Anthropology of Food Week 13

The Language of Food

Video Explorations:

FRESH
The End of the Line

The Big Four This week . . .

1. Thanksgiving
2. FRESH
3. The End of the Line
4. Presentations
Thanksgiving (U.S.A.) brings with it Festival Foods

22 November 2018
U.S.A. Holiday
Thanksgiving

In the United States this week we give a great big collective thanks—

and for most of us that will be for and with the sacrificial offering of a Pre-Columbian New World bird that has been industrialized to the point where it cannot reproduce without the help of humans, and to grow quickly to the point where it can barely walk.** But that stuffed bird might be appropriate, even symbolic (speaking of food symbolism) for the U.S.A. celebration where the participants themselves can often barely walk after eating the sacrificial primal bird and all its trimmings and accompanying dishes. So enjoy that, with a Pre-Columbian cigar if you are so inclined, but don’t forget
this year (if you’re celebrating Thanksgiving this week) your Thanksgiving Day is also an Anthropology of Food Lab Day, and we look forward to your report as you relax on World Buy Nothing Day (aka “Black Friday”).


Enjoy the day, and the day off for Thanksgiving break, and that big fat turkey that couldn’t reproduce itself by itself and could barely walk when it met its maker (probably in Minnesota, as Minnesota is the biggest turkey producing state in the U.S.A.). The Native American turkey was one of the few foods that the Conquistadores and their folks back in Europe took an immediate liking for (most of the rest of the New World foods they didn’t originally much care for). And, of course, the squash (first cultivated in Mesoamerica 8,000 or more years ago), pumpkin (from close to the same time in Mesoamerica), tomatoes (originally a Nahuatl [Aztec] word tomatl), vanilla and chocolate (pre-Columbian cultivars), and maize (from west of Tehuacán in Mexico) are all originally Mesoamerican foods. (The cranberries came from native North America.)

The class Turkey website is at

<http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/troufs/anthfood/alturkeys.html#title>

And, of course, nowadays lots of Thanksgiving foods are Genetically Modified, or grew up on Genetically Modified foods.
We have a *FRESH* video this week

This film and *In Organic We Trust* (next week) deal with important topics of modern food production. *FRESH* should all bring back memories of our discussion of food production in industrial societies. It would be a good time to review your notes on the films *We Feed the World* (Week 7), and *Food Fight* (Week 9). (The final exam is just around the corner.)

And have a look at

**The End of the Line: How Overfishing Is Changing the World And What We Eat.**

Next Week we’ll have a look at the Oscar winning film, *The Cove.*
The international politics of dead fish stink.

You’ll see that on-line this week in *The End of the Line: How Overfishing Is Changing the World And What We Eat*, and earlier in Week 7 in the “Fishing Yesterday and Fishing Today” segment of *We Feed the World*. And you have seen that also in the American Indian Fishing and Whaling Rights, and Inuit Seal-Trading Rights *Forum* in Week 4.

Some argue that food politics in general stink.

In the U.S.A. we have lots of freedoms, except, in practice, for most, the freedom to know what’s in the foods we eat, and thus the freedom to choose to then eat those particular foods or not. (You can argue, of course, that one can always grow their own non-GM foods, that is if you can find seeds uncontaminated by GM crops grown in neighboring fields.)
Some argue that in the U.S.A. the question of who chooses what we can eat is itself one of the major questions involved in Food Politics.

You should have been able to detect the influence of food politics in presentations last week, and in the materials on production in industrial societies earlier in the semester.

**Food politics is everywhere. You can’t escape it.** You can’t miss it, regardless of the Unit of Analysis that you’re looking at—global, international, regional, national, state/provincial, local, and even down to the neighborhood “food deserts” of American (U.S.A.) inner cities (remember “units of analysis” from Weeks 1-2?). Our focus this week is on the state/provincial and national levels.

**For a fair, objective, and comprehensive presentation of Food Politics,** have a look at . . .


Nestle, Marion. *Safe Food: The Politics of Food Safety.* Berkeley, CA:

- Blog and Website
- book information from the University of California Press
- "Food Politics: Personal Responsibility vs. Social Responsibility" (video archive)—keynote address of the 2010 Nobel "Making Food Good Conference," Gustavus Adolphus College

**Nestle, Marion.** *Soda Politics: Taking on Big Soda (and Winning).* Oxford University Press, 2015.

And for a rebuttal, of sorts, have a look at . . .


["For a biased assessment of global food politics, Robert Paarlberg's *Food Politics* ought to be called on the carpet for its lack of transparency. The subtitle, *What Everyone Needs to Know*, alleges that the reader will be informed about the multiple dimensions of a complex global problem. Instead, the book leans heavily toward the perspective of large, industrialized agriculture. The author also fails to present his complete biography (found online in a quick Google search), which includes being a member of the Biotechnology Advisory Council to the CEO of the Monsanto Company. . . ." Sacramento Book Review—May 24, 2010.]

**And, at least focusing on the unit of analysis of “The Class,” this is also Ketchup week** (even though nationally Ketchup Week is in December). **So work on your term paper, catch up on your readings, and think about the Final Exam.**
REM: Your Presentation is due this week.

REM: Optional Extra Credit Reports are due this week.

You may submit a maximum of two extra credit activities, one Review and one Case Study.

Extra credit will not be accepted later than the end of Week 13, Saturday, 24 November 2018.

REM: Your Term Paper is due next week

And also as usual, be sure to check the details of the activities and assignments of the week on your canvas “Calendar” or “Assignments” pages.

Assignments and Events

. . . this week are listed on your (1) ”Calendar”, and the (2) “Syllabus” sections of your canvas folder.
(1) This Week’s "Calendar"

18
- AF 13 For Fun Food Trivia: Are you really what you eat?
- #1 AF 13 Readings
- AF For Extra Credit View: The Grind (29 min. Due by the end of Wk 13)

19
- AF 13 Video: FRESH (90 min.)

20
- AF 13 Video: The End of the Line: How Overfishing Is Changing the World And What We Eat (85 min.)
- AF REM: Take Notes on your Thanksgiving Dinner

21
- U.S.A. Thanksgiving -- 22 November 2018

22
- AF 13 Discussion: Thanksgiving Dinner

23
- AF ITSS Course Survey
- AF 13 Due: Optional Extra Credit Lecture / Video / Event Review

24
- AF 13 Due: Project Presentation (dropbox)
(2) This Week’s “Syllabus”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sun Nov 18, 2018</td>
<td>AF 13 For Fun Food Trivia: Are you really what you eat?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon Nov 19, 2018</td>
<td>AF 13 Readings&lt;br&gt;AF For Extra Credit View: The Grind (29 min. Due by the end of Wk 13)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue Nov 20, 2018</td>
<td>AF 13 Video: FRESH (90 min.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed Nov 21, 2018</td>
<td>AF 13 Video: The End of the Line: How Overfishing Is Changing the World And What We Eat (85 min.)&lt;br&gt;AF REM: Take Notes on your Thanksgiving Dinner</td>
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<td>Thu Nov 22, 2018</td>
<td>U.S.A. Thanksgiving -- 22 November 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri Nov 23, 2018</td>
<td>AF 13 Discussion: Thanksgiving Dinner&lt;br&gt;AF ITSS Course Survey</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat Nov 24, 2018</td>
<td>AF Due: Project Presentation (dropbox)&lt;br&gt;AF 13 Due: Optional Extra Credit Lecture / Video / Event Review&lt;br&gt;AF 13 Due: Optional Extra Credit Case Study</td>
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And for fun, a trivia question this week . . .

”Are you really what you eat?”
If you have any questions right now, please do not hesitate to post them on the canvas Course “Chat”, or e-mail troufs@d.umn.edu, or stop by Cina 215 [map].

Best Regards,

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