



Amy's Potato Latkes

Amy Davies

The University of Chicago has long hosted an annual faculty debate over the relative merits of hamantashen¹ and latkes.² From time to time, manifesting the University's collegial and cross-disciplinary tendencies, the physicists and philosophers and economists and linguists and historians and social scientists permit a representative from one of the University's trade schools – say, law or medicine – to join the discussion. Meaning no disrespect to the physicians, the Green Bag is interested in the performances of the lawyers. We think they have represented our profession pretty well. For example, consider the following excerpt from Harry Kalven, Jr.'s 1961 speech:

We have in law a great index of all legal materials in some one hundred volumes – the West American Digest System. Where do we find latke and hamantash in the law's digest tracts? The arresting answer is that we do not find them; we look in vain under the law's rubrics – res gestae, res ipsa loquitur; coram nobis, quo warranto, quo vadis. They were not indexed in the digest. From this I can only conclude that in the law's view the latke and the hamantash cannot be digested: they remain indigestible.

This pearl, as well as the complete transcript of Geoffrey Stone's 1993 speech reproduced at page 209 of this issue, are drawn from a new book from the University of Chicago Press, The Great Latke – Hamantash Debate.³ In an effort

Among many other things, Amy Davies is the maker of the what are, in one Editor's opinion, the best latkes ever.

- 1 "Triangular, pouchlike cakes filled usually with poppy seeds and honey, and served in Jewish households at Purim." WEBSTER'S NEW INTERNATIONAL DICTIONARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE 1130 (2d ed. 1955).
- 2 Not defined in *Webster's Second*, and therefore not real, but considered by most people to be tasty potato pancakes.
- 3 Harry Kalven, Jr., *Undigested Tensions in the Warren Supreme Court: Latke v. Hamantash; An Essay in Gastronomic Jurisprudence* (excerpt), and Geoffrey R. Stone, *The Rights and Wrongs of Latkes* (tran-

to achieve those important hallmarks of legal-editorial excellence – fairness and balance (or is it congruence and proportionality?) – we have paired Stone’s advocacy of the latke with Eugene Kontorovich’s 2005 brief for the hamantash.

Finally, and without taking sides, we recommend the following recipe for latkes, which is popular in the home of one of our colleagues.

– The Editors



Amy’s Potato Latkes

- ◇ 3 large potatoes
- ◇ 1 yellow onion
- ◇ 3 eggs
- ◇ 1 teaspoon salt
- ◇ 2 tablespoons flour
- ◇ pinch of baking powder
- ◇ canola oil

Grate potatoes and onion in Cuisinart® using shredding disc. Transfer to large bowl. Beat eggs well, add to potatoes and onions, and stir. Add salt, flour and baking powder. Mix well. Let stand for 20 minutes. In frying pan, heat canola oil approx. 1 inch deep, and fry potato mixture by the tablespoonful, squeezing out moisture before dropping into oil. Turn pancakes when bottoms are golden brown, and fry on second side. Remove with slotted spoon to pan lined with paper towels. This recipe makes about 18 potato latkes.

Hint: freeze overnight and reheat in a 325° oven the next day before serving. Should be soft on the inside, crispy on the outside, and warm all over!

