

PHILOSOPHY 105

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FUNCTIONAL FOODS & CULTURED MEAT

WHAT ARE FUNCTIONAL FOODS?

Functional Food:

a food-based product that provides a demonstrable physiological benefit beyond its dietary or nutritional value.

PROBLEMS WITH FUNCTIONAL FOODS

1. Efficacy
2. Treating food as medicinal
3. Market forces

EFFICACY

1. They don't work very well
2. When they do work, their health & nutritional benefits are less significant than their advocates would have us believe
 - However, functional foods present simple and effective ways of addressing the effects of otherwise significant and complex underlying problems

FOOD AS MEDICINE

1. Functional Foods blur the line between food and medicine
2. Very poor regulatory oversight for food as compared to medicine (502)
3. The current burden of proof placed on the consumer to demonstrate a product is unsafe is unfair and unreasonable

THE ROLE OF THE MARKET

1. It is in the interest of the food market to make us eat more than we need
2. It is in the interest of the food market to fortify or otherwise process food to add value for which it can charge higher prices
 - fortified OJ, rice, etc.
 - markets and the interests of public health are compatible so long as no greater harms are inflicted, capacities diminished, or rights abused
3. Market mechanisms are "fickle"
 - markets are not designed to solve health problems
 - the interests of the market do not coincide with public health interests

commercial interests have the potential to transform how we eat and how we care for ourselves, yet the very future of food is in the hands of those who may not have our best interests in mind. That may be the most important thing wrong with functional foods. (Kaplan, 185)

MEAT WITHOUT ANIMALS

TECHNOLOGY CAN CREATE & SOLVE MORAL PROBLEMS

- New technologies raise moral questions that did not exist prior to the technological discovery
 - Organ transplantation
 - In vitro fertilization & stem cell research
- New technologies can resolve moral issues



POSITIVE FEATURES OF CULTURED MEAT

- Lower environmental impact than beef cattle
- Reduced land use
- Reduced animal suffering

NEGATIVE FEATURES OF CULTURED MEAT

- Higher environmental impact than eschewing meat altogether
- It's 'unnatural'

WHEN IS MEAT MEAT?

- Is cultured meat vegan? vegetarian?

