Anthropology of Food Week 7

"Eating-In: Commensality and Gastro-Politics"

Brief Midterm Exam Review

Guest: Stu Sivertson

This week Tuesday and Thursday we continue to have a look at “How People Get Their Food in Industrial Societies.”

Thursday Stuart Sivertson will be our guest speaker. Don’t miss him! Stu is the former President and CEO of Lake Superior Fish Co., whose great-great grandfather came from Norway and began commercial fishing in Lake Superior in 1892. The Sivertsons have been prominent commercial fishermen on Lake Superior since the late 1800s. You may be familiar with the family through the work of Stan’s artist cousin, Howard Sivertson, a well-known regional artist (Cf., Once Upon and Isle: The Story of a Fishing Family on Isle Royale, Wisconsin Folk Museum, 1992).
Speaking of fishing, Week 13 we’ll have a look (on-line) at *The End of the Line: How Overfishing Is Changing the World And What We Eat*. Week 15 we’ll have a look (on-line) at the 2010 Oscar winning film, *The Cove*. If you want, you can go to Weeks 13 and 15 and watch those on-line anytime between now and the end of the semester.

The film that we finish this week in class—*We Feed the World*—focuses on modern-day food production, including its international dimensions. *We Feed the World* is an award winning Austrian film [2009 DVD release] said in Austria to be “the most successful documentary ever,” that is, until *Food, Inc.* came out and quickly became the bestselling independent documentary of all time (see Week 12). For their real impact, both *We Feed the World* and *Our Daily Bread* (the Extra Credit film) should be watched on a large screen.

If you are into films, *Our Daily Bread* has been compared to Stanley Kubrick’s *2001: A Space Odyssey*. If you are not into films, *Our Daily Bread* has still been compared to Stanley Kubrick’s *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

Don’t be put off by the fact that *Our Daily Bread* has almost no dialogue. That is part of the design of the film. *Our Daily Bread* is almost all images and natural sounds. The world-class filmmaker wants you to think about your food and how it is produced as you watch the film. *We Feed the World*, another Austrian film (the required film that we will see this week), has narration and presents the subject matter more conventionally. Details of the on-site locations in *Our Daily Bread* are in the class viewing guide (and are listed on Wikipedia, should you be interested in where the footage was shot—but it was the original intent of the filmmakers Wolfgang Widerhofer and Nikolaus Geyrhalter not to focus on the identity of the companies and locations, but have the natural sounds and images categorically represent the sources of today’s *Our Daily Bread*).
Mark Bittman in a *New York Times* “Sunday Review” article opined:

**How to Feed the World -- Mark Bittman**, *New York Times* (15 October 2013, p. 9)

Bittman (a food journalist, author, food entrepreneur, and now former contributing opinion writer for *The New York Times*, well-known for his works *How to Cook Everything*, and *The Best Recipes in the World*, and a half-dozen other works) has this to say about today’s food production:

“The world has long produced enough calories, around 2,700 per day per human, more than enough to meet the United Nations projection of a population of nine billion in 2050, up from the current seven billion. . . . According to the ETC Group, a research and advocacy organization based in Ottawa, the industrial food chain uses 70 percent of agricultural resources to provide 30 percent of the world’s food, whereas what ETC calls “the peasant food web” produces the remaining 70 percent using only 30 percent of the resources.”

Feeding the world’s growing population, and world hunger, is on lots of people’s minds these days. A friend’s e-mail not so long ago included a few timely observations . . .

“Just finished *Tropic of Chaos* by Christian Parenti [Parenti, Christian. *Tropic of Chaos: Climate Change and the New Geography of Violence*. NY: Nation Books, 2011]. It is a powerful and quite frightening book. He looks closely at and describes several places in the world where climate change is converging with poverty and violence to provide a preview of where the world is heading if we don't find a way very quickly to reduce carbon emissions. “

“The places he reports on - Somalia / Uganda, India / Pakistan, Brazil, Mexico - are places where ‘normal’ was marginal, and where the change in climate is already forcing people past a tipping point in one way or another, resulting in turmoil and chaos.”

“In addition to providing a glimpse of the violence the future holds as more people haven't enough to eat, it also yanked me—an overly comfortable American—into an awareness of
the fragile agricultural systems on which many people on the planet depend.”

“It is a profoundly distressing book. Everyone reading this email has played, and is playing, a role in pushing our ecosphere out of a steady state condition. Many of us, as Charlie regularly points out, are ‘getting out just in time.’ But we have sure messed things up big time for those coming after.”

Even General Mills and other major food producers voiced similar concerns: “In a letter to U.S. and global leaders, the food companies’ CEOs say that if action isn’t taken now, ‘we risk not only today’s livelihoods, but those of future generations’ . . . . The companies include Nestle USA, Unilever, Kellogg, Stonyfield Farm, Danone Dairy North America, Ben & Jerry’s (which is owned by Unilever), Clif Bar, Mars Inc. and New Belgium Brewing Company. The[ir] letter marks the first time the food industry has come together to address climate change.” [General Mills and other food producers speak out on climate change -- StarTribune (01 October 2015)].

We’ll have another, closer, look at world hunger and the future of food towards the end of the semester.

On Tuesday we’ll also take whatever time you would like to review the Midterm Exam, so if you have questions, bring them along. If you took the exam, the results are in your Moodle Gradebook (check the upper left-hand Moodle corner of your HomePage under “Administration”).

Profs “grading” exams is a lot like an ump in Major League Baseball calling balls and strikes. The Major League rules are clear <http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/troufs/anthfood/afgrades.html#strikezone> as are the stated criteria for written projects and exams <http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/troufs/comp3160/criteria_for_grading.html>. But, in the end, they are both human judgments.

The biggest difference between a Major League Umpire calling balls and strikes and a professor calling a grade is that you jet ejected from the baseball game if you are argue balls and strikes (see Section 9.02 Official Baseball Rules <http://mlb.mlb.com/mlb/official_info/official_rules/foreword.jsp>) and one should really question the prof if they didn’t like the call, and that is especially true for midterm exams as one can often learn quite a bit that is helpful for the Final Exam by looking over and discussing a midterm exam.

Maybe a better analogy would be judging Olympic Figure Skating, or Gymnastics, or Ski Jumping, Diving and the like . . . <http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/troufs/anthfood/afgrades.html#gymnastics>.
If your style is to look at charts, the grading “chart” is at <http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/troufs/anthfood/afgrades.html#gradingpolicies>.

So if, for whatever reason, you didn’t like “the call,” e-mail, or stop in (UMD Library Rotunda Cubicle Q).

Please pay attention to what the numbers mean in terms of the final course letter grade:

Numerical Example:

\[
\frac{18}{20} + \frac{93}{100} + \frac{372}{400} = \frac{483}{520}
\]

\[= 92.9\%
\]

\[= A
\]

(the highest grade the UM system allows)

Review . . .

Writing Essays for Exams
Test Taking Strategies

Go back and look over your Midterm Exam, including your answers.

If you have any questions about the Final Exam, please raise them in class or in Moodle.
EXTRA CREDIT

If you didn’t do quite as well as you might have liked on the Midterm Exam, or if you did better than you even hoped on the Midterm exam but want to “bank” some insurance points for your final course grade, think about doing one (or even two—one of each) of the optional extra credit papers.

There are two Extra Credit options: (A) a case study, and/or (B) a review of a lecture (such as one of the Nobel Conference 46 “Making Food Good” lectures, or the Harvard University School of Engineering and Applied Sciences Series on Food Science) or a food film (other than one of the films we see in class). For the review option you may also compare two or more food films. (Remember from Week 1, one of the main features of anthropology is that it is comparative?)

- Details on the extra credit are on-line at <http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/troufs/anthfood/afextracredit.html#title>

- The Nobel Conference 46 lectures are on-line at <http://gustavus.edu/events/nobelconference/2010/archive.php>

- Harvard Food Science Lectures from the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, Harvard University <http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/troufs/anthfood/aflectures.html#harvardlectures>

- Other Lectures, including TED lectures are on-line at” <http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/troufs/anthfood/aflectures.html#otherlectures>

- A list of food films is on-line at <http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/troufs/anthfood/affoodfilms.html#title>

- Details of the Case Study Extra Credit Option are on-line at <http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/troufs/anthfood/afextracredit.html#casestudy>

- Details of the Film/Lecture Review Extra Credit Option are on-line at <http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/troufs/anthfood/afextracredit.html#filmreview>

As usual, be sure to check the activities of the week on your Moodle HomePage . . .

If you have not already done your evaluation of We Feed the World do it this week.

- Response to the film We Feed the World (Due by the end of Week 7—Saturday, 15 October 2016; Your Name Will Be Logged)

- Forum: Is Bob’s Red Mill a Good Business Model? (Due by the end of Week 7—Saturday, 15 October 2016)
And don’t miss “the gorilla” when watching the videos. If you didn’t watch these last week, do it now . . .

Selective Attention Test
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vJG698U2Mvo>

The Monkey Business Illusion
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGQmdoK_ZjY>

After the Exam Take the Two (Very Short) Selective Attention Tests
in Preparation for Watching Remaining Videos Page

Always remember . . . it’s a good idea to share your ideas with others. Discuss them on-line with the others in class. And you should do that. Share your ideas at . . .

*2016 Student Collaboration Space*
for your own personal use

Wiki for Project Collaboration

QUICKMAIL (see sidebar)

The above items will be found at the top of your Moodle folder under “Student Collaboration Space”.

Check the results of the class Video Responses from earlier weeks when they close. You can find the results in the Moodle Blocks where they first appeared. This week have a look at . . .

- Results--Food for Body and Spirit f2016
- Results--The Pig Commandments f2016
- Results--Desert People f2016 File resource
- Results--The Meaning of Food: 'Food & Culture' f2016
- Results--The Meaning of Food: "Food & Life" f2016
- Results--Did Cooking Make Us Human? f2016
- Results--Holy Cow f2016

For Fun:

This week’s trivia question:

In what region of Italy do Italians traditionally eat spaghetti with meatballs?
Your Readings and Assignments and Activities listings are available in the Week 7 Block of your Moodle folder.

As usual, if you have any other general or specific questions—especially on your Project, Promissory Abstract and Working Bibliography, or on the Midterm Exam results, or about the Final Exam—please do not hesitate to stop in after class, or post them on Moodle, or e-mail troufs@d.umn.edu.

Our tip of the hat this week goes to Bob Moore.

And to our neighbors in Canada celebrating Canadian Thanksgiving (on Monday, 10 October 2016).

Best Regards,

Tim Roufs
<http://www.d.umn.edu/~troufs/>