

ROBYN METCALFE, PHD

Food Historian + Futurist
Author, Artist, Entrepreneur
Inquisitor, Athlete, Explorer

GET IN TOUCH

3203 El Toro Cove
Austin, TX 78746

F+C Email: robyn@foodandcity.org
UT Email: robyn.metcalfe@austin.utexas.edu

Twitter: [@foodmiracle](https://twitter.com/foodmiracle) | [@foodcityorg](https://twitter.com/foodcityorg)
Instagram: [@foodcityorg](https://www.instagram.com/foodcityorg)
Online Publication: www.foodandcity.org

Food historian and futurist, with a concentration in the history of urban food markets, particularly in Western Europe during the 19th century. Why does a historian think about the future of food? It's all about context, having the knowledge about how we got here as we think about the future. I am particularly interested in the use of technology to improve and re-invent the global food supply chain.

EDUCATION

BOSTON UNIVERSITY

Ph.D. in History | 2006-2010
M.A. in History | 2003-2006

Major: Modern European History
Subfields: 19th Century American History;
History of Science + Agriculture; Urban +
Transnational History; British History

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

B.A. in American Studies | 1968-1970

BRADFORD COLLEGE

A.A. in Liberal Arts | 1966-1968

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

Research Scholar, Lecturer | 2014-Present

- The School of Human Ecology, College of Natural Sciences, Research Fellow
- Director and Founder, Food+City; Publisher, Food+City Magazine
- Producer, The Food Challenge Prize at The University of Texas at Austin

Research Fellow, Lecturer | 2012-2013

- College of Liberal Arts, History Department
- Classes taught: Modern European Food History, Modern European Metropolis, Thinking Like a Food Historian
- Director, The Food Lab (Food+City) at The University of Texas at Austin
- Faculty Advisor, The Food Studies Project at UT
- Conference Chair/Organizer, "Food, the City, and Innovation." Held in Austin and Boston.

Invited Research Scholar, Lecturer | 2011-2012

- Fellowship, Institute for Historical Studies. Fall 2011-Spring 2012
- Lecturer, European History (Food History, European Cities) Fall, 2012-2013

BOSTON UNIVERSITY

Visiting Assistant Professor | 2010-2011

- College of Arts and Sciences, History Department. Classes taught: The Historian's Craft, European History 1900-Present, European Cultural History 1900-1945.

Instructor | 2004-2010

- Spring 2010: College of General Studies, Western Civilization
- 2008: Undergraduate Writing Seminar Fellow
- 2007: Instructor, Teaching Fellow, Graduate Seminar, Agricultural History
- 2006-2007: Modern European History, Early American History (while pursuing PhD)
- 2005-2006: Grader, Teaching Fellow

THE AMERICAN SCHOOL IN SWITZERLAND

Instructor | Lugano, Switzerland | 1970-1971

European history for 9th grade international students, all core subjects for the 7th grade

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● PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT

KELMSCOTT RARE BREEDS FOUNDATION AND FARM

Founding Director, CEO | Lincolnville, ME | 1994-2004

- Non-profit organization operating a working farm open to the public; conserved historic breeds of livestock, promoted agricultural biodiversity, and provided public education programs; retail and wholesale meat sales, online store
- Increased rare livestock populations in North America and re-established the Gloucester Old Spots pig breed in North America. Developed protocols for small animal population conservation
- Featured on TV programs such as Martha Stewart Living, radio programs such as NPR/Living on Earth, and the recipient of design, community, and conservation awards
- Membership based organization, grants recipient, over 5,000 annual visitors

JOURNALIST / NON-PROFIT TRUSTEE

San Francisco, CA | 1980-1994

Arts and Cultural Organizations including San Jose Repertory Theater, Wang Theater, Battle Roads Farms, Heritage Breed Foundation, Fossil Rim Wildlife Foundation, Women Entrepreneurs, and PC Magazine, Columnist for Publisher's Weekly

ARTHUR D. LITTLE, INC.

Management Consultant | San Francisco, CA | 1980-1982

Strategic planning, marketing strategy, financial management of private and public companies in the US and Europe

SHOTWELL AND ASSOCIATES

Founder and Partner | San Francisco, CA | 1978-1980

Market research for the emerging electronic publishing industry. Produced market research reports on educational software and on-demand publishing

LANE PUBLISHING COMPANY

Editor, Production Manager | Menlo Park, CA | 1971-1978

Wrote and edited four books; managed editorial production for Sunset Magazine and Book Company (1.3 million subscribers).

● GRANTS + FELLOWSHIPS

ON BEHALF OF KELMSCOTT RARE BREEDS FOUNDATION

For the development and implementation of educational programs:

United States Department of Agriculture, Libra Foundation, Teach America, and Hamilton Rare Breeds Foundation, MBNA, Key Bank, Camden National Bank, among others.

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SELECT PRESENTATIONS + INTERVIEWS

*Note: Full list available upon request

2019

- "Technology to Sustainably Grow More and Better Food" – Austin Forum on Technology and Society, Austin, TX; February 2019
- "Saving Our Food" Panel discussion – SXSW, Austin, TX; March 2019
- "The Future of Eating" – SXSW, Austin, TX March 2019

2018

- "The Future of Food/Trust" Keynote speaker – Public Trust Summit, Guelph Ontario; 2018
- "Creating New Stories, The Hard and Slow Way" Keynote Speaker – ContentATX; September 2018
- "How Smart Cities Feed their People" – IEEE Conference, Austin, TX; April 2018
- "The Future of Food" – Querencia Barton Creek, Austin, TX; April 2018
- "Fight Hunger. Spark Change." – Walmart Labs, Austin, TX; April 2018
- "The Future of Food Delivery" – SXSW, Austin, TX; March 2018
- "Technology and Innovation Shaping the Future of Food" Panelist – Spoon University-Brainfood Bites at SXSW, Austin, TX; March 2018
- "The Future of Food" – Lakeway Men's Group, Austin, TX; March 2018
- "Food Waste Reduction" – San Antonio Food Bank, San Antonio, TX; March 2018
- "Smart Distribution Systems" – Aglanta Conference, Atlanta, GA; March 2018

2014

- "Kelmescott Farm: A Case Study in Agricultural Conservation" – American Livestock Breeds Conservancy Conference; November 2014
- Commencement Address, Principia College, Elsah, IL; May 2014

2013

- "Desert Running and A PB&J Sandwich" – Tedx Austin, Austin, TX; 2013

2012

- "Victorian Food Markets: Designing the City from the Inside Out" – European Association for Urban History, Prague; August 2012
- "Nineteenth Century Food Flows, Visualize" – International Conference of Historical Geography, Prague; August 2012
- "Victorian Urban Metabolism" – American Society of Environmental History Conference; March 2012
- "Nineteenth Century Food Systems: A Search for the Invisible Hand" – University of Texas at Austin, Institute for Historical Studies; March 2012

2006-2011

- "Global Localvorism: You Are Where You Eat" – Atlantic World Conference; March 2011
- "Nineteenth Century Urban Food Markets: The Victorian Environment and Urban Development" – World Congress of Environmental History, Copenhagen; 2009
- "Necessary Cruelty? Routing the Meat Market in Nineteenth Century London" – Animal Studies Symposium, 2009, Michigan State University, 2008
- "Creating A Livable City: The Removal of the Smithfield Live Cattle Market, 1851" – Society for the History of Technology, Lisbon, Portugal; 2008
- "The Removal of the Smithfield Live Cattle Market in 19th Century London" – Future Research in Economic and Social History, Presenter, Fresh Symposium, France; April 2008
- "American Livestock Improvers and Urban Cattle Markets During the 18th Century" – Twelfth International Enlightenment Congress, 2007
- "Problems and Considerations for Teaching Agricultural History" and "American Livestock Improvers and Urban Cattle Markets During the 19th Century" – Agricultural History Conferences; 2007, 2008
- "Nineteenth Century Public Food Markets" – Agriculture, Food and Human Values Conference; 2006

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RADIO + PODCAST INTERVIEWS

- Interview + Food Routes book discussion – Australian Broadcasting Corporation; April 2019
- Food Routes book discussion – MIT Press Podcast; April 2019
- Food Routes book discussion – Book People; March 2019
- "The Upside of Processed, Packaged Foods" – KERA-Public Radio; March 2019
- Food Routes book discussion – Science Magazine Podcast; March 2019
- "The Chicken is Local, but was it Happy? GPS Now Tells the Life Story of your Poultry" –Weekend Edition KUT-NPR; February 2019
- "On the Future of Food" – Statesman Shots; 2017
- "Food and Cities" – Heritage Radio Network; June 2014

PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS

- Food Routes: Growing Bananas in Iceland and Other Tales from the Logistics of Eating. The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA/London, England, 2019.
- Meat, Commerce and the City: The Food Markets in Nineteenth Century London, Pickering & Chatto Publishers, London, 2012.
- The New Wizard War, Tempus Books, Microsoft Press, Redmond, WA, 1988.
- Local Area Network Directory, Shotwell and Associates, 1982.
- Dear Nana and Friends - Letters from Maine, 1985.

ARTICLES / REVIEWS

- "An Industrialized Global Food Supply Chain Threatens Human Health-Here's How to Improve It" – The San Francisco Chronicle & The Conversation, April 2019.
- "What does 'Local' really mean? And is it really better?" – The New Food Economy online, March 2019.
- "A Conversation with Food Historian – and Futurist – Robyn Metcalfe" – The Boston Globe March 2019.
- "The Life Story of Your Supermarket Chicken: Food Tracking Goes High Tech" – The Wall Street Journal Online February 2019.
- Book Review: Journal of Food and Society, "Reconnecting Markets: Innovative Global Practices Connecting Small-scale Producers with Dynamic Food Producers," December 2012.
- Entries for the Encyclopedia of Food, Sage Publishing, 2015.
- "Fish Stories," Meatpaper, Issue, 19, November 2012.
- "Nineteenth Century American Livestock Improvers and the Market", "What Happened to the Food Industry Last Year.", "The State of Agtech," "The Coming Food Bubble," "Cuba and Food: Black Market to Free Market?" – Austin-American Statesman, 2015.
- "Rice Networks." – Texas CEO, 2016/Sugar & Rice, 2016.
- The Journal of the History Society, October 2007.

DISSERTATION

"Cash, Commerce, and the City: The Smithfield Cattle Market in 19th Century London" (Dissertation Committee: Dr. Louis Ferleger, Dr. Charles Dellheim, Dr. Brendan McConville, Dr. Harriet Ritvo, Dr. Brooke Blower). I argued that the removal of Smithfield Market was a negotiated enterprise between private and public interests. The market's relocation provides a case study for the modernization of European cities during this period of rapid technological, social, political, and economic change.

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EVENTS (PRODUCED + ORGANIZED)

THE FOOD+CITY CHALLENGE PRIZE

Director + Founder | The University of Texas at Austin + SXSW

Event held for 5 years from 2015 to 2019; International food logistics startup competition, three month mentorship program, and grants awarded to over 70 startups.

FUTURE FOODS SPEAKER SERIES

Creator + Discussion Leader | The University of Texas at Austin

December 2018, January 2019, March 2019, April 2019

FOOD AND THE CITY CONFERENCE

Conference Chair | Boston University | February 2012

FOOD, THE CITY, AND INNOVATION

University of Texas at Austin | February 2013

WOMEN AND FOOD, SYMPOSIUM

University of Texas at Austin | January 2014

COMMUNITY SERVICE

RECENT AFFILIATIONS

- Sustainable Food Center Advisory Board Member
- University of Texas at Austin Plan II Advisor
- Food Startup Business Competitions Judge (USC, Rice University)
- Boston University College of Arts and Sciences Dean's Advisory Board.
- President of Gloucester Old Spots Pigs Association

PAST AFFILIATIONS

Battle Roads Farm, Heritage Breeds Conservancy, American Livestock Breeds Conservancy, Fossil Rim Wildlife Center, Wang Theater, San Jose Theater, various community, publishing, and business associations.

OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS + INTERESTS

- US Team, World Championship Triathlon
- Ultra-runner (completed running across six deserts, 2010, Alps and Rocky Mountains, in 2011, Zugspitz Mountain Race, June 2013, Madagascar Ultramarathon 2014) and Patagonia Ultramarathon, 2017
- Member, 4 Deserts Club
- Cordon Bleu certificate (London) 1991
- Interests in art, film, storytelling; speaks two languages in addition to English