but *The Fermented Man* felt somewhat constrained by the framing device that was built into its premise. The book was part memoir, part haphazard experiment, and part exploration of a food production system that has alienated us from our nutrients. In being all three, the book just misses being enough of any one of those.

When Dellinger makes it to Iceland to explore how they do fermentation, he gives us a memorable scene in an improbable setting, and his humorous writing and adventurous spirit leave the reader wanting to learn of different fermentations and the cultures that have created them. When Dellinger describes the personal and professional difficulties he experienced during his year, the reader wants to identify with him, wants to struggle alongside him and grapple with his transitions. When Dellinger writes about the food industry and its gilding of the fermented foods we have developed over centuries, the reader is hungry for more of his sharp analysis. *The Fermented Man* is not quite able to satisfy any of those cravings, wanting for additional research, or travel, or self-reflection.

What *The Fermented Man* does provide, however, is a humorous voice discussing vital changes in the way we eat food, and doing so under the premise of a unique and comical experiment. Dellinger never takes himself too seriously, constantly poking fun at his experiment, and his book reflects his passion for learning. It is easy to like Dellinger through his writing, and the book offers some insights into the history and nature of our food that will stick with the reader long after they have finished reading.

— William Barton

**Meat Culture**

Edited by Annie Potts


xii + 295 pp. $152 (hardcover); $45 (cloth)

Meat is a staple in the Western diet and occupies an increasing share of caloric intake globally. Annie Potts assembles fourteen chapters that present a rather comprehensive examination of “meat culture,” the role that meat and eating animals plays in Western societies. Not being divided into parts, this structure constantly connects and reinforces previous themes without becoming repetitive. Each contribution critically interrogates social, cultural, and ethical aspects of eating animals with a particular focus on meat. The book’s greatest strength is exposing that the morality of eating meat/animals is almost entirely nonexistent in ethical discussions of many facets of culture and society. This review centers on several examples from the text that illustrate this phenomenon.

Nik Taylor and Jordan McKenzie examine discourse surrounding the European horsemeat scandal of 2013, where horsemeat was being sold as cow meat. They note how discussion revolved around the issue of trust in the meat industry, with the meat industry itself remaining unquestioned, and discussion of meat eating entirely absent. This relates to Jacqueline Dalziell and Dinesh Joseph Wadiwel’s chapter in terms of a silence over fundamental practices concerning animal slaughter. Dalziell and Wadiwel examine discourse and symbolism in a news story about live animal exportation from Australia to Indonesia. Like Taylor and McKenzie, they find that although the event created media discourse that persisted several years after the event, there was no examination of humans’ “right” to kill animals. Instead, rhetoric revolved around the how and who of slaughter. Tobias Limné and Helena Pedersen report on a springtime release of dairy cows on a Swedish farm. In their observations, while the welfare of the cows was the focal point of the publicity event, they note the absence of any ethical framing of keeping and using cows for milk consumption.

In an altogether different approach, artist Yvette Watt discusses how farmed animals are generally underrepresented in art, especially recently as animal and environmental themes and subjects in art have proliferated. Watt finds that most artists claim to care about animals and consider art to be an important vehicle by which to engage with and drive social and political issues concerning animals. Yet, art featuring farmed animals in ways that would highlight their sentence and individuality are lacking. Watt speculates this is because “featuring farm animals in their artwork [in these ways] would create a sense of personal conflict in these artists” (p.175). Again, a cultural blind spot is exposed when it comes to farmed animals via their representation in art, or lack thereof.

The last few chapters become more theoretical and philosophical. In a particularly interesting passage, Karen Davis references the 2013 *Personhood Beyond the Human* conference where multiple scientists suggested that human robotic creations may be more likely to be granted legal personhood—and therefore moral consideration—before animals. This is a dramatic representation of meat culture at its most stark. The suggestion that human-made objects could gain protection from harm, suffering, and/or murder before some of the most violently treated, sentient, living subjects (farmed animals) speaks to the cultural embeddedness of eating animals. In light of this, the silence of ethical animal discourse is hardly surprising.
The book closes with Greta Gaard’s interrogation of human, animal, and plant separations. Gaard questions whether or not plants are assumed to be an inferior form of life by those who problematize, blur, or work to deconstruct the human-animal boundary. While this essay seems to differ from the others, it calls into question a possible blind spot regarding plant-based food when it comes to sociocultural ethics, just as many authors call attention to this with respect to meat in previous chapters.

These examples show just how deep the line is that people continually draw between themselves and (farmed) animals. There appears to be an unquestioned assumption among Western citizens that animals are naturally made for consumption. Although animal welfare is omnipresent in discussions such as those above, there never seems to be critical discussion of the ultimate issue in farmed animal well-being—the necessity of death. Essays which highlight the silences that permeate discourse around meat expose the fact that talk of “humane” or “compassionate” meat serves to further normalize the practice of animal consumption and human supremacy. Meat Culture is an important book because it makes visible the ways farmed animals are rendered invisible as a result of human privilege.

—Nathan Poirier, Michigan State University

Coming to My Senses: The Making of a Counterculture Cook
Alice Waters
New York: Clarkson Potter, 2017
xi + 306 pp. Illustrations and photos. $27.00 (hardcover)

In Ten Restaurants That Changed America, Paul Freedman argues, “By 1980, Chez Panisse was more than an innovative French restaurant; it had become the most famous restaurant in the country” (New York: Liveright, 2016, p. 367). That most famous of restaurants would come to focus on high quality, fresh and natural, seasonally and geographically defined ingredients. In perhaps oversimplified terms, one could argue Berkeley, California’s Chez Panisse is responsible for what is known today as the farm-to-table revolution.

The innovative and famous restaurant inspiring that revolution is the result of the efforts of Alice Waters. Initially, Waters founded Chez Panisse as a place where her friends could enjoy a truly good meal versus what they could find in the all-too-common, smoke-filled coffeehouses dotting the local landscape. What took hold proved to be a journey, at that time unforeseen by Waters. With hindsight now on her side, that journey is the focus of Waters’s memoir, Coming to My Senses: The Making of a Counterculture Cook, an incomplete yet still essential read for anyone knowingly or unknowingly inspired by this accidental revolutionary.

Far from her first book, Waters is also widely known, to name but a few, for The Art of Simple Food, The Art of Simple Food II, My Pantry, Chez Panisse Vegetables, Chez Panisse Fruit, and Chez Panisse Desserts. Perhaps what she is most proud of are her efforts with the Edible Schoolyard Project—a joint undertaking with Berkeley’s Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School that envisions “gardens and kitchens as interactive classrooms and a sustainable, delicious, and free lunch for every student” (https://edibleschoolyard.org/).

Elements of her story were also captured by PBS’s American Masters series (www.pbs.org/wnet/americansmasters/american-masters-chefs-flight-alice-waters/8537/). In Coming to My Senses, however, readers finally encounter Waters telling her own story in her own words.

Not surprising, Waters takes her readers on a chronological journey that begins with her early childhood in New Jersey. That story then follows the moves her family made from New Jersey to Indiana and then finally to Southern California. While she initially enrolls as a student at the University of California–Santa Barbara, her sister Eleanor persuaded Alice to transfer with her in 1963 to the University of California–Berkeley. Recalling the change, Waters notes, “Terrible things were happening in the world, and the culture at Santa Barbara felt so willfully blind to the unrest. There were rumblings about student protests, people standing up for civil rights at Berkeley. We knew something big was happening. Thank goodness Eleanor brought me with her” (pp.84–85).

As previously echoed, the revolutionary culture surrounding Berkeley is an essential component in both Waters’s and Chez Panisse’s story. However, Waters’s most formative experiences came during her junior year in college when she studied in France. In particular, she refers to her love for France as “insatiable” (p.110) and spent as much time as possible exploring the countryside, tasting what its unique regions offered—“special dishes from special places” (p.112). As a result of those discoveries, her “whole library of French cookbooks that go back to the beginning of gastronomy in France were the foundation of Chez Panisse” (p.118).

Woven into the chronological narrative defining Waters’s memoir are related sidebars offering insights into the development of her culinary approach. Set in italics and appearing in each of the thirteen chapters, these details allow readers to learn how Waters thinks about, for example, cheese. In the very first such note, Waters claims, “I’ve always loved cheese. I love it. I love that it has so many possibilities, culinarily—from the little