

by legal change, increasing consumer choice, expanding work in the service sector and fundamental changes in the circumstances of family life.

The final article returns to the theme of industrial heritage conservation. Anthony Barlow examines the regional metal-working firm, the Starr Manufacturing Company, which like the Samson is as important to the world of industrial conservation today as it once was to business and work. Its importance arises from its size and varied history, and from the sad circumstances of its demise. The company failed for the final time in 1996. Historical, archaeological and architectural investigation during the following four years uncovered a great deal about this company and associated

industrial enterprise including the Shubenacadie Canal. Unfortunately, these uniquely interesting nineteenth-century buildings were demolished in 2000 during the preparation of this article.

This is a successful collection. The various chapters support and complement each other in the presentation of a rich panorama of the industrial past. Each chapter is strikingly visual. More than eighty photos, illustrations and diagrams are individually fascinating and collectively instructive. This book will interest anyone with an interest in social, business and technological aspects of industrial history and the role of heritage activities in shaping collective memory and identity.

## Digesting Food Writing

Lucy M. Long, ed., *Culinary Tourism*

Jamie Horwitz and Paulette Singley, eds., *Eating Architecture*

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Long, Lucy M., ed. *Culinary Tourism*. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2004. 306 pp., b & w illus., cloth, US\$35, ISBN 0-8131-2292-9.

Horwitz, Jamie and Paulette Singley, eds. *Eating Architecture*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2004. 373 pp., col. and b & w illus., cloth, US\$39.95, ISBN 0-262-08322-1.

If Allen S. Weiss is correct in arguing that “all true gastronomy, like all metaphysics after Nietzsche, can be written only in the first-person singular,” such an individualized, personal approach seems also at the heart of the critical commentaries on food culture that comprise these two varied and satisfying works (Horwitz and Singley, 22). As their names suggest, inasmuch as each collection interrogates food practices anchored in physical space, *Culinary Tourism* and *Eating Architecture* have substantially overlapping jurisdictions.

An unexpected similarity, on the other hand, is how, despite the traditional premise that academic investigation implies gaining a perspective beyond a writer’s personal experiences, a large number of articles in both texts derive directly from travels, meals, and observations in which the author was an active agent in the food culture being

investigated. For example, Lucy Long attributes her interest in the field — and, consequently, the stimulus for her book itself — to the fact that she grew up both in Asian countries and in the southeast United States, and that the exposure to “contrasting food experiences” brought with it “a sense of wonder at the potentially multiple and emotionally powerful meanings of food” (Long, 2). In the same collection, after living in and researching food and culture in the Basque country of France and Spain, Jacqueline S. Thursby notes that “My views of culinary tourism changed from simple curiosity to an understanding that foods, and cultural responses to them, sometimes reveal the deepest elements of meaningful human expression” (204). David Leatherbarrow, in a quietly elegant article entitled “Table Talk” in *Eating Architecture*, changes tack slightly. He begins by directing attention not to first- but to second-person musings, by inviting the reader to “Imagine returning to a restaurant in which you had just finished a meal — perhaps you went back for your keys [as did the author?]. Before leaving a second time, take a minute to notice the way the table looks after everyone has gone” (211). Proceeding to narrate the range of possible foci of encultured gazes undertaken by dining patrons, he seeks to demonstrate how architectural spaces in

general, and the table setting and its surroundings in particular, “not only accommodate the patterns of our lives but also provoke reflection on their implications” (213). Evidently, when it comes to talking about eating, one person’s own story counts.

Perhaps this should not be so surprising. Food generates the most ubiquitous of human activities. Most of us routinely partake in a wide range of food behaviours, and we are adept (perhaps more so than we might think at first) at manoeuvring between them. These behaviours could easily vary, at different moments, to quite dramatic extents — say from solitary, secret midnight binges to shared, precisely-orchestrated holiday meals. They might be engaged through practices of technological gastronomy — freezer-to-microwave eating — or through ideologies embraced in the Slow Food Movement, which brings attention to the quality, purity and freshness of ingredients, to cooking methods that accentuate flavour and enjoyment, and to presentation and serving practices that intensify eating as a pleasurable activity. If the articles in these two books do nothing else, they underscore the diversity and complexity of eating experiences as are had by us all: they remind us that, as the time-worn phrase says, we are — to a great extent — what we eat.

The centrality of food both in everyday life and in countless human sacralized rituals has, especially in the last two decades, inspired thriving discourses in the field of food culture. Organizations such as the Association for the Study of Food and Society (that sponsors a journal, an annual conference, a listserv, and a collection of relevant course syllabi), annual panels at such meetings as the Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association, and more locally and less academically-oriented groups including the Toronto’s Women’s Culinary Network and the Culinary Historians of Ontario, provide diverse and rewarding opportunities for transmission of research findings. Numerous books and articles have been published, and some very interesting Web sites, including Cornell University’s HEARTH Home Economics Archive (<http://hearth.library.cornell.edu/>) are online as well.<sup>1</sup> Particularly significant is how the field stimulates interdisciplinary approaches, as investigators work to consider issues as diverse as genetic engineering, gendered cooking practices, cookbooks as lifewriting, ethnic foodways, marketing strategies for new foods, and so on.<sup>2</sup>

Both *Culinary Tourism* and *Eating Architecture* make important departures in integrating methodologies and research findings from a range of scholarly domains, and in collecting articles to serve as incentives for further research. Long’s book takes

its name from a term coined by her, to articulate the efficacy of hybridizing the disciplines of travel theory and food culture, two areas currently subject to dynamic investigation, which, previously, had not been extensively interwoven. But “culinary tourism” is not only about the meals one eats while on holiday. It is, according to Long, “the intentional, exploratory participation in the foodways of an other — participation including the consumption, preparation, and presentation of a food item, cuisine, meal system, or eating style considered to belong to a culinary system not one’s own” (21). Hence, the term describes the experience of tasting unfamiliar food in a restaurant in one’s own city or in a neighbour’s kitchen as much as it refers to taking on new flavours and ingredients outside one’s familiar habitat. Papers in this collection are divided into sections that address public and commercial contexts; private and domestic contexts; and constructed and emerging contexts on the basis of what Long acknowledges to be an overarching folklorist perspective. Articles consider such issues as authenticity (Jennie Germann Molz on Thai restaurants), the exotic and the familiar (Jill Terry Rudy on Mormon missionaries’ eating experiences in Guatemala), and ethnicity (Barbara G. Shortridge on heritage foods in Kansas and Wisconsin).

*Eating Architecture* privileges the interstices between these specific domains. In addition to critical essays it contains artworks presented in a “Gallery of Recipes,” including Natalija Subotincic’s intriguing “Incarnate Tendencies: An Architecture of Culinary Refuse,” a dining room table in which seven years’ collection of chicken bones, saved from meals eaten by the artist, are embedded. Whereas articles in Long’s book were written by scholars in many branches of the social sciences and humanities, almost all the contributors to the Horwitz and Singley collection claim expertise in fields directly related to the study and/or practice of art and architecture and are coming to gastronomy as a supplementary discipline. Most of these papers navigate fascinatingly and convincingly between the spatialities of the built form and of landscape, and the more ephemeral or smaller-scale materialities of foods, meals, and artifacts associated with eating. Patricia Morton, for example, applies post-colonial theory to the food and architecture of the 1931 Colonial Exposition in Paris. She argues that architecture, cuisines and eating habits native to France’s colonies, as displayed at the exhibition, were collectively constructed to be read as incompatible with “civilized” taste so as to reinforce French cultural supremacy and further justify colonization. On the other hand, the union of site and bite sometimes creates rather opaque intersections,

the point of which becomes a cause for wonder in itself. One example is an unnecessarily complicated article by Susan Herrington entitled "Taste Buds: Cultivating a Canadian Cuisine." It blends historical material on Pliny, the Medici, Versailles, a sixteenth-century Islamic garden, English Enlightenment gardens, and Saihoji Garden in Japan, with references to food aficionados Alice Waters and Julia Child, the writings of Lévi-Strauss and Roland Barthes, authors Mary Shelley and Jane Austen and a book called *Canadian Food Words* (this is not a complete list) in a twelve-page preamble to a four-page analysis of debutante Elsie Reford's garden in the wilds of Quebec. James Joyce's *Ulysses* is easy compared with this.

In the final analysis, *Culinary Tourism* and *Eating Architecture* will appeal to those scholars for whom food provides intellectual as well as salivary stimulation. An added bonus is that both works have much to offer scholars of other disciplines, not to

mention those gourmet enthusiasts who enjoy lingering in front of the ever-expanding bookstore shelf space devoted to gastronomy and cooking. There is lots of engaging material here, such as that included in Long's book by Amy Bentley in her article "From Culinary Other to Mainstream America: Meanings and Uses of Southwestern Cuisine." Citing an interview that originally appeared in *National Geographic* on the borderlands between the United States and Mexico, she presents differentiating tropes whereby Americans "refer to a very handsome man as a hunk," while a Mexican would "call a very handsome man a *mango*, because a mango is a really sensual food" (222). Such a discrepancy uncovers much more than food preferences, and like the rest of these two books, beckons cultural observers of many flavours to develop approaches and investigations that represent a similar degree of innovation and interpretation. That would be the icing on the cake.

#### NOTES

1. A sampling of the range of works on food culture includes David Bell and Gill Valentine, *Consuming Geographies: We are Where We Eat* (London, New York: Routledge, 1997); Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterik, eds., *Food and Culture: A Reader* (London, New York: Routledge, 1997); Elizabeth Cromley, "Transforming the Food Axis: Houses, Tools, Modes of Analysis," *Material History Review* 44 (Fall 1996): 8–22; Barbara Haber, *From Hardtack to Home Fries: An Uncommon History of American Cooks and Meals* (New York: Free Press, 2002); Valerie Korinek, *Roughing It in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000); Harvey Levenstein, *Revolution at the Table: The Transformation of the American Diet* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); Joy Parr, "Modern Kitchen, Good Home, Strong Nation," *Technology and Culture* 43 (2002): 657–667; Laura Shapiro, *Something from the Oven: Reinventing Dinner in 1950s America* (New York: Viking 2004).
2. See, for example, Marion Nestle, *Food Politics: How the Food Industry Influences Nutrition and Health* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Jessamyn Neuhaus, *Manly Meals and Mom's Home Cooking: Cookbooks and Gender in Modern America* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003) and Sherrie A. Inness, *Dinner Roles: American Women and Culinary Culture* (Iowa City: University of Iowa City Press, 2001); Janet Theophano, *Eat My Words: Reading Women's Lives through the Cookbooks They Wrote* (New York: Palgrave, 2002); Jeffrey Pilcher, *¡Qué Vivan los Tamales!: Food and the Making of Mexican Identity* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1998); Laurette Dubé, Jordan L. Le Bel et al, *Proceedings from Health and Pleasure at the Table* (Montreal: Enjeux actuels du marketing dans l'alimentation et la restauration [EAMAR], 1995).