

Folk 267: Food and Culture

**MARCH 3: “CAROLINA HASH”
DISCUSSION AND ADLER’S
“MAKING PANCAKES ON
SUNDAY”**

Why did we watch “Carolina Hash”?

A regional foodways tradition

- ⦿ Has culturally-important narrative (myth) concerning its origins
 - Preston Brooks
- ⦿ Local variation on a standard “stew” type food
 - Similar to curry, chili, etc.
- ⦿ Seen as peculiar to that place by outsiders
 - “They can gum it: they have no teeth but they don’t need to chew”
- ⦿ Seen as normative by insiders
 - “They don’t know what hash is in North Carolina?”

Hash (cont.)

- ⊙ Within region, explicit “sub-types” (oikotypes/ecotypes)
 - Tomato; mustard; hogshead; beef; liver
- ⊙ Variations follow lines of ethnicity; class; urban/rural
 - “That’s a redneck food”
- ⊙ Important for rites of intensification
 - Church picnics; family reunions; political stumping; Fourth of July
- ⊙ Disappearing through legislation / subject to contemporary health paradigms

What did *you* think?

Adler's "Making Pancakes on Sunday"

Adler

- Starting with the film, we more or less move away from culinary tourism (the intentional experience of other foods) and towards local, personal, and even private food traditions
- Adler: a late 1970s meditation on shifts in the domestic foodscape

In a “traditional” American family

- ◎ The mother has (had?) been the primary, sometimes the exclusive, person responsible for food production
- ◎ Division of labour had once been
 - Men responsible for food provision that involved greater distance from home (hunting, fishing, (large) animal husbandry, agriculture) and long-term homestead maintenance

(cont.)

- Women responsible for food provision that was closer to home (gathering, (small) animal husbandry, horticulture, long-term storage), homestead upkeep, and rearing of children
 - Homestead upkeep including meal production and all that entails (dishes, etc.), laundry, cleaning, aka “housework”
 - Such tasks may be shed with younger women of household or younger males until they are able to work alongside the men

(cont.)

- The shift of labour into an exchange economy and the attachment of *monetary value* to men's labour skewed the overall perception of value of women's labour
- Men's participation in homestead upkeep seen as either "beneath" him or, as in this article, somehow "ludic"

Food and masculinity

- ⦿ With the exception of the “professional chef” (wherein professionalism assumes a level of expertise), food production seen largely as “women’s work”
- ⦿ To engage in it first requires the selection of “masculine” foodways
 - Barbecuing as “elemental” food production
 - “Hearty, large, spicy”
- ⦿ Claim “ownership” of particular recipes within family
- ⦿ Fetishising of equipment (specialty items, etc.)

Weekend foods

- ⦿ Outside of the confines of the (male) work week, food choices tend to be more fluid
 - More time, fewer intrusions, etc.
- ⦿ But men establish “sovereignty” over one meal
 - Tend to make the same foods each time
- ⦿ Mealtime becomes sacrosanct: a “special” meal *because* father prepares it

Finally:

- ⦿ Food as “hobby”
- ⦿ Since then, the emergence of “Bobos”
(cf. Wilson)
- ⦿ Shifts in gendered labour patterns
- ⦿ Demonstration of status

Go away from this place

- Next class, Lloyd's "The Cincinnati Chili Culinary Complex"
- Available through
 - <http://tinyurl.com/folk267>
 - It is best to access it on campus, otherwise you'll be having to log in through the library and find it again