



Cow: A Bovine Biography

Florian Werner

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She is everywhere: as a vehicle for both farmers and advertisers, a subject for research scientists and poets, and ever-present in the form of lucky charms, children's toys, or simply as a tasty sandwich-filler. The female of the bovine species is revered as sacred or reviled as stupid, but one thing she never inspires is indifference. After more than ten thousand years living alongside us, she remains a beguiling mystery. Combining a myriad of richly entertaining anecdotes and an abundance of illuminating discoveries, Florian Werner presents the curious cultural history of that most intriguing of animals: the cow.

Since evolving from the aurochs, an ungulate that grazed the Persian grasslands, the cow has embedded itself into virtually all aspects of our lives. *Cow* is the first book to look at the animal in its countless manifestations in cultures around the world. Werner examines cows' role in commerce as an early form of currency and their place on our plates and in our stomachs in the form of meat and dairy products. Florian Werner examines how cows are worshipped in some circles, such as in Hindu mythology, and abhorred in others, today being vilified as an agent of climate change. And he waxes philosophic about the significance of the cow's rumination and cud chewing, as well as her simple but meaningful moo.

Combining thorough research with an accessible writing style, Florian Werner offers readers an eye-opening perspective on this commodified animal, whose existence is inextricably intertwined with ours and which we too often take for granted.

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