

JCLS DE&I committee session #2 (3/19/21)

Speaker: Marilisa C. Navarro, PhD

“Blackness and Food Resilience: Black culinary epistemologies, the Slow Food movement and racial justice”

Introduction

(Sessions will be recorded for documentation purposes and will not be released to the public at any time)

Assistant Professor of African American Studies (East Falls Campus)
Course coordinator for American Diversity courses in the Hallmark’s Program
Member of multiple diversity and inclusion committees on campus

Previous work focused on food, food justice, race, racism and representation

- Limitation of healthy food access for low-income Black and Latinx communities and the resulting diet-related health inequities (diabetes, hypertension, premature death)

How are these communities are pushing back against these problems through their own efforts?

- Grassroots movements including cooking

There is a misconception that communities of color lack the knowledge of nutritious cooking and their previous and current contributions have also been overlooked

Slow cooking is perceived as a fad diet.....why?

Cultural appropriation (i.e. “soul food”)

- A hip food trend vs food that is a product of cultural traditions, economics and political movements in the face of oppression

Perception is not reality: Communities of color are agents of change through slow food

Why do people eat the way that they do?

- Cost
- Time
- *Circumstance****

An issue of choice vs. an issue of access?

*Circumstance****

- Minority communities have lacked access to healthy food choices
- Slavery
- Poverty (food stamps only accepted at certain lower-end places)
- Lack of healthy food options in schools

- Farming (sharecroppers and discrimination against Black farmers by the USDA)

How do we approach unlearning misconceptions and relearning accurate information in order to improve in the future?

- Being open to embracing our faults graciously
- Taking accountability for the things that are within our control and effecting change in those areas (diet, food choice, etc)