LCC 3508: Food and Eating in Early America
Midterm Assignment: Historical Recipe Book Website Prototype

Exhibit presentation and critique will take place IN CLASS on Thursday, October 16th. Written portion of assignment is due via TSquare on Sunday, October 19th, at 11:59pm.

In the first portion of the semester, we’ve examined a range of early American texts in the context of contemporary (and canonical) food studies scholarship, in order to better understand the significance of food and eating in early America. Now, we begin the process of concretizing this approach for the public by creating a historical recipe book website, updated and informed by contemporary approaches to food. Your midterm assignment is in some ways quite simple: to prototype this recipe website, and then to provide a written analysis that explains what you did and why you did it. The reality is a little more complicated. Your midterm submission should thus include the following:

1. A cover sheet that includes:
   a. A breakdown of the points that you want to allocate to each part of the assignment. You may choose between 4-20 points for each part, IN MULTIPLES OF FOUR (i.e. 4-20, 8-16, 12-12, 16-8, or 20-4), and be sure that the parts add up to a total of 24.
   b. Links to any project contributions.

2. A project contribution. You will work within (and across) your assigned groups in order to create a prototype of a historical recipe website, using WordPress (WP), located at: http://recipes.lmc.gatech.edu

Content coordinators, working with other CCs assigned to the same recipe book, will be responsible for:
   • Transcribing their allotted portion of the recipe book; and
   • Uploading the images and transcriptions to the cookbook site

Researcher/ Writers, working with other R/Ws assigned to the same recipe book, will be responsible for:
   • Researching the historical and cultural context of the recipe book
   • Writing up this context as a WP “Page.”

Developers, working with all other developers, under the management of the Project Manager, will be responsible for:
   • Researching, designing, and prototyping a WP site for the class; and
   • Creating the custom post format for individual recipes

The result should be the skeleton of a historical recipe book website that is ready to receive current and future class content.

Instructions continue on next page....
3. In a 3-4 page paper (double spaced; 1” margins; 12pt Times New Roman or equivalent), provide an analysis of your contribution. Your analysis should contain:
   a. A description of what exactly you personally contributed to the project and;
   b. An analysis of how your contribution engages the themes and issues we’ve discussed in the course.

The description of your process need not be longer than a page, which means that the analysis should constitute the majority of your paper. Your analysis should indicate an in-depth engagement with the themes and/or issues you choose to explore. Here are some topics and questions to consider:

   o Food, cooking, eating. Did completing this assignment change how you understand the act of cooking or eating in early America, or the food consumed? If so, how? If not, why not?
   o Ideas vs. Applications. What did you learn by completing this assignment that you could not have learned through the course readings?
   o Concepts and theories. Have any of the concepts and/or theories that we discussed in class acquired additional significance or meaning after completing the assignment? If so, why and/or how?
   o Process. What did you learn from the process of conducting research on/creating a platform for/dealing with the materiality of archival sources? How does this inform your understanding of historical scholarship?
   o Technology. What was your experience of using WordPress with the recipe books? How was the platform well-suited to deal with this archival material? How was it poorly designed, or otherwise unaligned? What do those advantages and/or drawbacks allow you to see about the original material?

These topics and themes are intended to get you started thinking—not to think for you! Please be sophisticated and creative in conceptualizing your contribution, and in articulating its aims. Please also come talk to me if this aspect of the project seems daunting, or if you’re not sure where to start.

And a final note:

Your project should be focused, and your analysis should integrate examples with evidence. You should demonstrate an awareness of the implications—and limitations—of your argument, and you should consider multiple perspectives when appropriate. Above all, your project should reflect the culmination of your thinking about the issues addressed in the first half of the course; it will be evaluated accordingly.