

# Booklist

Advanced Review – Uncorrected Proof

Issue: March 1, 2018

## **Milk!: A 10,000-Year Food Fracas.**

Kurlansky, Mark (Author)

May 2018. 384 p. Bloomsbury, hardcover, \$29. (9781632863829). 641.3.

The author of *Salt* (2002) and *Cod* (1997) tackles another staple food in this chatty history of milk and some of the many products made from it. He makes a convincing case that milk, both that produced by human mothers and that supplied by a surprising array of other mammals, is one of the most controversial foodstuffs around. On the human front, he discusses thousands of years of debate as to whether breastfeeding or formula is preferable, sidetracking into the role of wet nurses over the ages. In the animal kingdom, he explores why cows have become the preferred source of milk and ventures into more recent controversies, such as whether organic milk is superior. Cheese, yogurt, and ice cream receive rapt attention, and Kurlansky indulges in dozens of recipes, both palatable (Jamaican banana ice cream) and less so (“pudding in wine and guts” and Richard Nixon’s infamous “recipe” for cottage cheese mixed with ketchup). Kurlansky’s wide-ranging curiosity makes a familiar topic seem exotic.

— *Margaret Quamme*