



# Food Fight

**M A R G I N**

Volume 4, Spring 2015

Hurford Center for the Arts and Humanities  
Haverford College

# MARGIN

## FOOD FIGHT ISSUE

Volume IV, Spring 2015

Haverford College

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Each issue features a topic marginalized in academic discourses, presenting submissions of critical essays, reviews, creative writing, visual media, and any other artifacts that critically or creatively engage the theme. The Margin Editorial Board seeks to publish the work of students, scholars, artists, musicians, and writers, both from within and outside of the Haverford community.

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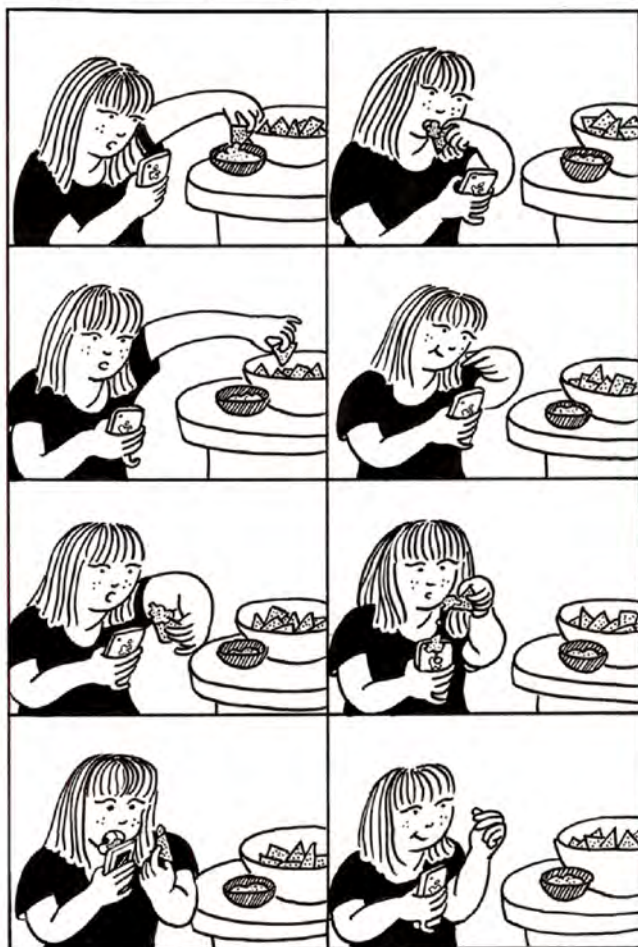
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# NACHOS

Beth Heinly

3:00



*the3oclockbook.tumblr.com*

# INTRODUCTION

## The *Margin* Editorial Board

When envisioning “Food Fight,” we were hungry for answers: why do we eat what we eat? Where does our food come from and where does it end up? What is “ethnic food” and why so many food fusions? We were interested in food as a cultural artifact and a victim of cultural appropriation, as a locus of societal and moral values, and as a point of intersection for the power dynamics of race, class, and gender. We wondered: are we in a golden age of food porn blogs? When does the quest for the next superfood become an act of violent colonization? We expected pieces tackling some of these issues, as well as others that might confront topics such as food access, food justice, and the recent surge in urban farming. What we have found is that “Food Fight” brings all of this to the table and more. With an artistic emphasis on food, identity, and relationships, the aesthetics of gluttony and the absurd, and food as a subject of satire that we could not have anticipated, “Food Fight” offers a rich palette.

To begin, Artist Beth Heinly frames our issues with her comics “Nachos” and “Black Licorice.” Both have a simplicity bordering on the bizarre that captures the mundane and yet culturally laden experience of eating. The comics in Heinly’s “3:00” series leave the viewer in limbo—is there a hidden meaning here? Is “Nachos” a simple depiction of a late night snack, or a statement on our ever-wired society? Are we to read a flaccid phallic symbol into the limp candy in “Black Licorice,” or have we taken the ‘don’t take candy from strangers’ trope too far? In the ambiguity, all we can do is laugh. Next, Katy Frank’s “Brunch” explores food as a social object that creates both tension and tenderness in our relationships with others.

In our first academic paper Dr. Naomi Millner investigates the growing permaculture movement, particularly as it is relevant to post-war society in El Salvador. Permaculture, as Dr. Millner defines it in the context of El Salvadorian society, comes from the idea of supporting and establishing systems economic, ecological, social, and biological—that allow for a new kind of experimental authority for El Salvadorian farmers. Millner’s work suggests that the emergence of permaculture and the agency of small-scale farmers in El Salvador can be traced to the material concern of soil, and that this concern is linked to global food security.

In her works "Cake" and "Thanksgiving Bliss", Oberlin College student Justine Neuberger uses the rich medium of oil painting to engage with questions of consumption, desire, gluttony, and disgust. "I encourage viewers to indulge in my candy colors, palatable imagery borrowed from advertising and illusionism...the grotesque colors represent the fact that overindulgence leads to nausea," Neuberger writes. However, alongside the "disgust and reluctant desire [she feels] in American consumer excess," she considers her work to be a "celebration of the indulgence of painting for anybody who desires to look."

Kelly Jung's short memoir excerpt, "Way Back Home," paints a portrait of her family through memories of coffee. Jung identifies a connection between food and identity familiar to so many of us: one whiff of the aromatic brew of Monsoon beans, and she is instantly transported to the forgotten parts of home. In her drawing "Cheerio," Courtney Lau transforms the prosaic into the extraordinary, casting the mundane daily ritual of cheerio consumption into an unfamiliar, almost extra-terrestrial terrain by foregrounding the richly textured craters and crevasses of the magnified cereal.


Similar to the explorations we see in "Brunch," "Porcelain" weaves a rhythm of tension through the ritual of eating. In "Porcelain," food is both a ubiquitous part of everyday life and a powerful site of bodily action and struggle. Anthony Campuzano's "True Story/Self Portrait" tells a too-weird-to-be-fake story involving a turkey and St. Joe's Prep, while Miranda Caniling's "#reclaimingmyculture" depicts a distilled story of eating, tradition, and belonging. Both pieces are irreverent and colorful; their relationship to food is celebratory, or at least, in Campuzano's case, too bizarre to invoke anything other than delighted wonder.

"Food-Gram" by Joanna Quigley displays the growing effects of technology and social media on our relationships to food. "Food-Gram" speaks to the ways in which constant visual documentation now functions to redefine what we eat as a (cyber) social and technologically influenced entity, perhaps even providing us with a sense of social cachet. With ruthless nihilism and bitter shade, DarkMatter's "#SelfieReflection" shines a light on the acutely uncomfortable everyday realities nourished by the social logics of public food consumption. DarkMatter inverts the racialized/sexualized colonial gaze while adding texture to the always unanswered question: what is love?

"Whose Streets?" by Kathleen O'Connor analyses the impact of gentrification

## *Introduction*

on food justice movements specifically in her home city of Oakland, CA. O'Connor ties current demographic shifts to historical land use practices, arguing that "Food politics and land allocation directly affected the way demographics spread out across Oakland...and continue to impact urban development today." "Food Fight" closes with "Easter," in which writer Ryan Murphy explores the politics of family dynamics and religious ritual through home brewed memories of holiday preparation. The tone is somber, rich, and heavy with the weight of loss and mystery.

With that, we present to you "Food Fight." As always with Margin, our goal has been to bring together a wide variety of  and differing perspectives in order to put a unique spin on an under-examined subject. We hope that it satisfies all of your cravings and gives you something to chew on the next time you're—well—chewing on something.



# BRUNCH

Katy Frank

The story of the summer in food:  
first you were vegetarian, then kosher-vegetarian.  
Then you stopped eating dairy.  
I got annoyed when you didn't want to eat sweets,  
because cooked milk is different from milk, dammit,  
like I'm pretty sure lactose-intolerant people can eat pancakes  
on a Sunday morning with their lover  
who doesn't even cook, normally. You ate lots of tofu –  
a noisy food when frying, quiet in the mouth.  
You scrambled eggs for me while Beyoncé sang  
*I want you to/Turn that cherry out, turn that cherry out.*  
I stayed carnivorous.

# FOOD-GRAM

Joanna S. Quigley



# #SELFIEREFLECTION

DarkMatter



**Darkmatter**

January 20 · Edited · 🌐

studying the exotic courtship rituals of the white heterosexual community over dinner as we celebrate the end of our working group at the public theater. the couple next to us appears to be awkwardly meandering around the inevitable fact that their tinder profiles are actually more compatible than they are. let's call this silence a form of mourning. we want to nudge them on the shoulder and remind them that things like 'love' and 'desire' are 'compatibility' are things that we perform to distract ourselves from the alienation we experience under racial capitalism, but instead we sip on our soup in silence as the other couple next to us takes instagram photos of their food and create meaning in the mundane.



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# SOIL, SEEDS, AND SOCIAL CHANGE WITH THE PERMACULTURE NETWORK OF EL SALVADOR

Dr Naomi Millner, University of Bristol

## Website links:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/geography/people/naomi-r-millner/index.html>

<http://www.authorityresearch.net>

**To gain access to the short film produced within this research or for the full version of the academic paper please contact:**

Naomi.Millner@bristol.ac.uk

*Focusing on the experiences of a growing 'permaculture' movement in post-war El Salvador, Naomi Millner's research suggests that bringing soil, a material concern, to the centre of radical democratic practices allows for the production of new kinds of experimental authority in El Salvador amongst small-scale farmers. Naomi is interested in what these 'bottom up' networks for social change offer to environmental change, and what it might take to allow the expertise they embody to affect global food security forums.*

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## Introduction

On December 20th 2013, the sixty-eighth United Nations General Assembly recognized December 5th, 2014 as World Soil Day and announced 2015 an 'International Year of Soils'. The chosen theme reflects growing awareness of the role soils play within food systems, fuel and fiber production, the groundwater balance, ecosystems functions, and in maintaining biodiversity. An awareness of this vitality is not new: it has long been understood that soil is essential for plant and animal life, not least through its capacity to store and purify water, to modify the atmosphere,

and provide a habitat for organisms which are instrumental in the decomposition and creation of other habitats. However, the state of soils in the contemporary world testifies to the selective forgetting which has accompanied the large-scale industrialization of agriculture across the past centuries. It does not seem likely that the sudden turn to soil as the 'solution' to problems from climate change to food insecurity will alter this habituated myopia. On the other hand, the revival of interest is charged with opportunities to repoint global political economies in more liveable directions. It is the aim of this paper to theorize this potential. Drawing the practical expertise, experiments, and reflections of agro-ecological movements in El Salvador into dialogue with academic debates surrounding food justice, I will suggest what kind of ethos is required to think from soil into food justice futures.

A precocious mixture of micro-minerals, organic matter, gases, liquids and diverse organisms, soils are already mediators par excellence and bring into contact the diverse arenas of the earth's life, including the lithosphere (earth's crust), the hydrosphere (surface water), atmosphere (surrounding gases), and biosphere (eco-systems). Contained in the etymology of 'agriculture' (from the Latin *ager*, or field, and *cultura*, cultivation), soil also seams together ecological and social systems, most notably in the production of food. However, while the basis for today's complex understanding of soil processes have developed over thirteen millennia of agricultural experimentations, a standardized 'soil science' was only consolidated during the Scientific Revolution. The Russian geologist Vasilii Dokuchaev was a prominent figure in the west, while the National School of Agriculture in Mexico was well-known throughout the Americas. Perhaps symptomatically, the latter was, however, influenced far more by the French School of agronomy far more than the historical folk knowledges and peasant practices, which had characterized the region for centuries. This strange buffer between two worlds of soil expertise was noted by geographer Carl Sauer in the 1940s, when he was consulted by the Rockefeller Foundation regarding proposals for radical agricultural development in the region. Sauer warned of the dangers of applying agricultural science 'to recreate the history of U.S. commercial agriculture in Mexico' and advocated a more 'bottom-up' process. This, he argued, would enable the existing cultural and economic infrastructures of agriculture to be preserved, together with the diversity of genetic resources cultivated through them over centuries. At odds with a perspective that defined food production increasingly

in terms of the urban consumer and agricultural modernization, Sauer's recommendations were not heeded. The damage of the subsequent 'Green Revolution' to the political ecologies and political economies of Central America is still only now being fully understood.

Whilst neglected by the Rockefeller Foundation, Sauer's thinking went on to shape new forms of scholarship. In agronomic terms, the field of 'agroecology' was established when such awareness of in situ ecological expertise was applied to the design and management of agricultural systems during the 1970s (Cox & Atkins 1979, Altieri 1995, Gliessman 1990). This application was mirrored in the development of cultural, and later, political ecology, as sub-disciplines of the social sciences aiming to set environmental uses and transformations into cultural and political contexts. Since the late 1970s and early 1980s political ecological perspectives have been adapted to analyze industrializing and globalizing forms of agriculture, showing how labor systems and eco-social systems were transformed through agricultural intensification (Dahlberg 1979, Stonich 1993, Grossman 1998). An explosion of interest in Marxist, feminist and post-structuralist concepts within the social sciences across this period emphasized urban sites as loci for critical engagement, but such concepts were also applied to reveal the significance of rural, 'peripheral' transformations within global economic processes. This point was made most effectively in the 'food regimes' theorized by Harriet Friedmann and Philip McMichael in the late 1980s, which exposed the entanglement of both rural and urban processes in food production and processing since the 1870s, and the new senses of scale and divisions of labor which were being established. Such work focused on 'settler societies' rather than the Global South (Bernstein 2014), but worked to evidence, and increasingly to politicize, the strategic role of agriculture in the construction of global capitalist economies (Weis 2007, Fairbairn 2014).

This earlier scholarship seems newly relevant as a renewed interest in soil within global policy forums is followed—at times, preceded—by a return to agriculture within political ecology, agrarian studies, peasant studies, and human geography. Such scholarship clusters around terms which promise some form of emancipation from the hegemony of markets within the production of food, including food justice, community food security, and food sovereignty (Heynen et al. 2012, Desmarais 2007). Of particular interest to this paper is the concept of food justice, which I define—with

Gottlieb and Joshi (2010:6)—as a collective effort to ensure that the benefits and risks of ‘where, what, and how food is grown, and produced, transported and distributed, and accessed and eaten are shared fairly.’ However, like environmental justice, the concept has gained quick resonance amongst diversely situated groups. Recognizing that it can substantively mean too much and too little, I treat food justice as a problem for thought. As a social phenomenon, food justice reflects novel forms of collective organizing and the revalorization of small-scale agriculture as a locus of ecological knowledge production and innovation (Van der Ploeg 2014). Recalling Sauer’s invocations, I suggest that such claims and networks offer important insights into how agricultural knowledge production can incorporate questions of genetic infrastructures within questions of cultural infrastructures. Within the paper, cultural infrastructures are reservoirs of know-how (including what conditions seeds need to grow, how to maintain soil richness, and what foods are good to eat), without which we cannot produce food. By highlighting the role of such cultural infrastructures within the preservation of soil I seek to show what aspects of food justice, as a way of framing emergent forms of collaboration, might help democratize the production of knowledge about food processes.

Within this approach I seek to unsettle the idea that a ‘right to food’ can undergird such a process of democratization. Appeals to universalized ideas of ethics, especially in terms of human rights, function to galvanize international sympathies but also to preclude debate over social givens (Millner 2011). The language of human rights upholds a ‘food security’ model of food justice, wherein certain actors guarantee minimum access to resources for ‘poor’ recipients—but the means of the operation are ruled out of the question (Heynen 2010). The language of human rights is impossible to argue with, whereas democratic knowledge production needs an object of dispute (Callon 2009). This paper therefore documents what I call ‘soil praxis’: practices for food production, which incorporate pedagogic attention to the agencies of soil life as a means of strengthening and protecting the cultural infrastructures of small-scale agriculture. Such an emphasis echoes recent efforts to imagine a ‘more-than-human’ geography, drawing on longer histories of ecological, artistic, and environmental thought. This work also builds upon earlier moves from feminist and post-colonial scholarship, which, in different ways, have emphasized the agencies and perspectives of ‘others’ systematically excluded from political visibility

or speech. However, thinking participation from a more-than-human perspective leads us to an expanded conception of ethics, in which not only human freedoms, but the qualities of interspecies and inter-systemic relations are at stake (Whatmore 2006). The place of dynamic material agencies within processes of food production have already been explored in relation to the meat industry (Roe 2010), farm animals (Yarwood & Evans 2000), agri-food practices (Roe 2006), and food scares (Stassart & Whatmore 2003, Hinchliffe 2001). As I bring this lens to bear on soil praxis I work to connect this more-than-human ethics to a broader politics of knowledge—that is, to show how and why attention to microbial agencies offer a more democratic framing for food justice agenda than human rights.

These practices and pedagogies entangle, in complex ways, my research context with my institutional context, since the principles I study share a lineage with the participatory action research methods I have employed. Specifically this paper draws on two years of participative research with the permaculture movement of El Salvador, a grassroots social movement whose activities center around an institute for ecological agriculture (the Instituto de Permacultura de El Salvador [IPES]) established in 2000. My fieldwork was concentrated into two visits, although communication and interviews continued in between: the first (December 2012-January 2013) was based entirely on observant participation, and yielded notes dominated by observations of bodily movements, feeling, and spatial atmospheres. Through this visit I established my two main research sites. Suchitoto, a small colonial town in the region of Cuscatlán, was an important guerrilla hub during the civil war (1979-1992) and today hosts the IPES offices and (12km outside the town) a permaculture demonstration site where training and experimentation takes place. Torola is a smaller town in the rural region of Morazán, which was also an important site of guerrilla activities during the war. The regions surrounding these two towns are the most 'active' in terms of permaculture, although there are smaller networks in San Salvador, Chalatenango and La Libertad, and many other associated agro-ecological organizations. In my second visit (March-April 2014) I carried out eight four-hour participatory workshops, co-designed with my partners, which functioned primarily as focus groups on issues of political-economic transformations, perceptions of power, and the relationship of soil conservation practices with ideas of food justice (*justicia alimentaria*). I also carried out thirty-six interviews with small-scale



farmers; local, national and international NGO representatives; and regional and municipal governors. After gaining the appropriate consents, audio and video capture of interviews and fieldwork also enabled a second translation of my data upon return to the UK. Combining these methodologies helped illuminate the way that different concepts (such as food sovereignty) were perceived by different actors, as well as allowing multiple opportunities for participants to contribute toward, and correct, my narratives of the movement. Through the paper I will raise a number of issues surrounding my positionality within this work, which was complex—traversing cultural, ethnic and linguistic boundaries—and often difficult to manage.

This paper presents selected aspects of this fieldwork, focusing on data which pertains to the role of cultural infrastructures of agriculture within a democratization of agricultural knowledge production. The rest of the argument will unfold as follows: first, I review existing food justice scholarship, focusing on the importance of prior work on 'in situ' conservation practices and recent attention to the growing food sovereignty movement for rethinking food justice in terms of democratic knowledge production. Secondly I elaborate my research context in these terms, emphasizing the genealogy of the social movements and pedagogical techniques which have formed the context for the growth of the permaculture movement. This leads me to unpack what 'soil praxis' means for the permaculture movement, and how this praxis is connected with technological developments and forms of social organizing in other domains. Finally I analyze this praxis in terms of tradition (how is tradition being reinvented? To what degree are tradition and democratic knowledge practices in tension?) and 'hybrid forums', a term devised by Callon (2009) to articulate processes of knowledge production in which diverse experts participates. In concluding I suggest that a democratic food justice is premised in hybrid forums that take seriously diverse claims to experiential expertise of the soil.

## **Research**

Permaculture comes from the idea of establishing 'permanent cultures': auto-replenishing and dynamic systems, which combine ecological, social, economic and biological processes. Developed first in Australia, permaculture as a set of practices was introduced into El Salvador in the wake of the civil war (1979-1992), building upon

social movement formations established by earlier liberation theology movements, which emphasized social justice anti-authoritarian readings of biblical texts. These movements share an emphasis on the experience and expertise of small-scale farmers within systems which treat them as backward or unintelligent. However, in focusing such pedagogies on material concerns like soil, permaculture has also established forums in which experiential knowledges and insights can be brought into dialogue with other 'objective' forms of authority, associated with science and policy. These emergent forms of authority have begun to unsettle the foundational assumptions of food security science and policy, and make further demands on what we call 'food justice'. Specifically, the reframing of food politics in terms of vibrant cultural and genetic reservoirs reveals the importance of grounding food justice in matters which can be verified, rather than the saturated lexicon of human rights, which locates agency among external authorities. Furthermore, resituating food justice as a material concern also resists the tendency for campaigns and assistance programs to solidify in relation to the experience of one brokering constituency (eg. male elders) or the 'top-down' analysis of an outside body (eg. humanitarian NGOs).



*Drying and storing seeds in Suchitoto, El Salvador*

In El Salvador, as elsewhere, permaculture was introduced to 'agro-ecological' communities. As a family of approaches, agro-ecology emerged in response to Green Revolution programs for industrial agricultural production which were unrolled across the Global South during the 1960s and 1970s. Agro-ecological 'schools' and networks contributed toward the formation of cross-cultural peasant and land-worker alliances (such as the Campesino-a-Campesino [farmer-to-farmer] movement in Central America, and the transnational movement La Via Campesina [the peasant's way]) throughout the 1980s and 1990s. They also formed the basis to validate and systemize traditional and highly situated forms of agricultural practice which were being progressively eroded. Whilst the commitments and politics of permaculture already closely coincide with those of agro-ecology, its replicable design principles (such as: obtain a yield, use and value diversity, use edges and value the marginality) have increasingly encouraged the creation of forums of knowledge production between farmers and other experts such as technicians, local government officials and schools. The reiterative process of observing, reflecting and taking action—learning, like liberation theology, on principles laid out by the Brazilian pedagogue Paolo Freire—have also led to the elaboration of critiques of gender and patronage relations within the existing farmer-to-farmer movements.

Permaculture is thus distinctive as a social pedagogy for the way it produces authority by establishing repeatable and experimental relationships with experience. Matter is known through the body, and learning is created as the body changes. The body is used to measure, to approximate, and test textures, tastes or smells. Permaculture practitioners are encouraged to rigorously test and compare results by creating twinned plots, regular note-taking, and recorded measurements. This leads to hybrid forms of ecological knowledge, which incorporate traditional and indigenous practices with novel techniques elaborated through *encuentros* (encounters) and *intercambios* (exchanges) between farmers. In El Salvador the mediating concept which forms a basis for exchange between these different forms of knowledge is the notion of *Terra Madre*, or Mother Nature, an idea derived from Mayan cosmology. Mother Nature is not one god or one ontology, but a term for acknowledging the excess of matter to human forms of knowing and saying the world. The term denotes the living vibrancy of the material world of plants, people, and soil and the connectivity of life. It is important, therefore, that the weightiness

of agricultural 'tradition' does not refer to the unqualified authority of forefathers or founding principles, but instead to a litmus of experience which is constantly being recombined for the present.



*A permaculture design course at the Instituto de Permacultura de El Salvador (IPES)*

This hybridity is vital. Interviewees within the study made clear that it is normally only well-meaning NGOs who insist that indigenous practice is something that is or ever was something 'pure' and separate from all other forms of knowledge—a claim which some suggest in fact relegates indigenous peoples to the status of past cultures (Braun 2002), along with the 'pristine' forest (Denevan 1992). To underplay this hybridity would also eclipse the way that Terra Madre is also increasingly being mobilized as a connective concept allowing for cultural exchange between diversely positioned land-workers, agro-ecological practitioners and food sovereignty activists around the world (Martinez and Torres 2014). Finally, the place of Terra Madre within these emergent forms of authority suggest that tradition can be future-oriented. Within experimental forms of authority a sense of tradition can imbue pragmatic practice with an ethical horizon, which speaks of more liveable worlds. From this

vantage tradition is valuable not because it looks back to the past, but because it conserves archives of experiential and genetic memory for the future. Agro-ecological practice is, in this sense, so potentially powerful because it occupies a liminal space between familiarity and futurity. It is perhaps through this future-orientation that existing and emergent forms of authority might be translated and augmented, in place of the perpetual reinvention of short-termist 'solutions.'

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# THANKSGIVING BLISS

Justine Neuberger





# CAKE

Justine Neuberger





# ARTIST STATEMENT

## Justine Neuberger

When describing my work, I compare my use of oil paints to water, yogurt, butter, cream, and frosting. Paint is a decadent material that may imitate virtually any surface with delicate handling. I use paint, a substance that conjures delicious imagery, to create sumptuous caricatures of people I have encountered in dreams, daily life, and media. My paintings incite desire and gluttonous consumption. I encourage viewers to indulge in my candy colors, palatable imagery borrowed from advertising, and illusionism. However, the grotesque colors represent the fact that overindulgence leads to nausea. Within my paintings, I juxtapose ancient beliefs concerning lust and gluttony, the celebration of excess of the pre-modern Carnival, and my experience as a consumer in the twenty-first century.

Ancient philosophers linked consumption to sexual desire. Plato conceived of the stomach and the womb as analogous structures as he described the uterus like an animal starving for fruit that wandered around the body causing damage if unfulfilled. Galen wrote that the consumption of 'hot' foods such as beans and meat, so categorized due to their heaviness and flatulence, raised bodily heat to the requisite temperature for the production of sexual fluids. When these fluids were not released they led to dangerous internal imbalances. Although excess was considered a deadly sin, during Carnival, gluttony, drunkenness, and sexual liberation were glorified. Carnival celebrated taboo and transgression before the return to productivity and functionality preserved by temperance. As an Italian saying goes: *A Carnevale Ogni Scherzo Vale!* (During Carnival Anything Goes)!

As a post-modern American consumer, I have experienced similar phenomena, and participated in gluttonous behaviors. I regard my indulgences with guilt, as my easy consumption comes at the expense of withholding means of livelihood from other people. Even painting is a luxurious indulgence. However, as opposed to solidifying barriers of social strata and class, painting preserves the spirit of Carnival and thus liberates viewers from such divisions. While only a few people can derive pleasure from eating a delicacy, which is consumed and then gone, many people can derive pleasure from looking at a painting. When placed in a gallery or in another public space, the audience can indulge in the pleasure of viewing. My work acknowledges the disgust and reluctant desire I feel towards American consumer excess, but it is also a celebration of the indulgence of painting by anybody who desires to look.

# WAY BACK HOME

Kelly Jung

I don't drink coffee. Whether it's bittersweet espresso shots, or an iced-latte with a beautiful gradation of black coffee and milk, the taste, smell, and effect of caffeine does not attract me. However, I've been exposed to the culture of coffee since I was young. My grandfather would leave the last sip of his heavily sweetened and creamed coffee for me. The Dutch coffee machine next to the kitchen counter always attracted my attention, and the bitter, sweet and sour aroma of coffee represented the smell of home.

Since the moment I could handle a warm kettle, coffee brewing has been my job in the family. Brewing coffee is a painstaking and meticulous ritual. One mug of coffee comes from concise measurements, perseverance, and expertise.

As my dad leaves the dinner table for an after-meal cigarette, I begin to prepare coffee. Empty dishes and leftover food still remain on the marble stone table, but instead of cleaning the mess, I put exactly one liter of water into the electric kettle. Then I turn to my right and grab the Mason jar filled with Indian Monsoon beans. Indian Monsoon has a soothing, earthy taste, perfect for after a meal. The first sip or smell might not provoke a sensation, but as the mug empties, the Monsoon relaxes your system, even to the tips of your fingers. I add exactly two spoonfuls of beans into the coffee grinder. The light blue grinder, passed on from my grandmother, was not intended for coffee grinding, but has fully adapted to its new task. The clear surface is now covered with grease and powder. I open the lid, and smell the mixture of 20 years of different coffee beans. Then, I press the button, count exactly to fifteen, anticipating the perfect coffee ground; if the ground is too rough, it cannot extract the flavor fully, if too fine, it extracts the bitterness of the beans, taking away from the flavor.

Everything is set. The water has been boiled, the beans are ground, and the utensils are set up: a piece of fabric, a glass pot, a filter with powder, and a bronze kettle that has lost its sheen. Now, I finally pick up the kettle.

The first drip must be gentle and subtle. I carefully pour a small circle of water onto the ground, then watch as the coffee powder rises. Drip after drip, the foam layers, and the smell of coffee begins to spread through the entire house, drawing

my father back to the kitchen. The scent of coffee is reminiscent and comforting; it is like a deep cello tune, slowly waking up all the dormant senses in my body. Just by deeply breathing in this aroma, even without taking a sip, I suddenly feel at home.

Choosing the mug is a crucial element of coffee making. On a gloomy day, a fragile mini teacup with Peter Rabbit illustrations will do. On a stressful day, two plain red mugs. Today, I pick out self-made pottery cups for my parents. They carry the organic, unrefined flavor of Monsoon better than any other choice. As my parents both take the first sip, I ceaselessly stare at them, trying to catch the smallest hint in their expression. The slight frown on my father's forehead implies that it's too strong, the unnoticeable nod and low key humming from my mother means absolute satisfaction. Accompanied by coffee, even the heavy humid mid summer morning becomes somehow special.

My coffee smells unique each time I brew it, even though it is always brewed in the same location, with the same utensils and around the same people. It smells like an old cigarette butt, dried leaves in late fall, and fresh soil. All of these smells call forth particular memories I share with my family; the snowy espresso night when my father announced his retirement; a typical black coffee breakfast interrupted by the spontaneous decision of a road trip; a heated conversation on North Korea's nuclear issues over two glasses of ice coffee; a sweet vanilla Hawaiian Kona disrupted by the news of my grandmother's cancer. The fluctuations of life have always been shared over a cup of coffee.

When they let their fourteen year old daughter leave home for a better education and a future in America, my parents and I both knew I wouldn't be returning any time soon, but didn't quite grasp what this farewell meant. We no longer prepared for Sunday brunches together; my father no longer drove me to school, I was no longer required to wash dishes, and my mother didn't get to help me pick out my outfit every morning. My parents stood in my empty room, wondering if sending me to America had been the right decision, while I sat on the red carpet of my new, unfamiliar room fighting loneliness. As the years have passed, loneliness has become a part of my routine and my identity.

My parents and I have missed out on each other's lives for the past six years; they don't know who my friends are, what kind of food I like to eat, or how late I go to bed. I don't know about them either; their new furniture, changed curtains,

## *Way Back Home*

and my mother's new hairstyle reveal that their lives have changed just as mine has. There are moments when home feels unknown and I feel like a stranger. Then, I begin to make coffee. As the familiar aroma fills the space, I am once again immersed in the memories of home.

In my sixth year of living away from my parents, coffee making is no longer a daily task. However, even in this foreign land, when I encounter the smell of an earthy Monsoon, delicate Antigua or sweet Hawaiian Kona, I'm brought back to my family. I see my parent's faces-closed eyes, pursed lips, and the low exclamation after tasting the coffee. No matter how life unravels itself and how far away I am from home, I know I will always be able to find the often forgotten pieces of myself through the smell of freshly brewed coffee.

# CHEERIO

Courtney Lau



Artist Statement: The drawing, "Cheerio," stems from an obsession with textures. By displacing and isolating a single cheerio from my typical daily ritual, I have de-naturalized my favorite breakfast food and revealed an unfamiliar object with rigid craters and spongy surfaces.

# PORCELAIN

Anonymous

And then my pelvic floor drops down thunk to the ground  
The uneven fan blade of conversation whips my hair  
My eardrum pounds to the clatter of silverware  
My eyes float in and out on the tick tock of a windup clock

All I can do is count to ten. nine. eight. seven.  
Beautiful patterns on porcelain plates.  
Embroidery on upholstery on thighs.  
Ten toes on the ground. Two feet on the ground.  
Press heels into floor. Press back into chair.  
All I can do is count to one. two. three. four.

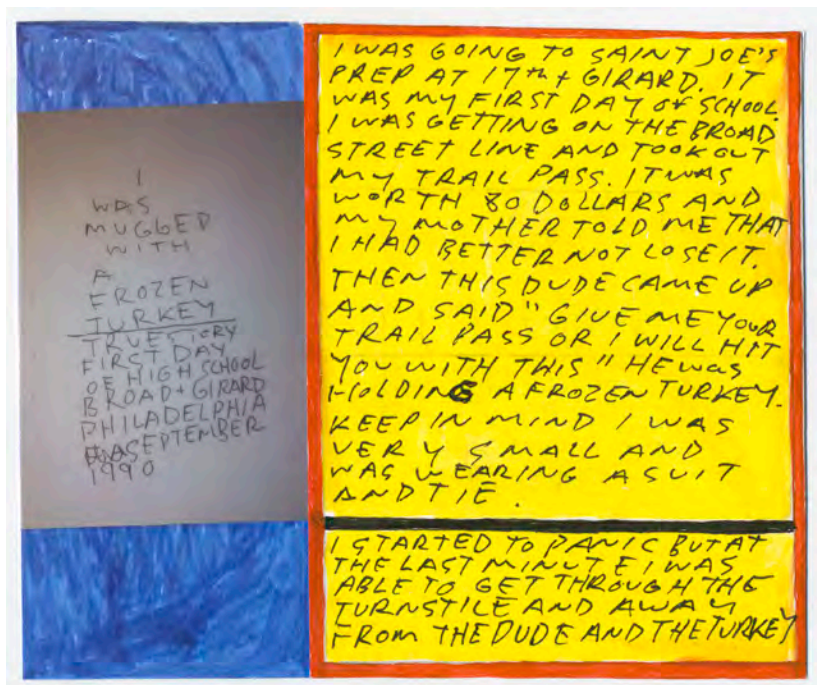
And then my eyes fall into a chasm of mashed potatoes  
I drown in gravy and drag myself out on a lettuce lifeboat  
pull myself up on an endless stream of wine I climb  
an asparagus tree to try to hold myself above the tide of rice  
I hold my breath above the whirlpool of double chocolate pecan pie...

All I can do is count peas and beans and waterfalls  
that cascade down my throat and through  
only to meet their end in a splash against porcelain  
All I can do is press-rinse-repeat press-rinse-repeat, press-rinse-

I find my pelvis sitting on the tiled floor  
A towel tickles my forehead, I can feel the stars.  
The nightlight shines on my mottled skin.  
I turn off the water. Blow my nose. Brush my teeth.  
Count to ten. nine. eight. seven. six. five. four.

# TRUE STORY/SELF PORTRAIT

Anthony Campuzano



# “WHOSE STREETS”: FOOD SOVEREIGNTY AND LAND USE IN OAKLAND CALIFORNIA

Kathleen O'Connor

The New York Times Travel Section's "The 45 Best Places to Go in 2012," listed one place that was not like the rest. At number five, between London and Tokyo, was Oakland, California, the city known not for its unique cultural spaces and creativity, but for its homicide rate, poverty, and racial tensions. While some Bay Area Locals reacted with pride and joy at Oakland's recognition, many others had their fears confirmed: Oakland was gentrifying at an alarming rate and a piece like this was a point of no return.

Ingrid K. Williams, the young white freelance writer who authored the section on Oakland, quells the fears of the New York Times readership, offering foodie culture like a siren call, "beckon[ing] amid the grit." She assures them that "tensions have cooled since violence erupted at the recent Occupy Oakland protests, but the city's revitalized night-life scene has continued to smolder." Having addressed the city's national reputation for violence, she credits "the city's ever more sophisticated restaurants" and "upscale cocktail bars" with "turning once-gritty Oakland into an increasingly appealing place to be after dark." Though she does not refer to race or class in her descriptions of Oakland's "grit," she praises gentrification in the form of "upscale" food establishments with making Oakland safer.<sup>1</sup> However, she fails to acknowledge to whom this new safety really applies, and she completely disregards Oakland's long and tenuous history with food politics. Gentrifiers' settler mentality endorses consumption without recognition, unleashing a new yet eerily familiar form of violence on Oakland residents who have fought for their food for generations.

In Oakland, as everywhere, food is tied to the land, and the land has a history. Long before the faux dive bars with \$12 cocktails and emptied warehouses serving-pine crusted sole filets, the area was populated by the Ohlone tribe. In the

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1 Williams



mid-eighteenth century, Spanish settlers brutally stripped the Ohlone of their land and forced them to work in the newly established missions growing food.<sup>2</sup> Since then, white people have continued to claim development built on the backs of indigenous peoples and people of color in the Oakland Area as their own.

The most significant groundwork for the current condition of food politics was laid in the mid 20th century. During World War II, Oakland's convenient port housed a major industrial hub for the United States military. The factory positions opened faster than the military could fill locally, prompting a large number of African Americans to abandon sharecropping positions in the Deep South in favor of more profitable shipyard jobs.<sup>3</sup> The rapid influx of African Americans prompted racist investing practices known as "redlining," in which banks and industries marked certain neighborhoods populated by African American residents as risky for investment and kept money out of those areas.<sup>4</sup>

Redlining accompanied the well known narrative of "white flight", which was a common phenomenon that occurred from the 1950s to the 1970s, in which middle class white people moved to the suburbs, often bringing investors and capital with them. The inverse was also true; people often moved to the suburbs to take advantage of the investments being made there.<sup>5</sup> These legacies continue to affect neighborhood dynamics today, particularly in their effect on the distribution of grocery stores. Chain stores such as Safeway moved from city neighborhoods out to the suburbs to build larger central stores. Meanwhile, family markets suffered from competition with corporations, and many small businesses in the flatlands eventually followed affluent consumers to the suburbs, converted to liquor stores, or shut down completely.<sup>6</sup> Food politics and land allocation directly affected the way demographics spread out across Oakland in the 1950s through the 1970s and continue to impact urban development there today.

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2 Maldetto

3 Curran & González, 211 & 212

4 Bass, Lo, & Montaña

5 Interview

6 This information comes from an interview with my father, an Oakland native who worked in his uncle's grocery stores in the East Bay in the early 1970's. "Murray's Market," where he worked, is now a liquor store.

As evidenced by the New York Times' cautious endorsement, Oakland is one of the most rapidly gentrifying cities in the United States. Analysts often attribute this to Oakland's proximity to Silicon Valley and the rising housing prices in San Francisco, right across the bay. However, gentrification did not happen in a vacuum; in many ways it was very intentional. Governor Jerry Brown, who was the mayor of Oakland from 1999 to 2007, pursued his "10K plan," the plan to attract 10,000 new residents by the end of his term. To do so, he worked extensively with land developers, working out a \$61 million subsidy for Forest City, a national developer.<sup>7</sup> The area in which most of the development was centered, which Forest City markets as "Uptown" is now crawling with new bars and restaurants born of former industrial buildings. The developers benefit from food tourism, but devalue cultural histories associated with food and ignore the histories of the former industrial centers that the trendy new restaurants occupy. This enacts violence on the people who likely built and worked in the building in the first place, namely the black migrants who performed much of the industrial labor during and after World War II.<sup>8</sup>

Chinaka Hodge and Watsky, two Bay Area-based rappers bring this violence to the forefront in the music video for their song, "Kill a Hipster," which explicitly links violence to gentrification, food, and occupation. In the video, zombies-as-hipsters terrorize a local park with their brain-fueled picnics. The camera cuts to a series of hip restaurants while Chinaka Hodge, a black woman and West Oakland native, takes the mic. Maps of the Bay Area fade in and out over the hipsters casually eating human flesh and, as the video continues, the maps slowly fill with red blood tracing the routes of gentrification from San Francisco across the bridge into West Oakland. The song continues, now with Watsky, a white man, playing the role of the gentrifier claiming he will "sprinkle you with goat cheese" [before he eats your brains]. Watsky's mention of goat cheese, a staple of the Oakland foodie scene, calls out gentrifier arrogance as his character marks his territory with expensive culinary products before consuming it all for himself. The hipster zombies take over the song, singing the hook ("Kill a hipster, save your hood!") in indie pop style, taking the

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7 Elinson

8 Curran & González

words out of Chinaka Hodge's mouth, silencing her, and ignoring her history.<sup>9</sup> As the hipster zombies literally ingest the flesh of long-time locals alongside their cheese and fancy drinks, they fill the map with blood, lacking any self-awareness of the damage they leave behind.<sup>10</sup> This video exemplifies the dangers of the gentrification mentality which, drawing from its colonial roots, deeply harms communities of color with little to no consequences for the gentrifiers. While the hipsters in the video, and those eating boxed Whole Foods lunches on the banks of Lake Merritt, use foodie culture to enter any and every space they wish, they absolve themselves from the damage they do to those spaces and the people living in them.

There is a long history of racialized food violence in Oakland, but there is also a long history of resistance. Artists like Chinaka Hodge have flourished in Oakland for decades, working through and alongside activist campaigns to change the food system and live outside it. The Black Panther Party, founded in Oakland by Bobby Seale and Huey P. Newton in 1966, was one of the most powerful.<sup>11</sup> Though the group was originally created to combat police brutality, its Ten Point Program also demanded an end to prisons and the enlistment of black men in the military, opportunities for self-determination and self-reliance, and "Land, Bread, Housing, Education, Clothing, Justice and Peace."<sup>12</sup> The Panthers ran a Free Breakfast Program to shift reliance away from government and towards community and to improve young black children's opportunity to focus and learn.<sup>13</sup> They emphasized food's power to sustain and liberate.

In 1969, the Panthers joined forces with the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee to boycott a Safeway on 27th and West Street just past what is now called "Uptown." Safeway had refused to donate food to the free breakfast pro-

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9 "Kill a Hipster"

10 Chinaka Hodge further explores this topic in her poem, "Barely Audible." In the poem she draws upon imagery of the kinds of food available in liquor stores and places it alongside images of poverty and violence to draw parallels between different forms of structural racism. Hodge locates the pain of gentrification within the black and brown body, using the sound of an auction to mimic the sound of a gun being fired, and using the word "sold" not only to describe the transfer of real estate but also to address the violence against women in her community.

11 Araiza

12 Newton

13 Araiza

gram and had sold California Grapes despite the UFW's demands. The coalition drove shoppers to get groceries at Lucky's supermarkets, which had supported the Panthers and the UFW. The communities worked together to collectively decide how land should be used and which institutions deserved support. They ultimately succeeded in closing down the Safeway and continued to work together on future campaigns until the Panthers disbanded and the California Government took the alternative systems built by the party out of community hands.<sup>14</sup>

Since then, more and more community-based organizations have emerged to support Oakland food sovereignty. Mo' Better Foods is a farmer's market in West Oakland that is run by and for African Americans, and which draws on the Panther's model of food sovereignty.<sup>15</sup> While farmer's markets are common in many parts of the East Bay, they tend to cater to white upper middle class folk. Mo' Better Foods offers a radical, empowering alternative for black people in West Oakland. According to Alison Hope Alkon, who writes about Mo' Better Foods in her essay, "Growing Resistance: Food, Culture and the Mo' Better Foods Farmers' Market," "the markets vision brings together local food-system advocacy, racial pride, and grassroots economic development."<sup>16</sup> Mo' Better Foods writes African Americans back into the history of urban agriculture as an explicitly anti-racist liberation tactic, and reclaims the space of the urban street as a place for African Americans to nurture themselves and each other as a "catalyst for healthy eating and cultural pride."<sup>17</sup>

Nearby, the People's Grocery, a community-based food justice organization, carries out numerous community-based projects that work towards food sovereignty for underserved communities. The People's Grocery operates on community funds and labor, and instills locals with a sense of ownership over their land and food. Yavette Holts, speaking on her work in the People's Grocery's "Growing Justice Institute" states that the purpose of the project is "to encourage interpersonal rather than monetary dependence. Empowering folks with their skills and time as resource. Connectedness in accomplishing a goal. Feeding families, improving access

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14 *ibid*

15 Alkon

16 *ibid*

17 *ibid*

by opening an alternate means of commerce. Boost personal confidence by encouraging people to bring their special skills forward and be rewarded.”<sup>18</sup> The People’s Grocery works toward collective empowerment for Oakland locals navigating the food system.

Other models offer more traditional grocery store models, but maintain a commitment to racial and economic food justice. Across town, Mi Pueblo offers bilingual services, fair prices, and shuttle rides to improve customer access. Mi Pueblo supports not only their customers, but also their employees and community. These pockets of collective and responsible community land ownership offer hope for food sovereignty and community-oriented land-based practices. However, their obligation to contend with unbridled gentrification and economic development presents a danger to their operations.

While these examples mark the success of some organizations working towards food justice, not all efforts have fared quite as well. What follows is an example of food politics failing to centralize issues of racial and economic justice, and the resultant failure in this approach. Occupy Oakland, as part of the global Occupy movement, advocated for the amelioration of unfair economic development and land use. Occupy’s tactics were incredibly clear and persistent in this regard: find a public space, live in it, and transform it. This strategy stems from the principle that land is a public good, and that, when the government does not handle it responsibly, it is the peoples’ prerogative to physically insert themselves into that space and make it their own. However, examining the interpersonal dynamics of Occupy Oakland reveals a great deal about the conflicting attitudes that disrupted Occupy’s progress towards a more equitable society. One particular incident, the vandalism of a Whole Foods near Lake Merritt during a protest in 2012, exemplifies these tensions.

Videos of the vandalism reveal the bizarre power relations between protestors, as well as the conflicting ideologies they hold. Many of the videos posted to Youtube by protestors present at the event start with the spray-painting of the word “strike” on the first window. A moment later, a man in a yellow helmet tackles one of the

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18 People’s Grocery “Growing Justice Institute”

"black bloc" protestors who was damaging the property.<sup>19</sup> Then everything erupts. The scene is almost carnivalesque in its disparate spectacle. Within moments, the unified chanting breaks off by sympathy. Supporters of the Black Bloc chant, "Fuck Whole Foods!" and "Fuck the property of the one percent!" A second group, composed primarily of young white men and a few middle-aged white women, chants "Nonviolence!" and "Peaceful protest!" The third group consists of young African American men who mostly present as lower class. This group is visibly angry. One man yells to the black bloc, "y'all hella stupid! The police gon' fuck y'all up, dumbasses! Dumb motherfucker you oughta be shot." Nearby, another African American man, who had been knocked over after he placed himself between the black bloc and the Whole Foods, jumps up, rips the stake from a black bloc protester's hands, and leaps up onto the planter box twirling the stake and yelling "no violence" triumphantly. Another man, also black who presents as middle or upper class, asks, "who's being violent now?"

The fact that a group of primarily white, college-aged anarchists chose Whole Foods as a target for vandalism and that they received pushback from the crowd complicates Occupy's relationship with local control of public space and the food system, which are both highly racialized in this context. The appearance of a Whole Foods (in this case in a former car dealership) is a foolproof indicator of gentrification in progress. The food they produce appeals to upper middle class people who appreciate not only the types of food offered, but the hip warehouse feel and location. The Black Bloc anarchists who chose this as their target recognize the ability of food establishments, like banks, to affect local economies and encourage gentrification.

While white moderate liberals feel entitled to walk through formerly Black neighborhoods of downtown Oakland chanting, "Whose Streets? Our Streets!" in a movement that shares its name with violent land usurpation, colonization, and violent military campaigns, they march along people fighting for the simple right to live in their own neighborhoods. While many of the white and upper middle-class protestors consider the destruction of corporate property "violent," young black

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19 A Black Bloc is a tactic used in protests in which participants wear all black, including black masks or face-coverings in order to conceal their identity and protect them from criminal prosecution. Black Blocs are often associated with anarchism.

men, the frequent targets of police profiling, recognize the real and immediate danger this causes for them.

Unfair land use practices, from colonization to redlining to gentrification and beyond, are at the base of Oakland's food politics. With the demographics of landowners disproportionate to the population of the city, the violent erasure and deliberate misallocation of resources will continue. For this to stop, the city needs to focus resources on people who are already in Oakland, and who have been living there for generations rather than trying to draw more capital into the cities through white and upper class settlement. Food sovereignty in Oakland means working towards the equitable distribution of land, fostering a collective memory of how the city arrived at its current condition, and building support for existing community-based alternatives. Only by centering and supporting the collective empowerment of Oakland communities, particularly for communities of color and for low-income residents, can Oakland's streets really be "our streets" for these communities.

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# #RECLAIMINGMYCULTURE

Miranda Canilang



Materials: (2014, Colored Pencil, Apple Pages)

Artist Statement: Happy Mid-Autumn Festival! As a 3rd generation #AsianAmerican, I don't really feel any personal connections to the holiday (my parents didn't even send me #mooncakes in the mail). But I'm thankful for being able to celebrate this special #Chinese tradition with my #Mawrterts! #reclaimingmyculture #alldoieat #bmcbanter

# EASTER

Ryan Murphy

"Please, tell me again why we must dye the eggs  
if once God did it himself."

We roll them over in the bright vinegar. We make  
sure each is as red as the other, then we peel away

their sanguine shells like paint for the membrane  
beneath, smooth as resurrection.

"Don't ask me about that," you say, your hand  
waving me away with my father's Catholicism.

You know that you're not spreading God thin.  
The wine-colored liquid trickles into your cracked

winter hands and makes them pink as my skin.  
Easter came early this year. Always you say

my name alone would be enough to make  
my grandfather roll over in his grave, no matter

how many wind-rolled stones I lay atop it. He, like them,  
will never sit still enough for you. Now, your mother

stands in the doorway with that man from  
the bookstore. She smiles in her survived

way, proffering low-fat desserts and the name  
Bill. I finally know of the seven years in which she

*Food Fight*

cracked the world in half, and I can only  
be thankful that you are showing me how to peel

things away gradually. Mother, you have become  
a wheel. You have seen your boulders rolled aside

for coal, a husband who held your blistered hand  
like just another holy wafer. Now our deft fingers rub oil

and fresh rosemary onto a raw lamb, both of us  
touching the body's presence, the full tomb.

# BLACK LICORICE

Beth Heinly

3:00



[the3oclockbook.tumblr.com](http://the3oclockbook.tumblr.com)

# CONTRIBUTORS

**Beth Heiny** is a local artist based in Philadelphia who practices performance, comics and curation. She is member of the artist collective Vox Populi where she regularly exhibits her performance and curation projects. She publishes a weekly comic entitled "the 3:00 book," a loosely based journal comic, [fortheartblog.org](http://fortheartblog.org). To view more of her work visit her at [domesticwildcatrefuge.com](http://domesticwildcatrefuge.com) or follow her on Twitter (@heinyho), Instagram (@bertheiny) & Tumblr (the3oclockbook).

**Katy Frank** is a 20-year-old New Yorker turned collegiate suburbanite. She likes playing pretty much any sport except basketball, although it is the only sport she enjoys watching. She has a twin sister and they don't look alike.

**Joanna Quigley** is an illustrator, dancer, video-maker, and fake food collector located in Philadelphia. She makes work for herself and others, and sometimes sells art under the name Ice Cream Thighs.

**DarkMatter** is a trans south asian performance art duo comprised of Alok Vaid-Menon and Janani Balasubramanian. Based in New York City, DarkMatter regularly performs to sold-out houses at venues like La MaMa Experimental Theater, Nuyorican Poets Café, and the Asian American Writer's Workshop. DarkMatter was recently part of the Public Theater's Under the Radar Festival as well as the Queer International Arts Festival. Known for their quirky aesthetic and political panache, DarkMatter has been invited to perform at stages and universities across the world.

**Naomi Millner** is a political and cultural geographer based at Bristol University who is interested in environmental and social movements of the past and present, and how material and more-than-human presences make claims upon them. Key themes of her work and practical involvement include popular education, food and migration justice, political ecology, commons and enclosures and agro-ecology.

## Contributors

**Justine Neuberger** was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York. She graduated from Fiorello Laguardia Arts in 2011. She is currently at senior at Oberlin College where she studies Art History and Studio Art. Her paintings reference Dutch genre painting and Popart as they investigate consumerism.

**Kelly Jung** is a sophomore studying philosophy and Chinese. She is from Seoul, Korea and moved to the U.S. alone six years ago. She enjoys warm weather and avidly follows food blogs.

**Courtney Lau** is a history of art major at Haverford College. She is currently interested in the tension between the analog and the digital.

**Anthony Campuzano** studied at Tyler School of Art, the Yale University Summer School of Art at Norfolk, CT, and the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. His work has been exhibited widely including solo exhibitions at the Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia; Fleisher/Ollman, Philadelphia; Churner and Churner, New York; and White Columns, New York. He was awarded a 2009 Pew Fellowship in the Arts and his work is in the collection of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, and the Woodmere Museum. He does not hold a drivers license and is a fan of pop music and pop music videos.

**Kathleen O'Connor** is from the East Bay Area, California. As a Dance and Comparative American Studies double major at Oberlin College, she studies the politics of bodies and performance in a cross-disciplinary context.

**Miranda Canilang** is a sophomore Physics major at Bryn Mawr College. An aspiring YouTube chef, it's quite obvious she loves food because we all know that Asians love food. Miranda is honored and excited for her first published artwork in Margin Journal. Her other works for the Asian American Students Association and BMCS Concert Series can be seen on posters around the Tri-Co.

**Ryan Murphy** is a second-year creative writing and environmental studies double major at Oberlin College. She originally hails from a small town outside of Charlottesville, VA. Ryan can be contacted at [rmurphy2@oberlin.edu](mailto:rmurphy2@oberlin.edu).

