Anthropology of Food Week 13

The Language of Food

Video Exploration:
That Sugar Film
The Cove

1. **That Sugar Film**
   (video: 1:42, 2015)

2. **The Cove**
   (video: 92 min.)

3. **DUE: Project Presentations**

4. **DUE: Optional Extra Credits**
   *The Grind*
   Case Study
   Lecture/Video/Event Review

5. **Course Survey**
   (from IT)

6. **Assignments and Events**
   For Fun Food Trivia
This week have a look at

1. *That Sugar Film*

*(video: 1:42, 2015)*

*That Sugar Film* is one man’s journey to discover the bitter truth about sugar. Damon Gameau embarks on a unique experiment to document the effects of a high sugar diet on a healthy body, consuming only foods that are commonly perceived as “healthy.”
Through this entertaining and informative journey, Damon highlights some of the issues that plague the sugar industry, and where sugar lurks on supermarket shelves.

The film features guest cameos from the likes of Stephen Fry, Isabel Lucas and Brenton Thwaites, interviews with Gary Taubes, Michael Moss and Dr. Kimber Stanhope plus a rocking soundtrack including Depeche Mode, Peter Gabriel and Florence and the Machine.

*That Sugar Film* will forever change the way you think about ‘healthy’ food.

-- *That Sugar Film* HomePage

Edinburgh International Film Festival 2015

Berlin International Film Festival 2015

International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam 2014

2. *The Cove*

(video: 1:33)
Not so long ago when my wife, Kim, and I visited O’ahu—in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, it was reported that most of the fish served in Hawai’i are not caught locally. They used to be. But now they’re flown in (adding lots of “food miles” to the catch, and increasing our carbon footprint), or they’re farmed (which some suggest is adding to the demise of native species). Either way, it’s a shame that a place built on fishing no longer fishes to any great extent.

Fish in Chinatown were the exception, but then Chines tend to prefer to purchase their fish still alive, not like the Japanese, as you will see in the film The Cove. (Speaking of Chinatown, in O’ahu in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, the restaurant Soho [named after the district in London] specializes in Chicago deep-dish pizza.)

The 2010 Oscar for Best Feature Documentary went to The Cove! With an Oscar and more than two dozen other notable international awards The Cove, directed by former National Geographic photographer Louie Psihoyos, and featuring “Flipper[s]” trainer Rick O’Berry, is not without controversy—lots of it.

There’s no question that the film is well done. Its Oscar alone attests to that.

But the film raises several ethical questions, including moral questions pertaining to its own filming, the Japanese whaling industry, dolphin drive-hunting, hunting in general, treatment of animals in aquariums and marine parks (read Sea
World), treatment of animals in captivity in general, ocean conservation, dolphin suicide, animal mental health, illegal protesting, illegal sales of mercury-tainted food to the general public and to school lunch programs, the alleged "buying" by Japan of votes in the International Whaling Commission, government and industry corruption, whistle blowing, concerted efforts to pass “ag-gag” laws making it illegal to collect photographic information on purported illegal CAFOs, sea-harvesting, and the ilk (read more laws like the ones under which Oprah was sued in a two-month trial by Texas Beef for saying she would not eat another burger—and which cost her a million dollars to defend herself) . . . and the list goes on, but not before adding killing and meat eating and lying and racial bigotry and psychopathic individual and corporate greed, and the government banning of books and films to the list.

Some “ag-gag” news includes . . .

- **Ninth Circuit Upholds Major Components of Idaho "Ag-Gag" Law** -- AgWeb (10 January 2018)
- **Idaho's Ag-Gag Law Struck Down** -- AgWeb (08 January 2018)
- **Big Ag GAG: 29 states quietly pass “preemptive seed laws” that prevent debate and local government autonomy over genetically engineered crops** -- Natural News (17 November 2017)
- **AG GAG BILL** -- HUFFPOST (29 October 2017)
- **What’s the status of ag gag laws?** -- BEEF (26 June 2017)
- **What’s going on with U.S. “Ag Gag” laws?** -- iGrow (12 June 2017)
- **Long-time Iowa farm cartoonist fired after creating this cartoon** -- KCCI Des Moines (03 May 2017)

And some **critics charge** that *The Cove* is film espionage aimed at producing “well-made propaganda.” It is said that David Cox of *The Guardian* Film Blog called it a "piece of
evangelism," and opined that from a Japanese point of view "Westerners . . . kill and eat cows. Easterners eat dolphins. What's the difference?" (Wikipedia). Cox’s comments should bring to mind FRESH and Food, Inc.

The same folks noting David Cox’s wisdom above favorably quote academic Ilan Kapoor, echoing the famous phrase by Gayatri Spivak, who argues that "it's a case of (mostly) 'white men saving cute dolphins from yellow men'" (Wikipedia).

The Cove should bring to mind the film segment on the Makah Indians returning to their ancient tradition of hunting and eating whale, to the displeasure of some non-Makah, from Episode 2: "Food & Culture" of Marcus Samuelsson’s The Meaning of Food.

And The Cove should bring to mind the “American Indian Whaling and Fishing Rights” class Discussion of Week 14, and the questions surrounding that.

And The Cove should bring to mind the “Fishing Yesterday and Fishing Today” segment from the film We Feed the World.

And The Cove should bring to mind the film The End of the Line: How Overfishing Is Changing the World And What We Eat.

The international fishing/whaling/fish farming situation is complicated, but then again it might just be the “canary in the mine” for industrial agriculture in general.

In Week 1 we argued that one of the defining characteristics of
anthropology was its commitment to trying to understand phenomena in a comparative and holistic manner. In this week’s *Forum* you have an opportunity to try holistic comparative analysis for yourself.

In thinking about sustainable seafood and *The Cove* be sure to have a look at the course WebSite on Whales and on Fish. And if you really want a holistic view throw in Lobsters and have a look at the rise and fall and rise and fall and rise of the New England lobster industry. And don’t forget to include genetically modified (GM) fish, some of which glow in the dark.

As I have been mentioning throughout the semester a major part of this course is your research project—not just for the points, but because researching a topic you are interested in, and presenting your findings to others, and then writing the results up as a formal paper, is one of the best ways to learn things, and it gives you valuable practice for presenting your ideas and arguments.

Keep in mind what I said earlier on about your Presentations, viz., that they are intended to be a report on work in progress, that is, basically, a rough draft of your ideas that should eventually make their way into your final Term Paper.

The class Presentations WebPage, if you would like to review, is at <http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/troufs/anthfood/afpresentations.html>.
REM: Your Term Paper is due next week

4. DUE: Optional Extra Credit Reports

The Grind

Case Study

Lecture/Video/Event Review

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, 23 November 2019.
5. Course Survey

The friendly folks from Information Technology Systems & Services will be sending you an Invitation to Participate in an online Course Evaluation.

Evaluations are important to me, the Department Head, and the Dean, as well as everyone in our Department.

Please fill the online Course Evaluation out carefully.

Evaluations are anonymous, and will not be seen by the instructor until final grades for this course have been recorded.

Thanks,

Tim Roufs

6. Assignments and Events

... this week are listed on your "Calendar".
This Week’s "Calendar"

REM: Links on screenshots are not “hot” (active)

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<td>8a AF Week 13 Memo</td>
<td>1a AF Wk 13 Readings</td>
<td>AF Wk 13 Video: That Sugar Film (90 min.)</td>
<td>11:59p (optional) AF Wk 14 For Extra Credit: View The Grind and Review</td>
<td>AF ITSS Course Survey</td>
<td>AF REM: Take Notes on your Thanksgiving Dinner for Next Week’s Discussion</td>
<td>(optional) AF Wk 13 Due: Extra Credit Case Study</td>
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<td>AF Wk 14 For Fun Food Trivia: How many pounds of anchovies does it take to produce one pound of fish-farmed salmon?</td>
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<td>AF Due: Project Presentation (dropbox)</td>
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AND REM: Clicking on “Agenda” will give you a listings view
And, at least focusing on the unit of analysis of “The Class,” this is also another Ketchup week (even though nationally Ketchup Week is in December). So work on your presentation and term paper, catch up on your readings, and at least start thinking about the Final Exam.
For Fun Food Trivia
this week . . .

How many pounds of anchovies
does it take to produce one pound of fish-farmed salmon?

Answer

If you have any questions right now, please do not hesitate to post them on the 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/>