Eating Culture
An Anthropological Guide to Food
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www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/trousfs/anthfood/aftests.html#title
use your up/down arrow keys and/or your space bar to advance the slides
the Biocultural Framework for the Study of Diet and Nutrition includes

- Nutritional Status
- Biological Makeup
- Human Nutrient Needs

- Diet
- Cuisine

- The Environment
  - Physical Environment
  - Sociocultural Environment
  - Economic and Political Environment
in food studies

**diet** is not a dreaded word . . .
it simply “refers to the actual foods that individuals or groups consume to meet their nutrient needs”
“diet”

BUT at times the authors of *The Cultural Feast* use “diet” in the collective sense and at other times they are concerned with how the foods and dishes in a particular cultural and physical context affect the specific food intake of individuals living in that setting.

*The Cultural Feast, 2nd ed.*, p. 9
at times the authors of *The Cultural Feast* use “diet” in the collective sense and at other times they are concerned with how the foods and dishes in a particular cultural and physical context affect the specific food intake of individuals living in that setting.

*The Cultural Feast, 2nd ed.*, p. 9
“diet”

at times the authors of *The Cultural Feast* use

but more often than not, the term refers to . . .

specific food intake of individuals living in that setting

*The Cultural Feast, 2nd ed.*, p. 9
thus the box labeled “diet” in the biocultural model diagrammed on p. 4 of *The Cultural Feast* contains “individual nutritional status”
Figure 1.1
Biocultural Framework for the Study of Diet and Nutrition

Source: Authors

The Cultural Feast, 2nd ed., p. 4
so in terms of the “units of analysis”

“diet”

will usually be the focus of inquiry as an item itself

as in, for e.g., “The Atkins Diet”
so in terms of the “units of analysis”

“diet”

will usually be the focus of inquiry as an item itself or it may be part of a focus on the individual(s)
thus the “diet” . . .
“units of analysis” usually includes:

- one person
- the family (occasionally)
- the community
- a region
- a “culture area”
- a culture / “subculture”
- a nation

- an item or action itself
- a “cultural metaphor”
if the focus of inquiry is something having to do with a group
then, in food research, that is known as . . .
Biocultural Framework for the Study of Diet and Nutrition

• Nutritional Status
• Biological Makeup
• Human Nutrient Needs
• Diet

• Cuisine

• The Environment
  • Physical Environment
  • Sociocultural Environment
  • Economic and Political Environment
“cuisine”
“refers to the foods, food preparation techniques, and taste preferences that are shared by the members of a group of people”

The Cultural Feast, 2nd ed., p. 9
so

“cuisine”

“refers to the foods, food preparation techniques, and taste preferences that are shared by the members of a group of people”

applies only to groups of people that share a culture

*The Cultural Feast, 2nd ed.*, p. 9
in the biocultural model diagrammed on p. 4 of *The Cultural Feast*

“diet” is nested within “cuisine” to demonstrate that a given set of preferred preparation techniques and dishes that characterize a particular culture group has an important impact on the diets of the individual members

*The Cultural Feast, 2nd ed.*, p. 10
so in terms of the “units of analysis”

“cuisine”
may be the focus of inquiry with
any unit that pertains to a group
and is usually reserved for
a culture, subculture, and, but only occasionally, a nation

usually a “community” would not have its own “cuisine”
apart from a possible identity
with a microcultural group

but a “cuisine” could be part of a metaphorical analysis
thus the “cuisine” . . .
“units of analysis” may include:

- one person
- the family
- the community
- a region
- a “culture area”
- a culture / “subculture”
- a nation
- an item or action itself . . .
- a “cultural metaphor”
thus the “cuisine” . . .
“units of analysis” may include:

- one person
- the family

and, as mentioned,
a cuisine could also be considered as

- an item or action itself
- a “cultural metaphor”
with regard to diet

“It is important to note that while acquired food preferences and tastes that are common among any particular group are power influences on diet, people also eat novel food or, at times, simply deviate from the group’s preferences”

The Cultural Feast, 2nd ed., p. 10
with regard to diet

“It is important to note that while acquired food preferences and tastes that are common among any particular group are power influences on diet, people also eat novel food or, at times, simply deviate from the group’s preferences.”

The Cultural Feast, 2nd ed., p. 10
“It is also worth noting that a society’s cuisine interacts with its members’ biological makeup and nutrient requirements”

The Cultural Feast, 2nd ed., p. 10
so basically, as a rule of thumb

“diet” refers to individuals or an item

“cuisine” refers to groups

(with the exceptions noted above)
have a look at . . .

Cuisine

Anthropology of Food
University of Minnesota Duluth

Tim Roufs
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Irish corned beef and cabbage

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