

Call for Papers: Eating for Life
4S 2016
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Call For Papers

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Eating for Life: When Food is the Best Medicine

What happens in the lives of individuals and to their relationship to biomedical expertise when food is the best medicine? In light of recent theorizing about the rise of “drugs for life” (Dumit 2012) – drugs which are necessary to sustain life and which also must be taken for the duration of life – as a dominant trend in the biomedical toolkit, everyday technologies of the self have sometimes been overlooked. Yet technologies of food consumption remain of vital importance for the allopathic management of certain diseases that remain incurable by pharmaceutical means (food allergies) and increasingly important adjuvants in others (ADHD, autism, heart disease). By contrast, dietary techniques that have captured the imagination of sufferers without receiving the imprimatur of Western biomedical science (such as those adopted from Chinese, homeopathic, or other “complementary and alternative” or “traditional” medicines) can cause controversy and conflict when patient and doctor meet. Beyond the clinic, dietary regimes centered around toxins, detoxing, cleansing, and “clean eating” offer opportunities for the reasonably healthy person to seek an elevated state of health as part of the new ideology of wellness.

Ultimately, this panel seeks to propose answers to the following questions: What are the moral, intersubjective, political, or economic effects of eating for life? What controversies arise between experts, including between biomedical experts and lay expert illness and wellness communities? What does the growing use of food as medicine mean for the authority and credibility of lab- and clinic-based biomedical knowledge? And, finally, what happens to the moral, aesthetic, and cultural connotations of (particular) foods when they are appropriated as part of a para-medical eating regimen?

Please email **abstracts of no more than 250 words** to dag66@cornell.edu by **Sunday, February 14, 2016**. This panel will be submitted to 4S as a closed panel.