

Reading: Brad Kessler - *Goat Song* (2009)

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We enjoyed this reading because it was an “easy read,” but also provided lots of information on the biology and domestication of goats, as well as some history on the origin of words- much of it related to goats

Dogs as food- seems inefficient to contain and raise a predator that eats protein, why not just eat the protein we use for their food? Still happens in China, so there must have been some benefit

- maybe China is just more open about it than Europe- less taboo in China
- maybe that wolves were really problematic- began to kill them, why not just eat them, then it becomes the norm
- dogs for food are bred specifically for food- import St. Bernards
 - use expensive, highly prestigious breeds... kind of odd

Language, history, and culture discussed in reading- why didn't we know about this?

- is one particular culture more influenced by pastoralism?
 - Western relies heavily on pastoralism
- how did we get from the cow to the symbol, to flipping it upside down and making it the English letter A
 - a little skeptical- use A frame for other tasks, may not have come directly from the cow
 - Wiki “A”- in Egyptian, it supports the cow theory
- letters- other keyboards more efficient?
 - QWERTY- designed to avoid putting common letters close together to avoid jams- maybe not based on what's easiest for the hands
 - there are a few, but they are not widely used
 - how did we get the order of our alphabet? arbitrary- no matter what order it's in, we would wonder why
- chinese as a “tonal” language- how a sound is inflected vs. a relatively phonetic language
 - words that look the same could sound extremely different
 - we recombine 26 letters, they have 3-4k characters that all have different meanings
 - new chinese consists of combos of characters; less correspondence between characters and words

Relationship between human, nature, and animals? Is it really inseparable, and is it mutualistic?

- author felt cruel for taking babies away from mother- are we selfish?
- vitamin E and selenium injections- in this sense, we helped them
 - maybe it's not always bad

- (theoretically) aliens and super vaccines to humans- would we feel benefited by this? are they even justified?
- we are still benefited by giving them the injection- **mutualism**
- psych experiment with monkeys- cloth mother vs. wire mother- positive affect associated with cloth/soft mother outweighed the milk from the wire mother in longevity of life
 - not necessarily the same as raising animals for dairy- we redirect the mother-offspring bond- not evil like Harlow's wire mom
 - Harlow was horrible to the monkey subjects- wanted to push them to their breaking point
 - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harry_Harlow
 - did he have a purpose for the mother experiment? It's at least better than torturing for no reason (putting cobalt in their brain)
 - still seems as good as biological mother's care when we raise the animals- "all dairying relationships are founded on theft and deceit"
 - Kessler felt so guilty, but it's commonly part of the process
 - we act in this manner with newborn humans as well
- nature doesn't have everything perfect- sometimes we have to intervene
- **is it inhumane to domestic a species that only we benefit from (no mutualism)**
 - chicken farms? bad living conditions but they do have a place to live
 - also passing their genes
 - parent-child relationship- parent probably knows best, while we don't understand their ways- wise dominion argument found in Bible
 - we are good people and wise enough to choose for the animals
 - however, we have many instances like those outlined in *Food Inc.*- Tyson not very ethical compared to private chicken farms for the family's use
 - where is the line?
 - the desire for more money corrupts the industry
- animal is a **commodity**
 - industrial system of producing meat- *The Jungle*- it's even worse than this now

New trend- if consumers are inundated with negative images towards the meat industry (remove the salience), then they will think twice before they buy meat

- agribusiness tried to make laws stating you can't photograph the farms etc. without permission (shot down)
 - easy argument to make for privacy
 - say people are over-exaggerating
 - their real argument is it's over-sensationalized by the press
 - but they can't control social media, so maybe they should focus more on appeasing the angry customers
 - LinkedIn news story- double-edged sword where authority's words may be taken out of context or exploited
- these places should be going through reforms set by the FDA- corrupt politicians finding loopholes; not enough funding for FDA

Maybe artificial meat is best- growing protein

- would this sever the connection and dependency between humans and animals? we would basically supercede animals
- it will be “beef,” not “cow”- or would it even be beef? probably closer to tofu
 - we’re already pretty removed from the cows
- what happens to the animals after? many would die. - **the animals only exist for us, and they are successful (in terms of population) like this** -so then do we have a moral obligation to keep them alive, if they are no longer our food source?
 - but it’s a slow market, so it probably won’t be so drastic, and would maybe even be better than how many chickens we kill for protein as is
 - the way the artificial meat would enter the market probably models the emergence of blu-ray discs (5-10 years)
 - if they are killed off, would that be bad?
 - they are bad for the ecosystem now, and they only exist for us- would not destroy an ecological community by ridding it of this niche
 - they would have higher standards of living- could send the animals we no longer need to underdeveloped or developing nations
 - unless we kill them all off- should we care?

oh wait.... what about eggs??

nothing goes to waste in our system

conference discussed modifying animals so they do not experience pain

eating meat *the way we eat meat* is wrong, but it isn’t necessarily wrong to eat meat

paradise- are we eventually moving towards it? we drive our own evolution/future

- also an argument that we’re going against it
- it’s important that we imagine that there is some sort of utopia at the end of the road, but there is a difference between the vision and reality
- synthetic meat maybe progressing towards it- nature was the imperfect system and we have “emancipated” ourselves from nature
- but can we ever really lose that connection? it may be more moral, but we need to keep it... why??? should it matter? we think yes, but we don’t know why

<http://www.cnn.com/2014/02/27/tech/web/linkedin-cleveland-job-bank/index.html>

Starting April 9 at 9:00

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/nature/inside-animal-minds.html>

