

Interactive comment on “Families and food: beyond the “cultural turn”?” by P. Jackson

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The paper sets out to do three things: It presents a personal story of the ‘cultural turn’ within human geography and highlights some of its shortcomings. It discusses findings from two research projects on food consumption in relation to the strengths and weaknesses of the cultural turn. It deals with future directions ‘beyond the cultural turn’. I thoroughly enjoyed reading this paper and there is not much I wish to see changed. My main concern is a rather minor one though I think the audience could benefit from this. Towards the end of section 3, the second example from the ‘changing families, changing food’ programme ends rather abruptly, leaving us wondering whether we see a new moral panic with regards to the alleged decline of the ‘family meal’. In reading this, I wondered whether there is more to say about why a post-cultural turn geography has the ability to detect moral panics. What is the contribution of cultural geography in understanding issues such as food consumption and practices beyond recognising

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moralising discourses? I guess that this section needs a few words to sum up the implications of the research presented. In the concluding section, the author nods towards approaches such as ANT and embodiment, emotion and affect. Given that this was already mentioned in the introduction, I was a bit disappointed that there isn’t more engagement with these approaches. They have been a substantial part of human geography over the last decade. I wonder whether the author could clarify how he thinks they can enrich the agenda of the cultural turn, what corrective force they may have, and how they help to deal with the shortcomings of a more ‘traditional’ new cultural geography. Moreover, does ANT or the work on emotions and affect imply other methodologies? The research presented in the paper seems to be largely based on the analysis of interviews and other narratives though other methodologies are mentioned. What about the agency of the dead chicken that cannot be captured through interviews but may need another form of, for example, ethnographic engagement? I do not think that these are major points. It is merely a few clarifying words that would establish even better the links between theoretical advancements, empirical research and future directions.

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