

**Eating the Asian other? Multiculturalism pedagogies and memories of food
cosmopolitanism**

Seminar Series 2011

When: Wednesday 19th October 2011, 4pm – 6pm

Where: Cosmopolitan Civil Societies Research Centre, UTS City Campus
Level 3, Mary Ann House, 645 Harris Street, Sydney
(a short walk from Central Railway Station)

Abstract:

Public pedagogies in tourism and education in Australia suggest that food is a medium through which we learn more about each other's cultures: in other words that food is a pedagogy of multiculturalism. Drawing on a white Anglo Australian's memories of food in different intercultural encounters, this paper prisms open the concept of eating the Other. There has been trenchant critique of food multiculturalism, the consuming cosmopolitan, and foodie tourism in Australia (Hage, 1997; Probyn, 2004; Duruz, 2010). Thus, several writers have noted that eating ethnic food is imagined to be a sign of cosmopolitanism, and even anti-racism, in individuals and cities in Australia (Hage, 1997; Sheridan, 2002; Duruz, 2010). Hence, the notion of eating the Other has been taken up to discuss how ethnicity becomes an object of enrichment for white people through the eating of ethnic food in restaurants (Hage, 1997) and cooking ethnic food at home (Heldke, 2003). For several writers, white people's practice of eating the Other is not de facto learning about the Other; and so you can have 'multiculturalism without ethnics' (Hage, 1997). In this paper we present an 'entangled' story of Frank which includes white expatriate masculinity, multiculturalism with ethnics and what Heldke calls 'colonial food adventuring.' This paper is motivated by two questions. What happens to the idea of eating the other if you are from a mixed race family: if the other is your wife, best friend, fellow-student and child? We chose to interview Frank because he married two Asian migrants, had children, travelled extensively and lived in several other countries. The second question is: what happens to the idea of eating the other when you live, work and eat in other countries, as opposed to merely eating out in restaurants in Australia. Frank's culinary biography stretches over sixty years and offers a highly specific white Australian gendered account of nation and home building through food. The paper offers us a different way of understanding Sheridan's concept of 'cosmopolitan modernity' – a 'fascination with the foreignness of newcomers mixed with a desire to be coolly cosmopolitan about accepting them' (2000: 127) - through public and everyday pedagogies of food multiculturalism in Australia. At the same time as some instances of food adventuring in Frank's account, we also see a 'no-nonsense' approach to breaking down exotic notions of the Asian Other while developing an 'everyday' - as opposed to an elite and gentrified - cosmopolitan identity. The historical perspective shows us that inter-cultural food encounters take many forms and these are grounded in the specificities of particular ethnicities, histories, countries and classed socialities.

Seminar Presenter:

Dr. Elaine Swan: Head of Communication Studies, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Dr. Rick Flowers: Head of Adult Education and Postgraduate Programs, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Presentations will be followed by wider discussion.

REGISTRATION

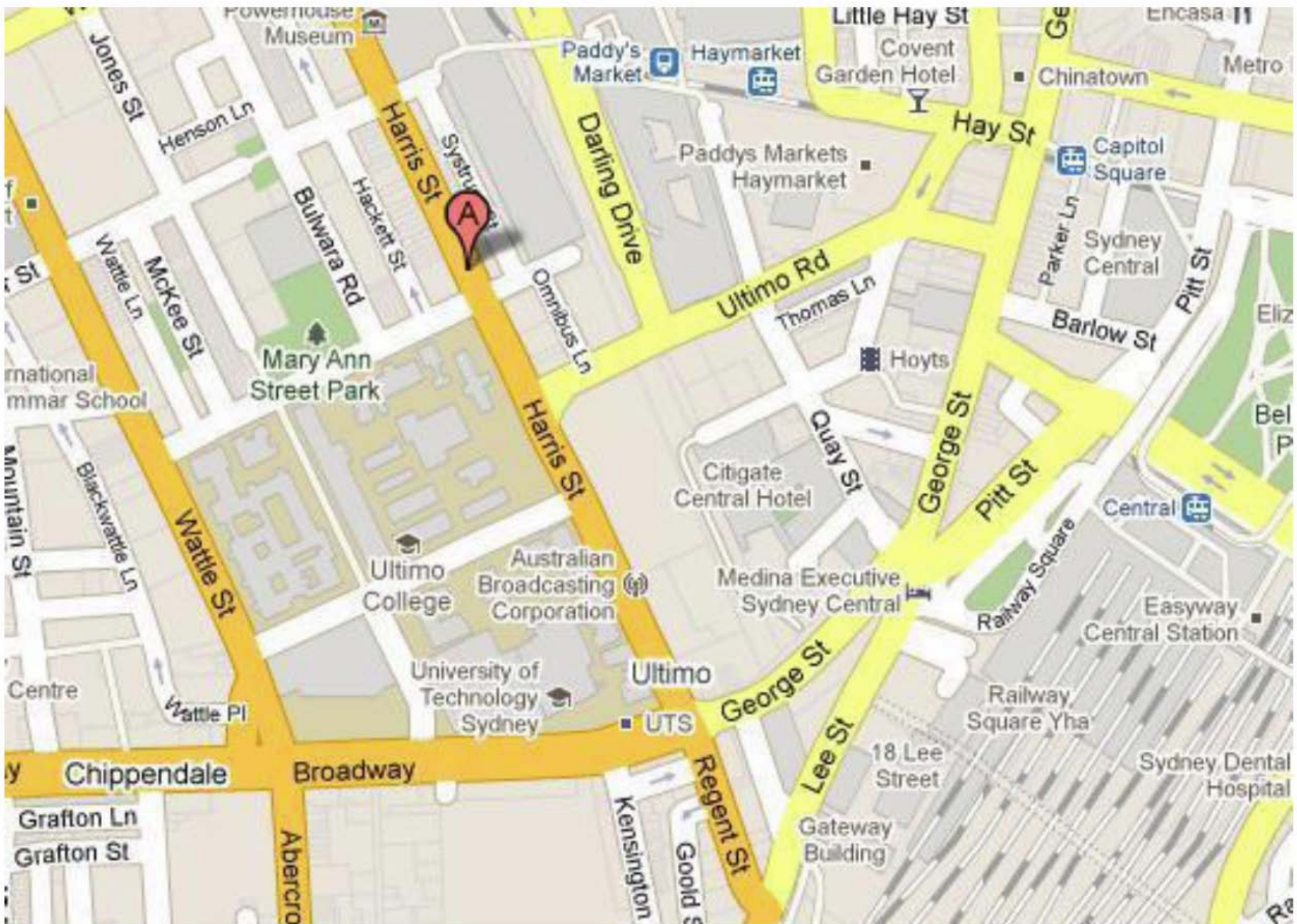
Please send registration details to: ccs@uts.edu.au & please include name, group or organisational affiliation & e-mail address

How to get there...

Head toward UTS main campus, its advisable to catch a bus along Parramatta Rd/Broadway/George St, or catch a train to Central, as parking can be difficult.

From there walk two blocks down Harris St.

Mary Anne House is on the corner of Mary Ann St and Harris St



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