

Meat And Civilization

Meat originally came from hunting, which brought power, satisfaction and food. Bringing home a Mastodon leg was cause for celebration. Such power over nature—eating it. Far more satisfying to hunt and kill than plow manure and grow crops.

Charlie was at the start of a career as a butcher (taxidermist by hobby.) After two weeks, he pondered why people ate muscle. His customers saw other body parts as far less desirable, even disgusting. Why? Why were there were some body parts even the most carnivorous humans avoided?

It worried Charlie that animals eat everything but humans exercise discretion.

Possibly the answer was texture. Beef muscle had texture, beef liver was mushy. Pork was also soft, so not as popular—bacon was very popular but tasted and chewed nothing like pork. As the price of beef skyrocketed, Charlie's customers sought alternatives. Hamburger was popular, though it had no texture and was a sad substitute. Chicken was an alternative (if covered with breading.) Livers had few devotees, kidneys fewer still and no one ate hearts or chewed on brains (even people who ate snails.)

Why? Why did some folks enjoy putting live lobsters into the pot of boiling water.

Charlie (you remember him, he's central to this story) understood that 'Primitive' cultures believe eating certain meats give them the powers of the animal. 'Civilized' cultures believe eating meat makes them feel full, powerful. 'Advanced' cultures believe longevity is found eating ultra processed foods and pills.

Charlie had no answers to these questions. But after a month he quit and became a vegetarian. He switched his taxidermy to focus on vegetables, developing a fine display of stuffed carrots, illustrating the harvest as a thrilling hunt.