

Industrialization and Colonialism

Food has frequently been a means of genocide within the colonial project. The food in residential schools was partly responsible for the large number of deaths within the assimilation project. Much of the nutritional information we have at the moment is likely a result of nutritional experiments performed on children in residential schools. Sugar, coffee, and tea fuel colonialism, plantation slavery, and industrialization.

Factors leading to the industrialization of food include new preserving technologies, mechanization of production, retailing and marketing, and transportation and distribution processes.

Biotechnology is the technological intervention in the biological composition or make-up of living things, including cellular or molecular interventions. This process is associated with genetic selection and genetic modification. Genetic modification may also enable the patenting of foods and seeds, and is associated with a reduction in biodiversity, rather than an expansion.

Food and Global Economic Policy

Globalization comes directly out of British imperialism and colonialism. All of the organizations that facilitate globalization were built on institutions formed immediately after the second world war, and therefore reflect the power dynamics of the time. The balance of power under globalization is very unequal.

McDonald's is seen as the icon of global fast food. It was regarded by many as destructive of food traditions, environments, and health.

Alternatives draw on gendered, racialized, and class-based relationships. Complex relationships between local/global, slow/fast.

What's so bad about "McDonaldization"? The rationalization of the process of producing food, the reliance on technology, efficiency, and control, standardization rather than diversity, alienation of labour (McJobs), and the dehumanization of the process of eating.

Other anxieties over fast food include: environmental impact, impacts on food cultures and traditions, health impacts, and working conditions.

These are deeply gendered, classed, and nationalist concerns.



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Page 1 of 1.

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