



2013 HAWAII UNIVERSITY INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES
ARTS, HUMANITIES, & SOCIAL SCIENCES
JANUARY 6TH TO JANUARY 8TH
ALA MOANA HOTEL
HONOLULU, HAWAII

BREAD: A COMMON CULTURAL THREAD FOR ALL AGES

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Abstract

Bread is a common cultural food element throughout the world. It is one of the oldest known prepared foods. The history of bread begins in early times and is evident as one examines the importance of the first bakeries and bakers guilds. Bread has often been referred to as the 'staff of life' for good reason. The nutritional contributions of bread to the diet, while often overlooked, are an important part of sustenance. In many families breads take two forms, daily bread and celebratory bread. Traditions and rituals may be focused on this simple food. Family stories and history often center on when, where, and what the family ate. Bread, so frequently found on the family table, is often a major part of the process of remembering. Stories of family breads from a variety of cultures highlight this connection. Current research emphasizes the need for educators to provide hands on experiences with cultural diversity. Family and Consumer Sciences teachers have a unique opportunity to help their students identify common threads in their various cultures. Bread is an excellent vehicle for this exploration. Sharing the stories of family and bread in a variety of classroom settings will help teachers reach across cultures and content to help connect students.