

PIE BY ANNE ELIZABETH MOORE

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CONTRIBUTORS, submit prose—2500 words or less—to THE2NDHAND for our online magazine, which updates weekly. 1) by sending your mail to the following address: THE2NDHAND, 2543 W. Walton #3, Chicago, IL 60622 or 2) by sending e-mail to editors Todd Dills (todd@the2ndhand.com) or Jeb Gleason-Allured (jeb@the2ndhand.com).

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THIS JUST IN

Our Media Statement: On the Pie Eating Contest

Chicago, IL October 2005—Pie consumed solely for purposes of gluttony should be avoided by those who can help themselves. Those who cannot should simply try to remember that there are less fortunate individuals in the world—starving children in Ethiopia, for example—who would be greatly improved by increased dessert access. Moreover, the eating of pies is not to be rewarded on volume; it is the enjoyment received from each pie element that should be stressed, and failing that, the tasting of an extremely wide variety of pies with various ingredients. Sorry! But it's true.

A FEW UNHELPFUL WORDS ABOUT PIE OFF

Few of the changes that occurred during this new millennium can be said to be quite as groundbreaking as the founding of Pie Off, a semiannual competitive pie creation celebration that explores new forms of aesthetic appeal, public performance, and collective decision-making. Also, sugar consumption. P.S. Bourbon too.

Founded in the late-night hours of New Year's Eve, 1999, Pie Off has since become synonymous with bolstering the creativity of the pie form, exploring group decision-making, and eating what amounts to a fuck-load of pie. Clearly, Pie Off carries with it grave physical dangers. Contestants are warned to avoid pie for three days prior. Physical and emotional difficulties from all participants are to be expected: entire careers, fortunes, marriages, and reputations have been staked, lost, and gained at Pie Off.

The ultimate lesson of Pie Off, however, posits that a variety of ingredients can indeed come together however disparate their unique physical sensations and emotional demands. United together in a common shell, the participants of Pie Off work together to forward the message of pie: to increase the girth of participants; to forward the political underpinnings of this particular baked good; and to exploit taste buds so fully that none dare plan another event of its kind for at least six months.

PIE OFF FAQ

What is Pie Off?

Pie Off is a competitive pastry-creation celebration that explores new forms of aesthetic appeal, public performance, and collective decision-making. A lengthy gathering of like-minded folk with one thing in common—the desire to eat a great deal of pie—Pie Offs have been held approximately biannually on, around, or nowhere near the summer and winter solstices since the dawning of the 00s.

Cofounded by Anne Elizabeth Moore in Seattle, Pie Off has failed in a half-decade to thus far involve any vomiting.

Why does Pie Off matter?

There are many strategies for approaching a worldview that involves this toothsome, wily dessert, and the founders of Pie Off, after a relentless search for the appropriate one, found it right under their own noses. While other approaches do exist—pie eating contests; pastry school; standard baking competitions; pie-throwing excursions; meditative, private, regular consumption—they are inferior to the creative, comprehensive approach represented by Pie Off.

What is pie?

Pie comes in many forms: standard, pizza, fruit, delicious, savory, sherpherd's, bad, cow, square, shit, and not. All forms of pie are eligible for competition in Pie Off. Including bad pie and not pie at all. Lesser desserts, however, such as cakes, tarts, betties, and doughnuts, are banned, as competitors must prove themselves to be from one of the many civilized nations on this earth, and consumers of doughnuts are going to have a hard time doing that.

Arguments among the factions that debate whether or not certain types of pie "count" do not interest Pie Off officials. The fact of the matter—if your object of delectation has a crust, you will have no difficulty defending it as pie. This is part of the approach that makes Pie Off unique and popular.

Those who do wish to argue over the inclusion or exclusion of certain elements, ingredients, or items from pieness are asked to take their divisive attitudes to McDonalds, where it is excessively plain to all what may or may not be pie. Pie is available on the menu for \$0.99; if you do not order it, you will not have any pie.

Why pie?

Do not be silly! It is pie!

This sounds great! How do I get involved?

Contestants should prepare a pie, but also—and most importantly—should prepare a presentation that provides all the necessary details of the pie. If your pie requires justification as pie, this will be your moment to explain. If your pie involves special ingredients, toppings, particular recipe elements, or other details not evident to the network of judges, this will be your

single chance to elucidate your consumers.

Due to the frequent one-to-one ratio of pies to consumers, noncontestants are encouraged to attend. Also, whiskey and coffee are encouraged to attend.

What, then, isn't pie?

The creativity implicit in Pie Off frequently inspires our more talented practitioners

toward concept pies, or pies that are interesting to discuss but that you should not consume. In the history of Pie Off, two concept pies stand out: Cookie-Dough Ice Cream Pie, in which a log of store-bought cookie dough was flattened into a pie tin, baked, and then filled with cheap vanilla ice cream from the 7-11, and the 2004 Bush Pie, in which toe-nail clippings, boogers, hair from a clogged drain, and small amounts of animal excrement were combined for presentation at Pie Off. Both pies were disgusting, although

Approximately two-thirds of the world's foreign population are named for pastry!

It is said that serial killers can be detected early via the following attributes:

- **Late-stage bedwetting**
- **Parental cohabitation into adulthood**
- **Odd disregard for key lime pie**
- **Excessive cruelty to animals and children**
- **Murder of one or more people**

both scored quite high marks among our creative judging staff.

The existence of the concept pie is proof that Pie Off is dedicated to discovering the true nature of pie, not to highlighting the most delicious pie, or bestowing the most prestigious biannual award. The true nature of pie is not only delicious and inviting, but frightening and disgusting. In other words, all things can be pie; what isn't pie simply isn't worth exploring.

Due to the nature of all competitive food events, however, pies that cannot be consumed by the standard judge will lose.

Who decides the winners of Pie Off?

Pies are judged on several rotating elements all left to the whims, abilities, and states of mind of the judges, who themselves are rotating and often lacking certain abilities. Frequently, the mode, manner, and means of judging Pie Off, decided upon by a panel of dedicated volunteer pie devotees, helps to determine what sort of pie will be most likely to win Pie Off.

In addition to being a groundbreaking arena for cutting-edge pastry experimentation, Pie Off serves as an exploration of decision-making possibilities. Previous Pie Offs have been judged by hand-count, board consensus, remote scientific judging, a two-vote ballot-box system, *Survivor*-style elimination, and truly democratic voting.

Thus, the victor of the competition determined via remote scientific judging was technically flawless although lacked flavor and emotional appeal; the winner of the Pie Off judged by hand-count was coincidentally the most attractive single female in the room; and

A cherry-peach pie found in a diner in North Carolina has been said to salve mistakes in accounting.

the champion of the contest determined by true democracy was a lame, ineffectual compromise of a pie which merely failed to roust anyone's bile and thus was never excluded from consideration. The dessert determined through extensive rounds of *Survivor*-style elimination was flashy, mean, and cheap, but at least people voted.

None of this can be explained. It merely is.

How much does it cost?

There are no fees involved in Pie Offs. Pie Offs are populist endeavors and must always be accessible to all who can attend. When we get sick of the populism thing we will begin charging a fee, however, so do check back for updates at a later time.

How can I get involved?

There is only one true Pie Off, and it is only held two times per year. You must be invited. Which means, essentially, that you must know the founder, or one of her associates, or happen to be standing near one of them while they are discussing plans for Pie Off on the bus or at one of the several local taverns where pie enthusiasts are known to gather. Failing this strategy, you may hold your own Pie Off, though it will be an inferior Pie Off, and not really a Pie Off at all, more like a pie off.

WHO MOVED MY CHEESECAKE?
A Competitor's Guide to Pie Competition

The beguiling sway of pie over the heart of man is not to be underestimated. As ephemerally delectable as pie is—or perhaps because of its mortal deliciousness—pie inspires a fierce competitive nature in humanity unequalled by other desserts, and frequently giving way to bloodshed, grand-scale biological warfare, or worse.

A handy guide to gaining that competitive edge over your would-be foes is thus a must-have for any pastry primer.

First, research the competition. Create a list of all contenders and begin research into their personal lives. Don't overlook the obvious: paying a detective to assist you in this matter will only further ensure your name's place in the roll call of the Great Bakers of History. For an inexpensive fee, satellites can now photograph the goings-on in most bathrooms of the U.S. and Canada.

If you are on a budget, however, simply creating a list of strengths and weaknesses will go far toward securing your victory. Should it be discovered, for example, that one rival is morbidly lactose-intolerant, a surprisingly small amount of cream will eliminate that rival swiftly from the winner's circle. Simple knowledge of a competitor's reliance on imported mangoes, when

More pies are consumed in September than during any other month of the year. Except, possibly, August or February.

Miss Manners explains that the only polite response to the query, "Can I get you a slice?" is to allow the jaw to slacken and a thin line of drool to emerge from the corner of one's mouth.

coupled with an awareness of that individual's shopping habits, budget, and favorite store, can increase your chances of victory by 48 percent.

Remember, too, to research the competition's judges. Most judges are not beyond accepting bribes, and those that are will likely be susceptible to violent physical threats or—should you find yourself with enough lead time—the most basic of brainwashing techniques.

Again, however, simply noting your advantages and failings in certain areas can be a great help to start, and may eliminate the need for expensive medical equipment. A rudimentary list of strengths and weaknesses will assist those on a budget, and can be surprisingly easy to put to advantage. A judge who despises cats, for example, will not take kindly to a piece of Chess Pie shot through with traces of cat hair or feces. Another who dislikes poison may find himself particularly unsympathetic toward your doctored-up presentation of rival Jackson Green's award-winning Apple Rhubarb Pie.

Paying close attention to the rules of the competition is mandatory. A judging reliant upon pies baked in the home will not look kindly upon the revelation that your neighbor baked hers in a brick oven at the local pizza eatery. Following these rules in the creation of your encrusted pastry—or permanently eliminating those aware of your transgressions in this area—should be your foremost concern.

Finally, be aware that presentation plays a role. A properly knotted tie, a warm smile, and a blow job can only assist your outstanding baking abilities.

YOUR PERSONALITY GUIDE

The key to your personality may lie in your dessert sensibilities. Just choose your favorite flavor to unlock your hidden potential!

Strawberry Cream	you are a kind-hearted person, apt to be hurt in arguments
Old-Fashioned Peach	you are a traditionalist with a strong sense of devotion
Quiche	there is something slightly wrong with you but nothing that can't be resolved by a shift in diet
Apple	you have not explored much of life because you fear failure
Chocolate Hazelnut	you are a passionate soul and care little for worldly possessions
Peanut Butter	although you are a dedicated friend, few trust you
Mint Melange	you are confused, and think mint is delicious
Pecan	you are quiet but have an expansive inner nature
Blackberry Crumble	you are short, which is why your associates tease you
Lemon Custard	you have a secret name, and it is Zargon
Icebox	although many would disagree, you know in your heart of hearts what is right and what is wrong
Meringue	fluffiness appeals to you
Chocolate Chiffon	your ethereal nature indicates you are not long for this world
Pumpkin	you are not being true to your inner nature; choose another pie

[PAID ADVERTISEMENT]

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM THE NATIONAL DESSERT AND SAVORY PIE CREATORS, ENTHUSIASTS, AND GENERAL WORKERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

The National Dessert and Savory Pie Creators, Enthusiasts, and General Workers Association of America is the only officially recognized union for pie bakers, eaters, and competitors. It offers representation in matters concerning wages, hours and working conditions, and sheer tastiness, and protects the rights of those who would eat or make pie. It negotiates and monitors retirement and insurance benefits. It provides other membership services and activities, assistance to charitable and community organizations, and enhances and defends the image of pie bakers, eaters, and competitors and their profession in and outside of the kitchen in the face of would-be foes in competitive, lesser dessert fields. Established in 1956, the NDSPCEGWAA has a long history of assuring proper recognition and representation of the interests of those in the pie-related fields. Each year, thousands of bakers, eaters, and competitors in the U.S. and Canada are either killed or seriously injured on the job. The NDSPCEGWAA has committed to erasing these deadly statistics and to creating safe workplaces for our members and all workers.

Benefits to membership include:

NDSPCEGWAA Credit Cards, Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance, Legal Services, Dental and Vision program, Car Rental, Union Made Checks

Know Your Rights:

Did you know there are federal laws in place to protect workers interested in forming a union? It's true. You may be surprised to learn that many activities, some even on company property, are protected by our federal government: You have the right to distribute prodessert flyers and brochures in nonwork areas. You have the right to wear union buttons, stickers, T-shirts, and hats to show your pastry allegiance. You have the right to petition and join together with coworkers to protest unfair treatment and hindered access to deliciousness or demand improvements in wages, hours, or working conditions.

**Four suicide bombings in April
were stopped by delicious
slices of Lemon Meringue Pie.**

EDITORIAL

New York Times, 1902

It is utterly insufficient (to eat pie only twice a week), as anyone who knows the secret of our strength as a nation and the foundation of our industrial supremacy must admit. Pie is the American synonym of prosperity, and its varying contents the calendar of the changing seasons. Pie is the food of the heroic. No pie-eating people can ever be permanently vanquished.

OUR OPINIONS

The Biotic Baking Brigade: Heathens and Pie Wasters

The Biotic Baking Brigade is a global network of activists united to "pie" unassuming, white-collar corporate criminals. By throwing creamy lusciousness in the faces of hypocritical movie actors, egregious CEOs, and employees of the wrongheaded WTO, the Biotic Baking Brigade has been slinging justice in the face of evil since the late 1990s.

And it's got to stop.

The Biotic Baking Brigade is in fact little more than a heathenous pack of wasters of everyone's favorite dessert.

Despite their popularity, and the supposed "humorous" nature of their incisive political statements, the rate at which they destroy, unconsumed, entire pies—the whole enchilada! The big shebang! Every morsel of heartwarming, encrusted dessert!—must not be tolerated by forward-thinking communities intent on preserving our nation's sense of deliciousness. Would that I could explain how deeply my soul is aggrieved to see someone so undeserving as Monsanto CEO Robert Shapiro receive a golden-crust shell, filled with rich banana-creaminess—delivered however forcefully.

**When cannibals get grossed
out by eating each other's
body parts all the time, they
bake them into pies. That
seems to work OK.**

in their entire lives. Forcing these evildoers to consume pie tastiness is an unparalleled cruelty forced back upon us all: a bit, I imagine, like forcing the devil himself to have a rollicking good time roasting some more sinners in hell.

It is demeaning to the true dessert activist community to have our ultimate glory tarnished by the sudden and unforeseen appreciation of pie by those least deserving of its light and honor. Let us change what it means to "pie" someone from a punishing act into a rewarding one, and change our slanderous, attack-mode stance into one of power.

Let us revise our uniting slogans to more accurately reflect our true feelings: *Take Back the Pastry! Hell, No, We Won't Pie Anyone! This Is What Deliciousness Looks Like!*

**The Khmer Rouge
despised pie.**

**Store your rolling pin in the
freezer, in a flour-lined box.**

After all, sometimes it hurts to give, and the most painful gifts can be the most beneficial; Shapiro's pie in the face, unfortunately—or Bill Gates's, or Milton Friedman's—was probably the best meal they had ever had

APTITUDE

Please limit your answers to the time provided.

Essay

1. What is the best kind of pie and how do you make it?
2. Name six key figures in pie history and describe their relevance.
3. In the space below, write your earliest pie memory in 500 words or less.
4. Is pie good or bad? Show your work.
5. Is pie a state of mind?
6. Which of the following would you eat if carefully wrapped in crust by the most skilled of bakers, and why?
 - a. old shoe
 - b. some dirt
 - c. body fluids
 - d. shards of glass
 - e. chalk
7. Do you like pie?

Short Answer

1. Below appear some pie-related phenomena. Please fill in the blanks with the appropriate answer. See example provided. Example: *apple* and *cinnamon*
 - a. flour and _____
 - b. pie a la _____
 - c. when the _____ hits your eye like a big pizza pie, that's _____
 - d. _____ sky in morning, sailors take warning; _____ sky at night, sailor's _____
 - e. love is _____
 - f. _____
2. Please rank the following in order from most to least delicious:
 - a. other desserts
 - b. pie
 - c. two pies
3. If you are lost in the woods with only a compass, shortening, flour, clean drinking water, and some rocks, which do you make first, a rock pie or a compass pie? Explain.

Multiple Choice

1. Which of the following make good pie ingredients? (Circle all that apply)
 - a. apples
 - b. flour
 - c. beef
 - d. plastic
 - e. all of the above if the crust is really flaky
2. If you knew someone who hated pie, would you:
 - a. kill them
 - b. let them suffer a miserable life without pie
3. Please choose the best from each of the following five answers:
 - a. fruit
 - b. Auntie May's meat pie
 - c. π
 - d. chicken pot
 - e. silk
5. Your grandparents, whom you have never met, leave you a zillion dollars. You:
 - a. open a bakery
 - b. hire a personal baker
 - c. stock up on frozen crusts and freezers in which to store them
 - d. buy a shitload of pie
 - e. quit your job to devote yourself to full-time pie experimentation
 - f. donate the money to a scientific research facility that studies the effects of baked goods on the human psyche and also volunteer there
 - g. carefully weigh the above options and become paralyzed with indecision
6. Which of the following would you not do for an even halfway decent slice of pie:
 - a. cry
 - b. stab someone
 - c. extortion
 - d. neighbor's spouse
 - e. laundry
 - f. swear off all future pies
 - g. fellatio
 - h. read a book
 - i. own parent
 - j. pay \$3.50
 - k. go to school naked
7. If pressed, which would you say is better, a or b below?
 - a. doughnuts
 - b. pie

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Please do not show your work.

1. Approximately how many large apples does it take to fill a deep-dish pie crust?
2. What is your annual income?
3. Do, do you like math?
4. Add some stuff and then subtract it.
5. What is π and why is it so great?
6. If you have one pie and yourself in a room together and no one is watching, after an hour how many pies are left?

1. Look at answer 2 in the math section. What percentage of that would you give for a really great Chocolate Cashewbutter Pie recipe?
2. How far is too far and have you ever gone that far?
3. What is your favorite film about pie and what do you feel that says about you?
4. Why pie?
5. Have you ever killed anyone for dessert?
 - a. If not, would you?
 - b. If so, what kind of dessert, pie or other?

Upon completion, please submit to local authorities.

When asked to judge a contest among delicious baked goods, many flounder. This chart, however, will allow you to use the latest in technological advancements to determine pie greatness or horribleness. It's easy!

PROPERTIES		TOTAL Add
Taste	Rating	
Sweetness scale (10 = perfect sweetness)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Non-crust ingredient volume (AKA pie-to-crust ratio)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Crust flakiness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Crust butteriness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Crustiness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Momentarily inhibits all other animalistic urges (being the number of urges inhibited)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Texture	Rating	Add
Appropriateness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Pleasure	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Surprise	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
# of adjectives used to describe this pie to others	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Visual	Rating	Add
Color palette	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Aesthetics	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Appropriateness when compared to taste	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Odor	Rating	Add
Present (yucky to appealing)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Verbal Presentation	Rating	Add
Eye contact	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Well-argued thesis	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Stuck to main points	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Emotional impact	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Visual Presentation	Rating	Add
Appropriate attire	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Accessories/decorative elements	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Serving utensil	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Other props	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Other Considerations	Rating	Add
Effort	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Creativity	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Potential pie impact (on future of all pies)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Hunger at time of judging	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Bribes received	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Political adv to choosing this pie as winner	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Sexual adv to choosing this pie as winner	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
General karma	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	

Not sure what to do about the issues raised in this brochure? Clip'n'Save this handy piefesto until you've gathered enough signatures to enact a real change in your local community.

We, the undersigned, enjoy pie. As pie enthusiasts, we note that a key, often lacking ingredient—if you can withstand the metaphor—of pie enjoyment is, far too frequently, pie accessibility in general, prohibitive expensiveness being only one example. Unfortunately, there exists a dearth of dedicated pie-eating establishments in many of this country's localities, and this lack has contributed directly to our recent failings as a nation, well-documented in recent years by the international press.

Current restrictions to consistent and regular pie enjoyment are many, yet the most strenuous and problematic have been determined through precise computerized methodologies to be as follows: slice cost; limited restaurant offerings; low rates of at-home experimentation; rising costs of ingredients, which should be cheaply available to all U.S. residents both legal and temporary, including but not limited to: fruits, chocolate, corn starch, nuts, vegetables, baking powder, salt, coconut, vanilla flavoring, sugar, flour, shortening, butter, ginger, nutmeg, cinnamon, etc; reliance on such desserts as Jell-O, instant or canned pudding, spongy cakes and the inferior, cheaply-made "cobbler" in public-school lunch programs; few and ineffective public awareness campaigns; the ill-conceived forwarding of cakes, tortes, tarts, tiramisus and pointless low-fat desserts for celebrations such as weddings, birthdays, anniversaries, wakes, bar and bat mitzvahs; the unrelenting powers and deep, deep pockets of the GNC (Greater National Cake, the lobbying arm of the cakeworkers union); general increasing rates of disability afflicting the arms, hands, and fingers due to logarithmically increasing dependence on computers, automobiles, the transportation of handbags, purses, briefcases, and attachés, the wearing of watches, amplified snugness of beer bottles, shirt-restrictiveness and the seemingly growing tightness of underclothing; widespread laziness ("couch-potatoism") or its obverse, sheer clumsiness; proliferation of the "fast-food" mindset, which is necessarily contrary to the pie state of mind; dissemination of untruths and misinformation by grumbling pie detractors regarding the difficulty of pie creation, potential harms by pie to the human body, and rumored deficiency of palatability of the dessert in general; poorly attended public pie functions; and lack of time due to mandatory employment by most would-be bakers and consumers of the American pie tradition. Pie, a natural, easy-to-make, scrumptious item not necessarily limited to post-meal satisfaction, must be returned to the forefront of our nation's concerns presently and with great urgency. These restrictions to regular pie enjoyment must be lifted immediately.

For further national pie satisfaction, we demand the above hindrances to accessibility be permanently abolished by federal mandate and that the following additional demands be met forthwith: government-sanctioned pie-tin subsidies; compulsory experimentation in advance of drivers' license application; increased fruit and vegetable planting free and open to all citizens in and around major urban areas, as well as drastically increased funding and public services for the farming of such items in rural areas; tax breaks for responsive dining centers; and an immediate and complete return to pie-centric thought, action, and mentality.

Finally, we the undersigned do hereby demand of our publicly funded eateries, local neighborhood taverns, restaurants, coffeehouses, snack shops, beer gardens, cafes, diners, and even individuals who hold social functions such as dinner parties, potlucks, coffee klatches, teas, and showers for babies and brides, the following: increased selection presented on a varietal and experimental basis; cheaper pie costs for both individual slices and whole, uncut pies; greater selection of pie-related toppings including but not limited to a wide selections of cheeses and ice creams, whipped toppings of both dairy and non-dairy origin, candies, liquors and liqueurs, and dessert-style sauces; and availability of both whole pies and slices at all locations and at all hours.

We thank you in advance for your immediate attention to this most deserving matter.

[illegible]