

'You are what you (m)eat': An embodied perspective on meat-eating and meat avoidance

by

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This dissertation presents results of original research undertaken by the author. The work has been conducted in accordance with the University of Nottingham's Code of Research Conduct and Research Ethics and in accordance with the School of Geography's risk assessment procedures

Abstract

In the context of increasing public perceptions that meat-eating is becoming a contentious issue, in recognition of the adverse environmental impact of meat consumption, this dissertation adopts an embodied approach to meat-eating. It explores how the embodied emotions of non-meat eaters and omnivores, triggered through sensory stimulations of touch, taste and smell, shape and are shaped by meat.

Despite the strength of feeling it inspires, and the integral role food plays in our everyday lived experience and the construction of our bodies, a theoretical approach of embodiment to the topic of meat-eating is largely absent from Geographical literature. Using the lens of the emotions of anxiety, disgust and guilt, the study seeks to explore points of similarity and difference between non-meat-eaters and omnivores and to identify embodied mitigation strategies used to off-set or mitigate emotional responses, and how such responses are situated in space and time. An intensive, qualitative approach of semi-structured interviews was adopted in order to gain illustrative data.

It is hoped that gaining insights into the non-cognitive, embodied emotional drivers of decision making in respect of meat consumption may be used to better inform and construct a behavioural change agenda in public policy to nudge consumers into adopting more plant based diets, in an effort to mitigate the detrimental consequences of large-scale meat consumption.

Word Count: 217

Preface

I would like to take the opportunity to thank my supervisor, Carol Morris, for her continuing encouragement and guidance in what was the most academically challenging undertaking of my university career.

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Table of Contents

Chapter 1- Introduction	7
1.1 The Debate	7
1.2 Research Context and Rationale	7
1.3 Aims and Objectives	8
Chapter 2- Literature Review	10
2.1 Theories of Food	10
2.2 Embodiment and Consumption	11
2.3 Embodying Emotion	12
2.4 Food and The Visceral	15
Chapter 3- Methodology	17
3.1 Introducing Research Techniques	17
3.2 Interviewee Selection	17
3.3 Semi-Structured Interview	20
3.4 Interview Analysis	21
3.5 Thematic Coding	22
Chapter 4- Anxiety	23
4.1 Contamination	23
4.2 Manipulation	24
Chapter 5- Disgust	26
5.1 Animal and Inedible	26
5.2 Distaste	27
5.3 Feeling Disgust	28
5.4 Offensive Aroma	29
Chapter 6- Guilt	31
6.1 Farmyard to Food	31
6.2 Close to Home	32
6.3 Guilty Taste	34

Chapter 7- Conclusion and Discussion	35
7.1 Limitations and Future Study	36
Bibliography	37
Appendix	47

Figures

Figure 1- Table of Participant's Profiles _____ **18**

Figure 2- Simplified Interview Schedule _____ **19**

Figure 3- Timetable and Method of Interview _____ **21**

Chapter 1: Introduction

"A human being is primarily a bag for putting food into...A man dies and is buried...but the food he has eaten lives after him in the sound or rotten bones of his children... I think it could be plausibly argued that changes of diet are more important than changes of dynasty or even of religion...Yet it is curious how seldom the all-importance of food is recognised." - (Orwell, 2021: 63).

1.1 The Debate:

Orwell's comments were prescient. In recent years, food issues, particularly meat consumption issues, have become ubiquitous in public discourse and political debate, with meat-eating viewed as an increasingly controversial practice (Šedová, Slovák and Ježková 2016). The industrial production of animals and their feed has resulted in widespread deforestation, significant groundwater contamination and unprecedented levels of greenhouse gas emissions. (Pew Commission 2008; Stoll-Kleemann and O'Riordan 2015). The overproduction of meat has created global food security issues, mounting clinical evidence linking diets high in animal products to cardiovascular disease, obesity and cancers, while intensive production methods promote the emergence of antibiotic-resistant diseases (Wies 2013, Godfray et al., 2018). Lastly, the ethics of meat production are increasingly questioned due to the disease-ridden, cramped conditions of concentrated animal feeding operations (Napolitano et al., 2007).

The IPCC report on Climate Change and Land recently stated that without significant food system reform, we cannot limit global temperature rise; consequently, the market is reacting, and Governments are regulating (Park and Barker 2019). Unilever is setting a target of £900 million in annual sales of its plant-based foods (Smithers 2020). Analysts at Barclays have predicted that the value of the global plant-based food and drink market could soar by more than 1,000%, and the EU has permitted the use of descriptors such as "meat" and "dairy" on plant-based food products (Kennedy, 2021; Wood, 2021). Despite this, only 3% of the UK identify as vegan; 79% still categorise themselves as meat-eaters (Cooke 2019).

1.2 Research Context and Rationale:

Promoting plant-based diets is now a priority of business and government policymaking, but are people's decisions about meat based on a predominantly rational, not emotional process? Recent studies have emphasised the nutritional value, environmental and health benefits of

avoiding meat (Parkinson, Twine and Griffin 2019; Olfert et al., 2020; Paslakis et al., 2020). However, emotional elements that affect our daily lives and the material and embodied aspects of food and eating appear to be given little attention in academic studies of meat-eating and Geography's discipline more broadly (Anderson and Smith 2001; Steela and Zinn 2016). Yet recent work in social sciences posits human decision making is both a cognitive and non-cognitive process, informed by our affective moods and emotions and immediate geographical contexts, as much as our reflective minds (Pykett et al., 2019: 69).

Within Geography, food studies have evolved to recognise food meanings go beyond nutritional maintenance, arising from cultural, social, and political beliefs. Resultantly, foodstuffs are ascribed meanings that can be positive or negative, reflecting broader societal norms and personal subjective experience (Bell and Valentine 1997). Within western society, there is distinct ambivalence surrounding meat, whereby on the one hand, it is considered necessary for good health and yet frequently linked with ill health, animal slaughter and disease (Lupton, 1996). As such, meat possesses a divisive emotional quality, often articulated through emotional reactions to embodied sensations such as anxiety, disgust and guilt, triggered by a bodily sense of taste, smell and appearance of food (Lupton, 1996 Jackson 2010; Waitt and Appleby, 2014).

Lupton observes food "has a supremely physical presence", eating being both an essential bodily practice and a crucial way we construct the shape and identity of our bodies; what we eat becomes biologically and metaphorically incorporated into our bones. (Lupton, 1996: 13; Krieger, 2005). As the body is the site of all our emotional sensations, expressions and judgements (Lupton, 2013), centralising the body and the experience of embodied emotions seems intuitively to be the most suited approach to exploring the consumption of meat in particular. It also appears to be a legitimate and germane approach for geographical work, given that the body has been described as the "geography closest in" (Longhurst, 1994: 214). Surprisingly, given food's significance to our bodies and the strength of feeling it inspires, an embodied approach to meat consumption appears largely absent from Geographical literature, which this study seeks to address.

1.3 Aims and Objectives

This study aims to contribute to the discipline of Geography by examining what shapes people's behaviours and decisions regarding meat-eating, adopting the theoretical approach of embodiment. It examines attitudes to meat consumption through the lens of emotion; seeks to understand how embodied phenomena impact eating or not eating meat; and how such

phenomena are geographically situated in space and time. This is realised through the following objectives:-

- Explore how the emotions of anxiety, disgust, and guilt shape the experience of eating or not eating meat and how this embodied response is situated in space and time.
- Analyse the importance of the embodied physical sensations of touch, taste and smell in the experience of eating meat.
- Examine the commonality of embodied responses between meat-eaters and non-meat eaters.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

To contextualise this study, an appreciation of relevant literature and an understanding of existing theoretical approaches to the topic is required.

2.1 Theories of Food

Within Geography, food studies have been described as a thriving scholarly field, although with a widely debated definition, as scholars have employed methodological and theoretical approaches drawn from a broad range of disciplines, including historical, sociological, and anthropological, to study food (Alba, 2013). This, Bell and Valentine (1997) argue, demonstrates food's properties represent far more than simply a means of providing nutritional sustenance in post-modern society. Goodman (2014: 258) argues that when studying food, it is impossible to separate the notion of politics, space, culture, and materiality that permeate it.

Chrzan (2013) explains that the nutritional approach to food studies is rooted in science and medicine. Food is theorised only as an instrumental means to provide good health, meaning food preferences result from a biological predisposition (Lupton, 1996; Vabø and Hansen 2014). The impact of culturally determined factors on food is only of interest as social processes act as a constraint on acquiring perfect nutrients, not because of any interest in food as a marker of culture or social communication (Chrzan, 2013). Consequently, these approaches provide a somewhat shallow analysis by severing food from any cultural context such as class, age, and gender and neglecting to consider its symbolic qualities (Wilk, 2012). Atkins and Bowler (2016) summarise several historical approaches that, they argue, go some way to address this oversight. For instance, food consumption has been used as a marker to identify changes in the mass market (Atkins and Bowler, 2016: 4), while food preferences are explained as a reflection of historical events or through the use of food as a commodity to display class (Magdoff, 2012). In a similar vein, the Marxist approach to food studies took a political-economic approach. Capitalism was essential in creating patterns of production, distribution and consumption, meaning capitalist ideology determined food preferences (Lupton, 1996). However, this approach was criticised for stripping the consumer of agency (Goodman, 2016).

Following this, Structuralist approaches to food studies emerged, driven by sociologists concerned with the symbolic and cultural meanings of eating (Lupton 1996). This approach

emphasises how social norms and expectations produce individuals' actions, values, thoughts, and identities regarding food preference, created by society's broader organisations and structures (Lupton, 1996). As food anthropologists became more concerned with history and less with food as a symbol, a wave of scholarship privileging food as constituting identity became the dominant theme (Dirks and Hunter, 2013). The intersection of gender and food studies is one way identity was represented, with early feminist scholarship concentrated on how patriarchal structures subordinated women (McLean, 2013), consigned women to roles of family food preparation or self-starvation to conform with a patriarchal body image (Lupton, 1996). The food as identity approach, alternatively termed the post-structural approach, foregrounds the body as a site of central importance, stressing consumer agency over both the economic and social structures the consumer is located within (Atkins and Bowler, 2016). Within this analysis, the use of food in the creation and expression of identity and subjectivity emerges as a central theme (Atkins and Bowler, 2016). Caplan (1997:15) explains subjectivity is interested in conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions and embodied experience. Lupton's (1996) work adopts this concept, arguing that through a combination of these discursive forces and embodied, sensual and emotional experiences, individuals come to understand themselves, creating their food preferences and relationship with food. As noted by Vabø and Hansen (2014), food choices are a complicated area of study, and the decision-making process behind consumer choice remains unclear due to these multifaceted influences. Adopting Lupton's (1996) post-structuralist understandings, this study aims to elucidate how these emotional, sensual, and embodied experiences influence consumers' decisions surrounding meat consumption.

2.2 Embodiment and Consumption:

Despite the fact our most personal and instantly felt geography is the site of the body (Davidson and Milligan, 2004), historically, there has been a reluctance amongst academics to study food and the body in terms of consumption, instead focusing on production and economic dimensions, a trend which can be attributed to a tendency for intellectuals to adhere to the classic mind/body dualism which privileges the rational mind over the body (Belasco, 2008; Bell and Valentine, 1997: 8). However, from the early 1990s, as part of the Cultural Turn, the body has become a geographical site of enquiry in its own right, mainly through the work of feminist scholars (Valentine, 1999). Their epistemological and methodological approach to embodiment has been most influential in challenging such binary thinking, arguing the physical body must be taken seriously as an area of study (Moss and Dyke, 2003: 6; Johnston, 2020).

Approaches to theorising the body within Geography have been prolific, meaning the term is not easily categorised or commonly understood (Longhurst, 1997: 487). However, a popular understanding in feminist thought is that the body isn't static but fluid and is produced through repeated practices (Butler, 1993). Embodiment can therefore be understood as a process, a product of interactions, which results in the transformation of bodily characteristics and behaviours over time due to a living being's engagement with their world (Valentine, 1999; Krieger, 2005). Colls (2007) elaborates on the idea of the body as a continual project due to its capacity for alteration and inscription through work on the materialisation of the fat body. She notes a critical spatial and temporal as this process is contingent on broader socio-political and cultural contexts (Colls, 2007). Valentine (1999) similarly theorises that the body is produced in relation to wider geographical locations through a complex set of interactions between social relations, bodily practices, and proximity to other bodies during the act of consumption. It is argued these relationships do not produce bodies in coherent ways, instead in ways displaying nuances. Close spatial proximity to others' bodies results in the corroding of bodily boundaries, influencing consumption habits (Valentine, 1999; Valentine, 2001; Valentine et al., 2014).

Geographers therefore acknowledge embodied practices as having the capacity to shape and be shaped by our interactions with people, places and politics (Davidson and Bondi, 2004: 373). Eating is a fundamental bodily practice and one of the most effective ways to shape and re-shape our bodies' space (Bell and Valentine, 1997: 55). Bodies are the site at which physical acts and emotions coalesce to construct the self (Lupton, 2000). Food is central to this construction project and a significant influence upon the moulding of bodies as it can both nourish the body but may similarly undermine it by polluting it symbolically and biologically; these external forces shape the body through adopting particular bodily practices surrounding food and eating (Lupton, 1996: 19; 2000).

2.3 Embodying Emotion

As Davidson and Milligan (2004) hold, theorists of embodiment must also carefully consider emotion as little we do with our bodies allows us to think separate from feeling; emotions occur both around and within this most intimate spatial scale. Jayne, Valentine and Halloway (2010: 542) emphasise that understanding emotions' 'socio-spatial mediation and articulation' is vital in explaining complex negotiations that form our lived experience. Despite this, Geography has historically marginalised its emotional dimensions due to wider gender politics within the discipline, which viewed masculinised objectivity and rationality as the antithesis of feminised subjectivity and desire, valuing the former over the latter in knowledge production (Anderson

and Smith, 2001; William, 1998). However, following Anderson and Smith's (2001) call for social research to address the emotional dimensions of our lives more adequately, geographers have described a plethora of emotions, including anxiety, disgust and guilt (Pile, 2011). Lupton (1996) notes the strong relationship between the emotional aspect of food and memory. Taste, textures and smells of food can trigger memories of a past event and the associated emotions, while emotion and memories of a particularly poignant event involving food can delineate food preferences (Lupton, 1996).

Jackson (2010) emphasises the legitimacy of questioning why food, particularly in the West, is a source of anxiety amongst consumers, concluding the scale of modern agriculture in this particular geographic location has elicited concerns over food contamination and disease, which Lupton (2000) explains is the result of the unnatural process of industrial food production. Understood in this way, emotions like anxiety are emergent properties of particular socio-cultural backdrops, meaning they must be understood within the context of the power relations of a specific setting, located within historical time and space (Williams, 1998). Orlando (2018) claims that a corporeal understanding of anxiety in consumption patterns is crucial. His study of organic food consumption concluded participants required embodied experience to navigate their everyday eating practices, with "listening to the body" playing a vital role in food preference. Structures of feelings and the body become instruments for testing food in light of distrust of official sources of information and industrial institutions, the mitigation of anxiety, therefore, embodied in specific bodily performances (Kristensen, Askegaard and Jeppesen, 2013). Jackson and Evert (2010: 2801) elaborate on this notion, emphasising "anxiety is not some free-floating mental activity" but installed in bodily doings, necessarily embodied in practical and practised ways which constitute our everyday, lived experiences.

Harvey et al. (2002) explain that while many studies of eating centralise the analysis of anxiety, disgust is similarly an emotion intimately linked with food consumption. Lupton (1996:20) theorises the body as a bounded system that functions as a symbol of broader social relations and must be protected. The contention is disgust results from a breach of the body's boundaries by ingesting substances that are not considered edible. Such substances include meat which has been anthropomorphised or visibly displays organs. Such meats remind us too much of our own bodies, and therefore, to eat them threatens our sense of self and is therefore unacceptable (Lupton, 1996: 109). This work also emphasises the sensory properties of food in this context. Foods with unfamiliar smells or slimy textures often evoke disgust as they are liminal, meaning on the boundary between edible and inedible, being challenging to categorise. This ambiguity provokes disgust as ingesting the unknown poses a

threat to our self-integrity (Lupton, 1996: 103). In her later work, Lupton (2000) emphasises these foods do not trigger disgust through being biologically contaminating, but contaminating in a cultural and symbolic sense and thus should remain outside the body.

Following this logic, Probyn (2000:139) notes that while disgust may be a judgement of one's own body or the reaction to the body of another, equally "disgust can be focused on what is going into the body rather than on the body per se". Likewise, Ahmed (2014) explains disgust is about an object, feelings of disgust and sickness therefore attributed to the impression of the object onto the body. An essential geographical dimension is evident in both Probyn (2000: 140) and Ahmed's (2014: 85) work which contends close spatial proximity between bodies and objects causes disgust, dependent upon intimate bodily contact. Disgust is elicited when bodies become too close to one another, the solution to which is to distance one's self from the object designated as disgusting (Probyn, 2000: 133, Ahmed, 2014: 83). Similarly, in their analysis of phobic disorders, Smith and Davidson (2006: 54) conjecture disgust in modern society is intimately tied to the upholding and breakdown of bodily boundaries between the self and substances designated as 'nature', particularly nature which displays some kind of agency, such as another living creature.

Guilt has been defined as "an aroused form of emotional distress...based on the possibility that one may be in the wrong or that others may have such a perception", consequentially, guilt can be understood as a social phenomena arising from inter-personal contact between bodies, as well as from inside them (Baumeister, Stilwell and Heatherton, 1994: 245). Rotella and Richeson (2013) examine the effect of guilt in the context of reactions to other bodies, concluding that embodied guilt leads to observable bodily practices in an attempt to show reparative actions for personal misdeeds. Lee and Schwarz (2011) assert that guilt directly influences bodily practices, namely washing hands to cleanse oneself of particular behaviours' physical and emotional contaminants. Geographical closeness to the psychological object related to a sense of guilt can enact embodied feelings of guilt within an individual (Vanolo, 2020). In addition to materialising between bodies, Vanolo (2020) further argues that guilt takes form in space. Specific spaces can facilitate consumption habits by reframing the meanings and discourse associated with the particular act of consumption. Narratives of localism and health are often called upon to moralise these acts as these discursive frameworks, which possess place-specific cultural meanings, often stress the authenticity or wholesomeness of the place to which the commodity belongs (Vanolo, 2020).

2.4 Food and the Visceral:

A growing body of work in social and cultural Geography has begun researching the 'visceral realm', which can be defined as the combination of internal bodily sensations, moods and emotions, determined by how we interact with the world around us (Hayes-Conroy and Hayes-Conroy, 2008). The visceral is informed by our sensory engagement with the physical and discursive elements of our environments, making it inherently geographical (Longhurst, Johnson and Ho 2009). Hayes-Conroy and Martin (2010: 272) elaborate, defining the visceral as broadly referring to the site of the human body, through which feelings, sensations and states are experienced. Evans and Miele (2012) claim that eating is a highly visceral affair as we do not only think about foods but also feel, smell, and taste them and incorporate them into our bodies. We form an embodied relationship with them which can determine how we think about food and how we judge its qualities, which can be a highly subjective process (Miele and Evans 2010). This subjectivity is explored by the studies of Waitt's (2014); Waitts and Appleby's (2015), which examines how kangaroo meat is rendered edible or inedible in different geographical locations between different consumer groups. They conclude strong visceral disgust worked to prevent incorporating kangaroo meat into Australian diets due to both discursive cultural framings of kangaroos, but crucially also adverse embodied reactions to the taste, textures and smells of the meat. This conclusion is reiterated by Roe's (2006b) analysis of the embodied practices of organic food consumers. This work asserts that the embodied and material practices involving the touch and sight of food inform the consumer's decision of the edibility of a foodstuff. It is argued that during this process, the consumer makes inferences and judgements on the invisible properties of food, like the levels of vitamins it contains, based upon visible characteristics made apparent through physical contact (Roe 2006a). Following this, Waitt and Phillip's (2016) exploration of the sensory and material dimensions of food waste found it was participants' visceral and material experiences with food, namely textures, smells and tastes, which they used to ascribe meanings to food and informed their classification of food as inedible, transforming it into 'waste'.

Sexton (2016) asserts visceral engagement plays a crucial role in how consumers understand food, evidenced by the expense put towards making plant-based meat alternatives taste, feel, and smell like real meat to satiate consumer taste for animal proteins. Hayes-Conroy and Hayes Conroy (2008) identify that scholarship which positions food as an issue of political subject expression and creation, misses how sensations and the internal body become meaningful in this process in ways not necessarily impressed on the body by discourse alone but through physical experience. In their examination of the School Garden and Cooking Programs, they conclude the eating subject or 'healthy body' is constructed through material

and emotional relationships with daily life and food (Hayes-Conroy and Hayes-Conroy, 2013). Through an analysis of the Slow Food Movement, the idea that political identity can be constructed and moulded in the visceral realm is explored. This work concludes that the location of the eating body, such as a home garden, played an essential role in influencing sensory perceptions of food. To be mobilised in political action, people must feel a resonance with a movement at a sensory level to feel they belong to it (Hayes-Conroy and Hayes-Conroy, 2010). Visceral experience cultivating a sense of belonging is elaborated on by Matthee (2004), who found women's corporeal participation in cooking and eating enabled them to appropriate their home space. The appreciation of the time spent preparing a meal and the pleasant memories and ideas of togetherness associated with family meals informed how participants experienced the materiality of the food they were eating and their emotional response towards it (Matthee, 2004). Similarly, Longhurst, Johnston and Ho (2009), in an ethnographic study of migrant women, found by cooking their native food, women remained connected to their country of birth by sharing the tastes and smells of emblematic native dishes, highlighting ideas of place and political identity are bound up with olfactory sensory experience. Low (2021) similarly argues that food's sensory properties convey strong political messages, meaning bodily sensations of food become politicised by examining food as a political gift.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introducing Research Techniques:

Anderson (2016: 183) argues the reason for researching emotion is simple; it is through emotion that people relate to the world around them and become embroiled in larger processes and events, while the body provides the subjective source of all worldly experiences (Csordas, 1999: 143). An understanding that emotions and embodied experience are essential aspects of how spaces are lived and experienced has prompted a new openness in qualitative research techniques to study such phenomena (Anderson, 2016). For example, as used to address the objectives of this study, the semi-structured interview. The focus on the embodied and emotional experiences of individuals regarding the act of meat consumption meant the interview was identified as a pertinent research technique as they allow scope for "the exploration of subjective meanings, value and emotions" (Clifford et al., 2010: 3), and a sensitivity to the intricacies and specificities of everyday lived experience in a way quantitative methods do not (Anderson, 2005; McDowell, 2010). Given it is through emotions and embodied encounters that people connect to and make sense of the world, this talk-based method provided a valuable means to explain how these connections are presented and understood as emotional, sensory experiences and physical actions relating to meat consumption could be meaningfully articulated (Anderson, 2005; Wilbur and Gibbs, 2020).

3.2 Interviewee selection:

Over seven months, 19 semi-structured interviews comprising 9 vegans and vegetarians and 10 omnivores were conducted. Each interview lasted between 30 to 45 minutes, in keeping with the hour-long commitment participants were informed of in advance while ensuring the adequate number of hours required to effectively address the aims and objectives of this study (Phellas, Bloch and Seale, 2011). Interviewees were obtained via 'snowballing' (Valentine, 2005: 117) through personal connections to a local church and the employees of a plastics manufacturing company and, additionally, through making contact with the teaching staff of the University of Bolton. Initial contact with participants was made using email or telephone, which presented a series of broad questions about the nature of dietary habits. Respondents were selected based upon their answers, making the sample purposive, in that each represented a category of people who have starkly contrasting opinions on, yet equally strong

vested interests in, meat consumption (MacDougall and Fudge, 2001). Therefore, it was assumed this sampling method would obtain cases that could provide rich data (MacDougall and Fudge, 2001). In addition, an even distribution of respondents between the categories of omnivores and vegans and vegetarians was deemed necessary. In combination, this rationale aimed to gain insights that were not necessarily representational but were illustrative, to the greatest degree possible, of the complex and nuanced ways these two contrasting categories of people respond on an emotional and embodied level to meat consumption (Valentine, 2005).

Figure 1: Table of Participant's Profiles

Participant	Gender	Age	Dietary Category	Employment
Mary	Female	21-29	Vegetarian	Unemployed
Jake	Male	21-29	Vegetarian	Part-time Employment
Cullum	Male	21-29	Omnivore	Student
Sasha	Female	21-29	Omnivore	Student
Cara	Female	21-29	Vegan	Full-time Employment
Ryan	Male	21-29	Vegan	Full-time Employment
Alisha	Female	30-39	Vegetarian	Full-time Employment
Daniel	Male	30-39	Omnivore	Homemaker
Georgia	Female	30-39	Vegetarian	Full-time Employment
Carol	Female	30-39	Omnivore	Full-time Employment
Robyn	Female	30-39	Omnivore	Full-time Employment
Tim	Male	30-39	Omnivore	Full-time Employment
Steven	Male	30-39	Omnivore	Full-time Employment
Richard	Male	50+	Omnivore	Full-time Employment
Riley	Male	21-29	Vegan	Full-time Employment
Anna	Female	30-29	Omnivore	Full-time Employment
Zara	Female	21-29	Vegetarian	Unemployed
Amelia	Female	30-29	Vegetarian	Full-time Employment
Abigail	Female	21-29	Omnivore	Full-time Employment

As recommended by Breen (2006), two pilot interviews were conducted, using personal connections to a student body. A preliminary interview schedule was tested to assess the format and wording of the questions. This ensured the meaning of the questions was understandable and enabled their classification to be adjusted to better execute this study's aim (Parfitt, 2005). Once an amended schedule was finalised, interviews were scheduled with the groups above. The schedule was designed to begin with simple, easily answerable questions. Opening the interview with straightforward questions of this nature made it more likely participants would feel comfortable initially answering questions and immediately grounded the conversation in their daily food consumption habits (Doody and Noonan, 2013). More thought-provoking or potentially awkward questions regarding animal slaughter were addressed in the second half of the schedule, as recommended by Longhurst (2016: 147), to allow time for participants to 'warm up' to the interview. Willing participants were provided with a simplified schedule before an interview to garner the general nature of the interview topics and make a judgment on their willingness to proceed (Phellas, Bloch and Seale, 2011). Additionally, to ensure confidentiality, interviewees were each allocated a pseudonym. Crucially, informed consent of each participant was obtained, and their right to withdraw from the study at any point was made clear (Ryen, 2003).

Figure 2: Simplified Interview Schedule:

<p><u>Simplified Interview Schedule:</u></p> <p>Questions for Reflections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ How would you best categories you're diet into the following broad categories?: Vegan (does not consume any animal products), Vegetarian (does not consume meat but does consume dairy and eggs), Mostly Vegetarian (consumes meat occasionally but omits from diet the majority of the time) Omnivore (consumes meat regularly) ○ Is the diet you practice now the same as the one you grew up with? If so why? If not why not? ○ What is the first thing that comes to mind when I say meat? ○ What is your opinion considering the slaughter of animals? ○ Could you please describe what you think meat tastes and smells like? ○ What are the most important factors to you with regard to you dietary choices, for example animal welfare, cost, nutrition and the environment? ○ Do you believe there to be any differences between processed meat from a supermarket/ fast food outlet and meat sourced from a butchers? ○ Do you have any particularly strong memories associated with meat?
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3.3 Semi-structured Interviews:

The conversational and fluid form of semi-structured interviews enabled interviewees to construct and articulate their accounts of meat consumption by allowing them to describe and explain their thoughts and lived experiences in their own words (Seidman, 2006: 9). The emotional and embodied experiences involved in the everyday task of consumption could be explained in detail as interviews provided an opportunity to ask the same questions differently and get respondents to expand on or reiterate specific points to explore the issue thoroughly (Valentine, 2015). The freedom interviews provide for investigating meaning and emotion were of central importance to a study of this nature, which aims to examine the subjectivities and diversities of corporeal reactions regarding meat consumption (McDowell, 2010).

The interviews took the form of telephone or video call communication. The locational flexibility of the telephone interview enabled respondents to be interviewed in a place they were most comfortable, which facilitated a more relaxed and open discussion (Valentine, 2015). Additionally, this flexibility made interviewing several hard to reach participants, such as busy working mothers and shift workers, far more accessible (Opdenakker, 2006). Interviewing by phone also provided participants with a certain degree of anonymity, meaning they were more willing to discuss in detail topics regarded as potentially sensitive or personal (Sturges and Hanrahan, 2014). This was of particular benefit in allowing participants to speak candidly about anxieties relating to their diets or what could be considered the controversial topic of personal beliefs regarding the consumption of animals.

Furthermore, telephone interviews are relatively faster to organise and obtain and present significantly less financial cost than face-to-face interviews, which was an essential factor to consider given the low financial budget and time restraints of this study (Sturges and Hanrahan, 2014). The video call integration provided the additional strength of conveying non-verbal data, such as body language and facial expressions, as the participant was visible. This helped convey their emotions and provided a context to interpret statements and utterances (Lo Iacono, Symonds and Brown, 2016). Thus, video calls helped to overcome the cold and mechanical nature that telephone interviews are occasionally criticised for (Lo Iacono, Symonds and Brown, 2016).

Figure 3: Timetable and Method of Interview

Participant	Method of Interview	Date Of Interview
Mary	Video Call	18/11/20
Jake	Video Call	22/11/20
Cullum	Video Call	23/10/20
Sasha	Phone Call	20/10/20
Cara	Phone Call	25/11/20
Ryan	Phone Call	13/12/20
Alisha	Phone Call	11/12/20
Daniel	Phone Call	11/12/10
Georgia	Video Call	17/12/20
Carol	Phone Call	17/12/20
Robyn	Phone Call	03/01/21
Tim	Phone Call	03/01/21
Steven	Phone Call	02/01/20
Richard	Video Call	08/02/21
Riley	Phone Call	10/12/20
Anna	Phone Call	18/02/21
Zara	Phone Call	30/02/21
Amelia	Phone Call	17/12/20
Abigail	Video Call	11/04/21

3.4 Interview Analysis

As recommended by Longhurst (2010), a combination of voice recording software available on iPhone and the inbuilt Quick Time app on an OS X PS was used to produce a digital audio recording of interviews for later transcription. Several 'test' conversations were undertaken before an interview to ensure the recordings produced would be audible (Burke and Miller,

2001). Additionally, producing a verbatim audio recording allowed data to be recorded more comprehensibly and objectively; eliminating the possibility of omitting valuable detail which may have been taken for granted as 'known' given the greater knowledge an interviewer has on the context of the interview (Rutakumwa et al., 2020). Furthermore, such recordings allowed interviews to be replayed multiple times so nuances in speech, such as changes in tone and emphasis, could be identified and documented. Such subtleties indicated the emotional state of the respondent when answering questions, allowing for a more meaningful and deeper analysis of the data as non-verbal reactions, not articulated through interviewees words alone, were revealed (Rutakumwa et al., 2020). The transcription software, Otter.ai, was used to produce a verbatim transcript of the audio recording. Due to the time constraints of this study and the plethora of data this kind of research method produces, automated transcription software provided an invaluable solution to avoid the time-consuming nature of by-hand transcription (MacLean, Meyer and Estable, 2004). While computerised programmes eliminate a degree of human error, it would be a misconception to presume they produced perfectly accurate records (Halcomb and Davidson, 2006). As a result, cross-checking was undertaken between the text and the original audio recording to ensure the data produced was an accurate representation of discussions (Halcomb and Davidson, 2006).

3.5 Thematic Coding:

As detailed by Cope (2014), manual thematic coding was completed to organise the data using the three broad themes: anxiety, disgust and guilt. These themes were identified as 'core' as it was around these sentiments most participants framed their experiences of encounters with meat. The themes were identified using 'in vivo' codes by repeatedly reading over the transcripts and noting the respondents' own words and their non-verbal cues, and reflecting on the broader themes they represented (Cope, 2009). Manually highlighting transcripts in conjunction with listening back to audio files allowed for these insights to be obtained in a way that would not have been possible had electronic coding been used (Cope, 2009).

Chapter 4: Anxiety

4.1 Contamination:

For omnivores, embodied feelings of anxiety arose from physical contact with raw meat, which participants confirmed they disliked. This affected their experience of eating meat as it resulted in some degree of aversion towards it and necessitated the act of handwashing;

"obviously we know raw chicken isn't good because it might give you, like salmonella. I find raw chicken actually a bit off putting, like even to touch a little bit [of] the thing ...you're conscious about it like I just touched chicken and I need to wash my hands before I touch something else" (Carol, Omnivore).

"I don't like having the raw meat on my hands I do really have to wash them quite a lot afterwards, I tend to do it twice after handling raw chicken especially...because it's very dangerous. Salmonella isn't it from chicken? That's the one thing that scares me about chicken" (Tim, Omnivore).

The anxiety experienced by participants was expressed geographically by reference to the closeness of their body to the raw meat, confirming food anxieties are created by an interplay between the concepts of proximity and distance (Jackson, 2010: 156). Conceivably, the anxiety surrounding disease is spatially situated as a response to British bought meat specifically, as British consumers are living through an age of anxiety, due to concerns foodstuffs have been taken from their natural state and made dangerous by the current power structures of the industrial processes exercised in Western Europe (Williams 1998; Lupton, 2000).

The practice of handwashing may be considered an embodied mitigation strategy to manage anxiety, allowing participants to consume meat. This affirms Jackson and Evert's (2010) theorisation that anxieties are embodied through an amalgamation of bodily reactions and affective events. Similarly, this emotional embodied act becomes part of a 'principle of performance' shaping the experience of eating meat. Such performances forming the basis of anxiety management (Kristen, Askegaard and Jeppesen (2013: 250). Meat-eating clearly possesses a significant embodied dimension, which one must recognise to fully understand how people engage with meat.

4.2 Manipulation:

Anxiety that food manufacturing had manipulated meat's natural composition was also repeatedly cited as a concern amongst participants, impacting their meat consumption. Amongst omnivores, this anxiety was affirmed through the embodied sensation of taste, which was significant enough for them to omit particular kinds of meat from their diet. This is evidenced by Anne, who explains why she refuses to eat chicken;

"I guess it always tastes a bit fake. It doesn't, I guess even if, it's like very soft and tender then it just... the idea of how does this bird get set up to be that soft and tender because like naturally ... they should have more muscle" (Anne, Omnivore)

This comment can be interpreted as a sense of anxiety concerning immaterial aspects of the treatment of the bird based upon its physical properties. This exemplifies Roe's (2000a: 467) notion that consumers form inferences on the immaterial qualities of food based on embodied experience. This reflection was prompted by acknowledging that the texture of the meat seemed too soft to be natural, thus indicating poor animal welfare. This finding strongly mirrors the results of Evans and Miele's (2012) study, which found participants used the embodied practice of eating to evaluate animal welfare credentials, with texture cited as a reliable indication of a farm animal's lived experience. Evidently, there is a capability of the connection between meat's texture and anxiety about undesirable interference of industrial production to influence meat consumption, reaffirmed by Sexton (2016: 73), who stated the similarity in the texture of meat-alternative chicken products to industrially produced chicken was the cause of her dislike of them. The significance of taste in shaping this response is noteworthy and confirms embodied notions of taste become more critical than scientific evidence in the conveyance of information regarding the safety of food (Orlando, 2018).

Sasha reiterated this sentiment while explaining why she tried to omit processed meat from her diets;

"I do prefer...sort of more whole cuts and stuff...you know, sometimes I've taken a few bites and there's just been something in there that's not right... so sometimes if you get like a really processed sort of chicken nugget or something. It's sort of with me, especially, it just plays with my mind...I don't know what's in there." (Sasha, Omnivore)

In light of anxiety over a lack of knowledge of the content of the meat she was eating, this participant turned to bodily sensations, which formulated the decision to omit certain meats from her diet. This confirms, when faced with a lack of scientific information regarding diet, people rely on bodily feelings and sensations as a strategy for managing anxiety (Kristensen, Askegaard and Jeppesen, 2013).

Here, emphasis is placed on the sensual property of meat in affirming anxiety, exemplifying the significance of bodily sensations. This reiterates the findings of Orlando (2018), who established people placed great significance on the sensual properties of food in determining food risk. Similarly, this mirrors Waitt's (2014) findings that a strong embodied response by participants to the texture of kangaroo meat demonstrated that food preference could not solely be explained as a rational or discursive project. Thus, the significance of embodied experience and emotion in determining preference for meat consumption should be acknowledged.

Non-meat eaters showed the same concern; in some cases, this anxiety was cited as primary causation for the dietary change, as Zara explains;

"I felt like, less and less like I could trust.. what things actually are...I think I've realised that a lot of it is, I don't know, like almost tampered with. Like chicken breasts being injected with water to make them look bigger, which you obviously see when you cook it. Now I realise...why a lot of, like water comes out... because they are almost manipulated to make them look more appealing". (Zara, Vegetarian)

The embodied act of cooking and physically handling chicken enabled Zara to see the release of water, confirming her worry that the meat had been tampered with and was therefore inedible. This supports (Roe, 2000b) the conjecture that food is tested through our embodied senses of taste and sight, and only after this may be ingested.

Significantly, anxiety altered the perception of what was safe to put into the body, in line with the concept that visceral experiences are a relational process, in that scientific knowledge of food and emotion become inextricably intertwined in the bodily judgment of food as 'good' (Hayes-Conroy and Martin, 2010: 273). Emotions significantly influenced the biological assessment of food and consequently affected what people were willing to eat (Hayes-Conroy and Hayes-Conroy, 2013). Therefore, the significance of embodied experience is an essential consideration in evaluating peoples' motivations surrounding meat consumption.

Chapter 5: Disgust

5.1 Animal and Inedible:

Observably, for those who omitted meat from their diet, disgust was provoked by their belief that they did not consider meat to be food. This was evidenced by their framing of meat as body parts, rather than foodstuff when questioned about what came to mind when they thought of meat;

“It looks like a disembodied, kind of leg” (Ryan, Vegan).

“Corpse...Just see a bit of flesh, a bit of a body” (Alisha, Vegetarian).

This notion is elaborated on below;

“I'd never go back to eating meat because I know since I've become vegetarian, I've developed a love towards animals, especially pigs. And because they're such intelligent...animals and I do really love them so I'd never go back to eating meat at all. It makes me feel a bit, like sick, imagining myself eating meat... so I do find like the overall look of meat is quite disgusting” (Mary, Vegetarian).

The participant's embodied disgust has shaped her experience of eating meat and prevents her from ever considering consuming meat again. Notably, the participant's ideological belief that animals were not food reinforced her embodied disgust and rendered meat inedible. This finding convincingly supports Probyn's (2000: 129) argument that disgust is a "bodily reaction to other bodies", as she viewed meat as the body of another creature rather than a foodstuff. Additionally, this finding reiterates Ahmed's (2014: 86) conclusion that "to be disgusted is after all to be affected by what one has rejected", as the participant rejects the concept of animals as edible. It is the corruption of the moral beliefs associated with Mary's vegetarianism that caused embodied disgust at the thought of eating meat, in line with Lupton's (1996) comments on the threat ingestion poses to self-integrity.

5.2 Distaste:

Embodied disgust similarly shaped the experience of eating meat for participants who identified as omnivores. However, this response, in contrast, was directed towards specific categories of meat that were not considered suitable for eating, and therefore avoided;

“I don't mind, perhaps, you know like, liver, even though probably if I look into it it's disgusting, but for other organs like, for example, you know, like, excuse the language but I wouldn't eat testicles, it is meat? I don't know why but definitely not, I wouldn't put that in my mouth”. (Daniel, Omnivore).

“You know like pets sort of things, pets are different aren't they...because they have a bit of personality don't they, not like bred for meat, you wouldn't eat a pet, be horrible like, to eat your pet, wouldn't it?” (Steven, Omnivore).

A differentiation is made between the meat from livestock animals and pets, on the grounds pets have a personality, evoking disgust at the thought of eating them. The emotional response to eating testicles can be interpreted as eliciting disgust as it seemed a threat to the participant's own masculinity. Both responses illustrate Lupton's (1996) classification of inedible foods.

As one omnivore vocalised, embodied disgust was, in fact, the overriding factor in determining his experiences of eating meat, revealed while explaining why he refuses to eat tripe;

“don't like the taste, don't like the look, particularly the taste. I did have tripe for the first time in Venice, when I didn't know what it was, and it was actually nice. And then, did we go back and have it the next night and I realised what it was? And had it again and didn't like it at all. And it was in the same location so that was a bit surprising, but certainly wouldn't have it again” (Richard, Omnivore).

In this participant's experience, disgust at the knowledge of what he was eating was so significant that it took precedence over both the pleasant memories and geographical location associated with the same meal, previously enjoyed when he was unaware of the nature of what he was consuming. This contests Ahmed's (2014: 88) proposition that the feeling of disgust towards an object is dependent on past associations and Waitt's (2014: 411) assertion that a taste for something cannot be viewed separately from the locations we inhabit.

5.3 Feeling Disgust:

Additionally, participants cited disgust at the sensation of touch in the context of bodily contact through the recollection of meat getting on their hands, which demonstrably shaped their experience of meat consumption;

"I never liked touching like the raw chicken breast and stuff like that. But I don't think anyone does...it's that tiny little moment in your head where your like, Oh, shit, this is a bit weird. This is slimy. Ew. This is an actual animal" (Robyn, Omnivore).

"Plus, it's like, you know, it's like that sort [of] feel of blood on your hands. It's disgusting! So I just want to get that off as quickly as is physically possible" (Abigail, Omnivore).

This finding strongly correlates with Smith and Davidson's (2006) analysis of phobic disorders and, similarly, that foods with slimy textures commonly evoked disgust (Lupton, 1996; 2000). The speed at which Abigail wants to remove traces of meat from her body evidences the temporal element of this embodied reaction. This response, Probyn (2000: 141) explains, is because bodily contact with the disgusting makes one disgusting and results in a desire to distance our body from this uncomfortable closeness quickly. A spatial element is also evident as she wishes to separate herself physically from the experience, consistent with Ahmed's (2014) assertion that bodies respond to disgust spatially by recoiling. Although they continue to eat meat, these excerpts display their attitudes towards meat are affected by embodied disgust. Centralising the body in this understanding is clearly essential. It is bodily contact and the sensation of the touch of raw meat which triggered a powerful, visceral, emotional response of disgust, despite the fact they willingly consume meat when cooked, which, following Ahmed (2014: 90), is explained by the fact a "stickiness becomes disgusting only when the skin surface is at stake".

Non meat-eaters expressed similar sentiments;

"worst case scenario would be meatballs...occasionally I'll make some for my daughter and I do really, really, really not like touching it. So there have been occasions, especially when you have to, like, get your hands into it. But I'll wear gloves or avoid at all costs because as soon as ... you touch it with your fingers, is that fat film that you just can't remove and it feels like you've got the death stuck to your hands" (Alisha, Vegetarian).

This can be interpreted as an understanding raw meat's texture was so unpleasant, it prompted her to think of the meat in terms of flesh and death rather than as food, which elicited a feeling of disgust. This interpretation is given weight by Waitt and Phillip's (2015) conjecture that food's texture can alter its assigned meanings.

5.4 Offensive Aroma:

Among non meat-eaters, there was a noticeable commonality of a strong sense of disgust towards meat, provoked by the embodied sensation of smell;

"I don't think I used to mind the smell of meat when I was a meat-eater. However, now the smell of like particularly bacon... it makes me quite queasy, and then again gives me associations of like the pigs and the slaughterhouse" (Mary, Vegetarian).

The smell of meat triggered thoughts of the unpleasant location of slaughterhouses, demonstrating a spatial dimension in this reaction, in line with Longhurst, Johnston and Ho (2009: 339), who explain aromas are embedded in place. Linking to Lupton's (2000) theorisation, since transitioning to vegetarianism, the idea of meat has become symbolically contaminating, meaning the thought of incorporating it into the body causes disgust.

"Not cooked it smells like blood. Not nice" (Alisha, Vegetarian).

"Oh, it when it's cooking, it smells horrible. It smells like burning and acrid and literally like flesh" (Zara, Vegetarian).

Temporality is exemplified here as smell triggered participants to think back to what meat used to be, with references to the slaughter, blood, and flesh of animals. Meanwhile, words such as acrid and burning imply suffering and violent death, culminating in an embodied sense of disgust, informed by the sensation of smell. To reiterate Hayes-Conroy and Hayes-Conroy (2008: 469), people quite evidently have 'bodily ways of judging'. These comments similarly reaffirm Waitt's (2014) finding that the strongest visceral response of disgust was triggered at the smell of kangaroo meat, as it evoked memories of the process of slaughter.

Similarly, omnivores also highlighted smell as a significant attribute shaping their experience of meat consumption. However, the emotional reaction to this embodied sensation was in stark contrast to that of vegetarians;

“I think the only thing is when there is lamb cooking the whole house smells absolutely delicious!” (Sasha, Omnivore)

“You know, it smells like... it does smell nice. You know, the smell ... of like smoked bacon is very potent, and so you smell it for weeks later. So I would say nice.” (Abigail, Omnivore)

These findings suggest that the ideological beliefs regarding the acceptability of animals as food determined embodied sensations and emotions. This observation is supported by Longhurst, Johnston and Ho (2009) and Low's (2021) conclusions that the description of food's sensory properties reflects political sensibilities and that socio-political issues shape visceral, embodied sensations. This interplay exemplifies the significant synergistic relationship between embodied experience and meat-eating.

Chapter 6: Guilt

6.1 Farmyard to Food:

Non meat-eating participants frequently cited close spatial proximity to the bodies of animals as generating guilt, which demonstrably shaped their experience of meat consumption. Riley articulated this recalling a memory that prompted a change in diet from omnivore to vegan;

“Where I was on holiday with my family... we walked past what I think was like, a slaughtering farm. And we heard the animal screams... And I feel like that’s a particular memory that stayed in my mind with an association with the industry. At the time... as an avid meat eater, I felt you know, my stomach dropped...Nowadays every time I think about meat, I just think about like... all the cruelty that animals are put through just to get that” (Riley, Vegan).

This aligns with Orlando's (2008) study that particular foodstuffs served to recall embodied memories of the location in which they were first experienced. The connection significantly impacted the bodily experience of the food.

“I don’t eat it [meat] now, and know what I said about how fresh food in a butcher wouldn't make me...more upset than seeing processed food in Tesco?...But then again, in the butchers, you do see...more graphic meat everywhere...it's more in your face isn't it? and it's more like right at you. And there's so many cuts and so much like animal products everywhere. I would less like to view that meat than in Tesco” (Jake, Vegetarian).

These exchanges supports Vanolo’s (2020: 7) proposition that guilt is elicited by closeness of the subject to the object, creating a sense of guilt. Closeness to the obvious animal origin of meat served as a reminder of the knowledge animals must be killed in the process of meat production, the subsequent guilt altering people’s experience of consuming meat. This echoes the conclusions of Valentine et al.'s (2014) study of childhood knowledge of alcohol in the home, which asserts the immediate spatial proximity of the bodies of children to their parents produced a particular type of knowledge of alcohol, influencing their children’s embodied consumption practices. Additionally, it was the recollection of an unpleasant spatial encounter with the bodies of animals that meant their memory served to restrict their food preferences

through the exclusion of meat from their diet, a judgment based on their embodied experiences. This aligns with Lupton's (1996) observations of food preferences and memory.

In contrast, for omnivores, close proximity with the animal body seemingly assuaged the guilt associated with the slaughter of animals, enabling them to consume meat. This was expressed concerning purchasing and consuming locally produced meat. This was cited on multiple occasions as a crucial consideration in consumption;

"I know more about the journey now from fields to plate...and...the businesses. Because I know them, I trust them, and you know sort of roughly where they're [animals] slaughtered and then you know, the butcher that's going to take care of them ...and that relieves some of the guilt about eating an animal" (Anna, Omnivore).

An attitude similarly reiterated;

"When I used to be in Spain I used to be in contact with local farmers and pretty much, you know like, I know where the meat they take it from, I know everything about it... but I guess now it's more difficult. With the supermarkets and all the other chains... I'm not happy about that. I'm trying to eat less meat, but I still eat meat." (Daniel, Omnivore).

In this sense, being brought closer to the animal body through purchasing meat locally can be viewed as an act of reparation, a physical embodiment of guilt deemed necessary to facilitate meat consumption. Similarly, Lee and Schwarz (2011) and Rosella and Richeson (2013) found feelings of guilt become embodied in physical acts of reparation to make amends for the actions which inflicted harm. The significance of place in influencing embodied experience and, subsequently, meat consumption is exemplified by the emphasis placed upon the perception the local is inherently virtuous in the process of meat production. This aligns with the proposition of Waitt's (2014) that bodily judgements of food are always spatially situated, with psychological understandings of place in part creating the experience of eating. Furthermore, this strongly resonates with Vanolo's (2020) analysis of consumption spaces.

6.2 Close to Home:

Close proximity to the bodies of other humans was similarly cited as an essential factor concerning the production and alleviation of guilt, which influenced meat consumption habits;

“being where I live and like knowing, you know, sort of, if we all stopped eating meat, then my husband, my brother in law, would be out of business, you know... if everyone in the village I lived in stopped buying meat, it'd have like a massive impact on farming and people's livelihoods, and family's livelihoods and their businesses” (Anna, Omnivore).

“If I had a choice between like a meat dish and meat free, then I would always go for the meat-free. But if somebody has cooked an animal for me that has obviously been slaughtered...then the person who has cooked for me, their feelings are more important to me than the animal” (Amelia, Omnivore).

These findings illustrate Waitt and Appleby's (2014: 90) observation that bodies are primed to eat particular things through being shaped by the contextual meaning of foodstuffs, specifically, the social relationships involved in its production. Likewise, these sentiments reinforce Matthee's (2004) findings that an appreciation that meat, in the particular family setting, had been prepared lovingly, created a bodily judgement of it as something intrinsically good rather than part of an animal, driving an incentive to continue to consume it.

Similarly, non meat-eaters vocalised the significant role that guilt, generated by the closeness of friends and family, played in their non-meat consumption as they felt uncomfortable maintaining a meat-free diet at home;

“But it's the fact that you have to like then go home at Christmas with your parents and be like “Sorry, no, I'm not having what you're having”. And you're kind of making everyone else's life around you a bit more difficult” (Cara, Vegan).

This sentiment reiterates Valentine's (1999b) findings that the household creates a particular moral environment, which generates its own meanings and values surrounding food. Household consumption patterns can therefore influence individuals' bodies and eating behaviours and impact their ability to construct their own subjectivity through food (Valentine 1999b). In the same vein, Ryan explained;

“there's about three or four markets that do quite good vegan options...today, I've come back for Christmas, they didn't have any of the vegan options, and it made me like... I feel like embarrassed that I have to ask, and people sometimes notice and make a fuss out of it for me, which I'm not a fan of cos' I'm quite introverted” (Ryan, Vegan).

These observations strongly correlate with Baumeister, Stillwell and Heatherton's (1994) theorisation of guilt, which explains guilt arises in space from interpersonal exchanges between one's own body and the body of others. Furthermore, Valentine (1999a) similarly noted that the gaze of other's within spaces of consumption serves to elicit embodied feelings within an individual, which structures their eating patterns.

6.3 Guilty Taste:

Feelings of guilt seemingly exerted influence on the sensory properties of meat, as participants noted the taste of the meat was altered by a guilty feeling. This significantly affected their experience of eating meat, as the following excerpts exemplify;

"If I think about it too much...sometimes there is sort of moments where ... I do get a little bit sad. I did go through a stage a few years ago, where for a few months, meat tasted sad. You could taste sadness...so I just couldn't do it." (Abigail, Omnivore).

For some, this phenomena was significant enough to result in complete omission of meat from their diet;

"the fear that they must feel is absolutely devastating and so distressing. And I think ... I couldn't bear to go through that myself. So why could I put any other beings through that? So I can recall it being tasty. But it is hard to describe but like I can't... separate now that [animal] from what I know how it's come to be that [meat]. So I feel like it's tainted... that there is a link in my brain now, that has actually changed maybe the way I then feel and perceive it when actually, you know if I consume it" (Zara, Vegetarian).

Imagining themselves in animal slaughtering and processing spaces caused participants to feel empathy and guilt towards animals, which altered their sense of the taste of meat. This restates Waitt's (2014) contention that senses are not just located in the biological body, but shaped by external, distant factors. Furthermore, embodied guilt at the knowledge of animal slaughter was significant enough to prompt a change in diet, supporting Hayes-Conroy and Hayes-Conroy's (2008) assertion that emotional connections are produced by embodied knowledge of food, in this case, the acknowledgement of animal slaughter, and the body feels these connections as a powerful force. These forces impact the taste of food and, therefore, clearly become powerful determinative factors for change within the consumer body.

Chapter 7: Conclusions and Discussion

This study has explored meat consumption from an embodied perspective. Addressing the key questions: how do embodied emotions and sensations impact and shape the experience of meat consumption, what role do these emotions and sensations play in eating meat, and how are they situated in space and time. The findings show that embodied sensations and emotions shape and mediate people's meat-eating experience in profound yet often irrational and unreflective ways. This is equally true for non-meat eaters and omnivores; the embodied emotions of anxiety, disgust and guilt characterising the experience of meat consumption for both groups.

In some instances, the responses between groups revealed a striking commonality. For example, the anxiety of contamination through touch afflicted both sides and discouraged meat consumption, similarly for disgust. Guilt likewise plagued both groups, all three emotions necessitating embodied practices to mitigate such feelings.

However, the response between non-meat eaters and omnivores is not necessarily consistent. Indiscriminate disgust towards meat was a unanimous sentiment amongst non-meat eaters, though for omnivores, it attached to certain meats only. Similarly, while guilt was significant to both groups, omnivores deployed embodied practices that facilitated continued meat consumption.

The bodily sensations of taste, smell, and touch were unifying crucial determinates in meat consumption. However, smell militated against meat consumption for non meat-eaters but encouraged it for omnivores.

The findings illustrate a geographical sensibility is pertinent to understanding embodied reactions to meat consumption as participants expressed such responses in the context of proximity between their own bodies and those of animals or meat and, additionally, the bodies of fellow humans. Further, spatially and temporally situated memories and notions of place exerted influence on the embodied experience of meat consumption, with reference to the location in which meat was consumed and the spaces of meat production and animal slaughter.

7.1 Limitations and Future Study:

This study intended to be intensive, producing findings that aimed to be illustrative rather than representational—as such, utilising these results to generalise how these two categories of consumers experience meat-eating within the broader population may not be an accurate representation.

A more segmented profile of participants than solely non-meat eaters and omnivores may have gleaned further insights. For example, a gendered dimension to meat consumption emerged. Two participants identifying as female indicated they would prefer their children to consume plant-based diets, but their male partners objected. A gender-orientated approach could have explored how gender and embodied emotion intersect to shape the experience of meat consumption. This resonates with the findings of a recent survey that found female; millennial vegans outnumbered their male counterparts by 5:1 (Cooke, 2019). Understanding the embodied, emotional dimension may help de-masculinise meat or de-feminising plant-based diets. These cultural framings seemingly prevent males from accepting animal protein alternatives at an embodied, sensual level (Peltola, Kaljonen and Kettunen 2020).

In tackling social problems, policymakers frequently make the misguided assumption that citizens consistently behave rationally, which, as the findings of this study reiterate, is not the reality (van Oorschot, Fenger and van Twist 2016:55). These results, combined with research outlined above, may provide data that would not simply be of theoretical interest but could usefully inform public-policy making and consumer marketing, nudging people in the direction of a plant-based diet to combat climate change. It is essential policymakers do not fall into this 'rationality trap' (van Oorschot, Fenger and van Twist 2016: 55) to meet the 1.5 degree temperature reduction target set for 2030 in the Paris Agreement (United Nations, 2019). The frequency of adverse embodied reactions articulated by omnivores in their experience of meat consumption suggests receptiveness to persuasion to transition to a less meat-heavy diet.

According to Pykett et al. (2016: 72), public policy in the UK has been influenced by behavioural research for over a decade across a range of sectors, with policy strategists regarding an understanding of emotional drivers of decision making as central to the successful application of behavioural insights to policy formation. I advocate a multi-disciplinary approach, with a geographical sensibility and awareness of embodied emotion and sensation supporting behavioural science. This approach may avoid privileging the rational and reflective at the expense of the intuitive and the "gut reaction" (Waitt 2014: 42) of citizens and consumers, consistent with Orwell's (2021: 63) insight that food is "in our bones".

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Appendix:

Interview Schedule:

Backgrounding Questions:

- How would you best categorize your diet
- How long have you been practicing your current diet
- What type of diet did you grow up with, is it the same?
- If transitioned, what type of diet are they transitioning from
- Can you describe a typical meal you like to eat?

Associations relating to meat:

- What is the first thing that comes to mind when I say "meat"?
- Could you characterize different varieties or cuts of meat to me?
- Do you think all cuts of meat are appropriate to eat- ask why or why not

Animal production and associations:

- What is your opinion concerning the slaughter of animals?
- What is the first thing that comes to your mind when I say "meat production"?
- Do/did you ever make any reflections on where your meat comes from?
- Where do you usually purchase your meat from?

Embodiment

- What does meat taste like
- What does meat smell like
- Has this changed since transitioned?
- Could you describe the texture of different kinds of meat?
- How do/did you feel after having eaten meat?
- Do/did you prepare meat yourself- can you describe how?- anything that you don't enjoy?
- Are there any spaces where you encounter meat? How does that make you feel?
- What does a healthy diet consist of for you?
- Do you consider meat to be unhealthy?
- Do you consider your diet to have any tangible health benefits?
- Is personal health something you are particularly concerned about?

Knowledges:

- What are the most important factors you consider in regards to their dietary choice- are some more important than others (animal welfare, cost, nutrition, the environment)
- How informed are you on where your meat comes from? (know any specific facts?)

Additional/ expansion:

- Do you regularly see processed meat in the supermarket- what do you think of it?
- Do you think there are any differences between fresh and processed meat?
- Do you think there are any misconceptions or stereotypes about your diet?
- Can you think of any commonly held beliefs about meat and meat in one's diet?

Emotions/Identity

- What do they think is the most meaningful/ important part of their diet (reasons for change for example)
- Any particularly strong memories of meat? (could be an occasion, something heard in the news)
- Would you ever consider giving up/ reintroducing meat in your diet? (why/why not)

Participant Identification Question:

1. How would you best categorise your diet into the following broad categories?
 - Vegan (does not consume any animal products)
 - Vegetarian (does not consume meat but does consume dairy and products and egg)
 - Omnivore (consumes meat regularly)
- Is the diet you practice now the same as the one you grew up with? (Y/N)
- If your diet has transitioned, what type of diet are you transitioning from?
- Would you ever consider omitting or reintroducing meat from/to you diet? (Y/N)
- If so, why? If not, why?: _____

2. What is your current employment status?	
Full-time employment	
Part-time employment	
Unemployed	
Self-Employed	
Homemaker	
Student	
Retired	
Prefer not to say	
3. Which age category are you in?	
18 – 20	
21 – 29	
30 – 39	
40 – 49	
50+	
Prefer not to say	
4. Which gender do you identify with?	
Man	
Woman	
Other preferred description	
Prefer not to say	

Colour Coding of Themes:

Mention of Senses/ Perceptions	Mention of Emotions	Mention of Health
Taste	Pleasure	Bad for the human body
Smell	Guilt	Necessary for good health
Touch/feel/texture	Disgust	Concern for appearance
Physical Appearance	Fear/Anxiety	

Q: And so just before we start, am I okay to confirm that you have read the participant information and consent form and you understand and agree to everything?

A: Yeah.

Q: Perfect.

A: If you can hear someone in the background, that's my mum.

Q: That's okay. Okay, so the first question is, how would you best categorise your diet?

A: One second. How would I best categorise my diet?

Q: Yes. Categorise.

A: Omnivore I eat everything.

Q: And so how long have you been practising your current diet?

A: Forever?

Q: So the diet that you have now is the same as the one that you grew up with?

A: Yeah.

Q: And then what is the first thing that comes to mind when I say meat?

A: Animals

Q: So would you say that you associate meat more with an animal than a foodstuff?

A: Yeah, Yeah I think so.

Q: Could you categories different varieties and cuts of meat for me please?

A: Er well, fish, chicken, pork. Cuts of meat?. You've got chicken breast, thigh, leg, wing. I'm fleshing it out? I don't know.

Q: And then how do you think they all compare physically? If you could describe the different characteristics for me, please?

A: Ooh, that's an interesting question. Well, the wing is like quite, it's not got a lot of meat on it. But it's more tender. But the breast is more kind of like, just a big hunk of meat. And so it's kind of less tender, but there's more of it. The thigh is kind of like a combination of all of that. I'm trying to think of other like comparing different animals. So like, beef is more sort of just big chunks of meat. Whereas things like chicken and fish, it's kind of smaller and more tender and things like that. So that's what I'd say.

Q: And do you think all cuts of meat are appropriate to eat? So including the more unusual ones maybe like tongue or liver?

A: Yeah, yeah, I don't particularly like them. But yeah.

Q: And could you just elaborate on that a little bit? What about it is it that you don't like?

A: I don't with liver, I don't mind tongue. I do like tongue, but liver, it's a bit too... the texture. It's like, it's like taking a bite out of Plasticine to me, and I just don't like the feel on my teeth, or on my tongue. It's just yuuch, no!

Q: And then what is your opinion concerning the slaughter of animals?

A: Well, see, I think it depends on the method. Like my mum grew up on a farm. So we've kind of always been around, you know, that kind of thing, so it's always been a part of life basically. So, I would always prefer, you know, not so much the more extreme slaughter methods, you know, where, like, the animals are conscious. And, you know, I really don't like that kind of thing, but anything else. I don't, I don't particularly think about it very much. But when I do it's sad because they are cute.

Q: What is the first thing that comes to mind when I say meat production?

A: I think there are two types, and you've got those sort of overly produced kind of pink slop that you get in like cheap chicken nuggets. And then you've got sort of like butchery and you know, making sausages and things like that.

Q: So do you see processed meat differently from meat in a butchers?

A: Yes. Yeah. Well, I think I do I usually sort of make the difference in my head unconsciously, but thinking about it, yeah. Because I feel like there's less sort of pumped into it. And, yeah, always prefer the stuff from the butchers.

Q: And why would you say that is? Do you think it's just that it's fresher or...?

A: I don't know, I think it's just because like I say, that's kind of what we've been around. So, plus, it's nicer to have the, sort of, whole thing and then you kind of go into it, and do what you want with it instead of getting stuff from Tesco and just dealing with it.

Q: And so would you say that you ever make any reflections on where your meat comes from?

A: Yeah, yeah. Occasionally, not all of the time. Because, you know, if I think about it too much, I think, think if everyone did that, no one would eat meat. But I sometimes there is sort of moments where I'm like, oh, you know, I do get a little bit sad. I did go through a stage a few years ago, where for a few months, meat tasted sad. You could taste sadness. I was like, aawh, so I just couldn't do it.

Q: Fair enough. Where do you usually purchase your meat from?

A: Usually the butchers. We've got a nice local butcher, go to him. And if not usually places like Morrison's from sort of the butcher section there. I do prefer whole meat instead of the processed, gunk that you get.

Q: And what does meat taste like to you, if you could describe the taste for me, please?

A: I think it depends on the meat. I think, so I don't really eat red meat a lot, or I try not to because, I don't know, it's just weird. But chicken and white meat tastes like... oh that's a really difficult question. It's like....

Q: A lot of people have struggled with this one actually

A: Yeah, it's such a difficult question. Well, fish is fishy. So as meat fish is fishy, that's the one that I am adamant on!

Q: [Laughs] And then similar question, but what does meat smell like?

A: Well, I think that depends what you do with it. You know, it smells like... it does smell nice. I think. You know, the smell of bacon. Like smoked bacon is very potent, and so you smell it for weeks later. So I would say nice.

Q: Yeah. And could you describe the texture of different kinds of meat please?

A: I think, well, things like liver, that kind of thing, like I say it tastes like Plasticine to me, it's like the texture of plasticine. So a little bit too weird for me. But things like chicken. I think I just eat mainly chicken, I'm not going to lie. Chicken, it's quite stringy. I think I like that about it. Pork, that's a little bit tougher. So you've really got to get in for that one. Fish is nice and flaky, you know, soft. And then beef. I don't eat much beef, but that again, it's quite tough, I would say. I forgot about lamb, but that's fine, I don't eat much lamb.

Q: And how do you feel after having eaten meat, usually?

A: I think it would depend when I am. So if I have been sort of contemplating life and things like that, then I feel kind of like, Oh, no, like, I do feel quite, almost grateful at times, which, you know, because obviously the animal has given its life for this. But then there are times when I'm just like, that was good, satisfied.

Q: And do you often prepare meat yourself?

A: Yes, yeah. I look after my mum. So I usually just, I make everything.

Q: Yeah, and could you describe how for me please?

A: Well, it would depend. I would love to make our own sausages, but we don't do that. But I do, usually sort of, like, take different cuts off of a chicken, very badly, but I still do it. You know, roasting is good for things like pork, unless it's like, you know, sort of like gammon steaks, I usually can fry those up or grill them, or something like that. Yeah, watch it in the oven, That's my motto!

Q: And is there anything about preparing meat that you don't enjoy?

A: I don't like touching it. And I'm very, I don't know why, I just don't like touching meat. I kind of like, I touch it, and I immediately wash my hands. Because I just don't, I don't like that.

Q: And why do you think that is?

A: I honestly don't know. I think it's sort of the prospect of possible illness. Because obviously, raw eat and illness kind of go hand in hand. And I really don't like that. Plus, it's like, you know, it's like that sort feel of blood on your hands. It's disgusting! So I just want to get that off as quickly as is physically possible.

Q: Fair enough. And what does a healthy diet consist of for you?

A: Ha, definitely not what I eat! I would say fruit, a lot of fruit and vegetables. Meat kind of two, three times a week. See, I love fruit. So lots of fruit, all of the fruit, and potatoes as well.

Q: Me too. And then do you consider meat to be unhealthy?

A: I think it depends what it is and how it's done. I think if you choose the right cuts, the right kind of things. Like if you get a really fatty sort of belly pork, that's definitely not [healthy]. That is just, no. But if you get like quite a lean, kind of like a sort of fish, I like fish a lot, that can be quite healthy, like full of sort of oils and things, Omega three, good stuff.

Q: And then do you consider your diet now to have any tangible health benefits?

A: Well, I mean, probably not, but I'm going to say yes to make myself feel a little bit better.

Q: And then what are the most important factors that you consider in regard to your dietary choice?

So things like animal welfare, cost, nutrition or the environment.

A: Well, I usually make kind of what I am told to make, because I cook for my family. So they kind of just say, okay, we want this and it's like, okay, I'll make that happen. But I am quite picky on certain things like I will only get sort of free range. I don't like you know anything from battery cages or anything like that. I really can't stand that. So I do try and go for sort of animal welfare and that kind of thing. And then packaging as well. I am quite fussy about it sort of not being wrapped in 20 tonnes of plastic and thrown together.

Q: And how informed are you, would you say, on where your meat comes from?

A: Um, I would say probably not as much as I should be. But my mum did grow up on a farm. We kind of were around that environment. So we, we were aware of it but not sort of as aware as I think we probably should have been, not really sort of in the, you know, abattoirs, slaughter house kind of areas. More sort of playing with chickens. That was that was our territory.

Q: How informed would you say you were on the environmental impacts of your diet?

A: Again, definitely not as well informed as I should be. I think that should be more of a concern than it actually is. Obviously, with things like cows, they are terrible, terrible for the environment. I am aware of that. It kind of it doesn't really come into the back of your mind as much, like it doesn't sort of creep up, it's just kind of okay.

Q: And then, do you regularly see processed meat in the supermarket? And if so, what do you think about it?

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Q: And can you think of any misconceptions or stereotypes about your diet?

A: I Don't know. Off the top of my head I mean, I do like the odd takeaway, and things like that. And to some people, I wouldn't say it's a misconception, but some people think, Oh, yeah, you must eat it all the time. No, I like making my own food. So I'd say that's maybe one. And apart from that, I can't think of anything else.

Q: That's okay, and then can you think of any commonly held beliefs about meat or meat in a diet?

A: Well there is this kind of idea that meat on the whole is quite unhealthy. And I think it depends on like I say how it's cooked, where it's from, like, you know, some places do pump meat full of nasty stuff, preservatives and all that kind of thing. So I think that it's probably got a bad name, in that people do think it is very, very unhealthy. But it's like well, you know, fish that is meat, let's be fair, so and that can be very healthy. You know? So I think it depends on how it's cooked and stuff. But that is one that I've seen a lot, and I'm like oh, okay then.

Q: And then what do you think is the most meaningful or important part of your diet?

A: Fruit. I love fruit so much. I do, I like sort of combining fruit and fish. I don't know why, I sort of come into this thing, where I'm like that's really good. Like putting limes and lemons and cooking it with the fish. Delicious!

Q: Sounds great! And then I think this is the last question, but can you think of any particularly strong memories of meat?

A: Not really, I mean, there was one time I remember we were sort of going to a kind of, it was like a weird festival type thing, and they had, you know, one of the whole roast hogs I was like, that guy is so cute, you know I just wanted to pet the pig but it was definitely too warm for that, and that's wrong, you definitely shouldn't do that. And I remember seeing a video online as well which was quite, quite graphic, in certain things and I was very sort of sad, that's that's kind of where the whole sort of, you know, meat tastes sad, thing came from. So, yeah, that those are the only two things I can think of for that one.

Q: That's it, thanks very much.

End of Interview

Coded Interview Transcript: Abigail Date: 11/04/2021, Time: 20:06 pm

Q: And so just before we start, am I okay to confirm that you have read the participant information and consent form and you understand and agree to everything?

A: Yeah.

Q: Perfect.

A: If you can hear someone in the background, that's my mum.

Q: That's okay. Okay, so the first question is, how would you best categorise your diet?

A. One second. How would I best categorise my diet?

Q: Yes. Categorise.

A: Omnivore I eat everything.

Q: And so how long have you been practising your current diet?

A: Forever?

Q: So the diet that you have now is the same as the one that you grew up with?

A: Yeah.

Q: And then what is the first thing that comes to mind when I say meat?

A: Animals

Q: So would you say that you associate meat more with an animal than a foodstuff?

A: Yeah, Yeah I think so.

Q: Could you categories different varieties and cuts of meat for me please?

A: Er well, fish, chicken, pork. Cuts of meat?. You've got chicken breast, thigh, leg, wing. I'm fleshing it out? I don't know.

Q: And then how do you think they all compare physically? If you could describe the different characteristics for me, please?

A: Ooh, that's an interesting question. Well, the wing is like quite, it's not got a lot of meat on it. But **it's more tender**. But the breast is more kind of like, just a big hunk of meat. And so it's kind of less tender, but there's more of it. The thigh is kind of like a combination of all of that. I'm trying to think of other like comparing different animals. So like, beef is more sort of just big chunks of meat. Whereas things like **chicken and fish, it's kind of smaller and more tender** and things like that. So that's what I'd say.

Q: And do you think all cuts of meat are appropriate to eat? So including the more unusual ones maybe like tongue or liver?

A: Yeah, yeah, I don't particularly like them. But yeah.

Q: And could you just elaborate on that a little bit? What about it is it that you don't like?

A: I don't like liver, I don't mind tongue. I do like tongue, **but liver, it's a bit too... the texture. It's like, it's like taking a bite out of Plasticine to me, and I just don't like the feel on my teeth, or on my tongue. It's just yuuch, no!**

Q: And then what is your opinion concerning the slaughter of animals?

A: Well, see, I think it depends on the method. Like my mum grew up on a farm. So we've kind of always been around, you know, that kind of thing, so it's always been a part of life basically. So, I would always prefer, you know, not so much the more extreme slaughter methods, **you know, where, like, the animals are conscious**. And, you know, I really don't like that kind of thing, but anything else. I don't, I don't particularly think about it very much. But when I do **it's sad because they are cute**.

Q: What is the first thing that comes to mind when I say meat production?

A: I think there are two types, and you've got those sort of overly produced kind of pink slop that you get in like cheap chicken nuggets. And then you've got sort of like butchery and you know, making sausages and things like that.

Q: So do you see processed meat differently from meat in a butchers?

A: Yes. Yeah. Well, I think I do I usually sort of make the difference in my head unconsciously, but thinking about it, yeah. Because I feel like there's less sort of pumped into it. And, yeah, always prefer the stuff from the butchers.

Q: And why would you say that is?

A: I don't know, I think it's just because like I say, that's kind of what we've been around. So, plus, it's nicer to have the, sort of, whole thing and then you kind of go into it, and do what you want with it instead of getting stuff from Tesco and just dealing with it.

Q: And so would you say that you ever make any reflections on where your meat comes from?

A: Yeah, yeah. Occasionally, not all of the time. Because, you know, if I think about it too much, I think, think if everyone did that, no one would eat meat. But I sometimes there is sort of moments where I'm like, oh, you know, I do get a little bit sad. I did go through a stage a few years ago, where for a few months, meat tasted sad. You could taste sadness. I was like, aawh, so I just couldn't do it.

Q: Fair enough. Where do you usually purchase your meat from?

A: Usually the butchers. We've got a nice local butcher, go to him. And if not usually places like Morrison's from sort of the butcher section there. I do prefer whole meat instead of the processed, gunk that you get.

Q: And what does meat taste like to you, if you could describe the taste for me, please?

A: I think it depends on the meat. I think, so I don't really eat red meat a lot, or I try not to because, I don't know, it's just weird. But chicken and white meat tastes like... oh that's a really difficult question. It's like...

Q: A lot of people have struggled with this one actually

A: Yeah, it's such a difficult question. Well, fish is fishy. So as meat fish is fishy, that's the one that I am adamant on!

Q: [Laughs] And then similar question, but what does meat smell like?

A: Well, I think that depends what you do with it. You know, it smells like... it does smell nice. I think. You know, the smell of bacon. Like smoked bacon is very potent, and so you smell it for weeks later. So I would say nice.

Q: Yeah. And could you describe the texture of different kinds of meat please?

A: I think, well, things like liver, that kind of thing, like I say it tastes like Plasticine to me, it's like the texture of plasticine. So a little bit too weird for me. But things like chicken. I think I just eat mainly chicken, I'm not going to lie. Chicken, it's quite stringy. I think I like that about it. Pork, that's a little bit tougher. So you've really got to get in for that one. Fish is nice and flaky, you know, soft. And then beef. I don't eat much beef, but that again, it's quite tough, I would say. I forgot about lamb, but that's fine, I don't eat much lamb.

Q: And how do you feel after having eaten meat, usually?

A: I think it would depend when I am. So if I have been sort of contemplating life and things like that, then I feel kind of like, Oh, no, like, I do feel quite, almost grateful at times, which, you know, because obviously the animal has given its life for this. But then there are times when I'm just like, that was good, satisfied.

Q: And do you often prepare meat yourself?

A: Yes, yeah. I look after my mum. So I usually just, I make everything.

Q: Yeah, and could you describe how for me please?

A: Well, it would depend. I would love to make our own sausages, but we don't do that. But I do, usually sort of, like, take different cuts off of a chicken, very badly, but I still do it. You know, roasting is good for things like pork, unless it's like, you know, sort of like gammon steaks, I usually can fry those up or grill them, or something like that. Yeah, whack it in the oven, That's my motto!

Q: And is there anything about preparing meat that you don't enjoy?

A: I don't like touching it. And I'm very, I don't know why, I just don't like touching meat. I kind of like, I touch it, and I immediately wash my hands. Because I just don't, I don't like that.

Q: And why do you think that is?

A: I honestly don't know. I think it's sort of the prospect of possible illness. Because obviously, raw eat and illness kind of go hand in hand. And I really don't like that. Plus, it's like, you know, it's like that sort feel of blood on your hands. It's disgusting! So I just want to get that off as quickly as is physically possible.

Q: Fair enough. And what does a healthy diet consist of for you?

A: Ha, definitely not what I eat! I would say fruit, a lot of fruit and vegetables. Meat kind of two, three times a week. See, I love fruit. So lots of fruit, all of the fruit, and potatoes as well.

Q: Me too. And then do you consider meat to be unhealthy?

A: I think it depends what it is and how it's done. I think if you choose the right cuts, the right kind of things. Like if you get a really fatty sort of belly pork, that's definitely not [healthy]. That is just, no. But if you get like quite a lean, kind of like a sort of fish, I like fish a lot, that can be quite healthy, like full of sort of oils and things, Omega three, good stuff.

Q: And then do you consider your diet now to have any tangible health benefits?

A: Well, I mean, probably not, but I'm going to say yes to make myself feel a little bit better.

Q: And then what are the most important factors that you consider in regard to your dietary choice? So things like animal welfare, cost, nutrition or the environment.

A: Well, I usually make kind of what I am told to make, because I cook for my family. So they kind of just say, okay, we want this and it's like, okay, I'll make that happen. But I am quite picky on certain things like I will only get sort of free range. I don't like you know anything from battery cages or anything like that. I really can't stand that. So I do try and go for sort of animal welfare and that kind of thing. And then packaging as well. I am quite fussy about it sort of not being wrapped in 20 tonnes of plastic and thrown together.

Q: And how informed are you, would you say, on where your meat comes from?

A: Um, I would say probably not as much as I should be. But my mum did grow up on a farm. We kind of were around that environment. So we, we were aware of it but not sort of as aware as I think we probably should have been, not really sort of in the, you know, abattoirs, slaughter house kind of areas. More sort of playing with chickens. That was that was our territory.

Q: How informed would you say you were on the environmental impacts of your diet?

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