

WHALE MEAT

IN AMERICAN HISTORY

IN DECEMBER 1620, before deciding to settle permanently at the place they named Plymouth, the *Mayflower* Pilgrims were still exploring Cape Cod and debating its potential when they had their first encounter with American Indians. The colony's chroniclers recalled how "As we drew near to the shore we espied some ten or twelve Indians very busy about a black thing." Upon seeing the English, the Indians fled, carrying something away with them. Later, as an expeditionary party of Pilgrims made their way on foot to where they had first spotted the Indians, they came across "a great fish, called a grampus, dead on the sands." Two more dead grampuses lay visible in the shallows. At the place where the Indians had been seen "busy about a black thing," there it was, or what was left of it, yet another grampus, cut "into long rands or pieces, about an ell long and two handfull broad." Saddened that they lacked the resources and time to load up on the dead grampuses, some of which were "five or six paces long, and about two inches thick of fat, and fleshed like swine" and which "would have yielded a great deal of oil," the Pilgrims turned away and followed the Indians' tracks into the interior.¹

The Pilgrims' descendants later dubbed the vicinity of this landing "First Encounter" beach to commemorate the English settlement's first meeting with native peoples, but this particular first encounter also marked New England colonists' entry into the oil business. The "grampuses" that washed up periodically on the shores of Cape Cod Bay were blackfish, or what marine mammal scientists today call pilot whales—to be precise, long-finned pilot whales (*globicephala melaena*).² To the Pilgrims and other seventeenth-century Europeans, pilot whales meant oil, the oil that would come from boiling, or trying-out, the pilot whales' two inches of swine-like fat. In truth, the Pilgrims did not covet the oil but the money that the oil would bring once sold. Earlier, when the *Mayflower* had first

entered Cape Cod Bay, its passengers had witnessed an even greater bounty than a few dead grampuses strewn along the beach: “every day we saw whales playing hard by us; of which in that place, if we had instruments and means to take them, we might have made a very rich return; which, to our great grief, we wanted. Our master and his mate, and others experienced in fishing, professed we might have made three or four thousand pounds’ worth of oil.” The whales cavorting in New England’s waters were probably right whales and justly recognized by those aboard the *Mayflower* as “the best kind for oil and bone.”³

Aware of whale oil’s marketability as lamp fuel and lubricant, English settlers in New England soon launched a whaling industry that quickly surpassed that of the Dutch, British, and other Europeans. Up until the twentieth century, all such ventures—American and European—focused on producing oil and “bone,” which was not bone at all but whalebone, better known today as baleen, the plastic-like plates found in the jaws of baleen whales such as right whales, bowheads, and humpbacks. Initially targeting right whales easily reached from shore stations, the New England oil-and-bone industry peaked more than 150 years later, in the 1830s and 1840s, with large ocean-going vessels embarking on three-year voyages; annual catches of more than a thousand sperm whales; a deep harbor at New Bedford, Massachusetts, the whaling capitol of the world; and the great American novel. As whales in one location became scarce and shy, the oil-and-bone industry moved on, restlessly searching for those places where whales congregated thickly, from the North Atlantic to the South Atlantic to the South Pacific to the North Pacific. By the early twentieth century, the New England whale fishery had all but withered away, while other whaling peoples, Norwegians in particular, ushered in a new era of industrial whaling. Steam-powered factory ships bedecked with harpoon guns and bomb lances chased the largest whale, the blue whale, and other rorquals; expeditiously killed them; and hauled them aboard for processing or took them to land-based stations. In this ultra-modern stage of commercial whaling, all parts of the whale found a purpose and were sold, even whale meat, which occasionally was processed for human consumption but most often ground into meal for fertilizer and animal food.⁴

For most Americans, and undoubtedly for many other people around the world as well, the history of whaling is the history of the oil-and-bone whaling industry and its associated imagery: Ishmael boarding the *Pequod* out of Nantucket, whalebone stays in women’s dresses, scrimshaw, and “Thar she blows!” But only a few Americans can say what whale meat tastes like or have ever contemplated the prospect of eating whales. The same could be said for many other meats that Europeans encountered in the age of expansion. While Europeans came to love the American potato and tomato, the experience of eating buffalo or guinea pig remained a curiosity.⁵ For Euro-Americans, eating whale meat was similarly extraordinary and, to this day, appears even more extraordinary than eating buffalo. Buffalo appears occasionally on American restaurant menus or behind the meat counter at grocery stores. However, whale meat and other “whale products” are banned in the United States, except for use by certain aboriginal peoples who are permitted to hunt whales, albeit for subsistence only.⁶

Thus in the United States today, a small minority eats whale and a huge majority does not. Globally, the same dichotomy prevails, producing tensions and shaping relations among the world's peoples. To some observers, the fracture between whale-eaters and non-whale-eaters might seem a fitting companion to the other, more familiar dichotomies that have served as analytical categories for understanding and managing human diversity—dichotomies such as industrialized and nonindustrialized, civilized and primitive, commercial and subsistence-oriented. However, whale-eating cannot easily be twisted to conform to these other dichotomies because two industrialized, capitalist nations—Japan and Norway—rank among the most vocal and prominent defenders of the right to eat whales, along with the Inuit, Makah, and other indigenous peoples.

This particular alignment of peoples is unique, but therein resides its significance. Over the past several hundred years, especially in the past three decades, the whale-eating divide has emerged as a tense global struggle—one that cannot be understood within the existing interpretive frameworks typically applied to post-Columbian world history. All the usual suspects necessary for a coherent narrative about the global rise of capitalism are present in whaling history, making the history of whale hunting look, at first, like just another example of how European capitalism reached out and brought the Americas, Asia, and Africa into its net, all the while turning raw resources into market commodities.⁷ However, also present in the whale-eating debate, indeed standing at center stage, is an unusual, seemingly innocuous and idiosyncratic point of contention: taste. The Columbian exchange and other historical moments in the age of European expansion recount how the rise of capitalism exposed the world's population to new tastes; the history of whale-eating complicates that story by illuminating the remarkable endurance of taste preferences in the face of powerful forces promoting change.

Scholars have yet to figure out the root causes behind differences in taste. They agree that taste is largely cultural in that people learn from others which animals and plants are suitable for human consumption. More troublesome, however, is the seemingly unanswerable question as to why nations living in such close acquaintance as France and England developed entirely different cuisines or why eating dog is part of everyday life in some places and an inducement to nausea in others. Anthropologists have generated most of the theoretical literature. They have suggested variously that food taboos originate in metaphors (people do not eat things that remind them of themselves), anomalies (people avoid eating things that cannot be easily categorized), and the biological body's nutritional needs (people do not eat things that they fear will cause sickness or death and people are drawn to eat those things that provide necessary proteins and other nutrients).⁸ As yet, no single theory can encompass and explain all the food aversions found around the world.

Whales are a special case in the larger mystery taste presents because to eat or not eat whale is an international controversy that has caused furious arguments in international forums and reached the highest levels of international diplomacy. In arguing for whales' value as food, representatives of whale-eating

constituencies (such as the Inuit and the Japanese) can point to a long history of eating whale blubber and meat. In contrast, most Americans never regarded whales as part of a normal diet.⁹ If the Pilgrims had come from a whale-eating culture, they would have fattened up on pilot whale to prepare for the approaching winter instead of calculating the money lost from the oil left lying on the beach.

Having a taste for whale thus has roots in ancient history, but the politicization of whale-eating is a legacy of the oil-and-bone whaling industry. The New Englanders whose whale fisheries far outstripped other whale hunting for nearly two hundred years never developed a taste for whale meat, but at the same time they exerted an enormous influence on the world to come. Their whaling ventures helped connect the world's people into a global commercial network, and their wealth and power in that world economy pushed for a global standardization of taste biased toward their own cultural preferences. This article explores how that happened, first by pointing out how common the eating of whales is, as demonstrated by a sample of whale-eating experiences from around the world. The second section of this article examines whaling Americans' ambivalence toward whale foods during the heyday of the American whaling industry. The article closes with a discussion of how Americans' reluctance to incorporate whales into their own diet impinged on international conversations about whales as a sustainable resource. The American whaling industry was in part responsible for the modern depletion and, in some cases, near-extinction of certain whale populations, but it is not just the whales that became the industry's victim. Whale eaters also suffered. Petroleum and the invention of plastic made the American need for whale oil and whalebone obsolete and meant that, when an environmental conscience intent on saving whales emerged in the 1970s, Americans could embrace this particular cause without suffering any loss.

WHALE EATING

WE DO NOT know what the Cape Cod Indians who fled from the Pilgrims that autumn day in 1620 did with the pieces of pilot whale they took with them, but most likely they made a meal of them. Historically and into the present, in North America and elsewhere around the world, people who have hunted whales, or people who merely wished for whales to appear one day stranded on the beach, often have thought of whales as food and enjoyed eating whale meat, blubber, skin, and other whale parts. The archaeological past of the Arctic is especially rich with whale skeletal remains and whale-related artifacts. Despite this abundance of archaeological material, questions still remain about whether the whale bones unearthed by archaeologists originally came from stranded whales or hunted whales; how significant whales were to human communities, both materially and spiritually; and the extent to which people depended on whales for food.¹⁰ However, even if we disregard archaeological evidence and start the history of whale-eating with its earliest appearances in written accounts and oral traditions and end with twentieth-century ethnographies of whaling peoples, there still would be plenty of evidence to suggest many continuities over time as well as commonalities among whale-eating cultures.

Amid the uncertainty and debate, some conclusions are possible, even obvious. People who ate whales in the past lived near oceans and along whale migration paths. Native peoples on the Pacific coast of North America looked forward to the annual passage of the Pacific gray whale.¹¹ Faroe Islanders looked out to sea in late summer and fall in hopes of sighting pods of pilot whales.¹² Inuits living on the northwestern coast of Alaska knew when and where to expect bowhead whales as they migrated to and from summer feeding grounds in the Beaufort Sea.¹³

A second fairly obvious conclusion is that whales are indeed edible. Perhaps if all the world's peoples gathered to taste all the whales of the world, they might find in one or two whale species a mutual distaste. Baleen whales, for example, have the reputation of tasting better than toothed whales, such as sperm, but still, humans have eaten sperm whale and enjoyed it.¹⁴ Every kind of whale appears to have served as human food in some place at some time.

We know, for example, that the Pilgrims could have eaten those pilot whales—if the whales had just recently stranded and were still fresh—because long-finned pilot whales have been feeding Faroe Islanders for five hundred to one thousand years. Located in the North Atlantic in between Iceland and Scotland and currently organized as a Home Rule government under Denmark, the Faroe Islands have been the scene of pilot-whale drives, or *grindadráp*, at least since the sixteenth century and probably as long ago as the ninth century, when Norse emigrants first settled there.¹⁵ From the Danish traveler Lucas Jacobson Debes's 1676 account to the 1940 Faroese novel *The Old Man and his Sons* up to the present, little changed in the conduct of the hunt, the processes for cutting up and storing whale meat and blubber, and the high status of pilot whale as the most beloved of foods, favored over the sheep and fish that sustained the Faroese on a daily basis. A Faroese pilot whale drive began when someone, usually a fisherman, spotted a school of pilot whales. He raised an alarm, and all men within hearing distance rushed to their boats, surrounded the whales and, by making loud noises and throwing stones, herded them toward shore, forcing the whales to strand themselves on the beach, where they were slaughtered and butchered. The whale drivers reduced some of the blubber into oil, which was one of the islands' few export products. Otherwise they set about turning the blubber into food, using it as others might use lard or butter and especially as a flavoring enhancement to whale meat. What the Faroese did not eat fresh, they preserved, salting the blubber and hanging it up to dry and also drying the surplus meat. Outsiders visiting or residing on the islands observed that the salted blubber looked and tasted like bacon; the whale meat, when fresh, looked and smelled like beef and, once dried, resembled "other smoaked flesh."¹⁶

Some changes did occur in Faroese whale hunts over time. The elaborate rules regulating the distribution of meat and blubber to the whale drivers and the rest of the community altered frequently, and there were market-related swings in the proportion of blubber kept by locals for consumption versus blubber turned into oil for export.¹⁷ However, the excitement of the drive, described by one island resident as being "like an electric shock," persisted in Faroese life along with the anticipation of the "savory and wholesome food" that resulted from a successful

hunt. Not surprisingly, *The Old Man and his Sons* opens with a pilot whale drive, from which an insatiable—but also perfectly natural and understandable—desire for whale meat then serves as the lynchpin event in the novel’s unfolding plot.¹⁸

Not only did the Faroese esteem pilot whales above all other animal foods; they also preferred pilot whales to other whales that could be found in their waters or that stranded on shore. Finbacks and sperm whales washed up dead occasionally and could be turned into oil. Beaked whales could be captured easily enough but if eaten, so it was said, turned one’s clothes and skin yellow and caused an unpleasant odor to exude from one’s body. Right whales or their close relative, bowheads, appeared often in Faroese waters, but fishermen thought them dangerous and developed ingenious methods for keeping the whales away from their boats so that they could fish in peace.¹⁹

In contrast, the Inuits, according to nineteenth- and twentieth-century accounts, prized bowhead whales above other whales and thought young bowhead *maktak* the finest delicacy. Spelled in various ways (*muktuk*, *maktaa*q), *maktak* refers to the outer layer of whale skin attached to about an inch of blubber.²⁰ Other favorites were the lips, tails (flukes), fins, noses, and cheeks of whales. The entrails inspired less enthusiasm but still served as valuable human food, often cooked in a stew with other ingredients. At the bottom of the desirability scale, there was whale flesh, the meat itself. Arctic peoples fed most of the whale meat that they acquired in hunting or trade to their dogs.²¹ Inuits also enjoyed eating the *maktak* of white whales (belugas) and narwhals, which, because of the decline in the bowhead population from industrial overhunting have become the preferred whales for hunting in the eastern arctic today. They are the whales most commonly eaten there, along with minke and fin whales.²² Inuit whale hunters ate (and still eat) the *maktak* right away, even as the whale was being brought into shore, but they also used their frigid natural environment for refrigeration; *maktak* and other whale foods buried in snow-covered pits provided sustenance when hunting luck dried up and fresh meat was unavailable.²³

Whale foods in Japan show the greatest variety, historically and across regions. Japanese whale hunting probably began a thousand or more years ago but is especially well-documented beginning in the seventeenth century, when all kinds of whales contributed to the Japanese diet: Baird’s beaked whales, right whales, humpbacks, fins, sei whales, pilot whales, and sperm whales. Culinary preparations differed by type of whale, availability, and regional taste. The popular *sashimi* used the raw, fresh meat of small whales, such as minke and pilot whales. The Japanese also preserved whale foods by sun-drying, salting, and marinating or pickling the meat and blubber, which later could appear as a meal unto itself or often as a flavoring for soup.²⁴ Japanese whaling expanded in the twentieth century by adopting the techniques and equipment of the oil-and-bone whaling industry, but Japan was unique among its peer whaling nations in that only Japanese whalers saw food as their primary objective.²⁵ Whether they brought whales in to shore stations from nearby waters or went all the way to Antarctica, Japanese whaling companies always included among their employees specialists knowledgeable in procedures for butchering whales’ most palatable parts quickly

and preserving them for eventual sale to consumers.²⁶ The growth and success of Japanese whaling fleets in Antarctica in the 1950s and 1960s, combined with the rise of refrigeration technology, brought more whale foods to more Japanese citizens until the last few decades of the twentieth century, when an increasingly hostile international climate cut into the previously easy access and widespread availability of whale meat in Japanese homes, stores, and restaurants.²⁷

Despite the varying histories of these and other whale-eating peoples, generalizations about whale-eating cultures across time and space are still possible. First, whales usually were not a staple food. The effects of whales' seasonal migrations, the difficulty and danger of hunting the world's largest animals, and the providential rarity of whale strandings probably explain why whales counted as a special food, not to be eaten everyday. Second, whale-eating peoples had discriminating taste preferences. Some types of whales were tastier than others, and certain parts of whales ranked above other parts as delicacies. Although preferences for certain whale species varied internationally, blubber—probably because of its high fat content—generally seems to have been deemed to taste better than plain whale meat. Third, whale hunters and those who took advantage of beached whales knew the peculiar requirements of whale food processing. Whales had to be butchered soon after death since whale blubber, which protected whales from cold ocean temperatures, caused whale meat to rot quickly when exposed to warm air.²⁸ For this reason and also probably due to the whale's enormous size and the consequent prodigious bounty of foodstuffs that a single whale provided, whale-eating cultures had methods for preserving whale foods.

Whaling historians, though well-aware of technological developments in whale hunting (harpoons and bomb lances, for example), have yet to study as thoroughly the extent to which changes in taste preferences also occurred. What little is known suggests that it is possible to acquire or abandon preferences for whale foods. Some whale-eating peoples—for instance, residents of the Tonga Islands and the West Indies—appear to have become especially fond of whale meat beginning in the nineteenth century, when the oil-and-bone whaling industry created meat surpluses and modeled effective whale hunting.²⁹ In contrast, some western Europeans apparently thought of whales as food earlier in their history but lost that understanding, probably around the sixteenth century, when overhunting exhausted the stock of right whales habituating Atlantic waters near European coasts. References to whale meat appear in medieval European cooking books and in travel accounts of Basque country but then dwindle away.³⁰ The Makah Indians on the northwest coast of North America also lost their memory of what whales tasted like, but not their memory of whaling. When, after a lull of more than fifty years, they recently revived whale hunting as a cultural tradition, they had to reacquaint themselves with the taste and texture of whale blubber.³¹

Taste preferences cannot be studied alone, without reference to such larger contexts as whale availability and the cultural meanings foods can evoke. The Makahs' cultural heritage made eating whale blubber an emotional, political act. The same could be said for the Japanese, for whom whale also holds a special

place in historical memory as the food that saved the Japanese from starvation in the desperate years immediately after World War II.³² Although whale's reputation as a traditional food has been on the rise of late among whale-eating peoples, in some cases as a rhetorical strategy to defend the right to eat whales, whale also remains a highly versatile food, appearing for instance as an ingredient in Inuit spaghetti.³³

This brief historical overview of whale foods around the world should be sufficient to demonstrate that there is nothing permanent or innate about why some people eat whale and others do not. Americans working in the nineteenth-century oil-and-bone whaling industry could have pursued whales for food, and they could have dried the meat on board just as they dried baleen. The technological state of the whaling industry in the nineteenth century does not explain why they trimmed whale carcasses of blubber and bone and then threw the rest of the whale overboard, treating it as a by-product of the manufacturing process. Cultural unfamiliarity with whale foods and the consequent absence of a market for whale meat in home ports explain why nineteenth-century American whalers did not routinely harvest food from the whales they captured.

AMERICAN AMBIVALENCE TOWARD WHALE MEAT

AMERICAN WHALEMEN did eat whale; they just never thought of whale meat as part of a normal diet. An illustration of American ambivalence toward whales as food comes from Henry David Thoreau's account of his vacation on Cape Cod in the summer of 1855. The Pilgrims would have been proud of their Cape Cod descendants, who not only melted down stranded blackfish for the oil but also drove large schools of pilot whales ashore, stabbed them with lances, and then tried out the oil. Descriptions of blackfish drives on Cape Cod read remarkably like descriptions of the pilot-whale drives that have been conducted on the Faroe Islands for several hundred years, but with one difference. The Faroe Islanders drove whales to shore so that they could eat them. Cape Codders drove whales to shore so that they could sell the oil. Thoreau arrived at a Cape Cod beach shortly after residents had driven a pod of pilot whales ashore. Walking among the thirty dead blackfish lying in blood at the water's edge, Thoreau talked to the men as they were securing the blackfish to prevent their washing back out to sea. For Thoreau's benefit, a whale driver "slashed one with his jackknife, to show me how thick the blubber was,—about three inches; and as I passed my finger through the cut it was covered thick with oil. The blubber looked like pork, and this man said that when they were trying it the boys would sometimes come round with a piece of bread in one hand, and take a piece of blubber in the other to eat with it, preferring it to pork scraps. He also cut into the flesh beneath, which was firm and red like beef, and he said that for his part he preferred it when fresh to beef." The event made Thoreau curious enough about blackfish to do some research, and so when he wrote his Cape Cod travel account, he was able to add, "It is stated that in 1812 blackfish were used as food by the poor of Bretagne."³⁴

As much as Cape Cod whale drivers may have enjoyed dipping bread in blubber or eating fresh whale meat, they did not kill blackfish for those pleasures. Neither

Figure 1. Whale Meat Harvest.



Courtesy of the Nantucket Historical Association, P21591.

Men cut up pilot whales on Nantucket Island, Massachusetts, 1907.

did they pick out a whale and eat it that night in celebration as the Faroese might have done. Even more telling, Thoreau did not actually see anyone eat whale meat or taste it himself. The ambivalence about whales as food evident in Thoreau's story was typical of how Americans working in the whaling industry expressed their feelings about whale meat: They had eaten it and found it surprisingly palatable. But if it were palatable, why did they not eat it regularly, especially given its abundance? And if whale even tasted good on certain occasions, why was it usually eaten under duress, as in Thoreau's aside, by the *poor* in Bretagne?

As American whalers trolled the oceans in search of whale oil and bone, they halfheartedly included whale foods in shipboard diets. Because whites, American Indians, and African-Americans from the northeastern United States worked and ate alongside Cape Verdeans, native Hawaiians, and other seamen from around the world, one might expect this great ethnic diversity of American whaling crews to have revealed differences in taste that then became a cause for conversation or conflict aboard ships. However, I have yet to run across any such incident recounted in the firsthand reports of whaling experiences, admittedly most of which were written by the white, Anglo American, New Englanders celebrated in the classic histories of American whaling as the "Yankee whaler." What diversity is evident in rank or gender shows that Americans at sea were

consistently ambivalent about whales as food. In journals and memoirs of nineteenth-century deep-sea whaling, whaling officers and laborers, passengers aboard whaling vessels, and whaling captains' wives wrote frequently about food. Greenhands in the forecandle, the novices who occupied the lowest rank aboard whalers, were especially wont to complain about the scant, rotten, and worm-riddled provisions that constituted standard sailors' fare: hard bread or "sea biscuit," salt pork, salt beef, beans, rice, potatoes, molasses, coffee, duff (flour dropped in boiling salt water), pies, and puddings.³⁵ With more mixed emotions, fluctuating between disgust and braggadocio, greenhands as well as captains, passengers, and wives also admitted to culinary experimentation and in their journals and memoirs described the tastes and textures of porpoises, dolphins, Galapagos turtles, albatrosses, iguanas, seals, walruses, polar bears, and penguins. Of these exotic foods, porpoise and turtle received the highest praise in terms of taste.³⁶

Whale was the same type of food: innately foreign and potentially revolting yet often surprisingly tasty, albeit not as tasty as a Galapagos turtle. Still, eating whale constituted a quintessential moment in a whaler's life. At some point in their whaling careers, every American whaler seems to have eaten some part of a whale. Many ate whale often, in one form or another. Probably the most common whale dish during the peak years of the New England whaling industry was "doughnuts," hard bread or biscuits dipped in boiling whale oil. Doughnuts were so luxurious a treat that captains held them out to crews as the reward for spermwhaling milestones: At eight hundred or one thousand barrels of oil, the crew celebrated by feasting on doughnuts.³⁷ Less beloved but still a common food aboard whalers was pilot whale, usually served in the form of blackfish balls or pancakes. To make blackfish balls, cooks ground up pilot-whale meat, sometimes threw some salt pork into the mix, rolled it all into small balls, and fried them in oil.³⁸ To make pancakes, cooks fried pilot-whale brains, a nauseating prospect to the uninitiated but which, once tasted, proved to be delicious.³⁹ Expert whaler Charles Scammon described blackfish as being like "coarse beef." When "properly cooked," he wrote, it "is ... by no means unsavory food, and is often used by whalers as a substitute for the fresh meat of land animals."⁴⁰ Some whalers did not agree with Scammon's grudging acknowledgment of pilot whales' edibility. Like rotted beef and pork or sickly Galapagos turtles, blackfish—even when fresh from the sea—was a target of subversive defiance, as whalers snuck into galleys at night in search of the next day's dinner and gave it a "sea toast" by tossing it overboard.⁴¹

The flesh of larger whales—"whale lean," "tenderloin," and whale steaks—also found its way into whalers' stomachs as did assorted whale body parts, such as sperm-whale tongues.⁴² However, the most famous account of Yankee whale-eating, "Stubb's Supper" in *Moby Dick*, when the *Pequod's* second mate feasts enthusiastically on whale steaks, is one of Herman Melville's many moments of fanciful excess.⁴³ American whalers considered sperm whale meat the least desirable of any; by one account, a single sperm whale steak in a lifetime was enough. When American whalers ate larger whales, as they often did in the

late-nineteenth-century western Arctic, that meat usually came from right whales or bowheads.⁴⁴ In his memoir, whaling captain John Cook described some of the methods for cooking bowhead and right whale meat: “Just before the finish of the cutting in when near the tail, two large pieces of meat are usually taken out on each side of the backbone, weighing five to six hundred pounds. This tenderloin is fine eating, its color being red and looking like fresh beef. It is cooked in various ways, either fried in steaks or ground into Hamburg steak, mixed plentifully with salt pork, then the mixture made into balls and fried. The latter is the popular way of cooking it.”⁴⁵

Even though laborers in the American whaling industry ate whale flesh while on their whaling tours of duty, they never truly thought of it as “meat.” One greenhand’s journal recounted a shipboard conflict between the crew and captain over stingy meat rations distributed to the men: “Some of the crew have openly aroused determination to refuse to do duty if we do not get more! ... Must have more meat! Not enough now! ‘More meat, or no whales!’”⁴⁶ On other whaling vessels, paltry meat rations were a common complaint, while food grievances in general often led to work stoppages and, in the most extreme instances, mutinies.⁴⁷ Despite their gnawing hunger, lust for fresh meat, and disgust with worm-infested ship provisions, nineteenth-century American whalers could not bring themselves to see the bounty of whale foods, sperm whale meat especially, as the solution to meat shortages.

Indeed, no matter how regularly American whalers ate whale, they persisted in cataloging whale foods as “Rarities to which landsmen are unaccustomed.”⁴⁸ Eating whale was either part of their adventure into the exotic or was part of normal life among the primitive foreigners whom they encountered. Those who had tasted whale, which was always worth a mention in memoirs, compared it to some other meat, which the author assumed all readers had tasted and knew well. Whale blubber reminded them of pork fat. Whale meat resembled beef or venison.⁴⁹ Despite this resemblance to familiar land mammals, whale meat carried a stigma. Moreover, even though American industrial whalers ate whale meat themselves, their contacts with whale-eating peoples only reaffirmed prior prejudices against it and furthered their association of whale eating with poverty and barbarism. As the oil-and-bone industry opened up new whaling grounds, Euro-American whalers brought local people into the whale hunting workforce, and in many instances, a mutually beneficial relationship developed, in which industrial whaling vessels took the oil and bone from the whales they had jointly hunted while local people took the meat, some of the blubber, and internal organs to consume themselves.⁵⁰ Even when native people had not helped in the hunt for whales, Yankee whalers gave the extraneous whale parts away to the native people who climbed aboard their vessels seeking to satisfy their curiosity or to trade. As they disembarked from the whaler and headed toward their home shores, these native peoples from different locales around the world disappeared into the horizon, their kayaks, canoes, and junks heavily laden with whale meat.⁵¹

For many aboard American whaling vessels, this symbiotic sharing of whales—each to their own desire—bore a racial caste. As arctic explorer Charles Francis

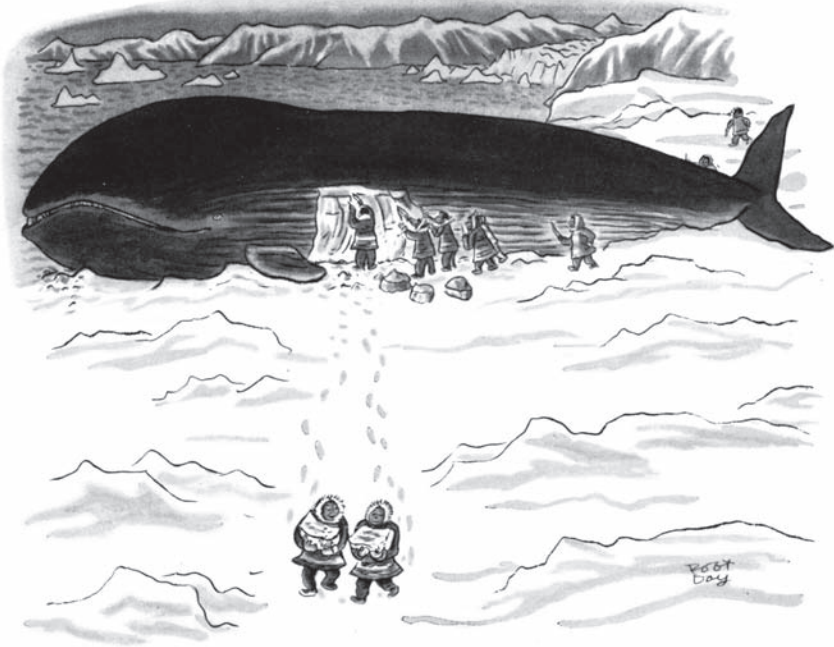
Hall described the scenes he witnessed while aboard the whaler *George Henry* out of New London, "We of the white race were proud of our victory over such a monster of the deep, and they of the darker skin were rejoiced at having aided in the capture of what would very soon give them an immense quantity of 'black skin' and 'krang' for food." Not only were whale skin and whale meat choice foods for dark-skinned people; they stood in contrast to what Hall called "civilized food ... coffee and some sea-biscuit." For Hall, Inuit mealtime was a primordial experience evocative of a dark, hellish world, in which the dark-skinned Inuit and the civilized white man gone native engorged on the black skin of whales and greedily drank up black stews made from seal's blood: "Any one fresh from civilization, if entering this igloo with me, would see a company of what he would call a dirty set of human beings, mixed up among masses of nasty, uneatable flesh, skins, blood, and bones, scattered all about the igloo. ... He would see men, women, and children—my humble self included—engaged in devouring the contents of that kettle, and he would pity the human beings who could be reduced to such necessity as to eat the horrid stuff."⁵² Other observers of natives eating whales shared Hall's disdain and avoided partaking in whale feasts while claiming to possess a constitution too refined and too white to stomach such a diet; a meal spent with native populations on their own terms could be "trying on a Caucasian's olfactory nerves."⁵³

Given nineteenth-century American whalers' ambivalence about eating whales, the failure of an international market in whale meat to emerge should come as no surprise. In the late-nineteenth century, arctic whalers made some attempt to manufacture and sell whale foods: They preserved *maktak* in a stew of "pickle and spice" and sold the mixture in San Francisco, where one arctic whaler recalled seeing "many a man eat it in a bar-room in the days of free lunch, and wonder what it might be."⁵⁴ However, pickled whale skin and blubber did not catch on, and few nineteenth-century Americans, excluding those with firsthand whaling experience, ever tasted whale.

Twentieth-century Americans similarly remained reluctant to eat whales, despite two novel attempts to normalize whale meat in the American diet. The first effort occurred around the time of World War I and had several champions: industrial whaling companies seeking buyers for whale products; the United States government, inspired by fears of wartime food shortages; and popular naturalist and adventurer Roy Chapman Andrews. One former arctic whaler commented dryly in a memoir published around the same time, "We have recently been asked to eat it [whale meat], as if that were a new idea. And the newspapers have had their short articles, or perhaps a column, carefully timed, telling us how good it is, and that it is getting to be quite the fashion at New York hotels, and that some firm in Oregon has been asked to put up a million or two cans of it.... [but] It did not seem to be in any great demand."⁵⁵

This public relations blitz in defense of whale foods failed, but not for lack of ingenuity. The federal government sponsored a flurry of pamphlets and magazine articles lauding the virtues of whale meat, fresh or canned, and at the same time made available recipes for "Stuffed Roast Whale," "Whale Croquettes," "Whale a

Figure 2. "Now, If We Only Had a Bottle of Good White Wine."



"Now, if we only had a bottle of good white wine."

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The humor of this cartoon relies on the juxtaposition of civilized and savage foods.

la Mode," and "Minced Whale with Scrambled Eggs," all intended to persuade the American housewife to cook with it.⁵⁶ Roy Chapman Andrews also found creative ways to advertise whale meat's desirability; his employer, the American Museum of Natural History in New York City, held a whale banquet in the museum's basement restaurant, where arctic explorers, government food agency representatives, and other luminaries gathered to eat assorted whale dishes prepared by a chef from Delmonico's.⁵⁷ The style of Andrews' promotions, however, likely doomed whale meat's acceptability. His magazine articles and books on whale hunting emphasized the picturesque, ethnographic qualities of people who ate whales regularly, and he referred to whale-eating peoples, such as the Japanese, as "Too poor to buy beef."⁵⁸ Contextualizing whale meat as an affordable substitute for beef only would have furthered American prejudices against it, substantiating its existing image as a food fit for the poor and uncivilized. Moreover, eating whale meat in a natural history museum, the repository for ethnographic displays of the world's exotic others, recreated in microcosm the experiences of nineteenth-century American whalers, who regarded all aspects of their whaling voyages, food included, as an extraordinary adventure that took them out of the normal, everyday American environment.

The second campaign for whale meat was the brainchild of Norwegian whaling entrepreneurs who promoted "Capt. Seth's Frozen Tenderloin Norwegian Whale

Steak” and other whale products in eastern cities in the 1950s.⁵⁹ This effort promised to be more successful than the earlier one because, instead of feeding the American public’s existing prejudices against whale meat as food for poor people, it targeted well-to-do Americans’ desire for new tastes and exotic pleasures. Marketing new foods to elites in anticipation of creating tastes that would then trickle down to the masses had worked for other foods, such as the avocado.⁶⁰ However, in this instance, the only impact seems to have been hilarity as whale meat became fodder for *New Yorker* cartoons and humorous human-interest stories in magazines and newspapers. Like their nineteenth-century predecessors employed in the whaling industry, twentieth-century Euro-Americans saw no reason to eat whales if they had beef and pork aplenty.

SAVE THE WHALES

IN THE SUMMER of 2002, a pod of more than fifty pilot whales stranded on the shores of Cape Cod Bay.⁶¹ Members of the Cape Cod Stranding Network and other Cape residents rushed to the beach, not to lance the whales to death but to save them. The gathered crowd tenderly covered the whales in blankets and doused them with water while preparing to push the whales back out to sea. Alas, the galvanized community’s efforts proved fruitless since the pod stranded again further up the Cape, and nearly all the whales eventually died. A national media extravaganza for 2002, the stranding and subsequent rescue attempt dramatized the remarkable reversal in sentiment toward whales that had occurred, not just on Cape Cod but throughout the world. The grampuses and blackfish of previous centuries had been prey, unequivocally, driven deliberately to shore where they could be conveniently slaughtered. By the 1930s, as the manufacturing of blackfish oil died out on Cape Cod, Cape residents had come to regard stranded whales mainly as unsightly, smelly waste-disposal problems.⁶² Then, after fifty years out of the public eye, on Cape Cod and elsewhere, stranded whales reemerged in the popular imagination as objects of great fascination, but with a twist. No longer manifestations of human desire and oil fortunes, no longer garbage littering the beaches, stranded whales had become piteous creatures in need of human protection.⁶³

Environmentalist organizations intent on saving whales sprung up around the globe beginning around 1970. Some declared war on Faroese pilot whale drives; others sent dinghies into frigid seas to battle against Soviet and Japanese whaling factory ships.⁶⁴ Simultaneously, save-the-whales ideology transformed international regulatory agencies and United States environmental policies. In the first half of the twentieth century, international discussion of whaling issues had involved industrial whaling nations in efforts to conserve whales as an exploitable resource: Whales were the produce of whale fisheries. The landmark League of Nations “Convention for the Regulation of Whaling” (1931) and the subsequent “International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling” (1946), which established the International Whaling Commission (IWC), articulated procedures for regulating whaling among signatory nations and led to such measures as a quota system for distributing whales among member whaling

nations and setting prohibitions against hunting any whale species identified as endangered. In 1982, the IWC made the transition from whale conservation to whale preservation when a majority of the participating nations voted for a moratorium on the hunting of all large whales.⁶⁵

Despite the United States' moribund whaling industry, its status as global superpower gave U.S. representatives a dominant voice in international whaling regulation. During World War II, the United States proposed the whale conservation meeting that led to the IWC's founding, and then several decades later, the United States initiated and lobbied for passage of the moratorium that would come to symbolize the transformation from whale conservation to whale preservation.⁶⁶ At home, U.S. legislators further promoted whale preservation by passing the U.S. Marine Mammal Protection Act in 1972, which committed various agencies of the federal government to protect and manage whales and other marine mammals.

Since most Americans had not embraced whale eating in the days when whales were prey, the growing compassion for whales since the 1970s only added to whales' perceived illegitimacy as food. Whale eaters, like smokers loitering outside of office buildings, increasingly found themselves in a defensive position. They could not eat whales in peace as their ancestors may have done but now had to justify their taste for whales before a global community that deemed eating whales unnecessary, even irrational. Twentieth-century international agreements had acknowledged that the many uses for whales included human food consumption. However, instead of dividing the world into whale-eating peoples and non-whale-eating peoples, international whaling agreements and U.S. legislation acted within the same dichotomous frameworks deployed in other international contexts—dichotomies that may have fit the oil-and-bone industry but which failed to incorporate the viewpoints of whale-eating peoples. Thus, whale hunting was either commercial or for subsistence, industrial or aboriginal, implicitly either civilized or primitive.

The combination of the IWC moratorium, the U.S. Marine Mammal Protection Act, and other whaling policies constituted what appeared to be a global mandate for ending all whaling worldwide. The minority of the world's peoples who hunted whales for food were now left with only a few avenues open to them. Those people who could be most easily conceptualized as aboriginal peoples hunting whales for subsistence usually had their rights protected but at a cost—they had to conform to outsiders' perceptions of what traits constituted aboriginality. The first international whaling convention articulated the prejudices behind aboriginal exceptions most bluntly by requiring that "aborigines" when hunting could "only use canoes, pirogues or other exclusively native craft propelled by oars or sails." They could not use guns, not work for non-aboriginal employers, and not "deliver the products of their whaling to any third person." Later international agreements retracted the provisions limiting aboriginal whale hunters to primitive technology. This was in part for the whales' sake since the greater efficiency of guns and motorboats resulted in a higher success ratio with fewer wounded or killed whales lost to hunters.⁶⁷

Otherwise, however, international whaling regulations and U.S. whaling policies conceived of “aborigines” as local, living in kin-based (not market) economies, and traditional in their cultural practices. For example, the Marine Mammal Protection Act clause that allowed Pacific coast and Alaskan natives to hunt and consume whales required that their purpose be “for subsistence” and “not accomplished in a wasteful manner”; that whale foods could only “be sold in native villages and towns in Alaska or for native consumption”; and that “only authentic native articles of handicrafts and clothing [made from marine mammal parts] may be sold in interstate commerce,” with “authentic” being further defined as objects made “wholly or in some significant respect of natural materials, and which are produced, decorated, or fashioned in the exercise of traditional native handicrafts without the use of pantographs, multiple carvers, or other mass copying devices.” Finally, the Act gave the Secretary of the Interior oversight over native whale hunting.⁶⁸

When the IWC banned all bowhead taking in 1977 to prevent their extinction, U.S. representatives acted promptly to assert the cultural and subsistence needs of Alaska’s native bowhead hunters. The controversy culminated in greater U.S. supervision over native whale hunting and an IWC resolution to consider “the needs of aboriginal people who are dependent upon whales for nutritional, subsistence and cultural purposes.”⁶⁹ Now treated as a distinct category by the IWC, “aboriginal subsistence whaling” wallows in a definitional quagmire where its implications fester.⁷⁰ “Aboriginal” whale eating is contingent on aboriginals’ separation from the world economy, and if they ever moved out of the category of “subsistence,” with its connotations of poverty and marginality, then they presumably would eat the same meats as everybody else.

Antiwhaling member nations of the IWC, such as the United States and Denmark, protected aboriginal hunting within their political jurisdictions, but industrialized nations that whaled for food found little satisfaction at annual IWC meetings.⁷¹ Industrial whale hunters, such as the Japanese, spawned more international protests, probably because their whale hunting breached the familiar categories. Indisputably industrial and commercial, Japanese whaling for food was an oxymoron to people who associated whale eating with poverty and primitiveness, even more oxymoronic in light of Japan’s miracle economy of the 1980s. When U.S. legislators met to discuss the merits and consequences of urging the IWC to support the full ban on industrial whaling, they quickly dismissed as unnecessary the use of whale meat in pet food and on Soviet mink farms by concluding that manufacturers of animal foods could find substitutes; more of a stumbling block to the moratorium’s successful passage, however, was the problem of Japanese whale consumption and the extent to which the Japanese would object to substituting other meats in its stead. Supporters of the moratorium testifying before Congress—most of whom belonged to environmental organizations working for whale conservation—rallied a host of reasons why whales should not be hunted, even for food: whales were intelligent animals with complex communication abilities; whales were fellow-mammals with much to teach humans about living in the ocean; whales *could* be a vast food reserve, if

absolutely necessary, but should be saved for when necessity required it; and eating some whale species was dangerous because of high mercury levels. According to various Americans who testified before Congress (but not according to lobbyists sent by Japan's Institute of Cetacean Research), even the Japanese did not like eating whale much anymore and had become less dependent on it as a source of protein.⁷²

As tensions at IWC meetings mounted over passage of the moratorium and as some nations dropped out of the international forum while others lodged formal objections and continued whaling, Japan stayed in as a fully active member nation. Seeing the possible extinction of certain whales as a reasonable cause for prohibitions, the Japanese hoped to restore the IWC's function to fishery conservation. Its unhappy representatives faithfully attended the annual meetings, railed against the "whale huggers" who had taken over the organization, and accused the United States of spearheading an Anglo-world conspiracy to make cow-eating appear more humane than whale-eating. They characterized that conspiracy as deriving from "culinary Imperialism," "Anglo-Saxon Ethnocentrism," and "racial discrimination."⁷³ That the United States and IWC sanctioned Inuit hunts of endangered bowheads in the name of tradition while decrying Japanese hunting of minke and other whales with thriving populations seemed a great hypocrisy to whaling constituencies in Japan, but it also explains why the English-language literature of Japan's pro-whaling lobbyists increasingly has contextualized Japanese whaling as an ancient and vital cultural tradition: if aboriginals have a cultural imperative to hunt endangered bowheads, why should not Japanese whaling be similarly accepted as an inherent cultural right?⁷⁴ Such an approach, however, likely will fail to resonate with those committed to viewing aboriginals as bound to tradition and the modern world of industry and commerce as tradition-free. Despite the IWC moratorium, Japanese whaling continued under IWC provisions for scientific research and other IWC exceptions that allowed whales caught by accident in fishing nets to be distributed as food. Scientific research and fishing-net accidents sustain Japanese access to whale foods while avoiding conflicts with Japan's image as a modern, industrialized nation.

From the perspective of whale eaters, the as-yet-unanswered question is why are whales so special? If whale meat looks and tastes like beef and whale blubber resembles pork fat, and if eating cows and pigs are not immoral acts outraging an international majority, then why castigate the Faroese for eating pilot whales and the Japanese for their *sashimi*? Unfortunately, the three schools of anthropological theory mentioned at the start of this essay fail to provide a satisfying explanation for variations in people's perceptions of whales' palatability. These theories aim to find the universal truth underlying all human attitudes to food; instead, the theories seem to fit some of the world's people but not all. Thus, it could be said that the liminality of whales makes them special: Whales are sea mammals. Perhaps liminality did cause Anglo-Americans to develop their whale food aversion. They do seem to have been especially struck by how meat akin to beef and pork came from the ocean. Interestingly, the Japanese pro-whaling literature insists that in Japanese cultural traditions, whales

have always been regarded as a type of fish, and so in other words, not liminal, not confounding easy categorization.⁷⁵ Perhaps liminality is the answer to taste preferences, but if so, what explains the variations in how people taxonomize the natural world?

There is also some support for the theory that humans avoid eating whales because they are reluctant to eat things that remind them of themselves. The problem with this theory, however, is that human empathy for whales is a recent phenomenon. After several hundred years of not eating whales and concurrent with the rise in save-the-whales ideology, many Americans discovered in the songs of humpback whales and elsewhere an anthropomorphic respect for whale intelligence.⁷⁶ Moreover, whale-eating peoples, such as the Japanese, can claim to have greater empathy for whales by describing them as part of a holistic spiritual world in which hunters thank whales for offering themselves up for human sustenance.⁷⁷

Anthropological theory number three—that food tastes and aversions come from involuntary and unconscious physiological need—also might lend insight into the history of whale eating but, again, not in a way that fully satisfies all human experiences with whales as food. Whales, it might be argued, became especially important to the Inuits and the Japanese because geographic constraints (the frigid cold of arctic climes and Japan's shortage of arable and grazing land) heightened the value of whales as a source of protein and other nutrients. However, nutrition alone cannot explain why whale-eaters do not want to give it up. When the IWC first banned and then, at U.S. insistence, investigated Inuit bowhead hunting, researchers determined that bowheads were not a unique nutritional resource: Although rich in nutrients, a bowhead diet could be replicated by other foods and vitamin supplements. However, the cultural significance of bowheads in Inuit life was irreplaceable.⁷⁸ Perhaps food tastes do originate in the interplay between a body's needs and the foods available in any particular environment, but if so, this rapprochement between humans and their environments must develop very slowly: The twentieth-century Inuits and Japanese did not embrace the prospect of substituting other foods for whale meat, while nineteenth-century American whalers could not see in whale foods a happy antidote to their paltry, rotten sea rations.

No single theory promising a universal explanation can suffice probably because food tastes and aversions have too complicated a history. Moreover, that history is social, not solely cultural or physiological in its scope. Except for Indians along North America's ocean coasts, most Americans had no cultural tradition of eating whales, and then, when the American whaling industry made possible a plentiful supply of whale foods, there was no incentive for Americans to accustom themselves to the strange new tastes and textures whale meat presented. Indeed, it could be said that Americans had disincentives. The Yankee whalers who ate whale regularly—even those who claimed to like the taste of it—resolutely believed that their whale-eating experiences were temporary, unusual, and foreign. Whalers at sea ate curious foods but once on land expected to return to the foods they dreamed of during their deprivation. And the primitive others

whalemen met in the exotic places they found whales—the many and varied native peoples who with such enthusiastic anticipation loaded up their junks, canoes, and kayaks with whale meat—only served to draw the line between them more boldly.

Although seemingly a benign disagreement, these enduring food preferences have the potential to disrupt international coalitions aimed at sustainable resource development and raise questions about the cultural derivation and power dynamics of environmental ethics. Nearly paralyzed by anti-whaling environmental activism, the IWC appears increasingly inefficient at fulfilling its mandate to set policies for international whaling regulation. Since its inception, the IWC had fallen short as an international regulatory agency anyhow, since it never could lay claim to having all whaling nations among its members. However, the divisiveness over the fundamental purpose of whaling regulation—preservation and protection of whale populations versus their conservation and sustainable use—has weakened the policymaking body's mission to build international consensus. Although the preservation versus conservation divide is a feature in nearly all environmental debates, it has been especially charged in the case of whaling because some people have historically regarded whales as food while others saw whales only as a way to make money. People who think of whales as money might be persuaded that poor people need to eat whales to prevent starvation, but they cannot appreciate as rational the choice to eat whales as a taste preference.

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NOTES

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 24. [Milton M. R. Freeman, ed.], *Small-Type Coastal Whaling in Japan: Report of an International Workshop*, Boreal Institute for Northern Studies Occasional Publication Number 27 (Edmonton, Alberta: Boreal Institute, 1988), 4, 66-73, 90-100; Arne Kalland and Brian Moeran, *Japanese Whaling, End of an Era?* (London: Curzon, 1992), 28-29, 37, 39, 145; Masami Iwasaki-Goodman, "An Analysis of Social and Cultural Change in Ayukawa-Hama (Ayukawa Shore Community)," (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Alberta, 1994), 103-104; Nicol, *Ayukawa*; Masayuki Komatsu and Shigeo Misaki, *Whales and the Japanese: How We Have Come to Live in Harmony with the Bounty of the Sea* (Tokyo: Institute of Cetacean Research, 2003), 56-58, 125, 131, 160-61; and Leonard Harrison Matthews, *The Whale* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968), 226-27.
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 26. Kalland and Moeran, *Japanese Whaling*, 70, 100, 147; and Tønnessen and Johnsen, *History of Modern Whaling*, 662-63.
 27. Komatsu and Misaki, *Whales and the Japanese*, 18; and Yutaka Hirasawa, "The Whaling Industry in Japan's Economy," in *The Whaling Issue in U.S.-Japan Relations*, ed. John R. Schmidhauser and George O. Totten III (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1978), 82-114.
 28. Stoker and Krupnik, "Subsistence Whaling," 614-15; and Jackson, *British Whaling Trade*, 166.
 29. Randall R. Reeves, "The Origins and Character of 'Aboriginal Subsistence' Whaling: A Global Review," *Mammal Review* 32 (2002): 71-106. On the West Indies, see John Edward Adams, "Historical Geography of Whaling in Bequia Island, West Indies," *Caribbean Studies* 11 (1971): 55-74; and Lois King Winn and Howard E. Winn, *Wings in the Sea: The Humpback Whale* (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1985), 123-27. On the Tonga Islands, see William Dawbin, "Whaling and Its Impact on the People of the South Pacific," in *South Pacific Islands*, ed. Peter Stanbury and Lydia Bushell (Sydney, Australia: Macleay Museum, 1984), 77-90.
 30. Ambroise Paré, *The Collected Works of Ambroise Paré*, trans. Thomas Johnson (1634; reprint, Pound Ridge, N.Y.: Milford House, 1968), 1012; Ellis, *Men and Whales*, 44; and Frank Hawley, *Miscellanea Japonica II: Being Occasional Contributions to Japanese Studies. Whales and Whaling in Japan*, (Kyoto, Japan: by author, 1958), 140-43.
 31. Reeves, "Aboriginal Whaling," 93; Sam Howe Verhovek, "After the Hunt, Bitter Protest and Salty Blubber," *The New York Times*, 19 May 1999, A14; and Robert Sullivan, *A Whale Hunt* (New York: Scribner, 2000).
 32. Komatsu and Misaki, *Whales and the Japanese*, 66.

33. Jolles, *Faith, Food, and Family*, 41.
34. Henry David Thoreau, *Cape Cod* (1864; reprint, Orleans, Mass.: Parnassus Imprints, 1984), 166.
35. On whalemens' diet, see Goode, ed., *Fisheries and Fishery Industries*, "The Whale-Fishery," 228; and William C. Paddack, *Life on the Ocean, or Thirty-Five Years at Sea, being the Personal Adventures of the Author* (Cambridge, Mass.: Riverside Press, 1893), 21. For complaints about the same, see Ben-Ezra Stiles Ely, "There She Blows:" A Narrative of a Whaling Voyage, in the Indian and South Atlantic Oceans, ed. Curtis Dahl (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1971), 9; and James A. Rogers, *Journal of Whaling Voyage of Ship Mentor of New London* (New Bedford, Mass.: Reynolds, [n.d.]), entry for 15 November 1840.
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37. Eight hundred barrels: Kevin S. Reilly, ed., *The Journal of George Attwater: Before the Mast on the Whaleship Henry of New Haven, 1820-1823* (New Haven, Conn.: New Haven Colony Historical Society, 2002), 223; One thousand barrels: Olmsted, *Incidents of a Whaling Voyage*, 65-66; and Joan Druett, ed., "She Was a Sister Sailor": *The Whaling Journals of Mary Brewster, 1845-1851* (Mystic, Conn.: Mystic Seaport Museum, 1992), 108.
38. "Six Months Outward Bound: John Jones, Steward, 1852," in *Meditations from Steerage: Two Whaling Journal Fragments*, ed., Stuart M. Frank, Kendall Whaling Museum Monograph Series, #7 (Sharon, Mass.: Kendall Whaling Museum, 1991), 16.
39. Reilly, *Journal of George Attwater*, 384; J. Ross Browne, *Etchings of a Whaling Cruise*, ed. John Seelye (1846; reprint, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), 63; and Robert Coffin, *The Last of the Logan: The True Adventures of Robert Coffin Mariner in the Years 1854 to 1859 wherein are set forth His Pursuit of the Whale, his Shipwreck on Rapid Reef, his Life Among the Cannibals of Fiji, and his Search for Gold in Australia, as Told by Himself and Now First Published*, ed. Harold W. Thompson (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1941), 48.
40. Scammon, *Marine Mammals*, 87.
41. Reilly, *Journal of George Attwater*, 81, 129, 319. On rotten beef thrown overboard, see Paddack, *Life on the Ocean*, 91; and George A. Dodge, *A Whaling Voyage in the Pacific Ocean and its Incidents*, ed. Kenneth R. Martin (Fairfield, Wash.: Ye Galleon Press, 1981), 14.

42. For "whale lean," see Reilly, *Journal of George Attwater*, 400. On sperm whale tongue, see Olmsted, *Incidents of a Whaling Voyage*, 92. On tenderloin and tongues, see Bodfish, *Chasing the Bowhead*, 93.
43. Herman Melville, *Moby Dick; or the Whale* (1851; reprint, New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), ch. 64.
44. Hopkins, *She Blows!*, 48.
45. John A. Cook, *Pursuing the Whale: A Quarter-Century of Whaling in the Arctic* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1926), 40.
46. Enoch Carter Cloud, *Enoch's Voyage: Life on a Whaleship, 1851-1854*, ed. Elizabeth McLean (Wakefield, R.I.: Moyer Bell, 1994), 279.
47. On work stoppages, see Briton Cooper Busch, "Whaling Will Never Do for Me": *The American Whaleman in the Nineteenth Century* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1994), 54-56. On meat as the cause of a work boycott and eventual mutiny, see Paddock, *Life on the Ocean*, 93-94. The infamous *Globe* mutiny also had cuts in meat rations as a cause: See Thomas Farel Heffernan, *Mutiny on the Globe: The Fatal Voyage of Samuel Comstock* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2002), 55, 224.
48. This is how Washington Chase summarized his account of eating whale stews, whale steaks, right whale lips, and blackfish stew, in *A Voyage from the United States to South America, Performed During the Years 1821, 1822, & 1823, Embracing a Description of the City of Rio Janeiro [orig], in Brazil; of Every Port of Importance in Chili; of Several in Lower Peru; and of an Eighteen Months Cruise in a Nantucket Whaleship* (Newburyport, Mass.: Herald Press, 1823), 71.
49. Scammon, *Marine Mammals*, 18. On whale steaks, see Dodge, *Whaling Voyage in the Pacific Ocean*, 15.
50. Bodfish, *Chasing the Bowhead*, 235. See also Eber, *When the Whalers Were Up North*; John R. Bockstoce, *Whales, Ice, and Men: The History of Whaling in the Western Arctic* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1986), 180-254; and Stevenson, *Inuit, Whalers, and Cultural Persistence*.
51. On Junks, see Cloud, *Enoch's Voyage*, 133-34. On canoes, see Bullen, *Cruise of the Cachalot*, 255-58; and Cook, *Pursuing the Whale*, 31, 180. On kayaks, see Robert Ferguson, *Arctic Harpooner: A Voyage on the Schooner Abbie Bradford, 1878-1879*, ed. Leslie Dalrymple Stair (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1938), 27. Similar exchanges occurred in the West Indies, recounted in Herman A. Jennings, *Provincetown or, Odds and Ends from the Tip End* (Yarmouthport, Mass.: Fred. Hallett, 1890), 91. On native Hawaiians taking sperm whale meat, see John M. Bullard, ed., *Captain Edmund Gardner of Nantucket and New Bedford: His Journal and His Family* (New Bedford, Mass.: Bullard, 1958), 34-35.
52. Hall, *Life with the Esquimaux*, 109, 265, 476-77.
53. "Mr. Petroff," in Goode, ed., *Fisheries and Fishery Industries*, 62. For comments on Inuit whale eating as pitiable and poverty-induced, see Jenness, "Azubah Cash's Whaling Days," 7.
54. Bodfish, *Chasing the Bowhead*, 92-93.
55. Hopkins, *She Blows!*, 48.
56. Bureau of Fisheries, U.S. Department of Commerce, "Whales and Porpoises as Food, With Thirty-Two Recipes," Economic Circular No. 38 (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office 1918), 3-4, 6-7; Edward T. Martin, "Whale Beef and Whales," *Scientific American Supplement* 85, #2193 (12 January 1918), 23; C. H. Claudy, "The Whale as a Food Factor: Sea-Grown Meat That Compares Favorably With Beef," *Scientific American* 118 (9 March 1918), 208-09; and "Whale Meat Approved by the American Public: The Probabilities of Its Ultimate Acceptance and the Advantages Thereof" *Scientific American* 119 (16 November 1918), 338. For the cooperative marketing efforts of private whaling companies and the U.S. and Canadian governments, see Robert Lloyd Webb,

- On the Northwest: Commercial Whaling in the Pacific Northwest, 1790-1967* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 1988), 233-34.
57. "Whale Meat Lunch to Boost New Food," *The New York Times*, 9 February 1918, 22.
 58. Roy Chapman Andrews, "Shore-whaling: A World Industry," *National Geographic* 22 (May 1911): 425, 442; and Roy Chapman Andrews, *Whale Hunting with Gun and Camera: A Naturalist's Account of the Modern Shore-whaling Industry, of Whales and their Habits, and of Hunting Experiences in Various Parts of the World* (1916; reprint, New York: D. Appleton, 1928), 86.
 59. "In Butter," in "The Talk of the Town," *The New Yorker* 27 (5 January 1952): 15-16; and Herbert Mitgang, "From Whaler to Platter," *The New York Times*, 14 November 1954, 34, 37. Also, in the 1940s and 1950s—as had happened in World War I—World War II and the Cold War spawned more interest in whale meat in Europe and the United States based on its affordability: See Barbara Squier Adler, "'Thar She Broils!'" *The New York Times*, 15 April 1951, 71, 73. Into the 1960s, specialty markets continued to carry whale meat, advertised alongside bear, buffalo, wild turkeys, and "suckling pigs"; see, for example, Maryland Market advertisement, *The New York Times*, 26 December 1963, 30.
 60. Warren Belasco and Philip Scranton, eds., *Food Nations: Selling Taste in Consumer Societies* (New York: Routledge, 2002), especially Jeffrey Charles, "Searching for Gold in Guacamole: California Growers Market the Avocado, 1910-1994," 131-54.
 61. Doug Fraser, "Whale Pod Strands Again; Most Perish," 31 July 2002; Doug Fraser, "A Century Ago, Cape Codders Hunted Whales," 1 August, 2002; *Cape Cod Times*, www.CapeCodonline.com/archives/; "56 Pilot Whales Die," *CBSNEWS.com* (30 July 2002), www.cbsnews.com/stories/2002/07/29/tech/main516748.shtml.
 62. Mary Heaton Vorse, *Time and the Town: A Provincetown Chronicle*, ed. Adele Heller (1942; reprint, New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1991), 304-307, 317, 322.
 63. By the early 1980s, rescuing stranded whales became common on Cape Cod; "Many Stranded Whales Die on Cape Cod," *The New York Times*, 24 December 1983, 8; "Volunteers Mobilizing to Save Stranded Whales," *The New York Times*, 18 October 1987, 55; "Stranded Whales Freed on Cape Cod," *The New York Times*, 30 September 1991, 15; and John Leaning, "Stranding Network Earns Its Stripes," *Cape Cod Times*, www.CapeCodonline.com/archives/. For how attitudes have changed since the early 1970s, see David M. Lavigne, Victor B. Scheffer, and Stephen B. Kellert, "The Evolution of North American Attitudes toward Marine Mammals," in *Conservation and Management of Marine Mammals*, ed. John R. Twiss, Jr. and Randall R. Reeves (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1999), 10-47.
 64. For Faroe Island protests, see Sanderson, "Grind," 196-97. For the Greenpeace anti-whaling campaign, see Robert Hunter, *Warriors of the Rainbow: A Chronicle of the Greenpeace Movement* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1979); and Kieran Mulvaney, *The Whaling Season: An Inside Account of the Struggle to Stop Commercial Whaling* (Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 2003).
 65. Patricia Birnie, ed., *International Regulation of Whaling: From Conservation of Whaling to Conservation of Whales and Regulation of Whale-Watching*, 2 vols. (New York: Oceana, 1985); on the resolutions of the two conventions, see 2: 679-724. On the IWC's conservation years, see J. L. McHugh, "The Role and History of the International Whaling Commission," in *The Whale Problem: A Status Report*, ed. William E. Schevill (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), 305-35. On the IWC's recent history, see Robert L. Friedheim, ed., *Toward a Sustainable Whaling Regime* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001).
 66. On U.S. instigation and promotion of the moratorium, see Tønnessen and Johnsen, *History of Modern Whaling*, 674-77; Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *International Moratorium of Ten Years on the Killing of All Species of Whales*, 92nd

- Congress, 1st sess., 26 July 1971; Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Preparations for the 32d International Whaling Commission Meeting*, 96th Congress, 2nd sess., 30 April and 20 May 1980; Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Review of the 32d International Whaling Commission Meeting*, 96th Congress, 2nd sess., 10 September 1980; Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Protection of Whales*, 97th Congress, 1st sess., 16 June 1981; and Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Review of the 33d International Whaling Commission Meeting*, 97th Cong., 1st sess., 22 September 1981.
67. "Convention for the Regulation of Whaling, Signed at Geneva, September 24th, 1931," and "International Agreements for the Regulation of Whaling" (1946) in Birnie, ed., *International Regulation of Whaling*, 2: 682, 697.
 68. "The Marine Mammal Protection Act as Amended by Public Law 97-58, 97th Congress, H.R. 4084, October 9, 1981," in Birnie, ed., *International Regulation of Whaling*, 2: 937.
 69. "Resolution Concerning Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling," in Birnie, ed., *International Regulation of Whaling*, 2: 794; and Donovan, *Aboriginal/Subsistence Whaling*. Also see U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service, *International Whaling Commission's Deletion of Native Exemption for the Subsistence Harvest of Bowhead Whales* (October 1977).
 70. Discussions of the term's imprecision can be found in Milton M. R. Freeman, "Is Money the Root of the Problem?: Cultural Conflicts in the IWC," in Friedheim, *Toward a Sustainable Whaling Regime*, 126-30; Reeves, "Aboriginal Whaling," 76-77; and Nancy Doubleday, "Arctic Whales: Sustaining Indigenous Peoples and Conserving Arctic Resources," in Freeman and Kreuter, *Elephants and Whales*, 241-61.
 71. For Denmark, see Caulfield, *Greenlanders, Whales, and Whaling*.
 72. For examples, see Congress, *International Moratorium*, 15, 23, 32-34, 50; however, the same issues came up at all the House hearings on the moratorium (see note 66). The Institute of Cetacean Research sent a lobbyist to argue for Japan's use of whales as food to House hearings held in 1980 and 1981, the years immediately preceding the IWC's vote for the moratorium in 1982.
 73. Masayuki Komatsu and Shigeo Misaki, *The Truth Behind the Whaling Dispute* (n.p., 2001), 92; Calvin Sims, "Japan, Feasting on Whale, Sniffs at 'Culinary Imperialism' of U.S.," *The New York Times*, 10 August 2000, A1, A8; Colin Nickerson, "Japanese Whalers Take on Greenpeace, assail 'Ecofascists,'" *Boston Globe*, 11 May 1993, 2.
 74. Komatsu and Misaki, *Whales and the Japanese*; Institute of Cetacean Research, *Japanese Whaling: Its Roots and Living Tradition* (Tokyo: Institute of Cetacean Research, 2003).
 75. Komatsu and Misaki, *Whales and the Japanese*, 54. Similarly, explanations of medieval European whale-eating often mention how whale passed for fish and thus could be eaten on fish days prescribed by the Christian faith; Ellis, *Men and Whales*, 44.
 76. Roger Payne's 1970 sound recording *Songs of the Humpback Whale* was the popular means by which this belief in humpback intelligence spread. For overviews of the romanticized whale in popular culture, see Arne Kalland, "Whose Whale is That? Diverting the Commodity Path," in Freeman and Kreuter, *Elephants and Whales*, 162-63; and Freeman and Kellert, "International Attitudes."
 77. Komatsu and Misaki, *Whales and the Japanese*, 34, 38.
 78. Donovan, *Aboriginal/Subsistence Whaling*, 7, 23-31, 43.