

Politics of Famine and Food Policy: Domestic and International Issues of Hunger

Professor Hopkins
Fall 1996

Course Description

This course provides a basic introduction to issues of food and famine. It examines policies in both industrialized and less developed countries. Its purpose is to explore connections between individual, family and national food status and other factors. These include phenomena such as weather, transportation capability, income distribution, and, most centrally, public policy choices aimed to affect the production or consumption of food. We will attempt to understand with what purposes and consequences such policies are shaped and received by local, national and international policy-making bodies.

While the world now produces more food per person than ever before, enough to feed everyone adequately, approximately 800 million people are hungry. This disparity and the seemingly needless waste of human lives shock many. Further, people who grow food or other agricultural crops -- farmers -- have become poorer. In the US many have lost their farms; in Africa and Latin America they are frequently those most hungry. We will examine various explanations to account for these outcomes and explore the justification (justice) of current policies .

Course Grading and Dates

There will be a major "thesis" paper and a final exam. The final exam will be held just before Thanksgiving break on Tuesday, November 26. A prospectus and bibliography for the paper will be due on Tuesday, November 7. An oral presentation of the paper's principal thesis(es) is to be given to the class after Thanksgiving break. The paper is due no later than the last day of the exam period.

The exam and paper (oral and written parts together) will each count equally in the final grade. Class performance will be weighed 20%. Dates for major events are: prospectus, November 2; final exam, November 26; reports to class, December 3-10.

Course Reading

Three books are available for purchase: Phillips Foster, *The World Food Problem* (Lynne Rienner, 1992), is a comprehensive overview of the problem of undernutrition with a special focus on targeted policy interventions. A second book, a collection of essays on hunger problems edited by Jean Dreze, Amartya Sen and Athar Hussain, *The Political Economy of Hunger* (Oxford University Press, 1995), offers the most technical analyses and policy recommendation in the readings. Finally, a popular analysis of the pressures of population and economic growth is Lester Brown's *Who Will Feed China?* (Norton, 1995). In addition to these books a collection of articles referred to as *Readings* will be on reserve in the library. All of the above books are also on Reserve for PS47 as are several other books. All suggested readings should be available in the library but not on reserve.

Research Paper

The paper you are expected to write should deal with some major policy issue. It may be confined to one country or organization or to several. You should find a topic of substantive interest to you and then be sure there are library and/or data resources available to do a good paper. The thesis and scope of the proposed paper should be summarized in your prospectus, due in November. It is often helpful to discuss your topic and approach with your instructor. Sample paper topics include: (1) Does food aid help development (or is it a disincentive to food production)? (2) Has the green revolution been a success or

failure? (3) Do food subsidies benefit or hurt particular goals, such as food security or increased food production in a country such as the U.S. (or Korea or Egypt)? (4) Is there a global right to food and, if so, whose responsibility is it to provide this "entitlement"? (5) Will China become a major food importer?

Class/Special Activities

On most occasions, the first part of class will introduce a topic and provide background. The predominant method of reinforcing the readings will be a discussion. Completion of reading by the assigned date will facilitate class discussion. During the semester we will explore certain problems by means of "cases." The case method of teaching is meant to encourage group efforts to understand a particular episode, drawing upon theories to explain and evaluate the case situation. Cases will be distributed to the class and a session for their discussion fixed.

Class Schedule

I. Introduction to National and International Food Policy

September 3 - 5

1. Hunger, Interdependence and the Role of Government: Problems Achieving Policy Goals

Foster, Ch. 1

Hopkins, "Food Security, Political Options and the Evolution of State Responsibility," Ch. 1 in *Food, the State, and International Political Economy*, Tullis & Hollist, eds. (1985), *Readings*.

Dreze, et.al., *Political Economy*, Ch. 2, pp. 50-68.

Suggested:

Bennett, *The Hunger Machine*, pp. 1-44.

Jean Dreze and Amartya Sen, *Hunger and Public Action* (1989), Ch. 1, pp. 3-19 and Ch. 3.

Bruce Johnson and Peter Kilby, *Agriculture and Structural Transformation* (1975), pp. 3-75.

Charles Tilly, "Food Supply and Public Order in Modern Europe," in Tilly, ed., *The Formation of Nation-States in Western Europe* (1975).

World Bank, *Poverty and Hunger* (1986).

Gittinger, et.al., eds., *Food Policy* (1987), pp. 15-38, 89-102.

Hopkins and Puchala, *The Global Political Economy of Food* (1979), Ch. 1, pp. 3-38.

Bread for the World, *Hunger 1997* (1996).

September 10: Case 1: Famine in Ethiopia, 1984-85.

II. Food Policy Issues in Developed Countries

September 12 - 17

2. American Agriculture and Policy Issues

Willard Cochrane, *Development of American Agriculture*, Chs. 15-16, *Readings*.

Don Hadwiger and Ross Talbot, Ch. 2 in Hopkins, et.al., *Food, Politics and Agricultural Development*.

Houthakker, "The Farm Problem," *Readings*.

Lester Brown, *Who Will Feed China?*
Jane Smiley, "Losing the Farm," *New Yorker*, June 3, 1996, *Readings*.

Suggested:

The Economist, "The Technocrats," pp. 20-32, *Readings*.
William D. Browne, *Private Interests, Public Policy and American Agriculture* (1988) .

September 17: Film at McCabe Library - "Grapes of Wrath"

September 19 - 24

3. Industrial Countries' Food Policies: U.S., Europe, Japan and the Uruguay Round of Trade Negotiations

I. M. Destler, Ch. 2 in Hopkins and Puchala, *Readings*.
Robert Paarlberg, *Food Trade and Foreign Policy* (1985), Ch. 4, pp. 100-142.
Robert Paarlberg, paper on "Why Agriculture Blocked the Uruguay Round," April 1991, *Readings*.

Suggested:

Dan Morgan, *Merchants of Grain* (Viking, 1979), Chs. 1, 6, 7.
Pamela Aall, "Agricultural Modernization in England, France and Denmark," in Hopkins, et.al., *Food, Politics and Agricultural Development*, Ch. 3.
Michael Tracy, *Agriculture in Western Europe* (1982).

September 24: Case Two: Agricultural Trade and the Uruguay Round

III. Problems in Developing Countries

September 24: Film at McCabe Library - Part II of "Global Issues, Local Heroes," produced by Richard Harley '73.

September 26 - October 1

4. Population, Poverty and World Hunger

Foster, Chs. 8, 9, 10.
Dreze, et al., eds., Ch. 6.

Suggested:

World Development Report. 1990 -- Poverty.
Dreze and Sen, *Hunger*, Chs. 2, 4.
Dreze, et.al., eds., Ch. 1.

October 3

5. Nutrition and Undernutrition

Foster, Chs. 2-5.
Dreze, et.al., eds., Ch. 5.

Suggested:

Gittinger, pp. 39-71, 327-354, 443-456.
World Bank *WDR. 1996*.

October 8 - 10

6. Institutional Barriers, Technology and Dependency in Africa

Gotsch, pp. 197-212: *Readings*.

Robert Bates, *Markets and States in Tropical Africa*, Chs. 1-3, *Readings*.

Dreze, et.al., eds, Ch. 10.

Suggested:

Murdoch, whole book.

Gittinger, *Food Policy*, pp. 108-118, 261-281.

Alain de Janvry, *The Agrarian Question and Reform in Latin America* (1979).

October 11 - 20: FALL BREAK

October 22 - 24

7. Access, Entitlements and Nutritional Interventions

Dreze, et.al., eds, Chs. 8, 11.

Suggested:

Gittinger, *Food Policy*, pp. 330-354, 385-412, 446-484.

Per Pinstrup-Andersen, ed., *Food Subsidies in Developing Countries* (1988).

October 23: Film at McCabe Library - "Politics of Hunger" (NBC)

October 29: Case Three: Rural Reform in Centropico

IV. International Policy and Organization in Ending Hunger

October 31. November 5

8. International Institutions and LDC Policy

Hopkins and Puchala, "International Regimes: Lessons from Inductive Analysis," *International Regimes* (1983), pp. 61-92.

Hopkins, "International Food Organizations and the United States: Drifting Leadership and Diverging Interests," in *The United States and Multilateral Institutions* edited by Margaret Karns and Karen Mingst (1990): *Readings and Reserve*.

Suggested:

Dreze, et.al., eds, Ch. 4.

Murdoch, Chs. 10, 11.

Bennett, Chs. 2,4.

Gittinger, pp. 72-88, 195-223.

Francis Moore Lappe, *Food First* (1977).

Ross B. Talbot, *The Four World Food Agencies in Rome* (1990).

November 7: Prospectus and Bibliography due.

9. Food Aid and Development

World Food Program, *Tackling Hunger: Tasks Ahead for Food Aid* (1996): *Readings*.

Food Policy, February 1988, pp. 2-26, 47-66: Readings.

Suggested:

Tony Jackson, *Against the Grain*.

Francis Moore Lappe and Joseph Collins, *Ten Myths of Aid*.

Mitchell Wallerstein, *Food for War, Food for Peace*.

Vernon Ruttan, *Why Food Aid?* (1993).

November 12: Case Four: The World Food Program Went to War.

November 14

10. China, Asia and Future Policies for the World

Robert Paarlberg, "Rice Bowls and Dust Bowls," *Foreign Affairs*, 1996:
Readings.

Dreze, et.al., eds, Ch. 9.

Reread (skim) Lester Brown, *Who Will Feed China?*

November 19 - 21

11. International Food Institutions: Ethical, Humanitarian and Political Roles

Henry Shue, "Distributive Criteria": *Readings*.

Food and Agriculture Organization, *Security and Ethics* (1996)

[WWW.fao.org/wfs/homepage.htm -- select Documentation, then "World Food Issues: Security and Ethics."].

Suggested:

Gittinger, pp. 497-508.

Bennett, pp . 193-216.

World Hunger Report, 1995.

UNDP, *Human Development Report*. 1994.

November 26: FINAL EXAMINATION

November 27 - 30: THANKSGIVING VACATION

December 3 - 10: ORAL PRESENTATIONS