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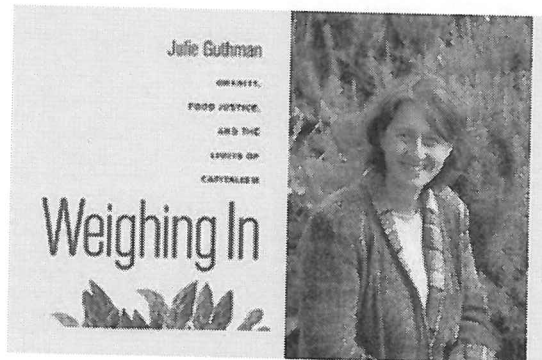
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Can You Have Your Cake and Eat it, too?

Posted on Tuesday, April 03, 2012

Professor and Food Activist Julie Guthman will join the Fisher Center for the Study of Women and Men on Wednesday, April 11, concluding a year-long discussion of the politics of food. Guthman's talk, "Having Your Cake and Eating It Too: Reflections on the Origins and Character of Contemporary Food Activism," will be held at 7:30 p.m. in the Geneva Room of the Warren Hunting Smith Library.



There will also be a Thursday morning roundtable discussion at 9 a.m. in The Fisher Center, Demarest 212, during which Guthman will answer questions and interact with students one-on-one.

As an associate professor in the University of California at Santa Cruz, Guthman has seen many students enroll in the school's food and agriculture program. In her address, Guthman will examine the evolving state of food activism, which, she believes, has entered a state of "feel good politics." Although the concept of educating others on how to grow their own food and pursue healthy lifestyles is not an inherently negative one, Guthman argues that such food activism ignores deep social injustices that are propagated in the production and consumption of food.

At the University of California, she teaches courses primarily in global political economy and the politics of food and agriculture. Since receiving her Ph.D. in geography in 2000 from the University of California at Berkeley, she has published extensively on contemporary efforts to transform the way food is produced, distributed, and consumed, with a focus on voluntary food labels, community food security, farm-to-school programs, and the race and class politics of "alternative food."

Her first book, "Agrarian Dreams: the Paradox of Organic Farming in California," won the Frederick H. Buttel Award for Outstanding Scholarly Achievement from the Rural Sociological Society and the Donald Q. Innis Award from the Rural Geography Specialty Group of the Association of American Geographers. Her new book, "Weighing In: Obesity, Food Justice, and the Limits of Capitalism," which challenges many of the taken-for-granted assumptions about the so-called obesity epidemic, recently won the James E. Blaut Award for Innovative Publication from the Cultural and Political Ecology specialty group of the Association of American Geographers.

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