CALL FOR PAPERS

Eating Knowledge: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Food Information, Communication and Education

International and Interdisciplinary Conference

University of Lille Humanities and Social Sciences

December 6-7 2018

The circulation of knowledge about food has increased significantly over the past few decades. A variety of actors – including doctors, researchers, food industry representatives, public institutions, communications agencies, journalists, teachers, publishers of textbooks and of healthy living how-to guides – produce, reformulate, adapt and circulate images and texts relating to food practices, in order to inform, educate and influence different publics. At the same time, members of the general public, whether they be consumers, gastronomes, bloggers, parents, pupils, students or patients seek, retrieve, and appropriate information about food and in turn produce and publish information and knowledge about food, using a variety of media.

Several recent studies in the humanities and social sciences have shown the extent to which food production and commercialization, culinary preparation and food consumption and nutritional practice have become public sphere issues. Certain authors have explored the ways in which the actions and initiatives of public authorities and of agrofood industrial actors have 'invaded' the private sphere. Such blurring of the boundaries between the private and public spheres can be seen as directly related to the rise of information, communication and education initiatives which form an integral part of the activity of the food industry sector as well as of governmental agencies.

This interdisciplinary international conference is organized by three research laboratories – GERiiCO, CIREL-Théodile and CERIES – and is sponsored by the University of Lille through the ALICE international project. This conference aims to explore issues arising from the informational, communicational and educational practices which contribute to the circulation of knowledge about food. We seek to advance understanding of the processes of formulation, mediatization, circulation and reception of knowledge and norms relating to food, within different social environments (education, business, information activities, urban public places...) and within a variety of informational and communicational contexts, including public communication, popular science publications, informal blogs, journalism, advertising...

We welcome contributions which deal in particular with the following issues and questions related to food information, communication and education:

1. Characterizing knowledge about food: how does such knowledge circulate?

   - What kind of knowledge about food circulates today? How is scientific knowledge presented and how is it linked to common sense knowledge or family tradition? Which areas of knowledge are given particular weight or importance: knowledge about the body, about foods,
about nutrition, health, food production and distribution systems, commensality and sociability…? What characterizes knowledge about food risks and dangers (health risks, environmental risks, agricultural risks…)?

- How does knowledge about food circulate? What types of media, documents, devices and artifacts, ‘transport,’ transpose, publish and transform knowledge about food: publications, web sites, posters, school textbooks, films, media coverage, blogs, YouTube channels and videos, television documentaries and fictional shows…? What discursive material forms, documentary forms and enunciative patterns characterize the structuring and mediatization of knowledge about food?

2. Actors and actions of food knowledge production and circulation. The focus here is upon public and private sphere actors who carry out information, communication and educational initiatives on the local, national and international level and upon the artifacts which they produce:

- Who is responsible for the creation, circulation and mediatization of norms and knowledge about food? What are the roles of: public entities (governmental ministries and agencies, local authorities, public institutions); private sector actors (firms, foundations, institutions, communications agencies); associations and organizations?

- What are the major issues and questions arising from the communication, information and education initiatives conceived and carried out by these actors within the public and private spheres, whether it be on the local, national or international levels? Contributions proposing analysis of municipal, regional, and national programs and official documents, of school curricula, of health and nutrition awareness campaigns, of events, of informational-pedagogical devices and of advertising campaigns are welcome.

- What kinds of knowledge (and know-how) -- in the fields of nutrition, medicine, communication, agrobiology, psychology, law, -- are mobilized by actors who produce and circulate food knowledge and information? What role is played by experts and expertise in these initiatives, whether it be medical or other scientific expertise (nutritionists, dieticians, biologists, etc), teachers and pedagogical expertise, agrofood industry expertise (restaurant and food service professionals, chefs, gastronomes, private foundations or institutes), marketing, management or communication professionals’ expertise (communication agencies, communications officers and public relations professionals, popular science journalists or bloggers), parents, consumer advocacy groups, pupils and students?

3. Information and knowledge practices: seeking, retrieving, processing, and appropriation of knowledge and information about food:

- How do individuals (consumers, families, workers, patients, teachers, information or health professionals…) seek information about food? What are their objectives and motivations (health concerns, consumption, cooking…) What sources of information are preferred and trusted? What sources are explored and used?

- What informational tools are used to organize, categorize, archive, share and circulate knowledge about food: terminologies, thesauri, classifications, categorizations, indexation tools? How do these tools contribute to the construction and reception of knowledge about food?

- What kinds of expertise are recognized and deemed or perceived to be relevant and trustworthy by information seekers or by individuals (information professionals, teachers…) who produce or process information? What do information practices tell us about the ‘relevance criteria’ which are applied to knowledge and information sources on food? In particular, what weight is given to different types of expertise by information seekers? Upon what basis are the discourses which present food knowledge and food information considered trustworthy and credible? How are the trustworthiness and credibility of food information sources constructed for/by information seekers?

4. Power and governmentality: cultural prescriptions, values and recommendations which circulate about food:
• What socio-economic and political issues, questions and values (concerning health and well being, individual action and power, economic productivity, environmental activism) are associated with the circulation of knowledge about food? What does the circulation of knowledge and norms about food (nutritional recommendations and prescriptive discourses, discourses about agricultural practice and about consumption behaviors, norms and practices, etc) reveal about the strategies, positions and thought systems of different actors, and about ideas of empowerment, of individual or familial choice, of subjectivity and agentivity?

• What importance is given to the governmentality and “responsibilization” of individuals, groups, communities within food knowledge artifacts and devices? How does the circulation of nutritional or health norms, rules, and implicit or explicit guidelines contribute to the elaboration of an ideal or ‘expected’ set of behaviors for individuals, families, consumers, pupils and students, workers? How do these ‘ideal’ behaviors vary in relation to geographic context (country, region, town) or to individuals’ socio-economic background, age?

• How are ideas (and values) related to performance and wellbeing implicitly or explicitly conveyed or connoted by messages which circulate about food? How are the principles defining performance (physical, intellectual, economic performance) related to the issues of social relations and social bonds at work, at home, in the community? In what ways do quantitative and qualitative standards of measurement and evaluation support, underlie or undermine values (of performance, well being...) associated with food?

Submission guidelines
We welcome proposals for papers in French or English, approximately 6000 characters in length including spaces (doc or odt format, 12-point Times New Roman font). Submissions should include the title of the proposed paper and should present the main research questions, hypotheses, methodology, principle results, key bibliographical references, and five key words. Please include: the author(s) name(s), the authors’ affiliations.

Proposals should be addressed to: Susan Kovacs, susan.kovacs@univ-lille3.fr

Evaluation process
Submissions will be subjected to double blind peer review by members of the scientific committee. Selected papers will be organized into speaker sessions.

Important dates:
Submission deadline : July 1st, 2018
Author notification : September 15, 2018

Website: https://foodice.hypotheses.org/colloque_2018

Scientific Committee

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