



Meathooked: The History and Science of Our 2.5-Million-Year Obsession with Meat

Marta Zaraska

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A few years ago, Marta Zaraska's mother decided to go vegetarian after stumbling upon an article on the health risks of eating meat. Her resolve lasted about a fortnight before the juicy hams and the creamy pâtés began creeping back into her refrigerator. Prodded to explain her lapse, she replied, "I like meat, I eat it, end of story."

Many of us have had a similar experience. What makes us crave animal protein, and what makes it so hard to give up? And if all the studies are correct, and consuming meat is truly unhealthy for us, why didn't evolution turn us all into vegetarians in the first place?

In *Meathooked*, Zaraska explores what she calls the "meat puzzle": our love of meat, despite its harmful effects. Scientific journals overflow with reports of red meat raising the risk of certain cancers; each hamburger contributes as much to global warming as does driving a car 320 miles; and the horrors of industrial meat production are now well-known.

None of these facts have prompted us to give up our hamburgers and steaks. On the contrary, meat consumption has only increased over the past decades. Taking the reader to India's unusual steakhouses, animal sacrifices at temples in Benin, and labs in Pennsylvania where meat is being grown in petri dishes, Zaraska examines the history and future of meat and meat-eating, showing that while our increasing consumption of meat can be attributed in part to the power of the meat industry and the policies of our governments, the main "hooks" that keep us addicted to meat are much older: genes and culture.

An original and thought-provoking exploration of carnivorousness, *Meathooked* explains one of the most enduring features of human civilization—and why meat-eating will continue to shape our bodies and our world into the foreseeable future.

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