

Folk 267: Food and Culture

JANUARY 18:

LONG'S "INTRODUCTION"

But first...

- ⦿ Research Assignment
- ⦿ Now due **March 1**
- ⦿ 5-7 pages
- ⦿ Uses secondary sources (i.e. **peer-reviewed** library or academic database material)
 - Do we know what **peer-review** means?

Assignments should have...

- A clear articulation of what topic you are addressing
- A clear articulation of what data you are engaging
- A **thick** description
- Comparison to other parallel studies (secondary literature)
- Tentative conclusions – what ***you*** think

Research assignment topic 1

- Take a quotidian food from your diet and discuss it according to where the constituent ingredients come from, how they are produced and processed, and through which channels they arrived at your Cape Breton dinner table.

Research assignment topic 2

- Is there such a thing as 'Cape Breton' food? How does it differ from – and how is it similar to – the food of other regions? What makes it 'Cape Breton'?

Research assignment topic 3

- Identify a food that you did not, could not, or would not eat in your past, and explain the processes by which it has entered your food repertoire.
Conversely, identify a food that you do not, can not, or will not eat now and explain the processes of its exit.

Research assignment topic 4

- Identify a food that is 'necessary' for the proper observance of a custom (a ritual, a calendar custom, a rite of passage, etc.). Trace its origins both in a larger, historical context and in your own personal history.

Research assignment topic 5

- Contrast a typical meal/food event that you may prepare for 'intimates' (friends, family) with one you may prepare for 'strangers' (important guests, potential romantic partners, etc.). What constitutes 'special occasion' food and why?

Essay “handout”

- The “What I Want From an Essay” handout will be available on the class website (<http://tinyurl.com/folk267>) by the end of this week.
- To save paper, time and effort, I won’t be printing it off for distribution.

What is “tourism”?

Back to Long’s “Introduction”

Some theories of tourism

⦿ Dean MacCannell

- “Touristic consciousness is motivated by its desire for authentic experience”
- The idea of “site sacralization”: the process of something becoming a tourist attraction
- “Staged authenticity”: crafting the *illusion* of familiarity with a culture (i.e. meeting expectations)

Some theories (cont.)

◎ Valene Smith

- Tourist: “a temporarily leisured person who voluntarily visits a place away from home for the purpose of experiencing a change”
- Informed by leisure time, discretionary income, and positive local sanctions
- Seven types of tourist: explorer, elite, offbeat, unusual, incipient mass, mass, charter
- Five types of tourism: ethnic, cultural, historical, environmental, recreational

Some theories (cont.)

◎ Nelson Graburn

- Touristic experience: “a journey from the profane to the sacred”
- A way for people “to embellish and add meaning to their lives”
- Relationship between pilgrimage and tourism

Some theories (cont.)

◎ John Urry

- “The tourist gaze”
- Different from everyday looking: an intentional seeking out of sights/sites different from the everyday (home)
- Experiences through different senses or on a different scale

General consensus

- ⦿ Tourism is a *quality* of experiencing, not a particular behaviour
- ⦿ The focus is on *otherness*
- ⦿ The intensity of that experience is correlated to its *authenticity*

Making it more difficult

- “Authenticity,” the idea of what is “genuine,” is itself a construct, a judgment by the experiand
- *Simultaneously*, as an industry, tourism cultivates/constructs/anticipates the tourist’s expectations of “authenticity”

Culinary tourism

- a) We have to eat, so in the process of touristic activity we may eat out of hunger as well as / in lieu of this intentional otherness
- b) Taste is non-communicable (or awkwardly so), so the act of eating is a plunge into something we are only loosely prepared for
- c) We don't have to travel somewhere for us to directly experience culinary otherness (unlike directly experiencing landscape)

What effect does tourism have on local culture?

- “Smile! You are a tourist attraction!”
- The presentation and cultivation of one’s culture as inherently different from others.
- The accentuation of difference and the ambiguity of commonality
- Economic dependence on a performance of otherness

Effects...

- The distinction between the leisured, spending tourist and working, earning tourism employee
- *But also* development, injection of money into a community, spillover into other cultural products, etc.

Folklore

- ⦿ The elements of *conservatism* and *dynamism* are evidenced in food and culinary tourism
- ⦿ There is a process of *negotiation* by the experiand (the tourist, the audience, etc.) on the *authenticity* of the experience
- ⦿ What is authentic, and why do we / should we care?

Go away now.