

Journal of Nutrition: space for interdisciplinary dialogue of the area of food and nutrition

Knowing the organization of social life and its symbolic constructions around the access, production and consumption of foods reveals the processes of historical evolution of society constituted around food, as a basic need of survival and a complex network of elements relative to social life.

Food consumption, as a basic condition for the production and reproduction of life, constitutes a biological, historical-social, cultural, economic, technological category, among many others, which could hardly be confined to a disciplinary approach. Thus, the food and nutrition issue is a challenging study object, because it requires an expanded view, different theoretical references for its exploration, does not easily fit delimited matrices of analysis and, thus, requires interdisciplinarity.

The Journal of Nutrition, in the thematic session of this issue, publishes two articles that fit the history and culture of food consumption, one about the iconographic and literary representations associated with food production in Antiquity and the Middle ages that express elements of the social organization of those societies; the other article discusses food consumption in Brazil during Dutch occupation, around the middle of the XVII century, exposing both the relevance that food consumption had on the conduction of the conflicts of the time with the richness of food sources of the local flora and fauna, as well as the problems associated with those who cross the ocean to meet the needs of the colonizers. Under diverse and adverse scenarios, the role of food consumption in history becomes clear in the two contributions published in this issue, and the way that eating practices are shaped by the dynamics imposed by society.

The translation of the relations of power printed through the destination of distinct foodstuffs as a mark of social stratification is also covered, especially in the article of Claude Guy Papavero.

By establishing a parallel with contemporary society, it is possible to visualize the growing challenge for nutrition, which is to face the continuous changes in food consumption that are due to political and economical influences that affect the access to food, the quality of the foods consumed and the dietary repertoire.

The dispute for cultivation areas between the production of foods to meet the local demands and items of greater economic appeal, discussion that integrates the recent agenda of debates on supply, is also discussed in the article by Giulia Crippa, with examples of this conflict found in antiquity.

We invite the readers of the Journal of Nutrition to consider the elements treated in this Thematic Section to enrich, within the Universities and Research Institutes sphere, the reflections on the ways of the scientific and cultural production in nutrition in face of the demands of society in current context. After all, the food problem, under the logic of capital, is manifested historically in the conflict between productive forces and social relations of production, either by reaffirming social exclusion or in forms which have advanced toward the collective interest, depending on the dynamics of the social movements and the paths that science takes.

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