has been promoted by the Mediterranean diet as a cuisine-based set of food rules leading toward a healthy body.
  - First studied on Crete in the 1940s and exported to North America, it was not the standard diet in this region by the time it gained its popularity.
  - A successful effort to get this diet on the Mediterranean diet on the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity Representative List in November 2010 is intended to help promote its use in its homeland.
  - Another example of a popular DIY diet has been the Paleo diet (aka, the Caveman Diet, the hunter-gatherer diet, the Neanderthal diet).
  - The omnivorousness of our ancient ancestors has become fixed as “the original healthy diet”.
  - One rejects all foods that agriculture introduced.
  - Many suggest eating as much as 65% meat. Of course, if you exclude Arctic peoples, this high meat protein diet was never the norm.
- In the United States, according to a Harris poll (2012), 4% of Americans are vegetarians and 47% eat some vegetarian meals.
  - Type of vegetarians: 1) lacto-ovo (dairy and eggs, no meat); 2) vegans (no dairy, eggs, meat, honey, leather); 3) natural hygienists (plants in specific combinations); 4) fruitarians (fruits, nuts, seeds, some vegetables); and 5) raw foodists (uncooked non-meat products).
  - Types of “vegetarian-inclined”:
    - Semi-vegetarians (aka flexitarians; small amounts of meat in diet, but mostly plants)
    - Pescetarianism (eats only fish and shellfish).