

# Feasting with the 'Other': Transforming the Self in Food Adventuring Television Programs

*By Jacqui Kong*

## **Introduction**

Food adventuring television programs are relatively recent phenomena that merge two previously distinct genres of television programming, i.e. travel programs and cooking shows. The term “food adventuring” was coined by Heldke, who uses it to describe “food adventurers... [who] go culture hopping in the kitchen and in restaurants” (xv). In this paper, I apply Heldke’s term exclusively to the current phenomenon of celebrity chefs and television personalities, and the programs which feature them going in search of ‘new’ and ‘exciting’ culinary adventures. These food adventures are often portrayed as gateways to experiencing and learning about different groups, cultures and their specific ways of life. As such, ‘difference’ is the highlight and the main focus of these programs – not merely the cuisine which is featured.

As a distinct cultural marker, food is an important and valuable signifier of identity and meaning-making amongst human beings. Food, as an everyday need, is a fact of life which anyone can relate to anywhere in the world. At the same time, however, it is a highly personal and communal activity shared amongst different people. As Counihan and Van Esterik state: “Food marks social differences, boundaries, bonds and contradictions” (3). These food adventuring television programs thus do not only involve the crossing of physical, geographical boundaries, but the more intimate, personal boundaries built in and around the preparation of food, as well as the consumption of food and its symbolic value intrinsic to particular groups, societies, cultures, and ethnicities.

It is this multilayered, complex terrain in these food adventuring television programs which I feel calls for deeper analysis. Although food initially appears to be the focus of these programs, it is in fact the issue of ‘difference’ which underlies these programs and which drives the programs’ narrative and its message/s to its audiences. “Difference,” as a precious cultural commodity in these programs, is represented and managed in a myriad of ways by different hosts in different programs. I aim to analyze how presenting others’ cultural traditions and ways of life to viewers, affects the ways in which ‘the Other’ is presented and related to on-screen.

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This paper analyzes how ‘consuming’ and experiencing the Other’s cuisine and culture occurs, and to consider the implications it holds for the relations between different groups, cultures, classes, and ethnicities. Furthermore, I contend that it is even more important to study how the food adventurers/celebrity chefs in such television programs manage and represent “difference,” precisely because they are considered public authorities on food.

### The Self/Other Binary

A large number of theories posit that encounters between Self and Other are more often than not mired in the misrepresentation and/or exploitation of the Other (Delisle; Duruz; Heldke; hooks; Girardelli; Mosley; Negra; Tickell; Turgeon and Pastinelli; Shields-Argeles). In such encounters, it is usually the Other who is turned into an essentialized, static figure rooted in non-progress, who is ‘consumed’ both literally and metaphorically for the enjoyment and self-enrichment of the food adventurer.

The terms ‘Self’ and ‘Other’ employed in this paper refer to the binaries of West/East, and what happens particularly when the ‘Western’, i.e. Euro-American food adventurer as conceptualized by Heldke (xv), travels to locations in Asia and Africa – particularly locations which are deemed as more ‘authentic’ and ‘exotic’. These locations, however, are often places which seem ‘untouched’ by commercialism, technology, and ‘modern’ influences such as Euro-American popular culture, language, dress, and cuisine. Most existing theories, therefore, posit that the ‘Western’ Self who travels to such places, puts into motion a colonizing mission to search for new and exotic places with which to enrich, or reinvigorate his/herself. In such pursuits, the Other is seen as a mere resource who is ‘consumed’ and ‘mined’ by the Self for his/her own purposes (Delisle; Duruz; Heldke; hooks; Girardelli; Mosley; Negra; Tickell; Turgeon and Pastinelli; Shields-Argeles).

I use the term ‘Self’ to refer to the Euro-American food adventurer/celebrity chef/television personality, and the term ‘Other’ to refer to the particular group, culture, community, or ethnicity which the Self is visiting.<sup>1</sup> I am aware that this reinforcing of binaries is problematic; however, in a later section of this paper, I show how the Other is not all powerless. Moreover, it is not just the Other who is ‘consumed’ in such encounters between Self and Other. In this paper, I aim to problematize the Self/Other binary, and to show that in food adventuring television programs such as Anthony Bourdain’s *No Reservations* (“Vietnam’s Central Highlands”; “Laos”), and Andrew Zimmern’s *Bizarre World* (“Kalahari Desert”)<sup>2</sup>, there is instead promise for a mutual *exchange* between Self-Other.

For example, these experiences of traveling to ‘unknown’ and ‘unfamiliar’ locales often transform into mutual *exchanges*, rather than mere, fleeting *encounters* between Self and Other. Subsequently, the Self undergoes a ‘transformation’ of its own, as the privileged positionality of the celebrity chef is displaced and challenged in such exchanges. For example, celebrity chefs like Zimmern and Bourdain undergo a ‘transformation’ in terms of a change of perspective about the Other, as well as a renewed sense of Self. It is through this transformation of sorts that I propose that the Other is not merely a cultural resource which the food adventurer/celebrity chef feasts *upon*, but a figure whom the Self feasts *with*, as both parties share mutual experiences with one another, allowing for the promise of renewed relations between different ethnicities and

classes. The Other is thus a figure which possesses the potential power to ‘transform’ the Self.

### **Transforming the Self**

In this paper, I propose that ‘transforming the Self’ requires two stages of action, though not necessarily in a particular order. The first stage of action is an active acknowledgement of the Other, and the second is a subsequent ‘dis-covering’ of the hidden Self. The first stage is a conscious act enacted by the Self, through a nuanced and detailed presentation and acknowledgment of the Other’s situated cultural and historical ‘difference’. This is a self-presentation of the Other, and not an Other who is ‘spoken’ for, or ‘re-presented’ by the Self. The second stage of action focuses on the transformation of the Self, which is the ‘dis-covering of the hidden Self’. This is the realization by the Self that the exchange between Self and Other has brought about a radical change in his/her ways of thinking and acting. By firstly acknowledging the Other’s lived context and history, the Self is thus displacing his/her initial prejudices, preconceptions, and judgments regarding the Other. This is the reason why I have used the term ‘dis-covering’ as a means of encapsulating not just the discovery of a new Self but also the un-covering or laying bare of one’s privilege and positionality.

### **Acknowledging the Other**

In food adventuring television programs such as Anthony Bourdain’s *No Reservations*, there is an active acknowledgement of the Other – most notably as human beings situated within complex contexts and histories. In Season Six, Episode Twenty of *No Reservations*, celebrity chef Anthony Bourdain travels to Vietnam’s Central Highlands, to visit its indigenous peoples. He demonstrates a sense of self-reflexivity about the Other, saying,

50 years later, it’s no longer Special Forces officers dropping into these villages, it’s another kind of invader. Just down the road from Mnong, [are] the Ede people. As far back as recorded time, they’ve been sharing epics, historical folktales and song and music. But now, recognized as a source for tourist dollars, they’re encouraged to recreate the past for display purposes. Ages-old, yet fragile communities, supported by and simultaneously altered by this; songs and customs once in danger of disappearing forever, now passed on to the next generation as a means to make a living. The buses come; the buses go. They watch; they buy; they’re gone. What do they leave; what do they take away?

In this description of the Ede indigenous tribe of Vietnam’s Central Highlands, Bourdain goes against the grain by not merely presenting the Native in his/her ‘natural’, “archaized” (Chow 25) environment. He also does not offer backhanded compliments or exoticize the Other as a way of dealing with ‘difference’. Bourdain does not use exoticizing language in order to introduce such indigenous peoples – for example, through words such as ‘pure’, ‘exotic’, or ‘untouched’ – instead, he acknowledges the artifice and ‘performativity’ of the entire endeavor, that the indigenous people are there “recreat[ing] the past for display purposes” and that the “invaders” will pay good money for it.

In doing so, he acknowledges the Ede people’s potential agency to control how they may commodify their own identities and gain monetary benefits from such

endeavors. It is through such “staged authenticity” (MacCannell 595), that the figure of the Other is recognized as having his/her own power in the two-way transaction and performance of authenticity which occurs between Self and Other. The Other is thus not all powerless, and may enact what I call their own ‘protective strategies’, controlling what they will or will not share with outsiders, and setting the limit of such sharings.

More importantly, Bourdain also questions the entire tourism industry and its effects on local ethnic groups and communities. By asking “what do [the tourists] leave? What do they take away?”, Bourdain exhibits an awareness that the entire activity of tourism is in fact a transaction – “The buses come; the buses go. They watch; they buy; they’re gone”. Bourdain acknowledges the Other’s positionality as a cultural resource which is ‘set up’ and ‘performed’ for “tourist dollars”, and in doing so, Bourdain is also indirectly questioning himself and his own positionality as a traveler/tourist – or even more directly, as a fellow “invader” – who is similarly witnessing and buying into such cultural ‘products’ and performances. This self-reflexivity is one of the steps which I have proposed will lead towards the ‘transformation of the Self’.

Notably, Bourdain’s self-reflexivity and honesty presents to viewers a reality which is much more accurate than a performance of authenticity praised and exoticized by the food colonizer for its purity and frozenness in an anachronistic display of staged difference and ‘Otherness’. When Bourdain and his television crew join the Ede family for a meal in their village home he remarks,

There’s that terrible moment sometimes when we’re gathered around a family in a setting like this: the camera people getting ready, a few moments of silence and weirdness. Our host will sometimes look up at us as if wondering, ‘What should I do now? Is this what you expected? Can we re-enact our lives for you?’

By making visible the Other’s “[re-enactment] of [their] lives for [the Self]”, in knowingly commodifying themselves for the “tourist dollar”, Bourdain is exemplifying what Feifer has termed “the post-tourist” (cited in Urry 90). Such a figure is aware of his/her role as a tourist, and most importantly, the implications and power imbalances that this role brings upon the relationship between tourist and host. Thus, Bourdain actively questions himself and other food adventurers’ motives, by asking “what do [the tourists] leave? What do they take away?”, and as such, he demonstrates an awareness of his positionality and privilege. A “post-tourist” is thus “not a time-traveler when he [*sic*] goes somewhere historic; not an instant noble savage when he [*sic*] stays on a tropical beach; not an invisible observer when he [*sic*] visits a native compound” (cited in Urry 91). Bourdain certainly demonstrates these qualities with his self-reflexivity at certain moments in particular episodes of *No Reservations*.

Therefore, celebrity chef Bourdain could be termed as a “post-tourist” as he acknowledges how his presence in the Ede family’s home causes his hosts awkward and uncomfortable moments. Bourdain does not assume that he has the right to be in the Ede family home. Neither does Bourdain treat his role as that of the traveler who elucidates the Other to his viewers, speaking for the Other as though he is an a figure of authority. Crucially, however, by guessing at what his host is thinking and feeling, Bourdain shows that he realizes the *pain* which his presence causes the Other. In “that terrible moment”, Bourdain realizes that it is not just awkwardness and uncomfortable silences which punctuate the atmosphere, but a sense of desperation in which the Other is putting on a

show for the Self: “Is this what you expected? Can we re-enact our lives for you?” Bourdain is affected by this power imbalance, and at the result and effect of his presence; thus, he is possibly a “post-tourist”, because he acknowledges the Other and how his own privilege and positionality affects his relations with the Other.

In another episode of *No Reservations*, Bourdain is even more affected by the knowledge of what his positionality and his own history entails. In Season Four, Episode Eleven, Bourdain visits Laos, and is invited to another family meal, this time, in the home of a man who has lost his left leg and left arm due to an unexploded bomb he accidentally stumbled upon – one of what Bourdain narrates as the “millions of tonnes of bombs” dropped on Laos by America during the Vietnam War. The man, through an interpreter, asks Bourdain (who is an American citizen) “Are you afraid of seeing the reality [of the war]?” to which Bourdain answers, haltingly,

Uh... Afraid? Um... Uh, no. It hurts, but I think that’s appropriate, uh, it should, I think. Americans, every American should see, the results of war. Uh, uh, you know, it’s not a movie. I think it’s, uh... the least I can do. Is to... to... see the world with open eyes.

[on voice-over] You’ll notice that in general, *I’m not myself in this episode. Where’s the snark, the attitude?* Well, what do you say to this? What do you talk about with a guy who’s lost his arm, his leg, his self-image, his livelihood, to a bomb that your country dropped over 30 years ago? ‘Sorry about the limbs, pass the fish’? I honestly don’t know.... This is something I’ve seen a fair amount of over time: acts of kindness and generosity from strangers who have no reason at all to be nice to me. *And frankly, it kicks the hell out of me.*

Bourdain is even more uncomfortable about the history which his American national identity carries which “frankly (...) kicks the hell out of [him]”. Placed in a face-to-face encounter with the Other, Bourdain is forced to admit his positionality and privilege as a White American man, and the burden of the past which his identity carries. It is thus not only the Other who is burdened by the past, but the Self who is forced to admit his own *complicity* in the past and the shaping of the Other’s life. By acknowledging the Other as an innocent victim of his country’s complicity in the Vietnam War, Bourdain subsequently acknowledges his own identity as an American citizen, and the pain and trauma which his own presence and identity brings.

Similarly, the Laotian man who asks Bourdain “Are you afraid of seeing the reality [of the war]?” opens up a conversation in which both parties engage in what hooks terms as “mutual recognition of racism” (28). This mutual acknowledgment of shared histories and dialogue in which both parties share their feelings and thoughts, will allow for a more equal exchange, and possibly bridge the divide between the Self and Other. Most importantly, this dialogue is initiated by the Other, a particular method for “anticolonialist eating” which Heldke proposes – that is, that the “colonized cultures... set their own terms for that engagement” (184), and that they initiate the exchange between Self and Other. Contrary to previous situations, food colonizers were the ones who assumed the right “to be anywhere and everywhere” (Heldke 53), but such a strategy inverts the common notion that the Other is the one to be ‘explored’, ‘consumed’, and

‘experienced’ regardless of their consent. This “anticolonialist” strategy therefore accords the Other with power to destabilize the Self/Other binary.

Most significantly, Bourdain feels guilt, and a sense of helplessness. He does not know what to say, and is burdened that the man and his family are still so generous and hospitable toward him, even when they know that he is an American. What is most noteworthy is that fact that Bourdain lets his viewers see this uncomfortable, painful moment, when he is “not himself” says “the snark, [and] the attitude” which has commercially defined him. This moment “[kicks] the hell out of [him]” when his emotions and vulnerabilities are exposed, and Bourdain is stumbling over his words, and is rendered speechless because of the painful history weighing heavily in the air. This is the moment in which Bourdain ‘dis-covers’ himself, by acknowledging and realizing his inherent positionality and privilege, in a renewed understanding of the Other.

### **‘Dis-covering’ the Self**

Exchanges between Self and Other have the potential to result in a displacement of the Self’s privilege and initial ways of thinking and acting. Instead of the Other who is commonly thought of as disadvantaged or manipulated, I assert that it is the Self who is vulnerable in such exchanges; it is the Self who is ‘dis-covered’ and subsequently transformed.

In the television program *Bizarre World*, celebrity chef and food adventurer Andrew Zimmern is placed in “bizarre” situations and unfamiliar places. In Season One, Episode Three, Zimmern visits the Kalahari Desert and spends a number of days with the Ju’hoansi tribe, a community of indigenous peoples in the Kalahari, who still maintain their hunting-gathering ways of life. It is significant to note that Zimmern does not use Orientalist language, or language which romanticizes and freezes the Other into surface-deep concepts of ‘authenticity’ and ‘purity’. Instead, Zimmern accords them with the appropriate acknowledgment, for example, he states that “to go hunting with this tribe is to see some of the best trackers of the world in action”. When he studies the ways in which the Ju’hoansi prepare and procure their food, and when he follows them on their hunting expeditions, Zimmern expresses amazement and admiration at the hunting skills of the Ju’hoansi men, who fashion traps for small animals out of mere leaves and twigs.

In this episode, Zimmern does not just place the Other in a favorable light. That is, he does not adopt ‘positive racial stereotyping’ (Chow 125), in exalting the natives’ virtues and wondrous ways of life. Instead, Zimmern gets involved in the Ju’hoansi’s daily activities and attempts to bridge the divide between Self and Other. When he first meets the Ju’hoansi, he is discouraged by the difficulty of their language. “The gap feels a hundred miles wide,” says Zimmern, but he does not give up, and manages to fit into the Ju’hoansi community. He does this by attempting to learn the skills of the Ju’hoansi people such as fashioning rope out of the fibres from a leaf, and knocking down fruit from a tree with a stick. “Most of the time, I failed”, Zimmern admits, but he presses on, saying “I am determined, I need to make myself useful”.

These articulations by Zimmern are significant because they reveal his innermost feelings upon meeting and ‘living’ with the Ju’hoansi for several days. It is thus important to note how Zimmern is the vulnerable one in this encounter between Self and Other. He feels lost because of the language barrier, and “need[s] to make [him]self useful”, as he feels that he is unable to contribute and fit in with a community which does not seem all too affected by his presence. In this encounter between Self and Other, it is

the Self who is stripped of his/her power. The tables are turned on Zimmern, and he becomes the ‘stranger’, the ‘Other’ to the Ju’hoansi tribe. Zimmern’s knowledge and life experience is reduced to nothing, as he realizes that he cannot even perform basic tasks such as starting a fire.

Another example of the reversed dynamics between Self and Other is demonstrated in a scene in which Zimmern and his camera crew are surprised by a presentation by the tribe. The Ju’hoansi perform an act, which turns out to be a mimicking of Zimmern and his crew. The Ju’hoansi each play separate roles: one of them mimics Zimmern and his behaviour, another mimics the crewmember carrying the boom-mike, and the crewmember carrying the camera. The scene signals the potential power of the Other in possessing his/her own voice in the *exchange* between Self and Other. This ‘presentation’ by the Ju’hoansi tribe could well be seen as the Ju’hoansi ‘speaking’ for themselves, and telling their own story of how they picture Zimmern and his crew. As Zimmern himself states, “When people are that comfortable letting you know they’re making fun of you, they’re having fun with you.... And today, the Ju’hoansi showed us more clearly than we’ve ever seen before, that nothing in this world is any more bizarre than us.”

This is an illuminating moment in the episode, when Zimmern realizes how “bizarre” he really is in the world of the Ju’hoansi tribe. As a celebrity chef and food adventurer, Zimmern is usually the one to proclaim what is “bizarre” and what is not, but the tables are turned on him as *he* becomes the “bizarre” Other. The Ju’hoansi demonstrate, in this scene, that the relationship between Self and Other is not unidirectional with the Self taking precedence over the Other. The binary and power imbalance between Self and Other has become a much fairer and equal exchange. In fact, the very binaries have been destabilized, with the Self now becoming Othered.

In a final scene of the “Kalahari Desert”, Zimmern is invited to join in a sacred ritual of the Ju’hoansi tribe. In the chanting and summoning of spirits, the tribe elder approaches Zimmern and touches him on his chest, in a spiritual moment of bonding and ‘transformation’. These few seconds leave Zimmern speechless, and he turns to the camera, with tears running down his face, saying, “Something happened in that moment: like nothing I’d ever experienced. It’s just so powerful, it just brings tears to my eyes. And I can’t explain it at all... It’s just amazing, absolutely amazing”. The next day, when he is leaving the village, Zimmern sits down with the village elder and his interpreter, and asks for advice on his leaving. The village elder tells him “how to live a good life”, and also tells Zimmern to have respect for everyone around him. In a particularly poignant moment, the interpreter tells Zimmern “you give them your heart, that’s why you’re like a son to them”.

Zimmern has thus been accepted by the Ju’hoansi and is considered “like a son”, perhaps in part due to his efforts to learn their ways of life. Here, the food adventurer is the one who learns about the Other’s culture and cuisine instead of ‘consuming’ the exotic Other. It is an experience in which both parties learn from one another, culminating in Zimmern undergoing a “powerful” and “amazing” spiritual experience to the point of being rendered speechless. Besides that, the fact that the tribe elder offers Zimmern advice on “how to live a good life” is evidence of the bond which has been built between Self and Other. Moreover, the Other is accorded an active role in defining the terms for the exchange. Zimmern realizes through his exchange with the Ju’hoansi

that his privilege and positionality will not help him understand the Other any better, unless he tries to connect with them on their terms. At the end of the episode, Zimmern says “I’m starting to feel a little more at ease in this new world”. Zimmern’s “feel[ing] at ease” requires not a ‘discovery’ of the Other, but an *acceptance* of the Other’s way of life. For example, throughout the episode, Zimmern tries to make himself useful. Thus, it is on the Other’s terms that the Self is accepted, much like one of Heldke’s “anticolonialist” strategies: the Other must be the one initiating the exchange between Self and Other (184).

However, I am aware that encounters between Self and Other can never truly be egalitarian.<sup>3</sup> Due to the fact that the Self has initiated such an encounter in the first place, it is always the Self who benefits primarily from the exchange. Nevertheless, it would not be fair to say that the Other does not benefit from this exchange. For the Other, the respect and acknowledgement which has been gained is the primary benefit; the Self has also gained respect for the Other and hopefully, through this “mutual recognition of racism” (hooks 28), both parties will have renewed relations which move beyond prejudices, stereotyping, and preconceived notions (hooks 28).

While these television programs are essentially productions, and celebrity chefs may be doing nothing more than reading from scripts in order to seem sincere, complete skepticism will simply bar the potential of such meaningful exchanges. Within increasingly multicultural societies, there must be a way to move beyond the surface-deep consumption of cultures when in actual fact, we know little about those cultures. How do we then advocate a sense of “eating responsibly”, as Berry has termed it (377)? Or perhaps a sense of eating in order to encourage closer ties and mutual learning and understanding between different cultures, ethnicities, and communities? Such food adventuring programs possess the potential to advocate and encourage an understanding and a deeper connection between communities that have been separated and defined by the binaries of East and West. These programs aim to show how Asian food and Asian culture among others – that are usually seen as ‘mysterious’ and ‘exotic’ – can instead be portrayed as rich, situated cultures with real histories, like that of the Laotian man, scarred by the bombs of the Vietnam War.

Such programs might inspire the sharing of histories through food, a universal need and cultural symbol which is appreciated and shared by all. Most importantly, these programs demonstrate that it is not an easy process to do so, and it is certainly not a comfortable and painless experience. However, if one can be ‘multicultural’ enough to eat foods from another culture or ethnicity, one should do so responsibly and with a respect and readiness to learn about the culture and the people behind the cuisine. In such densely multicultural and multiethnic countries like America, these programs take on an even larger resonance because of the histories that each community and ethnicity share. Thus, even with the Andrew Zimmern program with the indigenous peoples from the Kalahari Desert, it is important to examine the ways in which the Self/Other binary may be destabilized, so that the same dynamics may be employed in situations with Asian American ‘Others’ and the various ‘Selves’ that they come into contact with.

## Conclusion

Travel experiences which revolve around food and culture are thus not always touristic or neo-colonialist encounters that serve to reinforce the binary between the Self and the exotic, commodified Other. The Other is therefore not merely a cultural

commodity to be ‘discovered’ or experienced for one’s own enjoyment. In fact, such exchanges between Self and Other can be characterized by feelings of discomfort and a displacement of the Self’s ideals and authority. Through what bell hooks calls the “mutual recognition of racism” (28), the acknowledgment of shared histories, the realization of one’s privilege, and a willingness to listen to and understand one another, the binary of Self/Other is transformed into a mutual exchange.

If more food adventuring programs presented relations between Self and Other in this fashion – i.e. through mutual respect and learning – viewers might also bring some of these elements into their everyday culinary exchanges. Hopefully, this will take place in order to ensure that food adventuring becomes a responsible, respectful, and mutually beneficial activity among various cultural groups and communities.

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> As both the celebrity chefs that I am discussing in this paper are American, I suggest that these television programs possess the potential to inspire in their Asian American viewers a new way of re-conceptualizing as well as rebuilding strained or lost ties with their American counterparts and the Asian American community at large. I also acknowledge that the terms ‘Western’ and ‘Asian’ are problematic in that they generalize and elide difference; however, it is exactly these terms and stereotypes which are used and reinforced in these food adventuring programs which I wish to highlight.

<sup>2</sup> As my primary method of research, I recorded 138 episodes of eight food adventuring programs. These programs were all recorded on Astro satellite television in Malaysia, channels 703 and 707, (the Asian Food Channel, and TLC). As I have employed qualitative research methodologies, it was necessary that an inductive approach be taken, that is, for my data to be collected before the building of theory. In the early stages of my data collection, I did not privilege any particular food adventuring television program, hence the reason why I recorded so many television programs during the data collection period.

However, in this paper, I have reduced the number of programs and episodes which I draw upon in my textual analysis. I have chosen two food adventuring programs, with two celebrity chefs who are the hosts of these programs: Anthony Bourdain’s *No Reservations*, and Andrew Zimmern’s *Bizarre World*.

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<sup>3</sup> These exchanges may be ways to bridge divides of culture, power, class, or gender. Furthermore, I acknowledge that there is also never a complete ‘transformation’ by the Self in which previous roles, attitudes, actions, or ways of thinking about the Other are resolved. For example, in different episodes, celebrity chefs Bourdain and Zimmern revert to the food colonizer’s notions of ‘authenticating’ and ‘exoticizing’ the Other. In this sense, it is never a complete transformation of the Self, or a complete inversion of the

roles between Self and Other. The Other is also not completely powerful just because of the acknowledgment which has been accorded by the Self.

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