

Honey: A Sweet Journey Through History

1. First image ...
2. Title ...
3. Thank you ... I am most pleased to be invited today to share information with you on the cultural history of honey ... The fossil evidence for bees is quite ancient and pre-dates human existence as in the case of this bee preserved in amber from Burma that dates to about 20 million years ago well before humans came on the scene...
4. Earliest direct human use of honey dates to more than 10,000 years ago as revealed in these ancient petroglyphs or stone drawings from Spain and India that depict humans collecting honey from beehives ...
5. There are even a few petroglyphs from North America – such as this one from southeastern California – that memorialize bees prior to European arrival...
6. Today my topic is not bees – per se – but honey and to document its sweet journey through human culture and history. In preparing my presentation I searched globally for oral traditions on how bees and honey first came to human-kind and found a broad range of examples from cultures as diverse as the Bushman/San peoples of the Kalahari Desert, where a bee laid an egg inside the body of a praying mantis, and the egg hatched from the mantis as the first human ...
7. There is a tradition from the Massai of eastern Africa ... who when identifying the origins of their own people – lauded their god, Enkai, for creating the first people – the Torrobo – the first humans to eat honey ...
8. There also are Amazon tribes who relate the tradition that earliest humans were lazy and that the gods commanded bees to build their nests in tall trees thus forcing humans to work hard if they wanted to obtain honey ...
9. There are tales, too, from ancient Greece regarding how early humans and satyrs robbed beehives to extract honey as depicted in this early 16th century painting by Piero Di Cosimo entitled *The Discovery of Honey* ...
10. But my favorite is this one ... the story of the Creator Bee ... [look carefully at this image as you focus on the Creator Bee's eyes and mouth staring out at you in the audience ...
11. And how when the Creator Bee vomited, a universe of honey was formed ...
12. A universe composed of honey galaxies ...
13. Where galaxies were composed of honey planets ...

14. Where oceans rich and deep with honey flowed ...
15. Where honey streams flowed ...
16. And honey rivers ...
17. Where rivers and streams formed honey lakes ...
18. And honey ponds ...
19. Where honey puddles were formed ...
20. From honey raindrops – all caused by the Creator Bee ...
21. And then the Creator Bee buzzed: let beevolution begin ...
22. And so beevolution began ...
23. But unexpectedly a world of angry bees evolved ...
24. Types of angry bees that fought over territory ...
25. Types of angry bees that fought each other ...
26. Until finally the Creator Bee buzzed – enough ...
27. And ordered all the flowers to dry on the honey planet...
28. And when the flowers dried, the bees cried and shed tears ...
29. And in their sorrow the bees cried: We will fight no more forever ...
30. Words that the Creator Bee heard and in recognition of the “great bee truce” – let the flowers return ...
31. And so it was that the bees once again made honey ...
32. And the now peaceful bees buzzed with joy ...
33. And so it was that bees and humans became friends ...
34. And bees made honey and the honey made human children very happy ...
35. And as people all over the world came to respect bees – people wrote about honey in hundreds of different ways ...
36. And so today we gather to celebrate honey and honor bees and the sweet product of their efforts ...

37. So let us begin – and we will start with bees and honey in ancient Egypt ...
38. Where from the beginning of writing c. 3200 BCE, Egyptian hieroglyphs tell the story of how honey first came to earth ...
39. How the sun god, Ra, shed tears that turned into bees, and how the bees labored to form the first honeycombs ...
40. So important were bees to the ancient Egyptians that a combination of two glyphs, the sedge and the bee – were symbolic of the agricultural zone of Lower or northern Egypt ...
41. Honey production and honey storage is depicted in the tomb of Re-ka-mi-re at Thebes, dated to c. 1500 BCE ...
42. Ancient Egyptian bee-keeping is depicted more graphically at two additional locations during the 5th and 25th Egyptian dynasties ...
43. There is an oft-cited web-based claim that jars of honey were found in Tut-Ankh-Amun's tomb – that when discovered and tasted – appeared fresh and sweet: but this claim is false – no honey was found inside this king's tomb ...
44. There is another less-cited web-based claim that jars of honey were found at the ancient Egyptian workmen's site of Deir el-Medina at Thebes and that this honey contained pollen that could be identified – this claim is confirmed ...
45. Honey clearly is identified as a component of rations for royal messengers and standard-bearers in this ancient record, and as we will see later, the Ancient Egyptians used honey as a product with high medicinal value ...
46. Turning to Ancient Israel there are numerous accounts of honey use ...
47. Beyond the phrase “Land of milk and honey” used to describe the land west of the River Jordan – in 2007 archaeologists discovered actual ancient beehives at Tel Rehov, in northern Israel that date to c. 900 BCE ...
48. From the Torah to the Talmud, and other early Jewish religious texts – honey flows as a common thread as in this case – through Leviticus ...
49. And through the exploits of Sampson – who in this account in the Book of Judges, obtained honey from the carcass of a lion ...
50. And through the prophecies of Isaiah, and his words that the Messiah shall eat butter and honey and by doing so will know how to refuse evil and exhibit good behavior ...
51. Honey is referenced through a number of Psalms, as here in Psalm 19 ...

52. Honey also is referenced through several Proverbs – with the verse chosen here coming from Proverbs 24 ...
53. But it is honey – in the sensual sense of sweetness – that is used to describe one’s bride in the *Song of Solomon* ...
54. East of Israel in what is now modern Iraq – was ancient Mesopotamia – that land between the two rivers – and here exist some of the more ancient honey-related texts from the ancient civilizations of ancient Assyria, Babylonia, and Ur – as with this cylinder seal with reference to honey that dates to the 23rd century BCE ...
55. A reference to honey appears in the ancient *Epic of Gilgamesh* – that astonishing text from which the authors of Genesis drew upon for their description of God’s wrath and the universal flood and Noah’s ark ... where Gilgamesh filled a ruby-colored bowl with honey ...
56. The themes of bees and honey percolate throughout ancient Greek texts ...
57. In numerous passages bees are called the “Birds of the Muses,” and the ancient Greeks believed that it was these muses, who in turn, inspired writers and poets ...
58. Ancient Homer described the cultural role of honey as an offering at funerals – as in this passage from the *Iliad* where Achilles places jars of oil and honey atop the funeral pyre of Patroclus – and also in the *Odyssey*, where Ulysses prepared honey offerings for the dead when he visited the Underworld ...
59. Aesop writing in the 6th century BCE wrote of an encounter between Zeus and a bee at Mount Olympus, where a bee complained that humans consistently stole its honey and wanted a protective weapon to defend its hive; according to Aesop, Zeus then provided the bee with a stinger – but with the caveat that if it was used to attack humans – and the stinger was used – then the bee would die ...
60. In the ancient Greek tradition, bees were sacred symbols of the Greek goddess, Artemis – she of the hunt and goddess of fertility – whose primary sanctuary was at Ephesus ...
61. For more than 500 years Greek poetry is filled with references to bees and honey, as in this surviving lyric poem penned by Sappho, from the island of Lesbos ...
62. Another example of honey in Greek poetry is this passage written by Pindar to commemorate the ancient athletic games at Nemea ...
63. A number of Greek playwrights and commentators among them Aeschylus in his work, the *Persians* ...

64. And other playwrights such as Antiphanes, Arcestratus, and Euripides, wrote on the merit of honey ...
65. Even Aristotle in his several works on metaphysics extolled the merits and mathematical properties of honey-water ...
66. Apollodorus related the tale of Glaucus who while at play, slipped and fell into a large storage jar filled with honey and drowned – Apollodorus relates that Glaucus died, but was revived. Thereafter through the centuries, much of European lore held that honey could revive the dead ...
67. As with ancient Greek works, subsequent Roman/Latin texts are filled with honey-related passages ...
68. Roman mythology commonly focuses on the well-known icon known as “the theft of Cupid,” whereby the young child of love stole honey, then ran complaining to his mother, Venus, when bees stung him on the finger. The moral, of course, being that if a person lusts after something or breaks natural or human laws then such persons should accept responsibility and the consequences ...
69. The Roman Virgil penned a magnificent book on agriculture that contains a full chapter on bee-keeping, and several interesting passages – like the one identified here – describe how hard-working bees actually produce honey ...
70. Turning from the ancient Old World to the ancient New World where kingdoms of bees and realms of honey also existed ...
71. The *Popul Vuh* manuscript summarizes Mayan creation beliefs, and in this passage wandering humans find a beautiful land filled with pleasures, a place abundant in food – especially honey ...
72. Mayan iconography portrays bee-keeping and wedding gifts of both cacao and honey. For these translations I wish to thank one of our own UC Davis graduates, Dr. Julio Lopez, for translating and interpreting the bee- and honey-related passages from the *Madrid Codex* whose images are presented here ...
73. Let us now turn to a range of selected honey-related passages from the texts of different global religions ...
74. Starting alphabetically with Buddhism, the Buddha commented on human life-span, teaching that since all individuals must die –then people should take joy in the common, everyday aspects of life: the Buddha instructs women to gather and smell flowers – in the same way that bees go through life harming no one, merely taking nectar and making honey ...

75. In this passage the Buddha comments on two issues – the difficulty of cutting honey with a knife (it can't be done given the flow-characteristics of honey at room temperature) and the aftermath of attempting to do so, as when one licks the honey residue from the knife, but in the process cuts one's own tongue. This passage serves as a metaphor for lust and poor human behavior – where pain and remorse are felt after the initial taste of pleasure has vanished ...
76. Christian texts throughout the centuries abound with passages and illusions to honey, as in the *Book of Matthew* where the wilderness diet of John the Baptist's is identified ...
77. Elsewhere the sweetness of honey in the mouth is mentioned and described in the *Book of Revelations* ...
78. John Bunyan's, *Pilgrim's Progress*, contains references to the use of butter and honey as symbolic foods of Jesus – a reference to Isaiah 7: 14-15 – foods that teach Christ to refuse evil and to choose good behavior ...
79. Kahlil Gibran, commonly misidentified as a Muslim, was a Lebanese Christian who wrote *The Prophet* in 1923 – a work that became widely popular in the United States during the 1960s. In this passage, *On Pleasure*, Gibran captures the essence of the relationship among bees, flowers, and honey ...
80. The ancient Hindu texts, among them the *Rig Veda*, the *Ar-thar-va-Veda*, and *Grih-ya Sutra*, provide a very broad range of honey-related passages that provide symbolic honey descriptions of earth and sky features ...
81. The primary ancient Hindu medical text, the *Caraka-Samhita* that dates to c. 1500 BCE, provides descriptions of honey varieties, and their role in humoral medicine ...
82. Early Hindu texts commonly contain magical charms as in this instance where honey is evoked as part of a spell to protect against scorpion stings ...
83. Or with this wonderful honey-related spell – more than 3000 years old – that when evoked, is said to permit the speaker of the words to capture and secure the love of his life ...
84. Throughout Hindu family life the use of honey was vital, since it was the first solid food given to a new-born infant as documented in this text dated to 500 BCE ...
85. And this same custom has persisted through the centuries and is manifest today by Hindu couples in the traditional ceremony of Ja-ta-kar-ma Sams-ka-ra ...

86. Today, honey remains a purifying agent and is considered by Hindus among the highest religious offerings – as depicted here where images of deities are adorned with honey ...
87. This example of Pre-Islamic early 7th century Arab poetry by Abu Dhu'ayb compares the sweetness of wine to honey and how the two products could be blended – this before the Prophet, Mohammed, forbade his followers to drink wine ...
88. *The Koran* – considered by Muslims the revealed word of God to the Prophet Mohammed – contains passages on bees and honey. This text alludes to the color and healing properties of honey ...
89. A second *Koran* passage specifically identifies the importance of honey as a dietary item to believers ...
90. The Prophet Mohammed died June 8th, 632 of the Common Era. After his death collections were made of sayings or actions attributed to the Prophet. These were assembled by different Islamic schools of jurisprudence during the 8th and 9th centuries. These collections are known as *Hadith* [or Narration] and offer a wide number of honey-related passages –this example states on the authority of Aisha [the Prophet's favorite wife] that Prophet Mohammed was fond of honey ...
91. This *Hadith*, on the authority of Ibn 'Abbas, relates the Prophet's view on the medical attributes of honey – and its use to heal and cure illness ...
92. This *Hadith*, on the authority of Abu Said Al-Khudri, reports that the Prophet recommended the use of honey to treat abdominal troubles ...
93. The Imam al-Shafai'i – whose tomb is at al-Fustat on the southern outskirts of modern Cairo – is considered one of the founders of Islamic jurisprudence. In approximately 800 CE he wrote a tract entitled *On Fatalism* – that related the theme of the simplicity of life, noting that even the powerful and rich ultimately die, and that all life and existence is fleeting – whether one is rich or one is poor ...
94. The *Talmud* – is a record of rabbinical discussions pertaining to Jewish customs, ethics, history, law, and philosophy. Numerous discussions pertaining to honey are found within these texts. This passage identifies honey in a medical context as one of six key medicines ...
95. In this *Talmud* passage the rabbis relate how to correctly re-feed a starving person through use of meat mixed with honey, or by using different types of flour mixed with honey ...

96. Still other *Talmud* sources identify proper dietary behavior to be followed on the Sabbath-eve or on the Sabbath, and in this example – how the rabbis disagreed in their interpretations of proper behavior when honey was involved ...
97. Moving from honey in religious contexts to the role of honey in ancient and contemporary medicine and healing, the examples are numerous – literally in the hundreds – and highlighted here but a few representative passages ...
98. Our book, *Food: the Gift of Osiris*, published in 1977, contained these passages. These various papyrus documents cannot be dated exactly but generally are attributed to c. 1500 BCE. In these three examples honey is used as: 1) an external wound dressing; 2) an external compress to alleviate headache; and 3) as an ingredient in a mouthwash ...
99. In these additional passages: 4) honey is combined with squid cuttlebone, earth, and heat-producing hot spices to form a “Preparation H-like” suppository to treat hemorrhoids; 5) honey is boiled with mustard and other ingredients to treat diarrhea; and 6) honey blended with goose fat is applied directly to the surface of the eye to treat what we interpreted as cataracts ...
100. Among the more interesting ancient Egyptian prescriptions to survive, however, is one from the *Papyrus Ebers* that may be a reference where honey was used as an ingredient to treat diabetes ...
101. Numerous Greek and Roman medical prescriptions used honey as an ingredient and I will cite here just two out of the many available for inspection. The first is this Greek passage from Soranus’s book, *Gynecology*, written in the 2nd century of the Common Era, where honey was used to treat constipation in infants ...
102. Examine this second example by the Roman, Celsus. How general human behavior has changed. Think back to this morning: did you arise and greet the day with a traditional morning vomit? Sometimes the Romans began their day by “tuning-up” their bodies and cleansing left-over residues from dining parties held the night before! ...
103. Among the more curious examples of medicinal uses of honey that I encountered in preparation for our symposium today, was this passage the Chinese physician, Li Shizhen in his classic text, *Ben-cao Gang-mu*, dated to the late 16th century. where he describes a custom from the Arabian Peninsula – the so-called “Mellified Men” – that blends human behavior, honey, death, and a form of medical cannibalism. In this passage – translated from the Chinese – some old men at the end of their lives give themselves over to a special death where they eat only honey and bathe only in honey – until ultimately they excrete only honey in their urine and feces. Such a diet is not medically sustainable and after death takes them – their corpses are placed inside a honey-filled coffin and their bodies are “aged” for several centuries, whereupon, the coffins are

opened, and pieces of the corpses cut off, medicinally prescribed, and eaten to treat broken bones, wounded limbs, and a range of unidentified complaints! Yum!

104. Earlier, I touched upon the theme of honey and magic when describing Hindu spells used to protect against scorpion stings and other problems ...
105. Honey is used today in different magical contexts, as in this instance where honey and butter are smeared over the bodies of Massai women of east Africa to ensure fertility ...
106. The world-wide web is a rich source for “new age” honey-related magical spells. In this instance a mixture of almonds, honey, milk and raisins are recommended for use to conjure an image of one’s soul mate during dreaming ...
107. It is not readily apparent that bees and honey appear throughout history in military contexts. For example, in the year 908 the citizens of the English city of Chester repelled an army of invading Danes and Norwegians by dropping bee hives onto the Vikings as they attempted to storm the city walls.
108. The most curious linkage between honey and military activities, however, took place c. 400 BCE, when 10,000 Greek mercenaries under the generalship of Xenophon, marched from Greece to Mesopotamia [along this route] to join forces and assist in a local civil war. Xenophon’s troops ultimately returned to Greece and marched northward through what is now northeastern Turkey [in this location on the map]. And reaching this area and were incapacitated after eating honey that was toxic ...
109. The long first-person account provided here reveals that the troops suffered extreme vomiting and diarrhea, inability to stand erect, and staggered about as if violently drunk. After 3-4 days the effected troops recovered and they resumed their march; ultimately reached the shores of the Black Sea; turned west; and returned to Greece ...
110. The source of the toxic honey was pollen from this plant, *Rhododendron ponticum*. Beekeepers today in this region of Turkey – must remain vigilant, lest their bees seek out *Rhododendron* as their pollen source ...
111. Perhaps the most illuminating aspect of my search for honey-related information came from my investigations of ancient and contemporary customs and literary sources from Africa, Europe, Asia, and the Americas where I had not expected to find such a wealth of material ...
112. From hundreds of accounts identified, several may be cite4d here. For example, there are African traditions from Morocco still practiced today to keep local bees from being killed by thunder ...

113. There is a long-standing South African Zulu tradition that describes teamwork between large and small animals and how they worked together to share honey ...
114. The Hadza peoples of modern Tanzania in East Africa share beehive honey and wax with birds of the genus *Pro-do-tiscus* ...
115. Within the Orisha healing system practiced by the Yoruba of Nigeria, in West Africa, honey is said to calm; lead to sleep; and cure bed-wetting in children ...
116. Turning to Asia and the Pacific region let us explore additional honey-related themes ...
117. From the Middle Eastern *Arabian Nights* comes the dramatic story of how a single drop of honey – at the wrong place at the wrong time – brings about a series of unexpected events ... where the drop of honey attracts flies; the flies attract a bird; a nearby cat jumps on the bird; a nearby dog rushes in and kills the cat; the owner of the cat fights with the owner of the dog; the two kill each other; whereupon their respective clans embark upon a blood feud that leads to an uncountable number of deaths – all because of a single drop of honey ...
118. From ancient Persia comes the report of an exceedingly gruesome execution technique described by the Greek writer, Plutarchus, who described the torture and death of Mithridates, King of Pontus (302-266 BCE). This technique – called “the boats” is perhaps among the most horrible ever envisioned by so-called “enlightened” cultures, and Plutarchus noted that it took 17 days for Mithridates ultimately to expire from his excessive torment...
119. On a happier note there are wonderful honey-related passages from Tibetan literature ...
120. And this delightful passage from India contrasts the efforts of bees and butterflies and their different interactions with flowers ...
121. This example of south Indian Tamil poetry describes how honey is brewed, fermented, and aged using long pieces of bamboo ...
122. This wonderful passage from Thailand describes a mythological encounter between bees and elephants and explains why elephants have long trunks, and why bees build their honeycombs in hollow trees ...
123. From China comes this late 11th century song by Shu Shi about an old man who ate only honey ... and how by doing so, he produced poetry that when read by children the words “tasted of honey that was a cure for a hundred ills” ...
124. This cautionary tale comes from the Philippines and is somewhat akin to the Aesop’s tortoise and hare story. In the Philippine version, however, the two animals are represented by a selfish, quick-moving lizard and a slow, thoughtful turtle; the lizard –

espying a beehive and scampering ahead of the turtle wants to obtain the honey only for himself because he didn't want to share – and in so doing, was badly stung by the bees for his rash, selfish action ...

125. And within the Australian sub-continent come honey-related practices and oral traditions of Aboriginal or First Peoples and of special interest is this honey-related taboo lasting four months directed towards girls undergoing initiation rites ...
126. The Honey-related literary passages from northern, central, and Western Europe are legion and difficult to enumerate given their diversity and different contexts ...
127. Honey in literary passages stem from the earliest Norse Sagas that describe Viking exploration of Russia and India; they include cautionary tales that focus on the children of Odin; among them are the honey-related passages in the Kal-e-va-la, the Finish Saga; and in the Kvas-ir Saga, and how he was killed by evil dwarfs who blended his blood with honey ...
128. Russian and Ukrainian honey-related texts are reflected widely, from the 18th century poetry of Derz-ha-viln presented seen here through works by Pushkin and Tolstoy ...
129. To Dostoevsky's [Doe-stow-vesky] dinner scene in *Crime and Punishment* ...
130. To Anton Chekhov's short story, *Gooseberries*, where he describes a mentally disturbed man who poured honey over all his money and lottery tickets, then ate the mess so none of his heirs or friends would benefit from his assets ...
131. French literature also abounds with honey-related texts – from Balzac seen here ... to Moliere, to Zola, to Alexander Dumas [father] and many others ...
132. But my favorite French author is Jules Verne, who I read regularly during my early childhood, especially his *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*, where the heroes encounter beehives and honey ...
133. Honey-related German literature reaches into the 16th century with this *Commentary on Galatians* by Martin Luther ...
134. And extends to early 19th tales by the Brothers Grimm of which two of their fables celebrate bees and honey. One of these tales, presented here, details how a simpleton prevailed over stronger and wiser others to prevent the death of bees ...
135. Other honey-related sources of German literature include the tales and poetry of Johann Goethe; Hermann Hesse's masterpiece, *Siddharth*; and Franz Kafka's, unsettling masterpiece, *The Trial* – where the police eat a honey snack while interrogating the prisoner ...

136. But it is in the literature and poetry of the British Isles, whether English, Irish, Scottish, or Welsh classics, where bees and honey find an even greater expression. Starting first with *Beowulf* – or the “Bee Wolf” – a name meaning “bee hunter,” a synonym for “bear.” *Beowulf* was composed between the 8th and 11th century and the initial lines consider construction of the great *Heo-rot* or “mead-hall,” where the heroes would drink fermented honey ...
137. By the late 14th early 15th century the theme of honey was well developed by Chaucer in his *Canterbury Tales* [specifically, *The Cook’s Tale*] ...
138. Subsequently by Thomas More in his *Utopia* describes beverages where “water was sometimes boiled with honey or liquorice” ...
139. Shakespeare writes of bees and honey in his *Two Gentlemen of Verona*; in *Julius Caesar*; and in *Midsummer Night’s Dream* ...
140. Bees and honey abound in Shakespeare’s *King Henry IV, Part II*; and his *Pericles Prince of Tyre* ...
141. Christopher Marlowe considered honey bees in his epic poem *Hero and Le-ander*, published in 1598, while The poet John Donne in *The Token*, published in 1634 requests honey to make sweet his hive ...
142. Bees and honey make their appearance in Milton’s *Paradise Lost*; appear in Coleridge’s *Kubla Khan* and his *Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner*; and in Mary Shelly’s eerie novel, *Mathilda* ...
143. English literature of the 1840s is rich with bee and honey references as evidenced by Robert Browning’s *Pied Piper of Hamelin* – where the poor lame child, unable to keep up with the group of soon to be lost children, mourns that he will not be visiting the new land lauded by the Piper, where honey-bees had lost their stings ...
144. One of the best known limericks by Edward Lear – published in 1846 – has honey as its central topic ...
145. The Bronte sisters Charlotte and Emily considered honey and bees in their most widely known novels, whether in *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte ...
146. Or – *Wuthering Heights* by Emily ... [pause]
147. Late 19th century English literature with references to bees and honey include works by George Eliot and her *Legend of Jubal*; and even Charles Darwin considered the topic in his influential masterpiece, *Origin of Species* ...

148. And I would be remiss not to include Bram Stoker's *Dracula* – and his tantalizing description of the “honey-sweet” breath of the young vampire girl approaching her victim's neck ...!
149. On a lighter note ... Beatrix Potter of Peter Rabbit fame, penned the *Tale of Nutkin* the squirrel and how he and his rodent friends shared honey ...
150. In the early 20th century, two of my favorite English authors, Rudyard Kipling commented that people should listen to bees, otherwise there would be no honey ...
151. And Arthur Conan Doyle – in his *Lost world* – likewise included bee- and honey-related passages in his works as well ...
152. I also would be remiss if I did not include in this assembly of bee and honey English authors, notables such as Virginia Woolf, and Hugh Lofting and his *Doctor Doolittle* passage. But my favorite English honey text actually is anonymous – and published in 1983 ...
153. Turning to Welsh, Irish, and Scottish authors who included passages on bees and or honey, these sources also are numerous, and date to the 14th century Welsh epic of Talie-sin and the *Song to Mead* composed in the first half of the 14th century ...
154. Regarding Irish writers who included passages on bees and honey may be mentioned Jonathan Swift and his *Gulliver's Travels* – where Gulliver dines on water, bread, and honey extracted from hollow trees ...
155. Also one may include William Butler Yeats and his *Celtic Twilight*; as well as the works of George Bernard Shaw ...
156. James Joyce in his *Ulysses* – once commonly required reading in High School or first year in college – includes passages on honey...
157. Scottish writers, among them Sir Walter Scott, described honey use at Kenilworth castle and in his best known book, *Ivanhoe*, he mentioned that honey was served at a banquet to honor the Lady Rowena ...
158. Scottish poet Robert Burns described bees rejoicing over their summer toils in his famous *Brigs of Ayr* ... while the poetry of Robert Louis Stevenson mentions the color of highland honey and the hue of highland bees ...
159. Spanish, Italian, and Greek mention of honey appears in Cervantes', *Don Quixote*, and in this lesser-known passage from Balthasar Gracian's *Art of Worldly Wisdom* and his list of Aphorisms ...

160. Among the references to honey in early modern Italian literature is an execution account described by Boccaccio in his *Decameron*, another rather gruesome use of the bees' sweet product ...
161. A Greek tradition, collected and published by John Lawson at the turn of the 20th century, relates to whirlwinds – how according to Greek tradition are sent by the devil. Lawson collected a magical spell that was shouted whereby persons could avoid being enveloped within the evil dust –MELI KAI GALA STE STRATA SAS [HONEY AND MILK IN YOUR PATH] ...
162. Turning to North America, a wide number of Native American nations have traditions that relate to the origin of bees or honey ...
163. Among these are traditions associated with the Cherokee (eastern US; Hopi (southwest); and Chin-ig-chin-ich and Luis-eno (California tribes) ...
164. The first documentation for importation of European beehives into North America is this letter written in London and dated December 5th, 1621 ... where it was noted that hives were to be part of a shipment from England to Virginia that also contained diverse types of seeds, birds, and mastiff guard dogs.
165. North American literature regarding bees and honey is as rich as that for Europe and Asia. For examples, one may cite works by Ralph Waldo Emerson and a passage from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's *Evangeline* presented here ...
166. Hawthorne's *The House of Seven Gables* contains mention of bees and honey, while Henry David Thoreau in his classic *Walden* relates the "calling of the bees" back to their hives ...
167. Emily Dickinson's *The Pedigree of Honey*, is among the best known honey-related works of North American 19th poets ...
168. While Bret Harte, best known for his California-related gold rush era works, also wrote on honey in his lesser known poem, *Concepcion de Arguello* ...
169. 19th century American poet, John Greenleaf Whittier, penned an impressive message reporting the Appalachian folk tradition of "telling the bees", so the bees could spread the word of a relative's death...
170. In her 1893 novel, *Singer from the Sea*, Emelia Barr used honey as a metaphor that described the difficulties of differentiating false from true love ...
171. O Henry's collection of short stories, *The Four Million*, which contains his best known tale – *The Gift of the Magi* – also contains the interesting story of wealthy Prince Michael who preferred to dress in rags ...

172. And there is Ambrose Bierce – perhaps best known for his short story – *An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge* – who in 1912 published a series of cynical epigrams, one with passing reference to honey...
173. Contemporaries Kathleen Norris and F. Scott Fitzgerald both widely read today – touched upon the theme of bees and honey. Here is the artist’s image of Benjamin Button – from the British audio book collectors’ version – showing Fitzgerald’s misspelled name ...
174. Leaving literary sources, let us now examine bees and honey in contemporary North America as documented within a broad range of collectables to the curious and unusual ...
175. From needlepoint ...
176. To postcards ...
177. To postage stamps ...
178. To the curious ...
179. To the unusual ...
180. To geographical locations ...
181. To contemporary bee hive hair styles ...
182. To contemporary hair and body products ...
183. To Hollywood films ... I
184. To Hollywood films ... II
185. To television productions on Saturday Night Live ...
186. To Louisiana Mardi Gras costumes ...
187. To honey-related musical groups ...
188. To the *Honeybee Trio* musical group who performed for us today ...
189. To American newspaper names [even our local *Sacramento Bee*] ...
190. To personal bath-related products that began perhaps with Cleopatra ...
191. To pop culture and exotic dresses ...
192. To posters available for purchase on the web ... I

193. To posters available for purchase on the web ... II
194. To bees as icons in human tattoos and body art ...
195. The use of the words “bee” and “honey” in language is highly variable and interesting ...
not just the so-called “language of bees,”
196. As English slang terms for affection and love ...
197. As terms for honeymoon [presented here in 10 different languages] ...
198. As terms for honeymoon [and 10 additional different languages as well] ...
199. There are special contests for honey-related haiku poetry ... I
200. Such honey-related Haiku contests continue to attract numerous poets ... II
201. There is widespread usage of the words “bee” and “honey” as idioms within the English
language ... I
202. Perhaps this one being more famous than others ... !
203. There is English use of the word “honey” by inept, inexperienced men hoping to “get lucky
in love” ...
204. But the greatest variation and context of the words “bee” and “honey stems” from proverbs
and old saws/sayings – of which there literally are hundreds world-wide ...
205. Presented here is a sampling of some of the proverbs that I liked best; all are different but
can be clustered – these reflect issues of personal behavior, happiness, and faith ...
206. In contrast, these express darker meanings – expressing messages of death, cautionary
tales, or hidden dangers ...
207. This grouping reflects human attributes of greed, bitterness, and warnings ...
208. While this group reflects passion, anger, and opportunity ...
209. This group reflects obligations to help others; risk-taking, and what not to do in the
workplace ...
210. Still others reflect ethical and moral advice ... [pause]
211. These proverbs extoll hard work and labor ... [pause]
212. Still others offer advice on daily life ...

213. This well-known phrase, “the bees’ knees” first appeared in the English language in the 1920s ... but to take this concept to the Nth degree depicted here – seems curious to me ...
214. More recently, and hyped through American television and cinema, is the phrase “queen bee” – has added various components to its definition ... I
215. Queen bee ... II [pause]
216. Queen bee ... III [pause]
217. Queen bee ... IV [pause]
218. If we explore the word “honey” in song lyrics, it may be traced to at least 1744 with the well-known nursery rhyme song – *Sing a Song of Sixpence* ... which most attending this conference knew as a child ...
219. Less well known, however, is the use of both the words “bee” and “honey” in the popular 19th century U.S. army Cavalry song – *The Girl I Left Behind Me* ... sung in many of John Ford’s Western” movies ...
220. And in my undergraduate university years at Cal Berkeley, back in the 1950s, we all were familiar with the singer, Jimmie Rodgers, who in 1957 recorded his classic song: *Honeycomb* ...
221. And later other honey-related songs, among them *A Taste of Honey* recorded by the Fab-Four – became hits during the 1960s ...
222. And in this year, 2011 Blake Shelton, debuted his song, *Honey Bee*, at the Academy of Country Music awards telecast on April 3rd ...
223. In conclusion, I will briefly touch upon the use of honey in what social scientists call *The Rites of Passage* – a phrase that refer to major events in one’s life, specifically: birth, coming of age, engagement/marriage, and death ...
224. Each culture has a prescribed way of bonding the new-born infant to both its immediate family and to its society in general – usually through the introduction of specific foods during the first week of life – in this case a mixture of honey and water ...
225. In many traditional societies the new mother after delivery is secluded for up to several months and during this time she may be fed specific foods in accord with her cultural norm – in this case honey and hot water ...

226. Coming of age is another way of saying “sexual maturation” – the passage from childhood to adult status – whether for males and the passage from boy to man – and honey plays an important role ...
227. Or the female passage from girl to woman – are transitions filled with anxiety, excitement, promise, trepidation – and honey plays an important role ...
228. How and under what set of conditions marriages are contracted and arranged by family members, or reflect “individual love choices by the man and woman,” have been highly variable through the ages and varied dramatically at different geographical locations – and honey plays a role ...
229. Honey plays an important part in the marriage rituals of many countries of Eastern Europe, the Balkans, and Greece. Commonly, brides are escorted or carried to the home of their new husband where they receive gifts of honey to mark the door frames of the new house, or where the brides are blessed by the mother-in-law by marking the forehead of her new daughter-in-law with her finger dipped in honey ...
230. Death and remembrance mark the last rite of passage in all cultures. In historic times throughout the Middle East, if bodies needed to be transported – they were placed in coffins filled with honey. This being the case of Alexander the Great who died in Babylon, and whose body was transported to Alexandria, Egypt, inside a honey-filled coffin ...
231. In modern Greece death and remembrance is marked by sharing a special honey-based cake called *Koliva* – a tradition that dates to antiquity ...
232. And in Mexico – and in parts of California today – during the Mexican *Dia de los Muertos* [Day of the Dead celebration] – a special commemorative “death bread” is prepared that contains honey as an ingredient ...
233. Finally ... we have seen how honey has flowed through global cultures leaving its mark ...
234. Supermarkets in Davis and Sacramento offer a wealth of honey-related commercial products ... I [pause]
235. Almost too many to select from ... II [pause]
236. Really – almost too many to select from ... III [pause]
237. And I leave you today with a smile on your face and with a special present –two recipes that involve honey – and INSECTS as key ingredients ...

238. Now really: what could be better than honey popcorn dusted with dry-roasted, chopped insects – or try this a BEE-L-T sandwich – courtesy of the *Sacramento Bee* ... you might like it!

239. THANK YOU