

T.O.F.U.

T.O.F.U. MAGAZINE

there is an alternative | issue 8 | february 2015

Selling **Sex**

Are we selling out, even if
it's *for the animals?*



Carol J. Adams and others share their thoughts. Plus, recipes and plenty more articles.

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Credits

Totally and Obviously Fucked Up (T.O.F.U.)
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About the Cover

With the focus of the issue involving the intersection of sexism and veganism, the cover itself portrays many of the things touched on by contributors.

Suggesting breasts, alluding to PETA's lettuce ladies, and also using produce that is certainly not fresh, the imagery relays the fact that using sex to sell vegetables is a concept that needs to be tossed.

Contributors

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Heartfelt Thanks To

Devon Crosby, for his continued interest in the ridiculous things I do.

Amanda Rogers, for continuing to be a creative force in this world, even when she could easily be a hermit.

The advertisers, who choose to say "yes" to an email from someone most of them have never met.

You, for showing interest year after year after year.

From the Editor

Good things come to those who wait. And wait. And wait.

Where to begin? It seems I wonder that whenever I'm near the end of working on an issue and I'm left staring at this blank page. It's a page that I often leave until last, but it's one of the first ones anyone sees.

The creative process is funny like that. One never really knows what happened behind the scenes of your favourite movie, TV show, book, or anything else before it ended up in your hands. In many cases, there's also the added mystery of having to trust someone who has the bigger picture in mind. For film and television, it's the Director. For literature, it's typically the Editor.

Time and time again, I've been lucky enough to have people sign-up to join me on the next adventure that is an issue for this magazine, and they all had to trust that the sum of their efforts would be greater than the parts.

To say that I had a vision for this issue is a given, but I certainly cannot say that I saw the difficulties that delayed things when I set out to make this happen. From quitting my job and moving to another country (and then back) to contributors breaking bones, finishing and defending theses, getting sick, and generally dealing with life, the delays just kept piling up. However, I knew the focus was important, and plenty of other folks were there to tell me the same.

I turned 34 this year, and it's hard to believe

that T.O.F.U. has been a part of my life for nearly a third of that time. So, although it took me years to realize it, I knew that waiting for things to come together right was better than rushing the issue.

And now, it's done.

I'd like to think that most of you will agree the wait was worth it, and I hope that this issue (similar to those in the past) is just a part of a bigger discussion. Whether it's one you have with friends, family, or complete strangers, the focus of sexism and veganism within issue 8 deserves more attention than these pages provide and I hope you'll give it just that.

As always, I'm planning to have the next issue out sooner rather than later, but the only thing I can say for sure is that I'll still be doing what I can to make the world a better place whether or not it ends up in these pages.

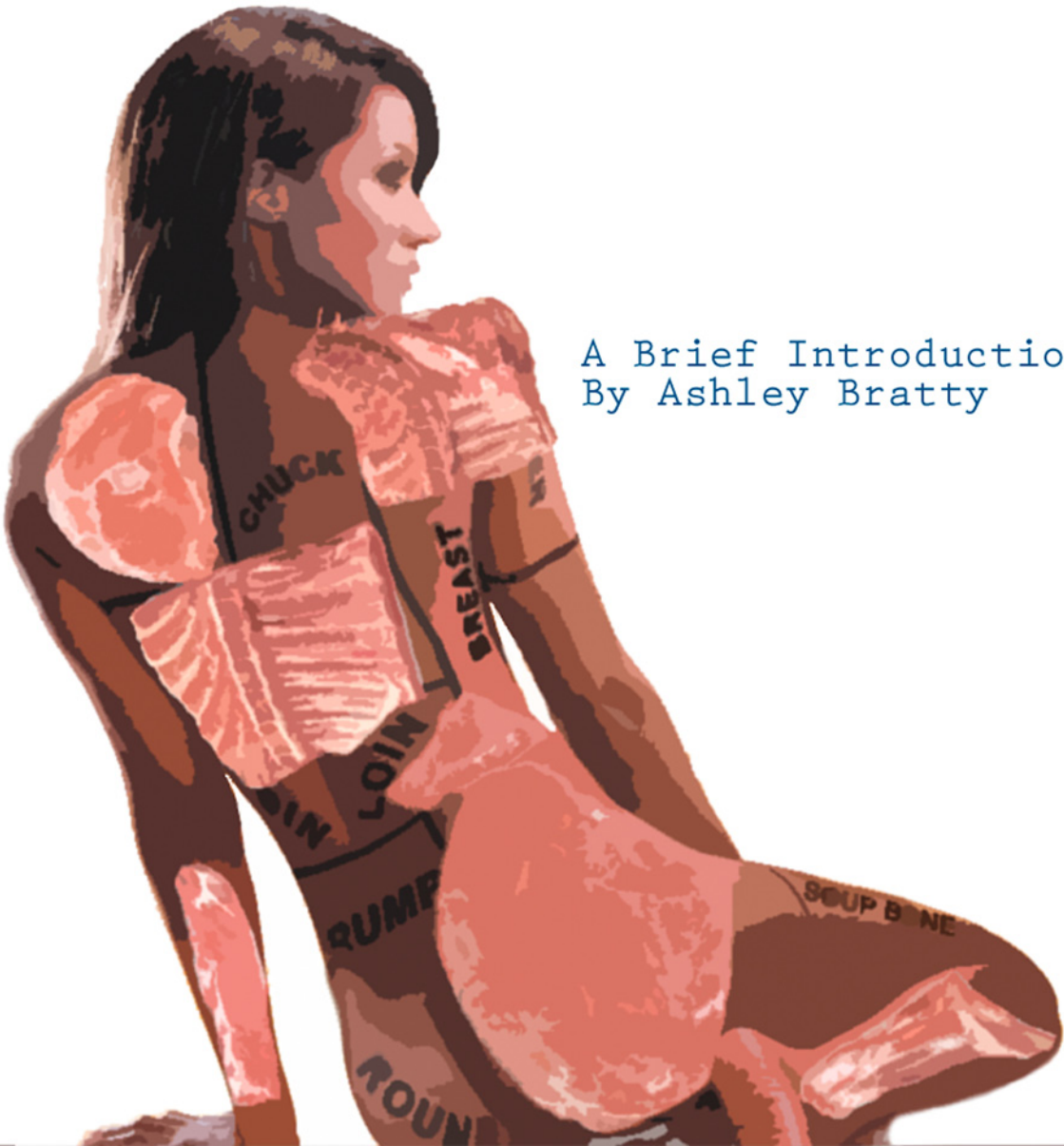
And I hope you'll do the same.



FOCUS

The Intersection of Feminism and Veganism

A Brief Introduction
By Ashley Bratty



If you connect with online or in-person activist communities, you may have noticed a word that keeps surfacing, especially when conversations get heated and criticisms of failing to be inclusive or progressive sound: intersectionality. It is a concept that is being injected into so many conversations about oppression because it firmly belongs there. Intersectionality is a term that describes structural inequality as the root cause for all types of oppression, and by doing so highlights the importance of seeing all types of oppression as connected and often reinforcing each other.

To have a conversation about oppression, of any kind, and not recognize that people have multiple identities (gender, race, ability, and so many more) is short-sighted and not inclusive.

But what does intersectionality look like? As an example, when we criticize the mainstream feminist movement as being concerned only with the needs of white, straight, cis-gendered, women we are criticizing it for not being aware of the need to be intersectional or for not being successful at upholding intersectionality. To have a conversation about oppression, of any kind, and not recognize that people have multiple identities (gender, race, ability, and so many more) is short-sighted and not inclusive. An intersectional, inclusive conversation about women's oppression would include many voices and would recognize the variety of life experiences as all valid, if all very different.

“Just as feminists proclaimed that ‘rape is violence, not sex,’ vegetarians wish to name

the violence of meat eating. Both groups challenge commonly used terms. Mary Daly calls the phrase ‘forcible rape’ a reversal by redundancy because it implies that all rapes are not forcible [...] The use of adjectives in the phrases ‘humane slaughter’ and ‘forcible rape’ promotes a conceptual misfocusing that relativizes these acts of violence [...] Just as all rapes are forcible, all slaughter of animals for food is inhumane regardless of what it is called.”

- Carol J. Adams, *The Sexual Politics of Meat*

It might sound strange to be injecting a connection about the oppression of non-human animals into the existing culture of talking about the oppression of women (or of any other oppressed group) but it isn't... because it's already there. The long-standing culture of patriarchy, and the somewhat more recent but equally oppressive culture of capitalism, has left us a legacy of violence towards animals the same way it has left us a legacy of violence towards women. Women and non-human animals have been denied their own personal integrity and treated as property to be bought and sold, traded and used, and even slaughtered for gains.

“Turning a person into a thing is almost always the first step in justifying violence against that person.”

- Jean Kilbourne

Think for a moment about the idea of objectification. The word calls to mind feminists decrying of sexualized women used to sell products, of anger at being harassed on the streets, of women being treated as less than intelligent because they are women. All of these examples are variations

of objectification, because objectification describes the process of turning someone into an object. Turning someone into something. Objectification is the literal definition of the business of slaughterhouses. Animals enter the building whole, alive, and all individuals with their own wants, needs, and desires. They are someone. They leave the building dismembered into products, no longer even referred to as the animals they were but under product names such as sirloin, chops, and filets. They are objects now. They are something.

When we see an image of a model's body used to sell beer or a luxury car, she has been objectified in a different but no less serious way. She is a pretty thing used as an object in an ad, not a person with her own life and ideas. She is a glorified piece of scenery. PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) frequently fails to be intersectional when they use women's bodies to sell their message of ending violence against animals. They often forget the women used as objects in their images and campaigns are sending a different message of violence.

"If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. If an elephant has its foot on the tail of a mouse and you say that you are neutral, the mouse will not appreciate your neutrality."

- Desmond Tutu

Perhaps the most important thing about intersectionality is that it isn't optional anymore, perhaps it never was. The danger faced by oppressed groups like women and non-human animals is serious and the time to consider them as deeply interconnected arrived a long time ago. Our silence on the

matter or either feminism while engaging in discussions about veganism or vice versa only serves to reinforce the systems and structures that continue the oppression and the violence.

How can we expect a culture that is heavily dependent on acts of violence to create what they eat for lunch to condemn and prevent acts of violence against women?

With more understanding about the intersection of violence against women and violence against animals, we are beginning to see research that finds the empirical, numbers-based evidence to reinforce the social justice activist culture of vegan feminism. In her study "*Social Disorganization in Slaughterhouse Communities*" Central Florida University Ph.D. student Racine Jacques found that proximity to a slaughterhouse is correlated with a 166% increase in arrests for rape. Rates of other types of crimes were also higher but none stand out so remarkably. This isn't a coincidence. Industrialized violence is not tidily separate from other forms of violence. How can we expect a culture that is heavily dependent on acts of violence to create what they eat for lunch to condemn and prevent acts of violence against women? We hear "She was asking for it" to describe both women who have been victims of sexual violence or abuse and to describe livestock who meet their fate on the slaughterhouse floor. The truth is that neither are to blame for what happened to them. They are both victims of structural violence.

In this issue, you will find the beginnings of many conversations that draw connections

between veganism and feminism, as well as other forms of oppression. It's so important to remember that we all have a responsibility to monitor our place in these conversations and, when needed, remember to take a step back and think about how we contribute to or fight back against what is going on in our world. We are seeing change, and we are headed towards better days for the animals, for women, and for all other oppressed groups, but we will get there faster if more people join the conversation.

RECIPE

Inauthentic Doenjang Soup

Since South Korea is a decidedly veggie-unfriendly country, I did my best to vegetarianize some traditional recipes during the year I spent there. This soup uses doenjang, a fermented soybean paste similar to miso, as a broth. It's fantastic with any combination of noodles and vegetables. Tofu is a great addition, but the soybean paste already has 2 g of protein per tablespoon.

Ingredients

2 L water
2 Tbsp doenjang (fermented soybean paste)
1/2 Tbsp gochujang (red pepper paste)
2 Tbsp soy sauce
1 pkg udon noodles or ramen noodles
Vegetables of your choice, e.g. broccoli, bean sprouts, zucchini, enoki mushrooms, green onion

1. Bring water to a boil.
2. Add vegetables and let them cook.
3. Add noodles and let them cook.
4. Reduce heat and add doenjang, gochujang, and soy sauce. Stir well, ensuring that the sauces disintegrate in the water.
5. Serve hot.

Elizabeth Pierre

All measurements here are approximate - sample the soup often and see how you want to adjust it.

Drawing Your Line

Michele Truty

We all have our own standards, and we draw lines in the sand about a number of things in our lives. But what do we do when others cross those lines?

Are you vegan? Awesome! High-five! You're the best! Now, do you eat honey because you believe your supplier doesn't hurt the bees? Do you drink wine at a party without checking to make sure it wasn't produced with albumin, isinglass, or other animal ingredients? Do you buy household products without checking for the cruelty-free label? Do you take medications even though they've surely been tested on animals? Do you only eat veganic, meaning no animal-derived fertilizers were used to grow the vegetables?

Okay, now you're just being ridiculous. No, now I'm trying to prove that we all draw a line somewhere and all our lines are different. We all have to live in this very real world, and it is up to each of us to decide how much energy we have to eliminate our effect on the exploitation of animals. Because each of us has a finite amount of energy that we can devote to the myriad decisions that make up our day—and yes, conscientious living takes a lot of energy. We need to understand what informs our decisions before we can understand and accept when others choose to make different decisions.

While it may look to outsiders that we are all of a single lifestyle, our actual individual

belief systems are wildly different. As people who call ourselves “vegan,” the only shared characteristic that can be assumed is that we eschew animal products, and even there we're going to disagree what that means (see above!). It's not like we became vegan by flipping the vegan switch or putting on the vegan suit with the vegan brain attachment. We arrived at veganism in very different ways. Some of us lucky ducks were born vegan, while others had to fight with our parents at every meal, and others saw the vegan light about the same time they received their AARP card.

What Informs Your Decisions?

Veganism is an ism, a belief system, a philosophy, a reality tunnel—whatever you want to call it. It's the bucket of assumptions we make about our universe, and we act on these assumptions. Ethical vegans believe it is wrong to make creatures suffer for things we want. We believe animals feel pleasure and pain, experience joy and suffering, and express affection and loss.

So why do you believe this? What is it that has caused you to dedicate time and energy to this way of life? To make dozens of decisions and take dozens of actions every day about what products you purchase, what you put

into and onto your body, which companies you support, where you send donations, what events you attend, plan, or produce, what books or magazines or websites you read...whom you invite to dinner.

For the most part, an activist—one attempting to live a life of ideals—is born out of a personal connection or exposure to an issue. You were raised by vegetarians or vegans, were introduced to the concept by a friend, or you read or saw something that made that light bulb go on in your brain.

But let's face it, our society is so highly industrialized and marketing-driven that chemical-laden products, cheap (whatever fiber) clothing, and factory-farmed food are all normal. It's quite possible to go through life without ever questioning what goes into the things that we consume. It sounds crazy to those of us who work so hard to know everything we can about what we eat and wear and wash our dishes with, but most people just use what is handed to them. Their belief system does not allow for the question of animal exploitation.

Being Vegan Is Not Enough

So you're the best vegan you can be. You leave honey to the bees and are stocking your home with plant-based, cruelty-free products—you're ace at reading labels, so even if those gloves are super warm and comfy, you think to look for that 10% wool

content, and without a second thought those babies are back on the shelf. But I guarantee you're doing something that others can find fault with.

Maybe you drive a car rather than taking public transportation, biking, or walking. Maybe you fly on airplanes on vacation—like for pleasure, not to speak at an animal rights conference or attend a big sanctuary fundraiser. Or maybe you purchase processed faux meat that's been imported from the other side of the world or comes in *waaaay* too much packaging. An environmentalist could call you out as not caring for the earth—and ruining our environment causes creatures to suffer and can lead to the extinction of species. And they'd have a point.

Humans are very good at rationalizing their actions. Our brains allow for reprogramming, and are especially open when the brain owner and operator is the one who wants to do the reprogramming. We want to feel good about ourselves—positive thinking allows us to keep doing positive things—so we do whatever we need to, to make that happen. Buying faux beef shipped from Asia becomes okay because maybe its carbon footprint is no worse than grain being produced and fed (along with a bunch of hormones and antibiotics) to a cow, which is transported and “processed”...and at the end of the day, no cow suffered or was slaughtered for your meal.

And here's where it gets really messy. We all know "vegans care more about animals than people," right? Hearing that might anger or upset you, but it is not a completely unfounded perception, as vegans do largely use their voice for the animals. This is our fight. This is where we focus much of our energy. No, we have not forgotten that there are abused children in the world. We have not forgotten that in some societies, elections are a sham, or girls cannot go to school without risking injury or death, or people do not have access to clean water. These are all horrible things affecting members of our own species, so how do we not drop everything to help these other humans? Well, because we don't have the energy or resources to tackle all of these issues, we do what we can to make the type of world where atrocities like these are not welcome, and we trust that there are others out there for whom these issues are their primary focus. That these fights are somebody's fights.

Then Again, Some Vegans Really Are Jerks

The disrespecting—or jerky—vegan is a curious beast, one that still catches me off guard after all these years. As it turns out, just because we all avoid animal cruelty doesn't mean we can't be cruel to other humans. Vegans can be racist, classist, sexist, ageist, guilty of body shaming or other judgment—the list of how humans can be jerks to one another goes on and on. How do you react to this jerky behavior when you encounter it on the Internet or out in the wild?

First, you cannot assume everyone's veganism is born of compassion. That would be too easy to call someone out on, that their behavior doesn't jibe with a compassionate life. Especially today, more folks are going vegan for health reasons, environmental concerns, or because of that one time Jay-Z and Beyonce did that cleanse. Whether or not vegans believe they're living compassionately, some might not be tuned to



potential sensitivities in others. Some vegans were raised with a background of disregard or disrespect for other people, other beings, the earth, you name it, and they might not even realize what they're doing. So how do you deal with that?

Step 1: Acknowledge and Admit Your Own Ignorance

You know you don't know everything, right? Right? One thing I learned from my mother very young—probably too young to fully get it at the time—was that I will never know everything. I will never know that my beliefs and my world view are the correct ones. (That meant neither would my parents or my teachers or the police...)

Ignorance is not a bad thing. Accepting ignorance can be scary, but the sooner you do it the better. Unfortunately, we tend to use “ignorance” with all its negative connotations, which only makes the situation worse, because “ignorance” is actually neutral. It is simply a state of being, one which illustrates that we are not omniscient. If you are not omniscient, then you are in some ways ignorant.

The not-so-simple practice of admitting to yourself that you are in some way ignorant—that you don't know everything and that maybe what you believe is not the case—opens you up to new ideas and new information. And when you're truly open to new things, your hold on your current beliefs becomes less rigid.

Finally, being open to change in your own life should make it easier for you to understand how others can hold a different world view from yours.

Step 2: Suspend Judgment and Walk Softly

So you've been working on admitting your own ignorance, and that's great. But you've just encountered some incredibly offensive behavior and you absolutely cannot—will not—let it slide.

Again, we are activists. We act. Beyond leading by example, we share what we've learned with others in an effort to spread compassion and leave the world a little nicer than we found it, to decrease the suffering humans inflict upon the world and the creatures that live on it, including other humans. This action of calling someone out on behavior we don't agree with comes with a degree of inherent judgment. We are “correcting” their behavior because we believe we are right and they are wrong. But the emotion we attach to that right and wrong can make a huge difference.

The key is to approach them like you'd approach anyone else displaying ignorance. You alert them to the issue in an open, non-confrontational way—it's the safer first step than attacking them over their potentially harmful behavior. We do not need to accept the behavior or even ignore it, but an emotionally judgment-free explanation or heads-up can work wonders. Sure, it could also be a total flop and they could come back at you, all fists and elbows; some people are not at all open to new information or perceived judgment. But as with all outreach, you really can only do what you can do, and you will be met with some great successes to offset those failures.

None of this is easy. Trying to embody concepts like the ones we're looking at is

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enough to send you off to a monastery or a cave or a cabin in the woods. But how would that help the world? No, we have to be out there on the streets, being that positive example, living with those people we don't necessarily agree with or approve of. And we have to practice. Practice compassion. Practice withholding judgment. Practice turning a negative reaction into a positive action.

Know That We Are All Changing, Always

Where will you be in five years? This mother of all dreadful interview questions can actually be a very helpful tool, if you let it—and if you look at it the right way. If you answer it any other way than, “Well, I’m not sure,” you’re lying to yourself. Where were

you five years ago? And five years before that? Could you have looked ahead and predicted exactly what your life is today?

We cannot see the future. We don't know what life will serve us, what we'll be exposed to and how we'll react to it. But hey, silver lining time: We don't know where *anyone* will be in five years. That person who drives you absolutely bonkers today with their disrespectful, selfish behavior could make some big changes between now and then. Their belief system will likely change, and you can help and hope that the changes are positive, respectful, compassionate ones.

The best you can do is to keep an open heart and an open mind to those not on your current path. Remember where you've been, and be open to wherever you might find yourself in the future.

Quinoa Risotto with Wild Mushrooms, Black Truffle, and Fresh Thyme

Traditional or not, this risotto makes a great vegan entrée or side dish. If you've got any left over, consider making it into 'arancini' (fried rice balls) or stuffing.

Ingredients

4 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 red onion, minced
1 Tbsp olive oil (plus extra for drizzling)
7oz or 200g mushrooms, sliced or diced
(choose whatever type you like: wild varieties like oyster and morel are something special, though regular chestnut and white mushrooms work just as well)
1/2 cup or 50g quinoa (dry weight)
2 cups or 400ml vegetable stock
1 cup or 200ml non-dairy milk (heavier milks like coconut, soy, and cashew are good)
1 cup or 200ml good white wine (I like a grassy Sauvignon Blanc)
2 Tbsps cornflour
2 tsps soy sauce
2 tsps black truffle shavings
or 2 tsps truffle oil (to taste)
1/4 tsp nutmeg
A handful of fresh thyme leaves
Sea salt and black pepper to taste

1. Place the olive oil in a large, deep frying pan over a medium-high heat. Add a little salt, the minced garlic and onion and fry, stirring occasionally, for about 5 minutes or until softened. Then add the mushrooms until they brown. At this point, add the quinoa and stir.
2. Add one cup of stock and one cup of wine. Stir and bring the mixture to a boil. Reduce the heat to a low simmer. Stir frequently, until the liquid has almost gone. Then add a cup of vegetable stock and repeat the process. When the stock has almost evaporated, add the milk.
3. When most, but not all, of the milk has gone, add the nutmeg and soy sauce, as well as the cornflour. Turn the heat off and stir the mixture well. You should have a fluffy, creamy mixture.
4. Add the thyme and the truffle. Mix well. Add extra salt to taste, if necessary.

Emily Wilkinson

AKA Vegan Lass – www.veganlass.com

LIFE



Harbouring a Vegan by Lisa Febre

This past summer, I was the house guest of two non-vegan family members. It didn't go as bad as you might expect, and I'm going to share the reasons why.

No two people share the exact same lifestyle: not husbands and wives, not a brother and sister, not two best friends, any more than two vegans. When we stay in their home, those differences become amplified. Remember, you have to function in someone else's world when you stay in their home. So it's important to be as gracious as possible.

Being a Vegan Guest

By now, everyone in my family knows I'm vegan because I "came out" about seven years ago. But if you're still in the vegan pantry, you'll need to come out to those whose homes in which you'll be staying long before you start to make your travel plans. It gives them time to freak out, do a little Googling, and then hit you with their questions. This could be all be new to them, so take your time in answering their questions. Soothe their fears.

People react much more strongly to you when you say you're vegan than a lot of other lifestyle choice out there. You have no idea the level of stress you're about to inject into your family's lives. There's always the temptation to become annoyed at them for their reaction, but keep it to yourself and remember kindness is key to keeping this relationship intact.

Be sure to listen to all your host's fears and concerns. Everything they worry about is as valid as your own concerns, so do not dismiss their point of view.

It's easy to offer your host a shopping list

(if they ask for it) but much easier to say "I'll go shopping once I get there. Please don't worry another second about me!" Add groceries into your travel budget and offer to take your host with you. It would be fun for them to hang with you while you glide effortlessly through their favorite grocery store picking up a number of vegan items.

Which begs reminding: don't whisk them off to an expensive specialty store. Do everyone a favor and go to their favorite store. It shows them that vegans are not high maintenance, that vegan food is not all about expensive "specialty" items, and familiarity might actually breed some exploration of vegan meals after you leave.

Once you have the groceries unloaded in your friend's kitchen, begin preparing a meal that everyone can enjoy. A really fun meal to share with vegan newbies is stuffed squash. You can personalize each squash, which can also help the reluctant among your party see that vegan food isn't scary. It's just sans meat. Seriously. That's it. No bubbling cauldron surrounded by dancing witches. Just chopped up veggies (that they happen to like) and rice. Spooky.

If your stay extends more than two or three days, you may have to accept the fact that some people won't want to eat vegan food every day you're there. That's ok. At least you got them to try a few new meals. Plus, you can make them insanely jealous when they smell your lentil burgers.

Harbouring a Vegan

If you find yourself on the other side of this equation, hosting a vegan in your non-vegan household, never fear! Your vegan

guest is ready and excited to help you dive into this vegan experience. Remember: don't freak out! Being vegan is their thing to worry about, not yours! But, if you're like most people, you want your guests to be comfortable and so you do worry.

The worst thing to do is inject more stress into the situation. Your vegan guest is already concerned, they don't want to make more work for you, and the last thing they want is for you to go out of your way for them.

Good news! A majority of items you have in your kitchen already are vegan, you just never knew it. Shop like you normally do, and let your guest raid your pantry to find the hidden vegan foods. They'll have fun pointing out the boxes and cans to you, and you'll be astounded at the variety and sheer number of vegan (scary!) food items you already own. This is why vegans laugh when people say "I don't eat vegan food." Because lots of people do.

One of the more frightening things a vegan can hear from a non-vegan is "It's vegan, I read the label." Unless you know every non-vegan ingredient as intimately as your guest, the likelihood of you getting it right is pretty low. Did you know that when a label says "may contain" that lots of vegans read it as "does contain" and won't eat it? Many vegans completely avoid things that have allergen warnings for dairy, and shellfish; and also for wheat (gluten) and soy (GMO).

Do you know the hidden non-vegan ingredients such as carmine, castoreum, rennet, casein, and shellac? Yep, shellac is used in foods and vegans don't eat it. It's

probably a good idea to do some research on these items listed here so you'll better understand why vegans don't eat them. Hopefully after reading about them, you'll cut them from your diet as well.

As I said before, no two vegans eat exactly the same way. A new vegan may not be aware of some of those ingredients listed above, while an experienced vegan appears to obsessively avoid everything. Some vegans eat honey, some eliminate chemicals from their homes, some feed their dogs a vegan diet. But no two of us are alike.

Probably the worst thing you can do as a host is continually point out the vegan, introduce them as "she's a vegan", or ask them a constant stream of questions about being vegan. We know you are curious, we were too, but remember there are other more interesting things going on in our lives besides what we're going to eat for lunch. Also, be careful what you're asking and where you're asking. The dinner table is not always the best place to start conversations about factory farming and "humane" slaughter.

Above all else, whether you're the host or the guest, honesty and communication will go a long way. This is a great time to learn new things, and being open to that is sure to make for pleasant meals and more.

Tips for the Guest

Be compassionate to your host. In the past, you too were concerned about how difficult it would be to adopt a vegan lifestyle. Someone made you feel better about taking the plunge, so keep that in mind as you make your host feel better about taking care of you.

Take your host shopping at their favorite store. Remember to budget an extra bit of money to fund this little shopping trip.

Buy a few fun vegan items.

Focus on fresh veggies and grains.

Get cookin'! Make something fun for your host family to enjoy!

If they revert back to their old habits while you're visiting, continue to make extra servings of your vegan dishes because people may be curious to try them.

Remember to thank your hosts!

Tips for the Host

This is the simplest shopping list I can offer family before staying with them:

- plain, unsweetened non-dairy milk (almond and rice being the two most popular among a lot of vegans)
- bananas or any kind of fruit
- frozen peas & corn
- dried pasta or udon or soba noodles
- rice or quinoa
- fresh carrots, potatoes, and broccoli
- some kind of cereal.

Don't worry! You already have many vegan items in your house that you are completely unaware of. We'll find them.

Don't be offended if your guest tells you not to shop because they want to make a grocery run once they arrive at your place. It has nothing to do with you; it has everything to do with the vegan trying to make your life easier.

Let them cook a meal. You may be shocked at how delicious a stir fry or veggie chili can be. Sometimes your guest just wants to let you relax for a meal to say thanks for hosting them. You may even find yourself asking for the recipe!

Ethics in Advertising

Eric C Lindstrom

Deciding to be a vegan can be difficult in your personal life, but finding a balance in your workplace is often a bigger problem. Luckily, the times are changing and staying true to what you believe doesn't have to mean staying broke.

As a kid I watched a lot of television. Growing up watching 70's and 80's sitcoms and reruns has had a long-term effect on how I turned out as an adult. Essentially, because of this, I'm not really an adult yet.

TV shows like *MASH*, *Mork and Mindy*, *Wild Wild West*, *WKRP in Cincinnati*, and *Taxi* captivated me and drew me in. There was something about the idea of taking the raw material of a script and casting, producing, directing, and broadcasting it that fascinated me.

One show in particular truly shaped my professional career: *Bewitched*. Not that I would eventually pursue a career in witchcraft, but instead I loved watching Darrin Stevens pitch one of his campaigns to a boardroom of clients, usually in order to get himself out of a mess. For the record, I prefer the Dick York Darrin Stephens to the Dick Sargent Darrin Stephens but they both were admen.

I was born a cartoonist, but soon realized that making a career out of cartooning was probably not in my cards, so I converted this God-given talent into graphic design which eventually blossomed into a full-blown career in advertising and marketing. I had become Darrin Stephens.

Through the Grapevine

Shortly after college, I moved to Ithaca, NY and worked in publishing for a "hippie" newspaper and magazine called the *Grapevine Press*. This early introduction to graphic design actually predated desktop publishing by a year and all of our work was still produced using traditional layout methods.

Recently, after a number of years of building up my confidence and experience, I launched my own agency, [ThankTank Creative](#). As a full-service consulting, design, and marketing firm focused on socially-just, environmentally-conscious, and vegan companies, I'm now able to combine my two passions: ethics and advertising.

Accepting the Challenge

Flashback 3 ½ years ago.

My wife had been gluten-free for eleven years and was already a lactose-intolerant vegetarian when we met. So, becoming vegan for her was not a huge stretch. I, on the other hand, was a 100% animal-eating omnivore. The idea of being vegan was as far-fetched as having a lead role on *Facts of Life*. But she wanted us to try it and I gave in.

The initial challenge became a friendly bet and I don't like to lose bets. So, now over three years later, I am still vegan and during that time period I became an ethical vegan (which I feel is the natural progression from dietary vegan). Becoming vegan affects every aspect of your life and goes way beyond finding accommodating restaurants. In my case, this also meant seeking out a new career direction.

Must Be Vegan

Over my twenty years of industry experience, I never knew another vegan. At least not one that was "out." I have worked with clients in every SIC code and not once did veganism come up as a prerequisite for a project. To this day, I'm not sure if they existed and were silent or if they never existed at all. However, working in each of these industries helped me mold my own business into one that not only works exclusively with vegan-centric companies, but also keeps an eye on sustainability and other issues related to our clients and the company itself.

Starting any company with such a strong stance is a risk. Veganism is oftentimes viewed to be "cult-like" or act as its own religion, so choosing to work with only companies with the same belief could be considered very risky. In fact, I had some professors in advertising at Ithaca College and Cornell University doubt there might be a market, but I persevered and it paid off.

Working Together

The first phone call I received was from a prospective client in Sacramento who said "thank you for being an ethical vegan," within the first few minutes of the call. In our first week, we saw an influx of numerous calls and emails of similar companies excited to work with a company who understands them and who is behind the mission for the animals. Since starting ThankTank in early June 2014, we have been asked to develop proposals for fourteen different companies in as many different industries to assist with their design and marketing needs.

These same clients welcome the fact that ThankTank gives back eight percent of every project cost to a not-for-profit of their choosing. Having partnered with such prestigious organizations as Catskill Animal Sanctuary, New York Coalition for Healthy School Food, NutritionFacts.org, Our Hen House, Sistah Vegan Project, Tompkins County SPCA, and A Well Fed World, the clients know we also financially support organizations on the same mission.

As good as being vegan feels every day, it's even better to be able to also start my workday knowing everything we are working on and everything we are helping to promote helps the animals and the planet.

RECIPE

Nutbutter Chocolate Bars

Ingredients

- 2 cups organic vegan chocolate chips (I like “Enjoy Life” brand)
- 5 Tbsps organic peanut butter*
- 5 Tbsps organic almond butter*
- 1 1/2 cups organic gluten-free rice cereal
- Cacao nibs & shredded coconut for topping

* I like to make my own nut butters. To make an all natural peanut butter, simply blend raw, unsalted organic peanuts in a Vitamix or other high powered blender until smooth. Peanuts are naturally very oily and usually don't require any added oil. For almond butter, blend approximately 4 cups raw, unsalted, organic almonds with 1/4 cup organic almond oil until smooth. This yields two small mason jars full.

1. Over low/medium heat, melt the chocolate chips. In another pot, melt the peanut & almond butters.
2. Lay parchment paper in a standard loaf pan. Pour half the melted chocolate mixture into the pan and spread evenly.
3. Sprinkle 1 cup of crispy rice cereal over the melted chocolate layer.
4. Pour melted nut butter mixture over the cereal layer evenly.
5. Sprinkle 1/2 cup crispy rice cereal over the melted nut butter layer.
6. Allow to set in the fridge for about 15 minutes. Remove from fridge. Pour the remaining melted chocolate on top and spread evenly. Top with cacao nibs & shredded coconut flakes.
7. Place in the fridge to set for about an hour or two. Remove from fridge and let stand 30 minutes before eating. Cut & enjoy!

Cassandra Bradshaw

Photo by Joel Phillip Jacobson



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FOCUS

LONDON CALLING



BY SEAN O'CALLAGHAN

As a well-rounded activist, I make it my business to be aware of and resist all forms of aggression, violence, and bigotry. There is no need for me to limit my compassion. I believe rising against all forms of subjugation whenever possible, not just selected causes, leads to individuals and collectives having a more effective and convincing voice.

My desire to improve outcomes for non-human animals does not exist in isolation from my activism for women or my interest in promoting the well-being of queer people. The fury that drives my need to educate people about animal suffering is the same fury that fuels my voice speaking out against racism.

Of course I can't act on everything I see as inequitable, but I can make my belief in social justice a thread that is woven through all aspects of my life whenever possible. Having a voice as a vegan blogger not only affords me the opportunity to champion the rights of non-human animals, but to ask members of the vegan community to work together to create a more socially just world for all humans.

You can choose to publish your views via social media, you can speak up during community meetings and you can have casual conversations with friends, colleagues, and fellow vegans.

The good news is that you don't need a blog in order to be a compassionate voice for humans in your life and community. Everybody can use outlets available to them as a platform to speak up against sexism, body shaming, racism, and homophobia. You can choose

to publish your views via social media, you can speak up during community meetings, and you can have casual conversations with friends, colleagues, and fellow vegans. Make your desire for across-the-board compassion known whatever way you can.

Colleen Patrick-Goudreau recently spoke at London Vegan Drinks and reminded people of the importance of asking the tough questions of ourselves as vegans. Yes, we celebrate food and the advancement of vegan cuisine is an important ongoing social and political gain for our movement. But Patrick-Goudreau wanted to let people know that the cute cupcakes are not the pinnacle of vegan activism, although they do play an important role. There is always the difficult part that we should not invisibilise and that requires courage, honesty, and a willingness to speak up.

I suggest we take this advice from Colleen Patrick-Goudreau and apply it to all aspects of our lives, not just the protection of animals. Aim to always ask the tough questions of ourselves. Don't ignore sexism, racism, homophobia, or other forms of oppression within the vegan community. We can make our vegan voices even more compassionate by challenging social forces that make people feel unsafe, rejected, or compromised.

One example of vegans rallying to reject another form of oppression was the collective international outcry surrounding the homophobic tweet published to the Twitter account of Beyond Meat. Vegans all over the planet, including those in the UK, were united in expressing their contempt for the content of the tweet. The message was loud and unmistakable. The vegan community

will not accept throwaway homophobic comments as part of a marketing campaign for a plant-based product.

On the other hand, one account of vegans failing to call out oppression came during a PETA demonstration. Did people connect emotionally and meaningfully with the PETA UK campaign that involved body-painted women in underwear looking like sexy Beefeater guards from the Tower of London whilst littering the accompanying press release with titillating language and tabloid-style innuendo? Or did this reliance on outdated, harmful, and sexist tactics push more people away from wanting to join the chorus of compassionate voices? I don't think it is a mystery that PETA's reliance on hyper-sexualised images of women causes emotional harm to members of our vegan community by perpetuating negative portrayals of women in media. Experts and academics have long discussed links between this sort of imagery and negative attitudes towards women.

We spoke out against homophobia successfully when a vegan company crossed the line, why can't we do the same when groups working to protect animals perpetuate imagery and ideas that contribute to sexism and misogyny?

Along with this, I believe PETA's relentless use of human bodies of a certain size works to undermine the confidence of vegan activists who don't fit that prototype. As a collective, we failed to speak loudly enough to inform PETA that we demand better from them as a leading activist group. I saw little or no dissent from within the vegan community

and I believe that is to the harm and detriment of real people in our community. We spoke out against homophobia successfully when a vegan company crossed the line, why can't we do the same when groups working to protect animals perpetuate imagery and ideas that contribute to sexism and misogyny?

Whether it's for a good cause or not, acts of sexism are acts of violence and aggression. You cannot fight one form of oppression with another. Our community should not be calling on notions of body perfection or the perceived roles of women in society to fight for non-human animals. Any victory for these creatures won through the perpetuation of negative and harmful stereotypes is not a very meaningful one. I don't want to save animals by contributing to the subjugation of women. I can avoid adding to the historical forces of oppression for women while thoughtfully working to improve outcomes for animals. I can do these two things simultaneously.

Thankfully, there are examples where this has worked. I recently called on my fellow vegans via [Facebook](#) to unite as a collective voice to demand the UK Government disallow public speaker Julien Blanc from earning money in the UK from his seminars. Blanc claims to help men with dating women, however his classes promote predatory behaviour and he uses violent, misogynistic, and racist language and imagery as part of his instruction.

My Facebook post linking to an online petition about Blanc was swamped by concerned vegans keen to be heard resisting this speaker. The topic had nothing to do with non-human animals, but compassionate people were coming together under the



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banner of the vegan community to add a strong and collective voice to the argument. We wanted to show our combined strength could be applied to challenge other forms of violence.

Make it clear that you do not accept the exploitation of one section of society to protect and advance another.

We need to make our concern for women part of our collective voice for animals. If you are at a vegan social event and witness sexism in action, speak up. Challenge sexist, homophobic, racist, and body-shaming language at animal rights rallies and catch yourself when you think you are thinking of using such words. Tell the organisations that work to end animal suffering that you do not accept out-dated campaign tactics that

perpetuate harm to humans. Make it clear that you do not accept the exploitation of one section of society to protect and advance another.

We don't need to call on damaging notions of sexuality, gender identity, physical attractiveness, and body size to make the argument for veganism. In fact, the opposite should be the reality. We need to use our vegan platform to resist and attack these forces that work to alienate and divide our community. Be a vegan activist who doesn't rely on shaming tactics or divisive imagery and you will be a vegan activist saving a lot more than animals. Make compassion for humans inseparable from your compassion for animals.

Being Vegan in Northern New Jersey

Dianne Wenz

Sure, it may not be New York City, but New Jersey can hold its own when it comes to keeping us vegans fed and happy. From group activities to plenty of places to explore on your own, you'll find plenty of reasons to make the trek from NYC or anywhere else.

I'm sure when most people think of New Jersey they conjure up visions of Tony Soprano's therapy sessions, Snookie and JWoww prancing around the Jersey shore, or The Boss playing to a sold out crowd at Giants' Stadium. Vegan living probably doesn't even come to mind, but the truth is that for the past several years, New Jersey has been quietly harboring a vegan movement, and it's gaining momentum.

I live in Northern NJ, and I'm not ashamed to admit that I've never watched *The Sopranos* or *Jersey Shore*, and I don't listen to Bruce Springsteen. I am very proud to admit that I'm vegan, and I have been meat-free for all of my adult life. I'm just a hop, skip, and train ride away from New York City, one of the most vegan-friendly cities in the U.S., which makes being vegan here pretty easy, but sometimes I just don't feel like relying on NJ Transit or dealing with NYC crowds.

Coming Together

For those reasons, my MeetUp group, [Montclair Vegans](#), was born. With the group, I had the vision of bringing together like-minded people to share recipes, form friendships, and break vegan bread. It's good

to have a support system in place, especially for those new to the lifestyle, and that's part of what Montclair Vegans is.

Through the MeetUp group, we have potlucks, charity bake sales, guest speakers, and trips to animal sanctuaries among other activities, and New Jersey veggies no longer have to deal with New York City traffic if they want to attend vegan events. In addition to meeting people and forming friendships, the group has helped to spread the vegan word throughout the local community, letting restaurants and stores know that we're here and we want more vegan options.

Beyond the Meet(Up)

For those who aren't much into group socializing, Northern New Jersey is vegan-friendly beyond MeetUp. There are quite a lot of vegan-friendly restaurants, and vegan establishments have been opening with greater frequency lately. Veggie Heaven was the first vegan restaurant I had ever eaten in, and it has since expanded, now boasting three locations in the Garden State – [Denville](#), [Teaneck](#), and [Montclair](#). They serve vegan Chinese food, most of which is made with soy and wheat meats.



Veggie Heaven's Glorious Sensation and Dumplings

Each location has its own menu, with vegan sushi available in the Denville and Teaneck locations. The atmosphere in each location is casual and friendly, and they're great places to take omnivores in order to ease them into vegan eating. My in-laws always ask to be taken there straight from the airport when they visit from Oklahoma.

If you happen to be in the area of the Montclair Veggie Heaven location, don't fill up on their delicious food, because the area has several vegan establishments. Mundo Vegan is one of them, and they can be found on Church Street in Montclair. As the name implies, Mundo Vegan is an all-vegan eatery, and their focus is on organic, non-GMO food with a Latin American flair. Some of my menu favorites include Ropa Vieja, which is roasted seitan seasoned with tomatoes, onions, green peppers, herbs, and spices, and served with coleslaw and rice and beans; Masitas, which is sautéed,

seasoned vegan chick'n drizzled with a cashew cilantro cream sauce and served with rice and beans and a side of kale; and the Lasagna, which consists of cashew ricotta sandwiched between gluten-free noodles and a homemade tomato sauce. It's all delicious, so you can't go wrong with your meal choice at Mundo Vegan.

Just a five minute drive from Montclair's town center is PositiviTea, located on Bloomfield Avenue in Verona. PositiviTea serves a variety of teas, along with smoothies, vegan sandwiches, and their own homemade dairy-free soft serve ice cream. The Big Wac is their specialty, which is the vegan answer to that famous burger – a double decker burger with two quinoa and bean burger patties, special sauce, vegan mayo, lettuce, dairy-free cheese, pickles, and onions on an organic sesame seed bun. All of the burgers and chick'n patties at PostiviTea are made fresh in house.

Eat the Plate

Area vegans with a taste for ethnic food are in luck, because North Jersey actually has two Ethiopian restaurants. [Mesob](#) is located on Bloomfield Avenue in Montclair and [Lalibela](#) is on Irvington Avenue in South Orange. Neither establishment has a fully meat-free menu, but both are very vegan-friendly, making them favorites in the veg community. If you've never had Ethiopian food, you're in for a treat at either restaurant. Communal eating is encouraged, and food is usually served on large platters covered in a large flatbread called injera. To eat, rather than use a fork, you simply tear off a little piece of injera, pinch food inside it, and pop it in your mouth! Both restaurants offer vegan dessert options, if you have room left after dinner, with a vegan chocolate sampler, gluten-free oatmeal cookies, or halewa, which is a cake made with sesame seed paste on the menu at Mesob; and cakes from Killer Vegan at Lalibela. If you're in the area and are unsure which one to visit, Mesob is a little fancier and gets crowded on weekends, while Lalibela has a causal atmosphere and isn't usually as packed with people.

[Killer Vegan's](#) opening in Union was greatly anticipated by hungry New Jersey vegans,

and fortunately the establishment opened its doors in autumn, 2014. Killer Vegan's owner Janelle Soto had already gained a reputation for serving delicious food at her biweekly popup brunches at Lalibella in 2013, so the vegan community was anxious to see what she'd be cooking up on her own space. Janelle hasn't disappointed, with dishes like dairy-free mac and cheese, the Killer Vegan Panini, and house-made sausages and peppers, along with baked goods and milkshakes. Dinner specials are available on Friday and Saturday evenings, and there's an all-you-can eat brunch buffet on the first and third Sunday of the month. The menu continues to expand as the new eatery gains its footing.

More Than Just Montclair

The Bergen County town of Rutherford has a few vegan-friendly establishments, with the all-vegan [Sweet Avenue Bake Shop](#) at the helm. This sweet little shop started out as a mail order and catering-only bakery in 2006 and expanded a year later, opening their storefront on Park Avenue in 2007. Sweet Avenue has a rotating menu of about 30 cupcake flavors at any given time, with at least 12 flavors available each day. Fluffernutter, Tiramisu, and Banana Cream pie are just a few of their creative

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Positivitea's Big Wac



Mesob's Veggie Sampler

Sweet Ave's Take Home Box





cupcake offerings. Seasonal cupcakes are available, and there's usually something fun, depending on what's going on in the world, such as soccer ball topped cupcakes during the World Cup, and cupcakes topped with blue crystal candy for the Breaking Bad finale. Gluten-free options are available and other delicious goodies such as cookies and cake balls are also baked fresh daily.

Just down the road from Sweet Avenue is [Rutherford Pancake House](#). Rutherford Pancake House is an omnivore diner that's open for breakfast and lunch, but they have a menu full of vegan options, such as tofu scrambles, pizza with dairy-free cheese, veggie nachos made with dairy-free sour cream, veggie quesadillas, and, yes, vegan pancakes. The restaurant has done so well that the owners opened the Maywood Pancake House last year with the same menu. Rumor has it that a third location is currently in the works.

Just around the corner from Rutherford Pancake House on Franklin Place is [Poofy](#)

[Organics](#), which has nothing to do with food, but rather sells cruelty-free health and beauty care items. Poofy Organics is a family-run business, and many of their products are made in small batches on the premises. Their products are free of toxins, and most are made with organic plant butters, oils, and extracts.

Familiar Faces

I'm sure most people have heard of the worldwide vegan restaurant chain Loving Hut, and there happen to be two locations in New Jersey. The North Jersey location is on Route 10 in [Ledgewood](#). Each Loving Hut location is privately owned and independently operated, so menus vary greatly from location to location. The Ledgewood location offers a mix of Asian-inspired and American-style dishes, and they serve the mac and cheese that Loving Hut has become famous for in America.

If you're in the mood for a road trip, vegan establishments [Papa Ganache](#), [Goldies](#),

Good Karma Café, Kaya's Kitchen, Wild Flower Vegan, and from Seed to Sprout are all just a short ride down the Parkway. The American Vegan Society is also located in South Jersey. And speaking of road trips, Sprig and Vine, one of the best vegan restaurants in the Eastern U.S., is just a stone's throw over the Delaware River in New Hope, Pennsylvania.

If you're more of a stay at home and cook kind of person, you're in luck, because no matter where in North Jersey you are, you're never too far from a Whole Foods or Trader Joe's. Vegan-friendly grocery store Fairway has had branches popping up too, with locations in Totowa and Paramus. There are many health food stores sprinkled around the state too, as well as Asian and Indian grocery stores, which always carry vegan products that can't usually be found anywhere else.

Of course, there are many more vegan-friendly establishments in New Jersey that I haven't mentioned here. There's the promise of one or two all vegan restaurants opening soon, and area eateries seem to be adding more vegan options. So you see, New Jersey isn't all about mobsters and spray-on tans – it's home to some delicious animal-free eats and friendly vegans too!

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Killer Vegan's Sausages and Peppers



Cloud 9 Pancakes

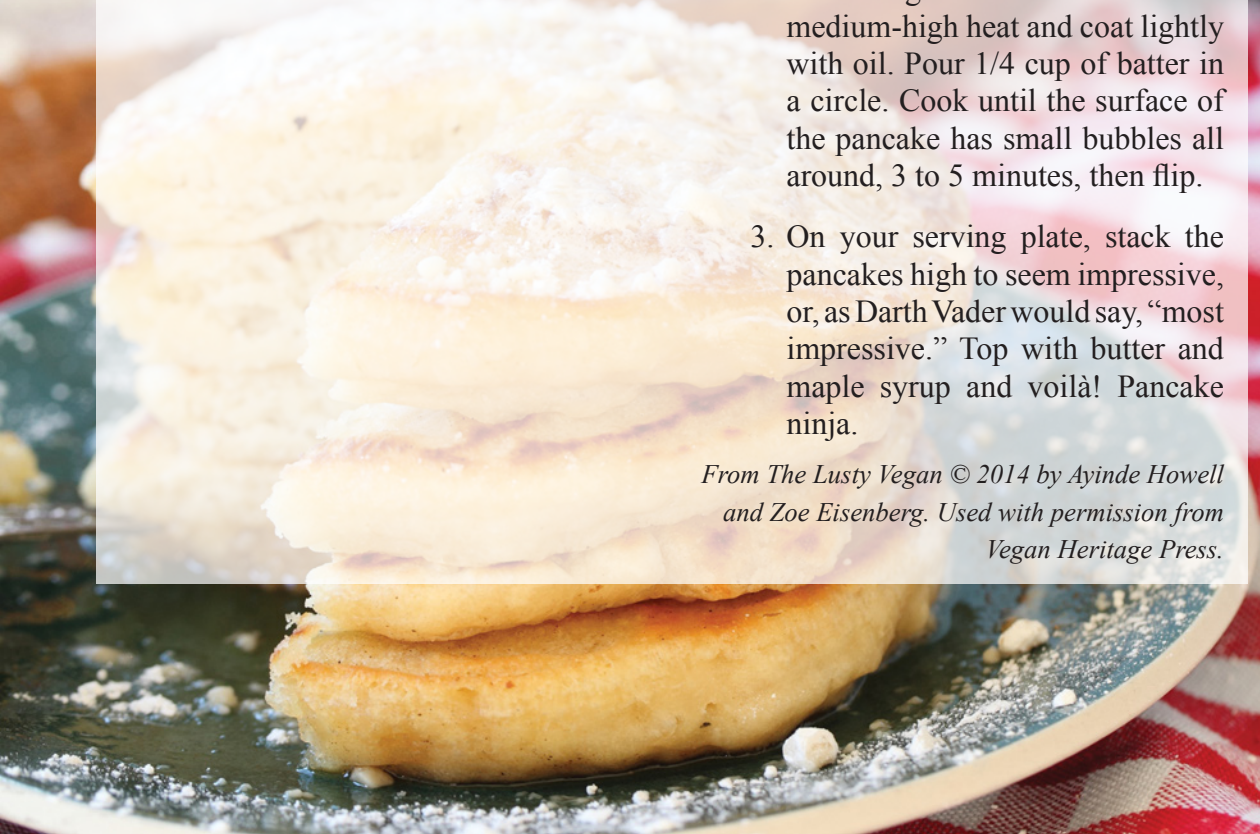
*This is the best vegan pancake recipe you will ever make. You deserve it.
To make this soy free, use soy-free Earth Balance.*

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
 - 2 Tbsps cornstarch
 - 1/4 tsp sea salt
 - 1 1/2 Tbsps baking powder
 - 1 Tbsp sugar
 - Egg replacement mixture
 - 1 cup almond milk
 - 2 tsps vanilla extract
 - 3 Tbsps vegan butter, melted
- Maple syrup and vegan butter, for topping

1. In a medium bowl, combine the flour, cornstarch, salt, baking powder, and sugar. In a small bowl, make the egg replacer and combine it with the almond milk and vanilla. Using a whisk, combine the wet and dry ingredients and mix gently. You want some lumps. Gently fold in the melted butter. Make sure the batter is still lumpy and thick.
2. Heat a griddle or skillet over medium-high heat and coat lightly with oil. Pour 1/4 cup of batter in a circle. Cook until the surface of the pancake has small bubbles all around, 3 to 5 minutes, then flip.
3. On your serving plate, stack the pancakes high to seem impressive, or, as Darth Vader would say, “most impressive.” Top with butter and maple syrup and voilà! Pancake ninja.

*From The Lusty Vegan © 2014 by Ayinde Howell
and Zoe Eisenberg. Used with permission from
Vegan Heritage Press.*



FOCUS



I remember when I was a teenager, first learning about animal rights. I came across a picture of a naked woman with no face and red paint dividing her body parts while labelling them with their “meat names.” It caught my interest. I printed it out and kept it on my wall. I thought of it reminding me that animal body parts are more than slabs. I then learnt about feminism, which at first seemed like angry people trying to pull men down. Of course, the more feminists I met, the more it became obvious to me that sexism exists and affects not just women in those “crazy countries” but my friends, co-workers, role models, and myself. Everyday. I learned that women are taught to be afraid to go out at night, to not wear clothes that “are asking for it”, and so many other things. Soon, I took that picture down.

Women in a number of ads are treated as objects and billboards for the cause. Their nudity being like glitter, an eye catcher being used to bring up thoughts of sex, not of animals or the issues they are facing.

It’s no secret that sexism has permeated much of our culture, but why is it propagandized by organizations trying to make a difference in the world? Women in a number of ads are treated as objects and billboards for the cause. Their nudity being like glitter, an eye catcher being used to bring up thoughts of sex, not of animals or the issues they are facing. It makes me wonder; does anyone decide to eat vegan, not wear fur, or change their lifestyle in anyway because they saw a sexy ad? As we’ve been told so many times sex sells! Right?

Studies have shown that sex does sell, when

you are selling a sex/sexy product, not a long term decision. A [Business Insider Article](#) in 2012 showed that people are 10% less likely to buy a product if it has been marketed with sex inappropriately. It works with impulse items like buying a magazine, vodka, or steak. When marketing sex one is appealing to a primal part of the brain that when thinking of sex will slow down the higher functioning processes like critical thinking. How does one critically decide to alter their lifestyle in a huge way because of their impulse decision making? It’s like asking for marriage after a drunken one night stand. I’m not saying that hasn’t happened, but there are reasons its rare.

When I approached PETA with this idea, they disagreed with my conclusion. PETA’s Communications Manager Heather Carlson stated in an email:

PETA’s purpose is to stop animal suffering, and we use all available opportunities to reach millions of people with powerful messages in order to initiate discussion, debate, questioning of the status quo, and, of course, action. Our thought-provoking demonstrations, website features, public service announcements, and videos get the word out on the airwaves and in the public eye in ways that no amount of money spent on traditional advertising methods ever could. The proof is in the numbers.

She goes on to say “More than one million people watched PETA’s banned “[Veggie Love](#)” (probably NSFW) Super Bowl ad, and 333,000 of those viewers went on to watch PETA’s hard-hitting exposé of the meat industry” She stated that “Many thousands ordered a vegan starter kit.” Why was this banned? The idea behind the

ad is women in their underwear seducing vegetables with a tag-line that says “*Studies show that vegetarians have better sex.*” then later “Go Veg”. The [PETA website](#) says “*Apparently, NBC has something against girls who love their veggies.*” The list PETA provides with NBC’s concerns are: “*licking pumpkin, touching her breast with her hand while eating broccoli, pumpkin from behind between legs, rubbing pelvic region with pumpkin, screwing herself with broccoli (fuzzy), asparagus on her lap appearing as if it is ready to be inserted into vagina, licking eggplant, rubbing asparagus on breast*”.

This seems like marketing sex inappropriately, most vegans don’t feel this way about vegetables and it seems I won’t eat asparagus for a few days after thinking about it “on her lap appearing as if it is ready to be inserted into vagina.”

Let’s look at another example PETA created plenty of controversy with: their “Boyfriend Went Vegan” (“BWWAKTBOOM”) campaign. In terms of numbers, the [YouTube video](#) has more than 3.2 million views, and [BWWAKTBOOM.com](#) received more than 300,000 hits in just its first two days online.”

For those unable to or choosing not to watch, a woman wearing only underwear and a coat goes to buy veggies while wearing a neck brace because, according to her, her boyfriend went vegan and “*knocked the bottom out of me.*” You can see her wincing in pain as she walks down the street. If sex is hurting either something is wrong medically or comfort zones are not being respected. A healthy sexual experience stops when someone is in pain (there are exceptions to this, but usually then there are safe words

and it doesn’t lead to a neck brace). This is why it is a sexist ad, not because the woman is in her underwear, although that doesn’t help, or because it talks about sex as a reason to go vegan, but because it seems to imply that going vegan will make your boyfriend stop respecting you enough to listen when you say “no” leading to pain and injury.

In their defense, PETA say they are trying to even the playing field by using some half naked dudes. Heather Carlson stated “*PETA’s latest sexy campaign starring U.S. soccer phenom Tim Howard has been a huge hit, reaching millions of people via social media posts on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Tim’s “Ink, Not Mink” ad and video allowed us to reach people who may not normally see our campaigns, and—as Tim says—‘show them just how badly animals suffer for this supposed fabric [fur] that no one needs.’*”

However, the difference is in the fact that he’s being interviewed in the video. He’s not licking vegetables, and he is fully clothed when his opinions are revealed. They are using his words to market not wearing fur.

In the promo shots, Tim is not wearing a shirt, and I must say he is very built and attractive. However, the difference is in the fact that he’s being interviewed in the video. He’s not licking vegetables, and he is fully clothed when his opinions are revealed. They are using his words to market not wearing fur. They also interview Taraji P. Henson fully clothed at the set of her nude photo shoot. The difference between these two shoots is Targji P. Henson is completely naked for her spread, while Tim Howard is

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clearly wearing shorts.

In a society that allows men to go topless in public while prohibiting women from doing the same because of secondary sex characteristics (“boobs”) these campaigns send a different message. It shows Tim Howard covered in art (his ink) and covering up his “sexy bits” and Targji P. Henson in her own skin showing all her parts.

PETA says *“No matter what a person thinks of public nudity, it gets people talking about animal-protection issues—and whenever we have a spike in traffic, we see people browsing our site and watching our hard-hitting videos, such as the Paul McCartney-narrated exposé ‘Glass Walls.’”*

I get that the ads I’m pointing out had a huge response and perhaps some people went vegan because of them catching their eye

and leading them to look up more. Also, I highly doubt PETA’s ads make anyone stop being vegan, and they probably don’t scare away people thinking about it. However, they most likely do scare away feminists from PETA itself.

It seems that if they can convince millions of people to stop wearing fur based on someone’s words, while also portraying Tim Howard as a powerful, strong, intelligent person, then why not portray women the same way? Along with promoting veganism, the ads would also teach little girls that they are valuable for more than their bodies, and they can change the world with their words, not just their sexuality.

Turkeys and Titles

Jessica Sarter

Most of us were not simply born vegan, so getting there is a journey. Being conscious of the path others are on, and even thinking about your own, is something that can be too often forgotten.

I am not one for titles. I don't like being locked into what a title means or being defined by the symbolism of certain words. This is why I'm in a partnership with my man instead of married, a student of Buddhism instead of a Buddhist and well, you get the gist. And while I've never been much of a meat eater, I have never taken on the title and presumed responsibility of being a vegetarian.

My food choices have often been a conversation piece when I was out and passed on meat dishes or ordered three different sides and called it a meal. At times, I liked the attention, because yes, you can't help but feel a little superior knowing that you are in fact on the moral high ground here. And at times it was annoying, such as when people would ask if it wasn't hard for me not to eat that steak. On a good day, I would say something like *"No, because if I ever want steak, I can eat it"* which is difficult to say without sounding like you think the person is an idiot. Or I would reply *"Do you miss eating things you don't like?"* which again, can kind of sound condescending but, really, come on!

I wasn't planning on assuming this new title. It just kind of happened on its own. The way

I love my pets and have seen how full of personality and feeling they are certainly opened my eyes to animals. My work in NYC to ban carriage horses made me feel good yet hypocritical. I have sat and listened to Buddha's teaching on compassion for all living beings and had a gnawing feeling that maybe I was cherry-picking my spiritual practices a little too much.

Not That Kind of Vegetarian

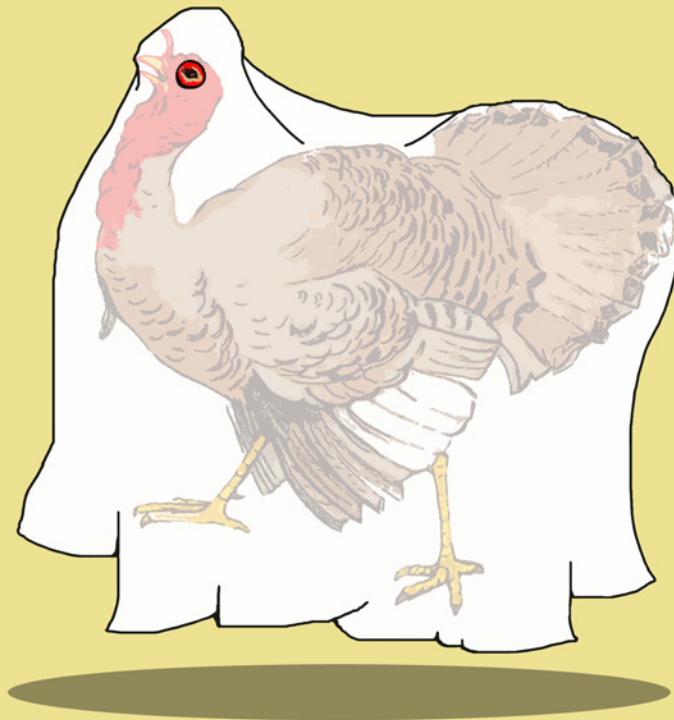
So I stopped eating meat last year. It didn't happen overnight, it just kind of unfolded. Like everyone else, bacon was a favorite and then one night I had a dream about baby pigs and woke up and said I won't eat that again. Just like that, it was done. The only thing I really did still eat was chicken, but even that became obsolete. Yet I still didn't see myself as vegetarian. To me, vegetarians are like my old roommate who would say *"what kind of flesh are you cooking"* or *"are you finished with the carcass?"* if I left chicken out. And I thought it was awful when she said those things and truly felt she meant to offend me. Maybe she did and maybe she didn't. All I know is that when she spoke like that while standing in tree pose in our kitchen it shaped my view of vegetarians.

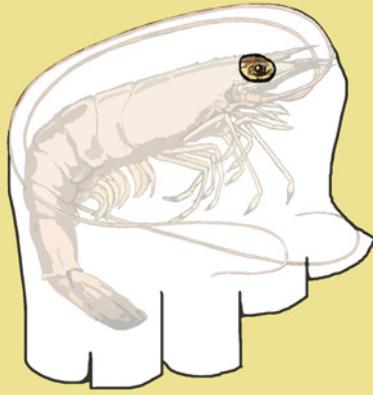
Whenever I have thought about completely giving up meat I have wondered what I would do on the holidays. I mean, turkey and stuffing are my favorite part. What would I eat? What would everyone else eat? Would I feel weird? Would they feel weird? And when Thanksgiving came around I ate turkey and stuffing as usual.

Taking the Title

The next morning I awoke with that bad feeling you get when you know something is wrong but you haven't been awake long enough to remember what it is yet. And there it was. I had broken my long spell on non-

vegetarian-vegetarianism. I was surprised to find that I had a guilty feeling inside. And then I realized it. I was done with turkey. What would I do if I couldn't eat stuffing though? It was my favorite thing to eat throughout the whole day! I would make it without the sausage in it. That's what. It's funny to suddenly see that the sausage was always a part of the stuffing that I tried to pick out as much as possible anyway. When my boyfriend came home I said it. I wanted to just drop the bomb. Shock and awe. *"I'm a vegetarian,"* I declared. *"Yeah I know,"* was his unaffected reply as he hung up his coat. Apparently, I always had been in his eyes. I just hadn't arrived there myself. Later





he would tell me I looked like I was forcing myself to eat turkey that day. And I was.

The next morning when I woke it hit me. Shrimp! I eat shrimp in the summer! I hadn't even thought about it. I immediately felt regret at locking myself in as a vegetarian. Damn, had I told anyone else yet? A quick google search proved that yes I could be a pescatarian— a vegetarian who eats fish — but that's a little too contradictory for me. Especially since shrimp is the only seafood I ever eat. Was I going to let that one thing keep me from stepping into a place that will make me feel more whole and consistent? I have reasoned that there must be some feeling of sacrifice otherwise this decision would have come to me long ago. And so I said goodbye to shrimp and was happy with my decision to commit to a title that reminded me of whom I am at this time in my life.

Unfortunately, that good feeling was short-

lived. Because just one day with PETA in your Facebook feed will quickly remind you that while you may be a better person for not eating meat, you damn sure have a long way to go if you want to honor the rights of animals. Great, I gave up meat, but I can't turn a blind eye to the fact that my dairy use contributes to abuse that may even be worse than death. I don't drink dairy milk, but I don't walk away from food that has it in it. I've volunteered several times this year at Woodstock Farm Animal Sanctuary in upstate New York. And as the turkeys stood next to me I was happy to be able to look at them as social animals that would follow me around and know that's all they are to me now. On my last visit, I sat out in a field and gave Reiki to a calf that would once have been either food or a milk machine. The moment was beautiful, she and I laying in a field together and as I sat there I wondered what the fuck was

wrong with me that I couldn't just make a full commitment to veganism.

Smoke and Mirrors

And that's the question. What is wrong with me that I don't just say this is it and then that's it? I speak only for myself when I say the mental process feels like when I quit smoking. I swear I thought about it forever, loathed myself for not quitting even while I was smoking my cigarettes. In a way it was a desire to escape that cycle of feeling pissed at myself every time I "enjoyed" a smoke that helped me to quit. How is giving up meat and quitting smoking even remotely connected? Yes I know, by smoking I was making a choice to harm myself, by consuming animal products I am participating in the suffering of animals that have not chosen to harm themselves. But in my observation of myself the mental and spiritual process I am going through is very similar. Both changes greatly affect my life and my identity. Even positive changes in who you are can take some adjusting to.

I "want" to be vegan yet at the same time I think I am fearful of it. Is that fear because of the unknown? Is that fear based on my need to be a perfect vegan which means once I say "yes", I can never mess up? Am I being lazy? Am I afraid of the title? Writing the article alone gives me anxiety as if I'll be held accountable afterwards. I'm trying to take my own advice that I give my clients and recognize the steps that I'm making, examining the struggles I have and constantly educating myself so that my subconscious will do some of the work for me. I think veganism is a simple choice for some people and for others it is not.

As I write this I fear the backlash from others:

"I thought this was a vegan magazine!"

"Why don't you send this to a vegetarian magazine?!!!"

"You either do or you don't!"

And on and on. Ultimately that's some of that fear that I speak of. I have met many vegans in my travels this last year and can't remember an actual public shaming (everyone is braver online!). And I tell people the truth, having decided that if and when I take another new title I want it to be true. And people say the same things that they say any time you see someone on a journey that you recognize yourself in. Like any other goal, I hear things like *"congrats on the vegetarianism"*, *"here try this cashew cheese"* and *"every step counts"*, etc. And I take that in and I give it back to others. When you do that for people it helps them feel like they are a part of something bigger and that their progress in getting there is just as important. For me personally, the last thing I need is someone telling me that I am sucking at this as if I don't have my own inner critic for just such feedback.

Taking the Steps

Fortunately, living in Brooklyn has made it possible to try many vegan dishes. I've been buying more and more vegan products, recently discovering veggie crumbles which have joyfully brought tacos back into my life. The cheese situation sucks, as anyone on the east coast will attest. California seems like a magical haven where great vegan things are happening while I wait for them to come to Whole Foods. I actively seek

out opportunities to try vegan foods now. We have a great event called [Smorgasburg](#) where I started visiting the vegan vendors and sampling all kinds of good stuff. And while the comments I see online can make even holding these discussions seem scary, the people I have met continue to remind me of their normal-ness.

Currently, I am operating under the premise that by trying the best vegan foods, I will be able to really see the potential in these new foods. I had seen Daiya cheddar in the grocery store, but never tried it after having some other horrible vegan cheese. But I ordered it when I saw it as an ingredient in a sandwich at an event and as I bit into it I think I might have actually whispered, “*oh god, thank you*”, realizing that all is not lost with vegan cheese. My Facebook wall now has my new vegan finds (“*Wow you should try this vegan sour cream*”) sandwiched between pictures of me having cocktails and me in yoga poses (oh the irony).

So that’s my story that I submitted to a vegan magazine because, regardless of my title, I read vegan magazines. And I think a lot of veg-curious people do as well. And I hope that it reminds some vegans of how they got to where they are and I hope that it lets other people know that they are not alone in trying to figure out what essentially is a whole new way of life. I hope it pisses some vegans off because without their fire and passion veganism would likely not even be the big topic that it is now. But mostly I wrote this for me because while I have always hated titles I have never been afraid to publicly commit to being a student of something that matters to me.



Peek-a-beet!

Chocolate Covered Popcorn

Chocolate covered popcorn is the perfect snack for all occasions and so simple to make. The sweetness from the agave syrup with the distinctive taste from maple syrup goes perfectly together with cacao. Combined with crunchy popcorn, it makes one amazing and healthy snack.

Ingredients

- 50g raw organic cacao liquor
- 50g raw organic cacao butter
- 2 pinches Himalayan sea salt
- 1 1/2 Tbsps organic agave syrup
- 1/2 tsp organic maple syrup
- 40g organic unpopped popcorn

1. To melt the chocolate, use a Bain marie, also called a water bath. Heat up some water in a saucepan. Keep the water simmering at low heat. Find a bowl (not plastic) to put on the top of the saucepan. The bowl should not touch the water.
2. Add the cacao liquor, cacao butter, and the salt. Stir until everything has melted.
3. Add the agave and maple syrup. Taste and adjust as needed. Let the chocolate cool a little bit.
4. Pop 40g unpopped popcorn. If you don't have a popcorn machine, simply melt a tiny amount of margarine/oil in a saucepan on medium-high heat. Add the unpopped popcorn and cover. When the popping sound stops, pour the popcorn into a bowl.
5. Cover the popcorn with the chocolate. Let it cool in the fridge. Enjoy!

Caroline Rognan Aasen

Certified Natural Chef

[Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#)

*Harnessing
The
Awesomeness
In Your
Vegan
Business
Idea*



By Stephanie Redcross & Emma Levez-Larocque

Is there an entrepreneur inside you bursting to come out? Do you sit at your day job dreaming of that business idea you know would change the world? Well, maybe it's time to take action to make your dreams a reality!

The vegan market is booming – new businesses are selling everything from healthy vegan fast food to designer vegan shoes and vegan gardening supplies. This is a great time to jump in with both feet. But before we encourage you to quit your day job, let us take a step back with you.

Starting a business is... well, serious business! And if you're going to survive, you have to balance your passion and enthusiasm with a reality check and a logical, well-planned process. After all, the vegan business world is no more forgiving (and perhaps even less so) than the non-vegan version.

We've put together 10 recommendations that will help you along your way. Don't let anyone take that passion away, but consider these points as you get started!

#1: Don't Just Create Something – Figure Out How You're Going To Sell It

Most products and services are developed in a magical creative fog that inspires entrepreneurs to push boundaries. Often, when you are in creation mode, you are experiencing ideas in a limitless setting. However, running a business is more of a practical exercise. For this reason, successful entrepreneurs need balance – you have to live in the clouds while keeping at least one foot on the ground.

Your first grounding exercise is to determine

the financial viability of your offering. Will people buy it? How much will they pay? Can you make enough money to build a good business? Finding answers to these questions involves research that will help you understand how you will sell your product.

Selling is a process; there are many steps required to deliver a product/service to customers. However, if you wait too long to start generating sales, you could end up with a living room full of boxes, a yoga studio with no students, or a beautiful website that no one visits.

To avoid this pitfall, remove your creative hat and think like a salesperson. Yes, you can hire a team to help facilitate deals. But as an entrepreneur you are the leader of your organization and everything flows from your strategic perspective. If you've never sold your product, it can be hard to coach, train, and hire the best sales team.

Vegan Mainstream Tip: Set a date, (hopefully soon), and spend at least an hour a week working at selling your offering. Find out if your product/service is more than a good idea. Push forward and make sure someone is willing to pay for it. Set up appointments, get out of the office, leave the garage (a.k.a. the product factory), get a booth at a farmer's market, or meet a potential client for lunch.

#2: Find, Listen To, and Understand Your Potential Customers

Don't fall into the common trap of thinking that vegans will be the backbone of your customer base. It is likely that most of your customers will not be self-identified vegans,

but people who are interested in or have some affiliation with the lifestyle. In addition, since vegans only make up a small part of the population, most businesses will have to rely on a community much larger than the vegan population. Therefore, it is important to develop a true target market. Your true target market consists of the people who will benefit most from your offering. Think carefully about who that might be because you're going to need to do some research on them.

Once you've identified your target market(s), make sure you understand their needs and how your service/product will help them. If you don't spend time connecting the dots between your offering and your customers, your sales could suffer and you will give the competition a chance to invade your customer base. So, figure out who they are, and then find the best way to make them notice you.

To reach people in your target market spend time in their circles. You have to understand where they shop, how they spend their spare time, and where they get their information. This means attending meet-ups and going to festivals they attend, reading the magazines and blogs they subscribe to, and participating in social media groups and joining local organizations they belong to. It's time to immerse yourself in their culture. When you do this, you will be rewarded. Once you have this information, you will be able to reach them – by developing dynamite packaging that they will respond to, crafting exceptional training videos they will find useful, or producing mouth-watering photos that keep them coming back for more.

Vegan Mainstream Tip: Make a target market analysis part of your business plan (and do an analysis for each target market you identify). Writing this information down will keep you focused on who you really want to serve, and this will help you make decisions in the day-to-day running of your business.

#3: Don't Let Perfection Hold You Back – Unleash What You've Got to the World (and Listen to What the World Has to Say)

As you start your vegan entrepreneurial journey, the excitement of the dream can yield the illusion that creating the best vegan ice-cream, coffee, restaurant, makeup, or consulting business the world has ever known is everything. While having an exceptional product/service is definitely a requirement, making the best vegan (whatever) in the galaxy is often only possible after you've exposed the world to your offering. There is an amazing thing that happens when customers are able to touch, feel, taste, or experience your product/service: feedback.

While it's an amazing accomplishment to build, create or provide a service to your community or industry, it must be used for all the benefits to be realized. This can be a little scary at times because customers can be brutally honest about their dislikes. As the creator, it can be hard to hear criticism; however, this is organic fuel for your business. Once you understand how to identify the meaningful feedback, you can make changes that will transform a great product into an exceptional product.

Vegan Mainstream Tip: To survive in this ever-changing world, a nimble approach will

be required to ensure your offering is always relevant. So the earlier you experience this sensation, the better off your business will be.

#4: Build Awesomeness and Be Flexible – Recognize Change as Part of Business

You have created an awesome product – so everything associated with it has to be awesome too, right? Of course! But, wait a second. Take a breath, and remind yourself that the overall awesomeness of your business is something you can take time to build, and it doesn't have to come with a huge price tag.

We all know of big corporations that spend months on logo development and naming projects; however, you are a small business. You can be nimble, make changes quickly, and adapt to anything that comes in your direction. Use that to your advantage and get comfortable with building your awesomeness over time. Need a logo? Start with a logo contest on a site like [99Design](#). Need a website? Download a storefront template on [Wordpress](#). Need some business cards? Get some free business cards from [Vistaprint](#). Don't be afraid to use these low-cost tools to get you started. While you might feel tempted to think, “*Why can't I have a site like that company?*”, the reality is you are just starting out, so strive to be the best you can, but don't feel like you have to start out perfect. The smart approach is to get your business going without a large investment.

During the early stages of your business, you will be testing the waters of your brand, understanding how your business

is perceived, and experiencing real-time feedback. Many of the decisions you made about your first website, once tested in the real world, might require adjustments. If you stay flexible, you will train yourself to understand that businesses evolve and mature like people. Today's shipping carton might be the standard box from the post office, but in 12 months you will be able to order custom boxes bearing your logo. Build your business with the essentials first, then work on making it better and better over time.

Vegan Mainstream Tip: We love sites like [Fiver](#) because you can get just about anything done for \$5. So, when you have that crazy idea, it's only a \$5 investment. Look to build what you need via these inexpensive channels because one day soon, you will decide to re-do it – guaranteed.

#5: Assess Your Skill Set – Use Surge Resources For Support

As an entrepreneur you are responsible for every aspect of your business, even the things that don't come naturally to you. You will need general knowledge of all the major pieces of your business, but that doesn't mean you have to (or should!) do everything.

Make an inventory of the things you do well, and the things you don't. Caution! When you're making this list remember, there's a difference between the things you don't do well and the things you don't like doing. In the beginning, you might have to work on tasks that you can do, but aren't your favorite. It's easy to think that you can just hire someone, but it's wiser to limit your financial commitments during the early



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months, so if you can do it, suck it up and do it yourself.

Vegan Mainstream Tip: For areas where you lack the experience or expertise, consider using surge resources instead of hiring an employee. For example, if you need help with your accounting, have someone review your books on a quarterly basis and prepare your files for tax payments, but do the rest yourself. The idea is to use resources during the critical times, when someone else's expertise will make the biggest impact.

#6: Set Monthly Goals and a Plan – Including Dedicated Time Each Day

Traditional jobs offer infrastructure. As an entrepreneur, there's no such thing as sick days or vacation time. You set the rules; therefore it's easy not only to break them, but also to never set them in the first place. This often translates to missed deadlines and delayed projects. This isn't a result of laziness – often it's mismanagement of time, resources, and expectations. The first solution to keeping things on track is to have a set number of hours each day to work on your business. This ensures your business gets the proper attention to catch anything that might fall through the cracks.

In addition to scheduling, your business needs goals. Take the time at the beginning of each year to document these goals. We'd all love to secure that million dollar contract, but think beyond financial goals. Consider the metrics that help determine if you are on course for that next big deal. This means monitoring website traffic, social media engagement, number of active customers, email subscribers, leads generated, and

proposals provided. These goals should be set on a monthly and quarterly basis to keep you accountable. Plus, evaluate monetary goals on a monthly basis so, if things are off-track, corrections can be made in time to change course. If you only look at how things turned out once a year, you will have to wait another 365 days before you know if things are on target.

Vegan Mainstream Tip: Post working hours for your business, especially if you work from home. This will be a reminder for when you should be in your office versus running a quick errand. Also, set a daily schedule with a complete list of standard activities per day and post it in your office. This will provide a consistent reminder of how you should manage yourself. Everyone needs a boss at times, even if it's your alter ego.

#7: Don't Quit Your Full-Time Job – You Will Need Money While You Build Your Business

Don't jump without a parachute – well, at least not by choice. With businesses downsizing and more jobs being outsourced, a layoff might be the catalyst that encourages you to become an entrepreneur. But maybe you are fed up with your job and just want to break out of the cycle and follow your dream? In this case, think twice – it's highly advisable to maintain at least a part-time job while you build your business.

Every business requires capital, and you will need to maintain your current financial responsibilities like that cell phone, car payment, and rent or mortgage. It takes time for a new business to generate enough income to pay salaries while retaining

enough from profits for re-investment in the business. You will need a solution to help you pay your everyday expenses while you figure out how to make your first million. So, if you have a good job (even if it's a boring one!), don't do anything rash. Nothing takes the steam out of a dream like bills piling up and the stress that results.

Vegan Mainstream Tip: Setting yourself a timeline goal for when you will be able to leave and work your business full-time will make it easier to stay focused on your long-term goal.

#8: Get Your First 10 Customers (Before You Build An Entire Business)

Every business needs customers and one of your first goals should be to start accumulating them as quickly as possible. Without customers every dollar spent becomes a drain on your savings, or a line item on your credit card statement.

Before you take on too much debt, work on the revenue side of your business. The purpose of this approach is to not only make the connection between a return on investment, but to ensure that you don't invest more than you can recoup in a given time period.

Vegan Mainstream Tip: It's easy to over-invest or build for a future that never comes. So, take a moderate approach to spending money until you get those first customers. Once you've figured out how to get 10 customers, it's often not hard to double and triple that number.

#9: Don't Do It Alone - Find Mentors, Network, and Build Partnerships

Being an entrepreneur can be a lonely road. Most of the decisions and responsibility rest on one or two people's shoulders. The weight of this stress can lead to sleepless nights, cranky days, and frustrating afternoons. But the entrepreneur's journey can be a shared experience if you find the support you need. This means building an infrastructure around you that will act as your support system, similar to a family structure.

Take the time each month to find new "family members" so you have people with varied expertise to ask questions, and to provide perspective when difficult situations arise. We can all benefit from having someone in our corner to provide a sanity check. This is especially essential during the first six months: an advisory board can help you avoid common mistakes.

So, how do you build an advisory board? Start with friends and family members whose ideas and opinions you value – you're going to need lots of people to bounce ideas off of. As you gain momentum and start to make contacts involve people in your field who have traveled down a similar road. Use sites like [LinkedIn](#) to identify people in your network. Ask people you think would be great board members for a lunch meeting to chat about their business, your new venture, and the collaborating potential. As people are willing to help you out, be willing to return the favor. After you've met with a few people, determine who's a good fit and how often you would like to meet with each individual. It could be monthly, quarterly, or as needed.

Vegan Mainstream Tip: Remember people are volunteering their time so be respectful; treat them like gold, because when you treat them properly, they will be that precious to you.

#10: Get Tools to Help You Work Smarter -- Free Ones to Start

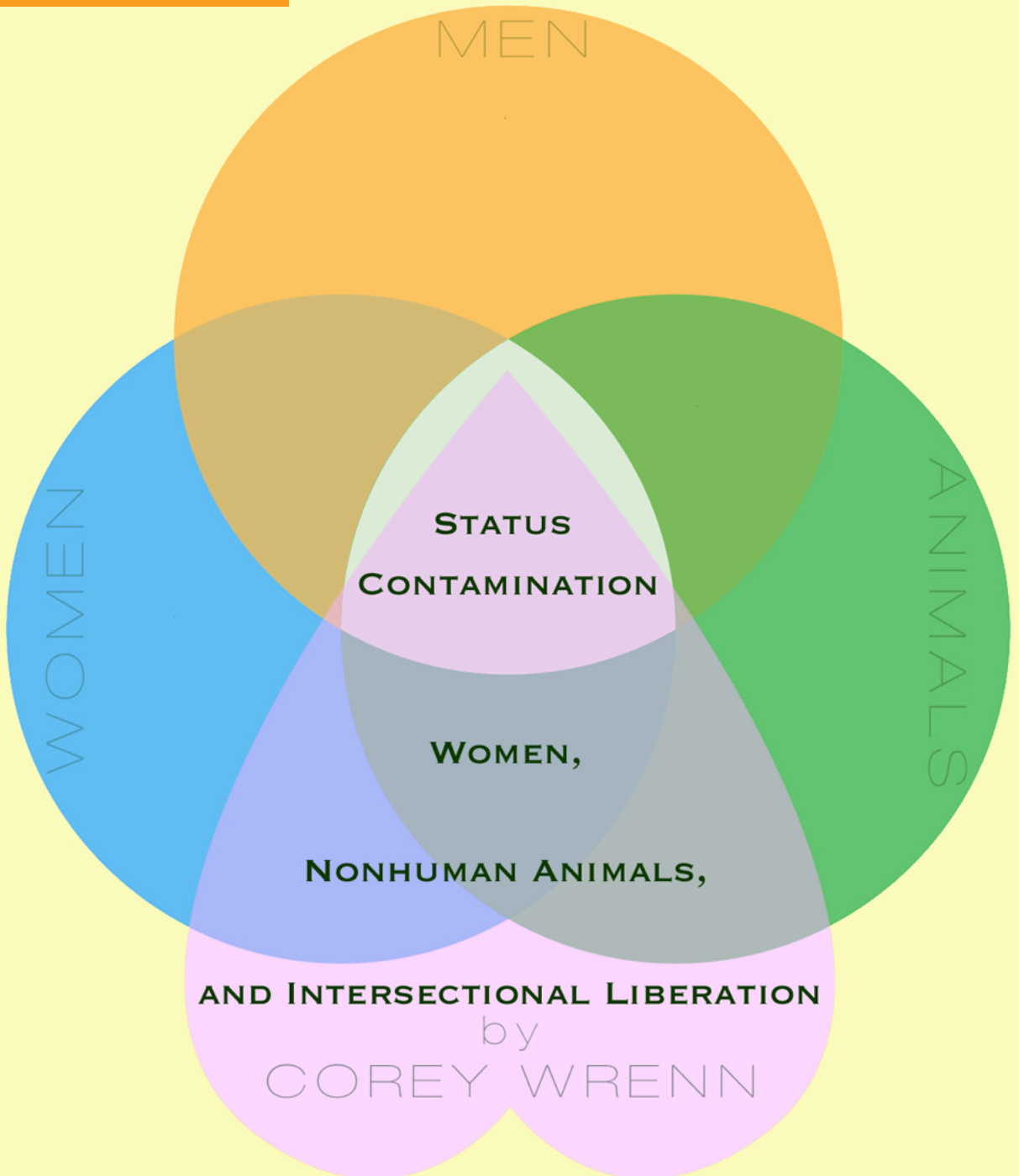
Since we live in the age of technology, a small business can be managed from a laptop in your bedroom. Most software is available via a quick download or enabled via our web browsers. Avoid the temptation to sign up for everything with the hopes of “using it one day”. Instead, evaluate each tool carefully, and start with the minimum requirements that will help you streamline your day-to-day tasks. Look for tools that offer efficiency and convenience, while helping you save time and money. In addition, when evaluating systems, use the 80/20 rule.... while it would be great to have every feature you desire, you have to realize that bootstrapping a business means getting most of what’s needed, not 100% of what you want.

Vegan Mainstream Tip: There’s a large crop of free tools with amazing features available. Consider a free accounting system like [Wave App](#), project management tools like [Trello](#), credit card processing like [Stripe](#) (online) and [Square](#) (in-person), and website/blog software like [Wordpress](#).

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Vegan Mainstream offers Professional Bootcamps that are helping new vegan entrepreneurs all over the country by bringing together new and established business owners, and fostering the passion for vegan business while teaching some of the practical skills that are needed for success. For more information, or to find out about a bootcamp near you, please visit [our website](#).

FOCUS



In sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's *Distinction*, it is argued that social stratification relies substantially on the social construction of aesthetic and taste.¹ These are not universal human experiences, but are instead relatively distinct reflections of the socioeconomic position occupied by different social classes. Likewise, these different aesthetics wield varying levels of access to valuable social, cultural, political, and economic capital.² The maintenance of power often entails the accentuation of privilege in relation to those lesser privileged. Elevated statuses must be clear and unsullied by the encroachment of lower status individuals. This can be achieved in many ways, such as conspicuous consumption or high educational attainment. However, inhabiting a privileged position often elicits envy and admiration by those less fortunate. As a result, many individuals existing within lower positions within the hierarchy of power will attempt to emulate those socially "above" them. This emulation will inevitably dilute the higher status activity or attitude to the point where it no longer represents anything special—it is no longer exclusive to the more powerful groups in society. Thus, those in power tend to abandon that social artifact in favor of something else that is unobtainable by those of less status.

Status contamination can help explain the role power plays in aggravating segregation, as well as the difficulties segregation poses for combatting social inequality.

The struggle to obtain higher status objects and ideas to maintain systems of inequality in reaction to encroachments by lower status

groups is a social phenomenon known as status contamination. Social objects are routinely abandoned as their high status designation is no longer exclusive.³ Society is far from static and battles over power and privilege are commonplace. Sociologist Max Weber defines power as a group's ability to achieve its own aims when other groups resist or otherwise seek to prevent it.⁴ Those with power and those who seek power are in a constant struggle for the representation or protection of their interests. Status contamination can help explain the role power plays in aggravating segregation, as well as the difficulties segregation poses for combatting social inequality.

Schelling⁵ first developed this idea in an exploration of neighborhoods that were racially segregated. Schelling found that community members preferring neighbors of the same race, but also living in a neighborhood experiencing a permeation of other races, would eventually create a tipping point and move out. This exodus leaves the newly establishing racial minority group behind as the new predominant group. This phenomenon has been used to explain the predominance of immigrants and other minority groups in inner cities as well as the subsequent "white flight" to the suburbs. Importantly, separate is rarely equal, and the emigrated higher status groups tend to take with them their social and environmental privileges. Residential segregation has been linked to impoverishment and diminished life chances for those left behind,⁶ while those living in suburban areas generally enjoy access to superior schools, medical facilities, culture and arts, and even healthier grocery options.

Lieberson et al.⁷ have applied this same model to the use of androgynous names over the past century. As more females were given male names, those names were gradually abandoned by subsequent parents of male children. As a name became increasingly associated with persons of low status (in this case, females), that name was thus “contaminated” and inappropriate for individuals of higher status (men). Names like “Kim” and “Lindsey,” once popular names for male children, have become designated as names only appropriate for girls.

Not surprisingly, the reverse is not true for boys appropriating girl names. Boy children who begin to dominate androgynous names or appropriate female names will not cause future parents of female babies to avoid those names en masse. The reverse is less common because there is nothing to be gained from adopting a low status female name. Alternatively, women do stand to benefit from hanging on to names that the more powerful male group favors. For instance, female-demarkating names on resumes can lead to fewer interviews,^{8, 9} and are less frequently cited in academic spaces.¹⁰ Presumably, then, holding a male name will reduce exposure to discrimination and increase one’s opportunities. Of course, should females create a tipping point by over-utilizing male names, men can be expected to retreat and the status associated with these indicators would be lost.

Status contamination impacts race and gender inequality, but also species oppression. Human animals have segregated from Non-human Animals in the creation of a human-nonhuman divide.¹¹ Non-human

Animals (both domesticated and free-living) exist within the absolute lowest social status possible within human society as objects of resources. This low status has entailed a near complete powerlessness that leaves them vulnerable to extreme exploitation and death. Indeed, human persons of lower status have been likened to Non-human Animals throughout history in order to justify their own exploitation and death. Human slaves have been likened to Non-human Animals to justify their slavery (African slaves, for instance, have been compared to brute-like apes), women have been likened to Non-human Animals to justify their subjugation (like slaves, women are often literally considered livestock, but are also referred to as “meat”¹² in the sexual sense), and human persons of other nationalities have been likened to non-humans to justify their colonization or invasion (in the 19th and early 20th century, indigenous persons were kept in Western “human zoos,” for example). Non-human status has long been correlated with social powerlessness and vulnerability.

To be human is to experience power, prestige, and personhood—to be Non-human is to be the terrible opposite.

Not surprisingly, the social stigma attached to Non-humans remains pervasive. Many recoil in disgust at being compared to other animals. Stereotypes that reference nonhuman species, like “pig,” “bitch,” “nag,” and “rat,” have been used as insults in our human culture. Some schools, horrified at advancements in scientific theory that support the connection between

humans and other great apes, refuse to teach evolution (or offer it as only one of several possibilities), as a genetic relationship with apes is thought to be insulting to the superior status of humans. Insensitive PETA campaigns that liken the Non-human experience to that of Jews in the Holocaust or African slaves in the Antebellum United States have deeply offended many.¹³ To be human is to experience power, prestige, and personhood—to be Non-human is to be the terrible opposite. In order to retain our high status position, we have abandoned our biological and social connections to Non-human Animals with little regard to the overwhelming scientific evidence for biological relationship and the striking similarities in historical experiences. When other animals encroach on our privileged space and challenge our status, we have tended to retreat.

Status contamination, then, works as a mechanism of in-group and out-group boundary maintenance. It has been foundational to institutionalized oppressions of all kinds. Unfortunately, it tends to surface within social justice spaces as well.

In the movement to liberate other animals, men have largely abandoned the feminized advocacy space. Perhaps a reaction to some degree of recognized connection in experiences of inequality (or, more likely, a result of higher status individuals lumping lower status individuals together), women have been more likely to do the work of attending to Non-human Animal interests (while men have predominantly been engaged in maintaining speciesism through “hunting,” vivisection, slaughtering, “farming,” etc.).¹⁴ Indeed, as social reform

typically took place in the public sphere, a realm off-limits to women, women cleverly tapped into the socially constructed connection between women and Non-human Animals and argued that they would be best suited to Non-human Animal welfare work. This allowed women to escape domesticity to some extent and create important change for Non-human Animals.

Before long, the Non-human Animal rights movement became a women’s movement, and thus a movement for the powerless by the powerless.

However, the increased presence of women in the Non-human Animal rights movement led to that unfortunate tipping point, whereby the movement became associated with a low status activity, or “women’s work.”¹⁵ Before long, the Non-human Animal rights movement became a women’s movement, and thus a movement *for* the powerless *by* the powerless.¹⁶ Not only did men largely retreat from the movement, but they also began to dismiss the movement as overly emotional, silly, and associated with a number of other female denigrations.

This entanglement of power and powerlessness between human and non-human groups is an essential component in the struggle to liberate other animals. Advocacy that is focused only for the advancement of Non-human Animals is likely to be hampered, because non-human advancement will ultimately be hindered by the structural disadvantages felt by women and other human groups.¹⁷ To see real change for Non-human Animals, advocates must challenge inequality for all. It is those normalized and taken-for-granted systems

of inequality that allow for powerlessness and justified exploitation. This connection also has implications for the mainstream Non-human Animal “rights” industry, which either ignores the oppression of other groups or complicates it (e.g. PETA’s “I’d Rather Go Naked than Wear Fur” campaigns). The movement will have difficulty achieving Non-human Animal liberation so long as it refuses to acknowledge the heavily entwined oppressions of low status groups.

The push for Non-human Animal rights, then, is a fight to end inequality of all kinds.

Alternatively, vegan abolitionists (activists who reject the single-issue focus of professionalized advocacy) challenge socially imposed differentiations and segregation.¹⁸ Abolitionism, unlike the more dominant and moderate Non-human Animal positions, explicitly recognizes that inequality for Non-human Animals operates rather similarly to that of other oppressed groups.¹⁹ More importantly, while Non-human Animals are given special attention, vegan abolitionists do not see them as separate from the human inequalities that exacerbate their experience of speciesism. The push for Non-human Animal rights, then, is a fight to end inequality of all kinds. Recognizing the role of status contamination is crucial not only for exploring the manifestation of otherizing social behavior and systemic segregation, but also in addressing the potential for status and power contestations to enter social justice spaces and complicate liberation efforts.

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¹¹ The term “Non-human Animal(s)” is capitalized to denote their status as a social group.

¹² Euphemistic language has been placed in quotations. I employ this technique on Non-human Animal-oriented language as well, such as “hunting” or “farming,” which are inaccurate labels for the institutionalized violence they entail.

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Why I Stopped Telling People I'm Vegan

Trying to Find Myself Amidst Being Told Who I Was

Marieke Gruwel



When I was thinking about what to write in this article, I had so many ideas that I could not keep track of them. But then, when I got around to sitting down and putting them on paper, I was stumped and had no idea where to start or how to express myself correctly. And so begins my article: with an introduction that has been used countless times by writers, alongside a complementary tone of uncertainty. I cannot count how many times I have sat at my computer screen trying to begin a paper, a Facebook status, or even just a comment on some form of social media, and have been stumped. I have noticed a trend, however. This only happens when I have a strong opinion or am passionate about what I am going to say, and I think this is where I got myself into trouble as a young vegan. Being vegan as a teenager was much more than not being able to eat the dip at a party or buy cupcakes at a bake sale. It became who I was and how I was labelled – even if I did not agree with the stereotypes thrown upon me. I would like to share with you my experience of being vegan while coming of age because sometimes it was great, sometimes it was funny, and sometimes it just downright sucked.

More Than a Phase

I am sure most of you have heard the joke, *“How do you know if someone is vegan? Don't worry, they'll tell you.”* I have to admit, when I first went vegan I lived up to that stereotype wholeheartedly. I went vegetarian when I was twelve years old and by the age of fourteen, I had decided to go vegan. I felt great. Every time you sit down for a meal you make a choice – and here I was, at fourteen years old, making what I

thought was the best possible choice. I was saving animals. It was at this time that people started commenting on my diet, most likely because I was no longer just going through my *‘vegetarian phase.’* I had the urge to tell the world about being vegan and I wanted to let everyone in on the horrors of factory farming and how easy it was to stand against it. I never really made the connection that the food on my plate came from a living (and more importantly, feeling) animal until I went vegetarian. Therefore, I thought that if I made the connection for others, they would just as happily ditch the animal products. But I was naïve. Instead of being praised and respected for the choices I made, I was often teased, labelled, and judged.

Diagnosis: Vegan

Surprisingly, this was not just an issue with my peers. Understandably, when you are young, there is a tendency to make jokes about things that make you uncomfortable or push you out of your comfort zone. Of course, I did not understand this when I was that age but at least I can look back now with a more forgiving lens. What was shocking then, and is even more shocking now, is the number of adults who made my diet their business. Throughout high school I suffered from various mental health issues and have been repeatedly ‘diagnosed’ with various mental illnesses, from depression and bipolar to post traumatic stress disorder and borderline personality disorder. Alongside being prescribed numerous drugs (which is another story altogether), I had to attend therapy. I had experienced a pretty traumatic event when I was young and I was having an incredibly tough time getting through life. Needless to say, I really needed therapy.

Well, I was in luck – someone knew exactly what was wrong with me and how I could fix it.

When I went to meet with the psychiatrist I was referred to by my family doctor, I proudly discussed my veganism when asked to talk about myself. Little did I know, this tidbit of information (that I never would have guessed had anything to do with my mental health) turned out to be precisely what was wrong with me. According to her, my veganism was the cause of my depression, my self-loathing, my inability to function in society, and my suicidal thoughts. Who knew eating vegetables could cause so much pain? That day I learned that ‘vegan’ was not simply a word to describe what I did or did not eat.

The definition of vegan, according to the Oxford Dictionary, is quite simple. A vegan is a person who does not eat or use animal products. Easy. For me, that is what I was signing up for. I was prepared to politely reject birthday cake and forgo the pizza at parties. And to be completely honest, I was ready to hear about how kind and ethical I was – come on, I was fourteen. But like I said, when you are young and something makes you uncomfortable the normal reaction is to make fun of it. And this is what happened. Instead of playing along with the humour and gently showing others why I made the choices I did, I took the attacks on veganism personally. I reached out online to find support, and seven years ago the most accessible support came from PETA, specifically peta2.

Finding a Community

I joined the peta2 street team, I ordered their

starter kits and flyers, and I bought a variety of vegan apparel (including the famous “I am not a nugget” tote bag). I had already been known as “*the crazy vegan*” in my high school, so I thought I might as well embrace it and try to be an activist. I remember going to my first (and last) peta2 event. It was when KFC finally introduced a veggie option on their menu and was agreeing to more humane treatment in their farms. Outside of one of the KFCs in downtown Winnipeg, peta2 was celebrating their ‘victory’ by handing out coupons for the new vegetarian sandwich in, yes, you guessed it, their famous lettuce bikinis. I went to go order this new option, which I actually had a difficult time getting veganized because the sandwich on the menu was not even vegan, and then proceeded to get my picture taken with the women in the lettuce bikinis to get my street team points. I remember feeling so uncomfortable. Groups of men were standing around trying to get attention and cars were continuously passing by, honking their horns, and shouting things at the women as they held their signs at the edge of the street. Was this what it meant to be vegan? Because if it was, I did not like it.

I Was Not the Problem

I was lost for a while. I did not want to be part of the only vegan community I knew of, but I sure as hell did not want to stop being a vegan. I felt as if I had to live up to the vegan stereotypes in order to be a real vegan. And I wanted to be a real vegan because I strongly believed (and still do) that eating a vegan diet is the right thing to do. But I really had no idea how to be vegan other than in the most basic definition of the word. I slowed down with the animal rights activism and

remained quiet when people shoved meat in my face (I'm sure you have all been there at some point, it takes a lot to not get angry). One of the hardest days I endured in high school was when I was in grade eleven and my environmental science class got the chance to watch a documentary about factory farming and its devastating effects on the environment. I was pleasantly surprised when the documentary also shed some light on the treatment the animals receive in these massive industrial farms. I had seen footage of this sorts numerous times before, but it was clear many of my peers had not. I noticed some of the students close their eyes or gasp, which was a normal reaction, but a handful of the students started laughing and imitating the cries of the animal who were being beaten and abused. I walked out of that class feeling physically ill.

I finally figured out that it was not me. I was the only vegan in my high school and I had no other vegan friends, so naturally I took the teasing as a personal attack. That day I learned that unfortunately, no matter who the message came from, it was not going to be taken seriously by some. I really wish that they were attacking me personally because that would be so much easier to accept and understand than the fact that some people just do not care. I could not stop trying to help the animals, but my activism became quieter and more personal.

Hiding It

By the time I got to university, my veganism was not something I wore on my sleeve but if you got to know me it would certainly come up. Things were getting better and people

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were more understanding than before. I was starting to feel more comfortable with who I was becoming because it finally felt like I was starting to decide who I was. Good things must always come to an end, though. One summer evening I went to a pub with some friends to catch a band. I started talking to some guy at the bar and we really hit it off. After we had been chatting for some time, he ordered two shots and I politely declined the offer. When he asked me why, I explained that I could not take the shot because, if memory serves correctly, it had something like Bailey's in it and I explained I could not have dairy because I was vegan. His face dropped – it was almost as if I had told him I could not drink dairy because I was an alien from another planet. He proceeded to tell me that he once dated a crazy vegan before and that if anything were to happen between us it would only last for an evening. I smiled at him, and rejected his offer with a “f*** you.”

I cannot decide, however, if getting rejected purely because I am vegan is better than the unwanted comments about my sex life. I cannot count how many times men have asked me upon finding out that I am vegan if I swallow. Often, they stand around with their friends and giggle and one of them blurts it out and they think they are all comedians. These occurrences got so annoying that I actually stopped telling men I was vegan until I had to. I have dated guys for weeks without my veganism entering the conversation. This takes a fair bit of skill, if I do say so myself. Coffee dates, movies, concerts – but never dinner. I also began using allergies as an excuse for why I did not eat certain things. It turns out people get really offended when you do not want to eat

their cookies and, speaking from experience, telling them you are vegan does not always work. People respect allergies much more than they respect ethics.

Finding the Words

I really had no idea how to present myself. If I told people I was vegan I was often treated differently, like in the case of my psychiatrist. Maybe if I had kept my veganism to myself I would have received the treatment I needed. But keeping my veganism from people I am dating, new friends, and even coworkers did not seem right and in the long run just did not work. By not sharing this part of myself with others, I felt like I was hiding a part of me. And this was not a part of me that I wanted to hide. Is it my fault that others have misconceptions about vegans? No. Can I decide what kind of vegan I want to be? Of course. And by doing this, I might even be able to shift people's perceptions on what a vegan is and show them that we are all different and that that is okay.

Yet, as I struggled with when and how to present this part of me to others, I also struggled with what word, or words, to use. Words can be a powerful thing, so perhaps changing my language was the easiest way to fix this problem. I noticed a growing trend on the internet of people using the term *plant-based* to define their vegan lifestyle. I found that most people using this term were using it as a way to define a way of eating for their health as opposed to a way of eating for ethical reasons. My veganism, however, has nothing to do with my health. It is a nice bonus, but I would be vegan even if eating animals was the healthiest thing you could do for your body. For me, the other ways

of describing a vegan lifestyle did not fit with my personal beliefs. So I returned to the word *vegan* and gave it some serious thought.

Why was I letting an old psychiatrist, mean kids from high school, and random men from bars scare me away from using the word *vegan*? When I tell people I am a feminist and they ask me if I shave my legs or hate men I do not stop identifying as a feminist – I try to explain to them what feminism really means. I would never tell

anyone how they should identify themselves because I believe that people should call themselves or identify as whatever they feel comfortable with. But I also believe that as people following vegan lifestyles, we should not let stereotypes or misconceptions about the term turn us away from embracing the word *vegan*. A *vegan* is someone who does not eat or use animal products – the rest of yourself is up to you to define, and you should not let anyone tell you differently.

RECIPE

A Variation on Jan's Yeast Gravy

The secret to this gravy is in the toasting of the yeast. The darker the yeast, the deeper the flavour.

Ingredients

2 cups nutritional yeast
3 Tbsps of oil or margarine
pinch of salt
2 Tbsps of flour
2 medium onions, finely chopped
1 cup of chopped mushrooms
4 cloves of garlic, minced
1 cup of vegetable stock (optional)
2 Tbsps of tamari
Dash of balsamic vinegar
Herbs of choice (savory, sage, rosemary, etc.)

1. In a large pan, heat the oil. Slowly add the yeast, covering it in the oil. Continuously turn the yeast to toast it. Once the yeast is dark brown, add the onions and mushrooms, lightly salt. Simmer with the lid on for a few minutes. Add a few tablespoons of water or oil, if the yeast might burn.
2. When the onions and mushrooms are almost cooked, add the garlic, tamari, and vinegar. Blend it into a paste. When thick, stir in your vegetable stock and your water.
3. Finally, add herbs to taste. Simmer for a few minutes.

Liz Solo

Shelter Menus

Carolyn Mullin

For any animal lover, supporting your local shelter seems like a given. However, what can you do when your local shelter doesn't see the problem with serving animal products to raise money?

What comes to mind when you think of Auburn, Nebraska, population 3,460? Prairies? Cornfields? Cattle-grazing? Why, of course! All of that exists there and is bountiful. It also happens to be home to one of the most effective animal rescue and sheltering organizations in the country. Celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, [Hearts United for Animals \(HUA\)](#) is a national no-kill animal shelter, sanctuary, and animal welfare non-profit dedicated to relieving the suffering of animals. To date, they've rescued over 10,000 dogs from puppy mills, sheltered more than 12,000 animals, and, at any given time, the sanctuary houses 400 dogs and 25 cats on its sprawling 65-acre campus of farmland, trees, and grass. In addition to saving and providing refuge to so many animals, HUA also has adopted an animal-friendly menu policy for its people—meaning they serve only vegan or vegetarian food at their events.

HUA is one of the biggest success stories of [Animal Place's Food for Thought](#) campaign, which encourages and helps animal shelters, humane societies, and other animal non-profits to adopt an animal-friendly menu policy for their sponsored events. By animal-friendly, we mean ideally vegan, but many groups are taking intermediary steps

by adopting a veg policy first. After initially asking HUA to consider adopting a policy, it was just a matter of days before their Board of Directors had passed an official animal-friendly menu policy.

Like many vegans and vegetarians, you probably find it not only bothersome, but also downright difficult to understand why animal shelters, SPCAs, local rescues, and other similar non-profits serve animals or animal byproducts at their fundraising events. For us at Animal Place, one of the leading farmed animal sanctuaries in the U.S., it's an issue very near and dear to our hearts. Our first resident, a piglet named Zelda, had found herself at a shelter where the staff immediately fell in love with her and wanted to see the little pink porcine go to a home that viewed her as a friend, not food. They accomplished their mission, yet months later this same shelter served ham at an event to raise money for the dog kennels. Due to Animal Place's ground-breaking Food for Thought campaign, this shelter has adopted an animal-friendly policy.

All too many shelters across North America still share this same fractured view of *'who do we save and who do we serve?'* As we all know, this dichotomy does not need to exist.

Need Ammunition?

There are countless reasons for a shelter to adopt a veg policy and, as an advocate, it's best to be equipped with as many as you can articulate. For one, this policy is an extension of an organization's mission to help animals. It's also the most sustainable and cost-effective option. Plant-based offerings are also generally healthier. An organization can market itself as really being "no-kill." And, as the story of Zelda exemplifies, a good number of shelters also take-in and adopt out as companion animals chickens, goats, rabbits and other so-called "farmed animals," making serving them at fundraisers particularly problematic.

For individuals fighting to eradicate puppy mills, HUA's Director, Josh Bruegger, offers this insightful argument:

"The animals are in a cage their entire lives. They received little to no vet care. They receive no socialization. They are bred over and over again. The offspring are taken from their mothers too early. They have no names and are sometimes known only by numbers. Simply put, these facts are true for animals suffering in puppy mills or those animals who live in factory farms."

[Animal Farm Foundation](#), an organization dedicated to securing equal treatment and opportunity for "pit bull" dogs,, offers this powerful argument:

"Animal Farm Foundation recognizes the value of all animals and additionally respects the missions of all our coworkers and cohorts in the animal welfare movement. As such, we make it our policy to extend our own compassionate practices beyond the scope of companion animals and to never devalue the work of other organizations who are working so hard for wildlife and farm animals. We do not serve meat at any Animal Farm Foundation function."

These are a few of the many reasons provided in a list of 21 reasons with detailed explanations we have on [our website](#) as a handy PDF that can be printed and given to your local shelter.

The Campaign

If this issue rings close to home, we want to equip you to incite change in your community – whether you're an internal advocate (employee, volunteer, board member) or an external one (supporter, donor, member of the public). Your goal is to have the Board of Directors pass a policy statement about the type of food served to people at events, such as fundraisers and volunteer luncheons.

Here's an example of a good policy from The Humane Society of the United States:

"People support The HSUS to help animals. As such, our policy is to see that all HSUS events, functions, or gatherings where food

is made available – from small catered lunches in our offices to conferences such as Animal Care Expo and gala events such as the Genesis Awards – are free of animal products. Where this is impossible or unworkable, these circumstances will be handled on a case-by-case basis.”

Some groups like to keep it short and sweet: *“Hearts United for Animals (HUA) shall only provide vegetarian and/or vegan food options at events sponsored by HUA.”*

Just keep in mind that this campaign centers on the food served to the public, not individuals or the actual animals at a shelter or a rescue.

Let’s Begin!

A good place to start is to determine whether your shelter or rescue currently has a menu policy. It could be an informal one that was developed out of habit or under the leadership of a particular director or board. Perhaps the policy was formally approved by the Board of Directors. Usually the Executive Director or the Board Chair would know if any such formal or informal policy exists. Whatever you discover, there’s likely room for improvement.

Try to get a sense of where staff and board members stand on this issue - are any of them vegetarians, vegans, pescatarians/flexitarians, environmentalists, or health advocates? If so, their support will be key. Supportive staff members or board members can help you in the campaign process, not just with legwork, but to show that there is wide support within the organization for such a policy.

Figure out who might be a challenge to

convince and try to ascertain what would motivate them to support a policy change. Is it economics? Is it taste? Concerns about donor satisfaction?

Determine your best course of action. Would your board be impressed with a formal presentation and literature addressing their questions or concerns? Would they appreciate a vegan food tasting? Is a sample budget showing the economic advantage of a plant-based menu over meat dishes a convincing argument for a ‘numbers’ person? Do they need to know which food trucks, caterers, and restaurants are able to donate or make plant-based foods? Would vegan versions of previous event menus help them envision the policy in action? The available resources on [Animal Place’s Food for Thought website](#) could prove helpful at this stage in the policy adoption process.

When your board seems ready to draft the language for a policy, turn to the [Food for Thought website](#) for sample verbiage from other shelters that have implemented their own animal-friendly policies. Creating a policy can be as simple as a one sentence statement!

Once the policy has passed, let us at Animal Place know so we can recognize your efforts and add this policy to our site! Also, consider applying for a Shelter Grant. Animal Place is awarding grants totaling \$25,000 (100 individual grants of \$250) to eligible and deserving organizations that have adopted an animal-friendly menu policy. See [our website](#) for further details.

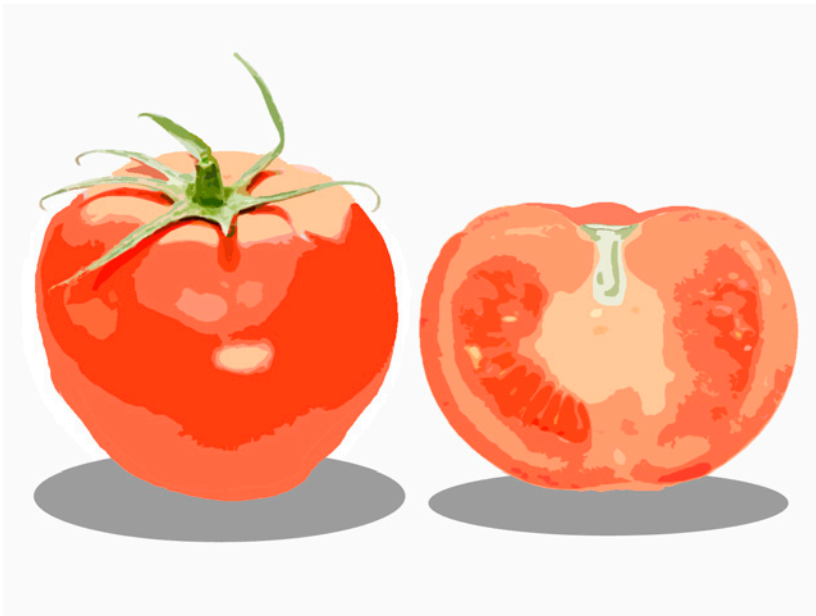
If at any point, you need help - whether it’s with menu ideas or seeking sample products for your event - just let us know. We’re

happy to help! For activists that are ready to take this campaign on, please shoot us an email at foodforthought@animalplace.org and we'll send you all of the materials you should need, such as brochures, an information packet, and other things.

And be sure to watch our brand new [campaign video](#) starring Jackson Galaxy, host of the hit show "My Cat from Hell" on Animal Planet. Joining him in this compelling eight-minute video are animal welfare leaders from across the country emphasizing the importance of veg policies. This film is a must see for your local animal shelter staff, and you can view it now and order your own copy on the [Food for Thought website](#).

About Animal Place

Animal Place was founded in 1989 and is one of the largest and oldest animal sanctuaries in the nation, operating a 600-acre sanctuary in Grass Valley, California, and a 60-acre Rescue Ranch in Vacaville, California. Animal Place extends compassion to all life with a special emphasis on farmed animals. www.animalplace.org



LEAVING A M A R K

**A CONVERSATION WITH CAROL J. ADAMS
BY ERIN RED**



When tackling the hefty topic of sexism as it relates to veganism, there's virtually no one more certified than Carol J. Adams. An acclaimed writer, feminist, and animal advocate, Carol is a graduate of the University of Rochester, obtained her Master of Divinity from Yale Divinity School, and has probably been vegan for longer than you've been alive. Her most well-known work, *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory*, was released in 1989 and has since found its way into the hands of almost every single vegan I know. Provocative and relentless, the book has been hailed as a bible for feminist and progressive rights activists, and was published as a 20th Anniversary Edition in 2010.

It's safe to say that Carol and her work inspired this very issue of T.O.F.U. Magazine.

I was incredibly grateful for the opportunity to chat with Carol recently on some of the topics and ideas that have brought her so much notoriety and which continue to inspire the minds of so many. So, what happens when two feminist vegans with big mouths and bold opinions connect on a controversial topic?

How dare we.

After handling some technical difficulties preparing our discussion, Carol asked if she could share a story with me before we got started. Naturally, I obliged. Little did we know it would create a theme for the whole conversation...

CJA: Something very interesting happened yesterday on my "personal" Facebook page after I posted that Lesley Gore had died. Back in the 1980's, *Ms.* Magazine did a conversation with her, and they talked about feminism and popular music. That was the first time I had really realized how much Lesley Gore was involved in feminism. Of course, she had done the song "You Don't Own Me" – which was a great song in the 60's. The *Times* headline announced, "Lesley Gore, Singer of Teenage Anthems, Dies at 68." But when you read the obituary in the *Times*, it talks about her pro-choice activism, she was a lesbian, she had a partner of 33 years, and a feminist. I decided I was going to post this, and I wrote "Lesley Gore, Feminist Lesbian Pro-Choice Activist, Dead at 68 – so sorry to hear this." Somebody local writes and says, "I'm sure there was more to Lesley than being a feminist, lesbian, and pro-choice activist. If you

lived in the 60's, you were a Lesley fan because she expressed teenage angst in a way we all understood regardless of labels." And I thought, okay.... You know, so.... You want to do this on my Facebook page?

EG: You picked the wrong Facebook Page, my friend.

So, I began gently and I said, "That goes without saying; I was offering a counter weight to the *Times* headline. Everybody knows "Lesley Gore, It's My Party", but did you know Lesley Gore, "Feminist Pro-Choice Lesbian?" Then he writes, "Those anthems are still important to many of us, they helped define a generation!" I said, "Okay, everybody *knew* she was a singer/songwriter, we all know 'It's My Party' and 'Judy's Turn to Cry' and 'You Don't Own Me.' And some of us can remember dancing to those songs at school dances in the 60's, myself included. To flesh out the singer as a feminist, lesbian, and pro-choice activist gives her the kind of recognition she deserves; a person who lived her values, was engaged in social change, who was brave."

...nope, he's not done yet.

Oh, boy.

“You’ve missed my point, Carol. We loved her for what she expressed that united divergent types of folks, not what distinguished one group or mindset from another.” And I said, “Well, not everyone in the 60’s agreed with the idea of ‘You Don’t Own Me!’” Obviously, you don’t write a song “you don’t own me, don’t tell me what to do, don’t tell me what to say...” if everybody agreed that women could *not* be owned, if women weren’t property! The very fact that she performed the song said that we were not all united. So I said, “Ask girls who were teenagers at the time – caring about feminism is not something that should distinguish one group from another; that is something that should unite us.”

At this point, you know, people are starting to ‘like’ my comments, no one is ‘liking’ his comments, and he says “I guess I’ll choose a different pathway on this one. I will point out I have a female accountant, attorney, physician, my daughter, two cats, and oh yeah – even a few lesbian friends. But I just think of them as folks, friends, and adoring pets. I like that the *Times* referred to her as a humanitarian activist.” Now someone else is getting involved at this point, going back and forth. And I said, “I think the bigger question is why you want to have the last word on this.” And then I quoted her partner, “She was a wonderful human being. Caring, giving, a great feminist, a great woman, a great human being, a great humanitarian.” When she was being called a great humanitarian, in the same sentence, *by her lesbian partner*, she was also called a great feminist. I went to sleep, and I woke up, and all I could think about was ...who’s ‘marked’ in our world, and who’s ‘unmarked’? What upset the man on Facebook is by my claiming her within this social justice context – which is how she lived – I marked her. Or at least, *I marked* him. He had been unmarked.

And those who benefit from the status quo want to keep themselves unmarked. By recognizing the fullness of Lesley Gore’s life, I was now saying something about his experience of the 60’s.

And how dare you adjust his view.

Right. And you see, this is vegan feminism.

In spades.

This is what we’re doing. We’re entering the world in which the status quo does not want to be called attention to. This is why when Nell Painter did her book *The History of Whiteness* it was like, oh.. you can have a history of whiteness? We were the unmarked people, and you get to live unmarked because of privilege. And privilege does not want to know that its privilege has come from a political structure that can be changed. *Privilege does not want to be exposed.* Creating a movie called *Fifty Shades of Grey*, and then creating a cookbook called *Fifty Shades of Chicken* – that is all part of maintaining a status quo of dominance over non-dominant beings.

Then, someone on Facebook posted a wonderful thing. “You Don’t Own Me is just so brilliant. It just occurred to me that it could really be about the way we treat animals.”

Absolutely, it could be a chicken’s theme song.

Right! The question is, who gets to be owner, and who is the property? When you look, for instance, at the Constitution of the United States, the only people who were protected at first were propertied white men. And when we look at an issue in the twenty-first century, it’s directly related to the way society was constructed, the way philosophy was constructed. I talk about this in *Neither Man nor Beast* (1994), the way philosophy constructed itself in the image of propertied white middle and upper class men

of Europe; they defined what philosophy was so it became rational instead of compassionate and emphasized the mind over the body. Out of this story of Lesley Gore comes the whole framework for looking at how we've structured a world in which dominance disappears, becomes privilege, and privilege is privatized as pleasure.

All of this coming out of one man's view, one man's image of Lesley Gore. How dare you come along and change his reality, change the way he sees, hears her?!

That's right, but here's the thing – this is the question we're always asked. *How dare you?* How dare you challenge me? How dare you decide that you can be pregnant, or not pregnant? That you can go get an abortion? "How Dare You" is the question that is thrown at feminist vegans so often – how dare you decide what I can eat at your dinner party? *Hosts of parties always decide what you can eat.* It's the nature of hospitality. Because *I'm cooking dinner*, that's how I dare.

I was married years ago, and my wedding was of course entirely vegan. Naturally the majority of my family was up in arms about it, and that's exactly how it came back to me – how dare you impose your choices on all of us? I said, when you get married you can feed your guests whatever you choose, just like everyone else. This is my wedding.

Right – it's my party, and I'll be vegan if I want to.

Exactly!

The theme here is that people benefitting from the status quo don't want that disturbed. And I just thought the Lesley Gore anecdote was such a great example of the kinds of ways we interact with the status quo, and a great way to get into these questions.

What do the terms 'masculine' and 'feminine' mean as they relate to veganism?

We need to back up and say, what do the terms 'masculine' and 'feminine' mean as they relate to meat-eating? Our world ended up being structured dualistically. We now know that there are more than two sexes, we know that identity isn't fixed. We know that some women on a continuum would be seen as being forthright and strong and aggressive, which are terms labeled masculine, and that some men would be seen as being quiet or gentle or into embroidery, qualities associated with femininity. Again, we don't come into the world unmarked. I mean, it's not even "coming in" at this point – now we have "reveal parties" announcing the sex of the fetus, where they have either a pink cake or a blue cake. You know, in the 1990's, Lego discovered that they "needed" to make pink Legos and it was such a setback for girls. Girls were handling Legos all the time, they didn't need something that was pink and prettified. The whole masculine/feminine framework of our world pre-exists even our own identities and we move into that world marked from the beginning. Studies have shown that when they're babies, boys are playfully thrown up in the air more than girls. One of the first articles, a short story, in *Ms. Magazine* in 1972 was about giving birth to a baby and never identifying the baby's sex, never having any marker that allowed you to define the baby's sex, and how that threw everybody off.

I think a part of the vision of feminism is to refuse the cultural determination about who we can be and who we are. We come into this world with a hyper-vigilance and fetishization of masculinity and femininity. Masculinity has been attached to meat-eating for many years and even though there are new iterations of it, some of it stays the same: that men are supposed to eat meat, that meat gives protein and strength, that

meat is associated with virility, and that men who don't eat meat are therefore not virile, are not masculine. It's assumed that men who are vegan are homosexual; this was the case into the twenty first century. There's a lot of hostility to veganism as saying something about sexuality and gender that the status quo doesn't want said. But one of the things that's happened recently is that now there's this regressive rearticulation of the sexual politics of meat – in 1990 I was observing that there was this supposition that men are supposed to eat meat, but *now* what we've got is “Man Up”, “renew your man card.” It's saying men have to constantly be doing it. Well, I don't have to renew my library card every year... why does a ‘man card’ have to be renewed? But what that is showing is that *masculinity is so unstable that not to practice it daily through meat eating destabilizes both.*

One of the things I look at is a beer ad for Red Lion. “Putting together a barbeque: +374 Man-points. Cooking tofu on it: -470.” The act of putting together a barbeque, screwing all those screws and following directions, that gives you 374 points. But simply putting a piece of tofu onto it completely eradicates all that you did. Now, I know it's a joke... but what it's showing, again, is the instability of masculinity. And I love that.

When it comes to veganism, the question is to vegans: Are we going to interact with the cultural anxiety about defining masculinity and femininity according to ‘maleness’ and ‘femaleness’, or are we going to let veganism be what it really is – a radical critique of patriarchal assumptions?

And just ignore the masculine and feminine situation entirely.

That's right. Because we live with people like the man on Facebook, constantly trying to return the conversation to the status quo. Some vegans want to accommodate that. “Oh, no, you're not going to lose your maleness, you're not going to lose your masculinity, you're not going to lose your virility - in fact, real men eat plants!” Then we had He-Gans, a term some vegan men coined. Or that you're ‘plant-strong’. Why accept the terms of the sexual politics of meat? Why can't we say veganism is the radical acknowledgement that we can live with compassion with all beings? And that compassion, especially in this world, is something that requires a strength of character? I mean, if we need to use the word “strong”, let's use it around compassion. The people from HSUS and PETA and MFA who go undercover to record over and over and over again the terrible, punishing, violent acts against

The Instability of Masculinity

PUTTING TOGETHER A BBQ

+ 374 MAN POINTS

COOKING TOFU SAUSAGES ON IT

- 417 MAN POINTS



LION RED
BEER OF MEN

cows and chickens and pigs... they are strong.

If veganism wants to begin that conversation, let's situate it within a vegan frame of mind. Why are we trying to accommodate veganism to a dominant world in which that dominance includes oppressing other animals? It's irreconcilable.

I think the question constantly is, what's the headline? What's the headline, and what do we want? We have to remember that we've *already* stepped so far out that people are anxious. But we do not need to accommodate their anxiety by reassuring them, "you don't have to change how you look at women, you don't have to change your belief that you need to be masculine, or that 'masculine = xyz' – you can be all of those things, and be a vegan!" No. I want to destabilize the *whole thing*. And I love that we apparently can destabilize it so easily.

It's a fragile, fragile thing evidently...

That's right, apparently. Let's get more tofu out there! Tofu becomes the symbol of veganism. And then everybody thinks of it as bland! Instead of looking at tofu as the palate on which we paint our vegan cuisine...

...right, this incredibly versatile plant-based protein deliciousness...

...right, it's just judged. This was in front of a restaurant in Dublin: "I wish this were made from tofu, said no one ever." One image I show in my slideshow is "No one high-fives after eating tofu." What's hidden there is the athleticism. The athlete would be the one high-fiving. The message is that an athlete would not eat tofu. Then there's an ad for Taco Bell asserting if you eat three times the steak, you can compete with the best athletes. It shows a white man, probably 5'6". He's watching four tall men, probably 6'4", playing basketball. Three of the four are Black. And he eats this huge sandwich, it's a triple-

meat-something-or-other, and he goes onto the court and he says, "Okay *girls*, let me show you how it's done." In other words, in this ad's premise eating meat will make you as "natural" a basketball player as African Americans are "born" to be. Interconnected oppressions!

There are so many things wrong with that entire scenario I don't even know where to begin.

That's the world we're entering. We're at a different stage of the sexual politics of meat in which it's constantly having to recuperate itself, and that shows our strength! And we should sit back and say, hey – yeah, there's some terrible racism and misogyny here and now they're having to work at a whole different level to recuperate the dominant worldview.

We hear a lot about the idea that sexism and racism and speciesism are all the same thing. Can we talk about intersectionality and issues like this that overlap? Do you think that shared oppression is an instrument for change?

I think that it's the only instrument for change. We're not going to achieve one freedom without all the freedoms. But I just want to back up and say that I don't think racism and sexism and speciesism *are* the same. I think they are operating within a dominant paradigm that uses particularity of oppression (race/sex/gender/species), and intensifies the particularity through association and intersectional oppression. For instance, misogyny is expressed through racism or speciesism. Let me be specific to help illustrate that – we've got feminists saying, "feminism is the radical notion that women are human". But what's human? Human has already been defined as rational, male-defined, above other species. I want to destabilize '*human*'. Liberal feminists will protest misogyny, but not the way that misogyny is strengthened by speciesism.



Misogyny intensifies *through* speciesism. For instance, on a continuum, this limited notion of ‘human’ we have is like that evolutionary chart we all grew up with. First we were on all fours, then we had our hands to help us walk, and then we evolved into this white middle-class man that we see represented on the charts. But we know that 99 percent of our DNA is the same as a chimp’s. If we think of human-non-human animal relationship as a hierarchy, we ignore the similarities, and we don’t recognize that we’re all connected. One way racism is strengthened is by viewing African Americans as animal-like. Beasts, or brutes. Or looking at women as animal-like. The oppression of other animals becomes the basis by which sexism or racism is intensified. My goal isn’t to make sure that women are always on the side of being human and leaving other animals on the other side of that. I want to remove the attitude and demarcation point that creates the hierarchy.

When we begin to advocate for interconnectedness, we look at issues differently. The US Government guarantees to milk producers a certain price on milk, and buys it up

so that it never goes below that price – what do they do with that milk? Over many years, they dumped it into the Women and Infant Children program, and into elementary schools. Who got fed at these elementary schools for breakfast and lunch? Often it was poor, African-American kids. And most African Americans, along with the majority of the world, have lactose intolerance. In fact, *not* being lactose intolerant is the unusual thing. You’ve got a poor child who comes into school, is given milk on his cereal for breakfast, is given a cheese sandwich for lunch, and at about 2:00 starts acting out. Then sometime in the second half of the twentieth century we start hearing about African American boys having “behavior problems” in elementary schools, and no one looked at the fact that it could have been what we were feeding them. It becomes a behavioral thing linked to race rather than an expression of what happens when we stuff kids full of the wrong kind of food. That’s an interconnected oppression.

Patricia Hill-Collins, an African American feminist theorist argues that pornography as we know it now evolved from the display of African

American female bodies during slavery. Theirs were the first bodies on display and being sold, because they were seen as closer to animals. Earlier in the century, there was a debate about the missing link (between primates and humans, again assuming the hierarchical notion of evolution) and the assumption was that it would be found somewhere among African people. The teleological notion of evolution gets acted out through slavery, because Africans are “lesser evolved” according to this schema.

The structure of the ‘absent referent’ as I conceptualized it is acting first upon animals. They disappear literally when we kill them and they become meat. They disappear conceptually when we say “chicken wings” instead of “a chicken’s wing”. We take possession away; we take the whole conceptual notion that this was an entire animal (and when they DO cook the whole body, say a pig roast, it’s usually laden with misogyny and sexism to deal with the body). The animals disappear metaphorically when their oppression is lifted and applied to describe the experiences of another group. At the center of interconnected oppressions is the absent referent. And it’s because of this structure that these overlap. When women are shown on all fours, they’re often being represented as animals (the woman wants to be treated like an animal). If an animal is shown as a sexy being with high heels, and breasts covered in a bikini, the *woman* is the absent referent (the animal *wants* to be consumed like a woman). Consumability of the oppressed group is intensified or legitimized for the dominant culture *by* these associations.

Talk to me a little bit about being a feminist and a vegan in the 70’s and 80’s as compared to what’s going on now.

I gotta tell you, the soymilk... it smelled so beany. When I’d go to somebody’s house, what they had for me were these dried packages of

burgers, and unless I could get involved to help cook it, they would be the blandest, driest things ever. I’d say, “let’s add mushrooms into the mix” because I knew the meal would be representing vegetarianism to them. When I became a vegetarian, I barely knew how to cook. When people say at this point, after 40 years, “oh, Carol, I could be vegan if you’d just cook for me,” I say “learn to cook!” It’s not hard.

I think in terms of feminism... oh my goodness, what a wonderful time it was to be a feminist. To be a feminist during the early 1970’s meant buying every feminist book in hardcover! You were so anxious to know. Kate Millett comes out with *Sexual Politics*; in ’75, Susan Brownmiller’s *Against Our Will; Women and Madness* in 1973 I think, Mary Daly’s *Beyond God the Father*, Adrienne Rich’s *Of Woman Born* 1976, Angela Davis’ book *Women, Race & Class* (1981)... there was something new every day to think about. Then there were the ‘zines; we didn’t call them zines back then, but they were – *The Spare Rib*, *The Second Wave* in Boston, *Notes from the Second Year: Women’s Liberation* - it was just amazing. And I lived in Cambridge, which was filled with feminists. I’ve always said that living in Cambridge in the early 70’s was like living in France when Gertrude Stein was there. There was so much excitement. That’s where the ideas for *The Sexual Politics of Meat* came to me, and were nurtured by other feminists and other vegetarians. And I learned to cook! In fact the first person I became friends with wanted to know about women’s history, and I wanted to know how to cook vegetarian, so we taught each other.

I can’t talk about the 1980’s without talking about how hard it was for me that I hadn’t finished my book. Because I was living with the consciousness that there was a connection, I wanted to talk about the connection, and I did not know how. Recently, I was listening to *This*

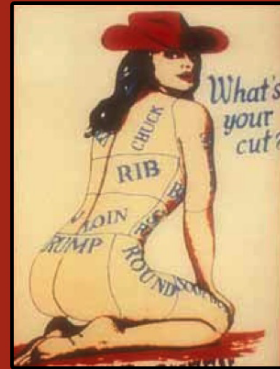
American Life, and Ira Glass said, “the thing for new artists to realize is that their conception of what they want to do, and what they actually do, begins by being very far away. And by working and working you close that gap.” It took me fourteen and a half years to close that gap. The draft I did in 1976 was so inadequate I thought, “I only have one chance at this, I want to do this right.” Then I became a grassroots activist. In terms of my consciousness of feminist and animal issues, the hardest thing for me was working with domestic violence advocates in New York State. I was on the Governor’s Commission on Domestic Violence; I was meeting all the top, wonderful activists as we evolved what we now know as the DV Movement.... And most of them were eating hamburgers during our meals. It made me very upset.

But another reason it was such an exciting time is that there were all these new cookbooks coming out... I have to admit that I have a collection of probably 500 vegetarian and now vegan cookbooks and I’m still learning from them! I’ll take them to bed at night and read them, and think, “oh, so *that’s* how she does her cashew cream.” I could cook a new recipe every day for the next thirty years and not even touch all the wonderful recipes that exist. During those years, the late 1970s, the 1980s, I’m learning, I’m excited as a grassroots activist to be able to be working against racism and domestic violence and sexism and poverty... and I’m constantly thrown back by how much resistance there is. I read everything I could. I read about racism, I read about slavery, I read about the Underground Railroad, I read about reconstruction. I read about the Civil Rights movement. I wanted to know why racism continued to be so pervasive in the 1980’s, and look at it now in the twenty-first century! But those years equipped me to write *The Sexual Politics of Meat*. I encountered the connection between racism and sexism,

20TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

THE SEXUAL POLITICS OF MEAT

A FEMINIST-VEGETARIAN CRITICAL THEORY



CAROL J. ADAMS

between domestic violence and harm to animals. I sometimes refer to the 1980s as my wilderness years, because I felt so lost in terms of finishing my book, but those were the years that taught me how to articulate an oppositional viewpoint and how to live with the intense reactions that are elicited. Rush Limbaugh talking against *The Sexual Politics of Meat*? That didn’t bother me at all; he didn’t know where I lived!

By the end of the 1980s, I was finishing *The Sexual Politics of Meat*. The turning point was when I realized that animals were absent referents – I went to bed one night after reading Margaret Homans’ *Bearing the Word* talking about women writers of the nineteenth century

and she talked about the concept of absent referent in literature, and I remember putting the book down and thinking... “that’s what animals are.” And I woke up in the morning and I thought... “that’s what women are, too.” Once I had that idea in 1987, I was able to finish the book, and in working on the book realized I had to be vegan. By that point, we had much better tasting soy milk.

I remember thinking as a vegetarian, “Well I like cheese pizza, but if I look at pizza and realize the suffering of the cow that caused this pizza to exist, then when I look at pizza, what I’m seeing here is the blood of the cow.” That did it. And that’s restoring the absent referent. That’s being able to conceptualize, to give the absent referent back something, so that I could recognize her suffering.

Now, it’s just incredible how many vegan options exist from plant milks to nut cheeses to seitan-based foods to vegan restaurants.

Yeah, it’s hard for me to take anyone who complains about the challenges of veganism seriously these days.

Well, when people say, “it’s hard”, I think what they mean is that they don’t want to think about changing. This is what I realized with *Living Among Meat Eaters* (2001): change might be hard, but not changing is even harder. They’re working so hard to not change. They’re spending so much time sabotaging and hurting other people. All that negative energy!

In *Living Among Meat Eaters*, you explore our culture’s unwillingness to honor grief and sadness, nor allow it to be properly expressed, indicating that feelings equal lack of control, vulnerability. How does this affect our food choices?

We now know that there are so many different kinds of intelligences, and that our public school

system emphasizes three or four of them, but one intelligence that’s not very well developed is emotional intelligence. We have a tendency to say, “grief, I’m gonna put you over there. I don’t want to access you.” And as a result, when someone else is feeling grief, people don’t know what to say. We don’t have an emotional intelligence about grief and sadness; they make us uncomfortable. Often what people will say to me is, “don’t tell me, I don’t want to know”, which says to me they already *do* know. What we need to do is help them to learn to be comfortable with this painful knowledge. I think people are afraid that the grief will kill them. But anyone who’s grieved – a mother, a father, a sibling, a cousin, a good friend, a mentor – grief is probably the most powerful emotion we have, but grief is a deeply strengthening emotion. As we move our way through grief we learn so much about who we are. When people fear feeling grief about what animals experience and refuse to know, it means they prefer ignorance about animal suffering to honesty, and that to protect their feelings and their palates they’re willing to continue to consume the flesh of wretched animals. What I try to do is show people that grief doesn’t kill you, and that the other side of grief isn’t ignorance... it’s joy. It’s like that quote from Kafka, “Now I can look at you in peace; I don’t eat you anymore.” Now we can meet the animals, now we can do something about their plight, because we’re not frightened by the feeling their plight might arise in us. People also fear that’s all they’re going to feel. No – it’s like any kind of grief: there’s a very intense time, and then you learn that yes, there’s a hole in your heart. But you don’t want the hole in your heart to go away because the hole is telling you that you have compassion. The hole tells you have made a place for the other animals.

What I love about vegan cooking is that there’s

joy there, which acts as counterbalance to the grief.

In the food.

That's right. I was just reading today about the treatment of these sows, who, in order to get them to move, one of the workers was putting an implement up her anus. I mean, she was being anally raped. And it makes me so mad. But I also need to walk away and assure myself, in my activism and my writing, I'm working on that. By being vegan, I'm working on that. By educating people, I'm working on that. I need to balance this knowledge and anger with some joy. And the joy for me is taking care of rescued dogs, and cooking great vegan food, and talking about vegan food, and feeling that each day as we do this balancing act, we move forward.

Yes, people think grief and sadness are about vulnerability, but I think we mistake openness for vulnerability in a sense. If we could just see that the gift of being open to the lives of other animals is the gift of being able to transform the world away from oppressing them. That doesn't make me vulnerable.

It makes me powerful.

Right. But I do think it goes back to emotional intelligence and the fear of grief. We all live with grief, and this is a world we should be grieving. To not grieve is to not face reality.

Again in Living Among Meat Eaters, you mention we should approach omnivores as "blocked vegans". What does this mean and why is it so important to look at them this way?

I had so much fun with that book!

I think as vegans we are so susceptible to believe that if we just had the right answer, they're going to change. And we think that we know the right answer. I mean, I could probably argue

"Why Vegan" for an hour. I could win debate awards. But I'm not going to win that omnivore. The image I have is every argument we offer them is helping them build a picket fence, because what's blocking them is inside of them. By my talking to them, I'm going to be seen as argumentative, as unkind, because omnivores want to take their discomfort about eating dead animals out of the picture. They're looking to us to perform in a certain way to let them release their complex of emotions that they don't know how to handle. We as vegans come along and we say, "oh, well, let me tell you", and then they want to argue with us. They want to be angry with us, to avoid getting angry with themselves for not changing.

But if we looked at them as blocked vegans, we would realize that our goal is not to solve their problem, our goal is to get out of their way. As unblocked vegans, it isn't our issue – we've already solved it! The best way we can help an omnivore is to be a relaxed and happy vegan. Because they look at us in these situations with omnivores and they think, "God... every dinner I've been to with Carol, she's been arguing with everyone". Instead of understanding the argument, they're thinking, "I don't want to spend my life arguing, and at least I get a hamburger." I think the point of seeing meat eaters as "blocked vegans" is that we need to step out of the belief that we need to solve it all for them.

Not all vegans have been blessed with big mouths and bold opinions (as we clearly have) - how else aside from speaking up can we affect change?

I truly believe that vegan meals make a big difference. Meat-eaters are perfectly happy eating vegan meals as long as they don't know this is what they're doing. We need to stop presuming our big mouths are going to solve



everything. Sometimes it's the non-verbal. And just like I said in *The Sexual Politics of Meat*, veganism is a non-verbal way to reject patriarchy – let's develop non-verbal ways of maintaining this activism. If all of us had 'Vegan Propaganda Meals' and constructed it recognizing how unhappy these blocked vegans are; where you're not talking about what you prepared, where you never use the 'T-Word' (tofu), where you just create a relaxed atmosphere... they go home and they incubate it. And they think, "that was a really great meal." And then they think, "that was a really great meal *and* it was vegan!"

I also think writing letters to newspapers and magazines is very effective. Karen Davis of United Poultry Concerns has made this an art. The more letters the better. Also, teach vegan cooking classes at recreation centers. Sharing the joy of vegan living, helping people learn about animal suffering - *but at their pace*. You

know, I'm lucky enough I can also say, "read my book!"

I cannot get over how many people have written to me saying they became vegan by reading *The Sexual Politics of Meat*. I only know the book from the inside out, and when people tell me that, they're giving me a gift, and it's a beautiful gift. But it's such a deep and wonderful thing to think my book changed someone's life and I don't know quite how to receive the information, and usually what I'll say when people tweet it to me or email me or come up after a talk is, "Thank you. Now be sure to take your vitamin B12!" I don't want the responsibility of somebody becoming vegan and not getting their B12!

There's been a pervasive trend of vegans and vegan organizations using sexism to promote the movement, to 'sell' veganism - we see this with a lot of PETA's advertising, book titles like "Meat is for Pussies", and

so on - why do you think this is acceptable within the community? What's going on here?

First, there is no 'Vegan Community'. There are a variety of people who are identifying as vegan, and some of them aren't even vegan! But I think you're talking about people who do self-identify as vegans, are active in veganism... why do they not get it? And the easy answer would be to say because of the function of the absent referent – they've *seen* the absent referent of the animal, but they haven't recognized that racism and sexism also construct people as absent referents.

Sex sells. PETA is looking to sell the message, "Don't Eat Animals". They're not looking to sell any other message. If you complain to them about their sexism, you'll get a letter saying that they're headed by a woman and so they're feminist. But A does not equal B, here. Phyllis Schlafley, this great anti-feminist of the 1980s, traveled the country telling people that women should not travel the country – you can be an anti-feminist and be in the vegan movement.

I talk a little bit about this in *Neither Man nor Beast* when I discuss racism and the politics of solidarity. I think some people are willing to deal with their privilege over other animals, but not deal with their privilege over women or people of color. They don't want to examine that privilege. Leave that status quo alone. It's like my Facebook argument—the other person was saying, "don't disturb how I think of myself!" PETA is trying to assure consumers you don't have to *change* yourself, just stop eating animals, but you can keep using pornography, you can keep situating yourself in a hierarchy viz a viz other humans.

Here's a way to illustrate the problem with this approach: If PETA came and tried to help remove an animal who's in a situation where

they were being harmed by a batterer. But if part of the control of the batterer over the human victim is to threaten animals, removing the animal doesn't help any other animal, or the human victim, because the batterer will acquire another animal. Until you get to the heart of the matter, which is someone deciding to control another with violence, we're going to have one animal at risk after another. The failure to see the interconnected oppressions creates inadequate activism.

When I debated Ingrid [Newkirk, President of PETA] on this back in the early 90's, she said "you go have your theories, we're too busy being activists." The thing was, each of us can work until the day we die, and we will not have completely changed everything through activism alone. Clearly, a feminist-vegan critical theory recognizes that we've got to connect theory and practice. It's not one or the other. The vegan movement exists within the larger dualistic world, an either-or world, but it's not actually an either-or world. When I hear people say, (which is on the other end of the continuum of PETA, but still reflects the same mindset), "we have to solve human problems first," I think, it's not either-or! I started a hotline for battered women *in my home* for heaven's sakes, and I was a vegetarian. I didn't have to choose between these. Vegans are involved in lots of other social justice movements as well as working against the treatment of animals. The only people who think it's impossible to do it all are those who don't want to give up eating dead animals. And of course the other thing this "human problem first" ignores are all the human-related problems related to the animal agriculture industry. Climate change, environmental issues, health issues, starvation, worker safety... all of that. One of the problems with selling veganism with sex is that we haven't sold it for what it is – *a transformative social justice movement*

that unites a variety of oppressions, and has a realistic solution to many of them.

In an interview with Joshua Katcher of The Discerning Brute and Brave Gentle Man, you said, “the best way to assist the devil is to pretend he’s not there”. What does this mean to you?

Tell me what it means to you.

Ignoring the problem doesn’t make it go away.

This is exactly what the man on Facebook wanted to do. He wants to pretend there was nothing there but Lesley Gore uniting all these angst-y teens of the 60’s. There was always something more there. To assist the devil is to pretend he’s not there... and I think this goes back to the absent referent. Invisibility. To name and locate oppression is a radical act. But it’s a liberating act. And what it does is it dethrones the evil that has been accepted without acknowledgement. There’s a wonderful book that came out in the

early 90’s, *Trauma and Recovery*, and it was the first book that identified how post-traumatic stress disorder affects rape victims, sexual abuse victims, and domestic violence victims. It was an immensely important, wonderful intervention into understanding the nature of trauma. And the author, Judith Herman, begins by saying, “It’s very tempting to take the side of the perpetrator. All the perpetrator asks is that the bystander do nothing. He appeals to the universal desire to see, hear, and speak no evil. The victim, on the contrary, asks the bystander to share the burden of pain. The victim demands action, engagement, and remembering.” With my quote, the devil doesn’t want action or remembrance or to be acknowledged. The devil wants to be free to be out there. The devil is the perpetrator. And the thing about eating animals and animal products is that there are no bystanders. To not take a stand against violence is not to be neutral! It is to side with the perpetrator. Everybody who eats dairy or meat, dead flesh, is providing the financial backing, is investing in violence.

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I think the reach of the dollar that invests in a hamburger, or buys a piece of cheese pizza, is the slaughterhouse and animal agriculture. We can't disassociate. Again, it's back to the Lesley Gore issue on my Facebook page – "no, don't disturb my notion of what she was all about." This is why we as vegans have to be at peace because we are the recipients of so much of this anxiety about guilt and wrong-doing. They don't want to know they are implicated. They want to believe there is a neutral place.

When I did surveys of new vegans, about 200 of them, for *Living Among Meat Eaters*, the stories I got were that the people who actively sabotaged were often the ones who became vegans because they spent so much time learning about veganism in order to sabotage it! To put that much energy into sabotaging someone else's veganism *could* be a positive thing – let's just say that some energy is better than no energy! That's why I think the anger of blocked vegans is so fascinating – it's telling me *they know* something's wrong. They just want *us* to

take care of it. I don't want to take care of their discomfort; I want them to be uncomfortable. Discomfort is telling us something. Guilt tells us something. Grief tells us something. Let's teach people how to learn from that, so that we're *not* assisting the devil.

What advice do you have for the future of eco-feminism, the future of vegan advocates and animal activists heeding your message?

Don't work all the time. Seriously, we're in this for the long haul. Don't exhaust yourself. You don't need to look at any more of those very depressing films, we already know it. Create as much positive energy as you can in your life. You deserve it. Share vegan food. Learn how to live and work with equality. Find joy every day in something, to work as a counterweight to the things we learn through our activism. Don't measure success by anything other than the fact that you have been an activist. We will win some and lose some, and what winning is and

what losing is is very hard to determine in this world when things are so fungible. Don't stake everything you're doing on achieving some goal that is external. Vaclav Havel said that we need to do this work, we need to be activists, not for the outcomes but because it's the right thing to do. To know that you have been successful as an activist because x or y or z has happened, it creates an unattainable marker while neglecting what you're doing every day. And this is where eco-feminism comes in. The process is equally important. *How* we do it. *That* we're doing it. We can't be product oriented, because that's the old model: objectification, fragmentation, consumption. Consuming the success of our advocacy. We have to be in it for the process, that

the ends never justify the means, which is what causes confusion for people who are arguing and accepting the patriarchal structure for veganism - that's when the ends justify the means. No – the means *are* the ends. Make sure the means that you're living by can sustain you.

Erin Red is a career Vegan Advocate and Animal Activist. Her podcast, Red Radio, will return to the airwaves Spring 2015. Find out more about her work at erinred.com, and follow her on [Twitter](#).

RECIPE

The Vegan Peach's Caesar Salad Dressing

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Caesar salad was always one of my favourite dishes. I remember the day I found out that caesar dressing was not vegetarian, let alone vegan, very vividly. It was a day of mourning. Eventually, I decided that it was time to try making my own dressing. I can't believe it only took nine years of vegetarianism and three years of veganism to try it. This is my original recipe, which was revised from another recipe. The serving size is for one medium sized bowl of salad. Double the recipe if you are serving more.

It's quick, easy, and delicious. Enjoy!

Ingredients

- 2 cloves of garlic
- 1 Tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tsp onion powder
- 1 tsp mustard
- 1 tsp agave
- 1/2 cup vegan mayo (I use Vegemaise)
- salt and pepper

1. Blend all ingredients in food processor or blender. Chill for one hour.

Ashley Leslie

[The Vegan Peach](#)

Promoting Veganism Through Positivity

Vicki Cosio

No matter what you do or when you choose to do it, there are plenty of ways you can make a difference and promote veganism. This is how I choose to do just that.

Sometimes I have to pinch myself, because I feel I am so lucky. After spending a career doing what I really didn't want to do, I am finally able to do what I want. Promoting veganism is my passion, and going vegan 15 years ago changed everything for me.

But, I didn't always feel so lucky. I just retired after 25 years in law enforcement. I started at a very early age, joining the police force before I was even legally allowed to drink. And boy, do you usually need a drink in that profession!! Since I was a teenager, I wanted to be in law enforcement. The reasons were very clear at the time: to help others and to give back to the community. I was 16 years into my career when I went vegan. Suddenly, I felt different about everything. I had an urgency that built up inside of me. The need to yell at everyone around me and say *"Don't you know what's happening to the animals?"*

Over the past few years, I've found that my vegan activism has shifted and I'm more focused on leading by example. Gandhi had it right when he said *"We must be the change we wish to see in the world."*

Approaching a much anticipated retirement, I vowed that my "twilight career" would be to promote veganism by being an example.

I thought about what I enjoyed and what I was good at, then focused on how I could promote veganism through those venues. These three areas have been my focus leading up to, and since, my most recent retirement:

Advantage Vegan

I have been a competitive athlete for pretty much my whole life. And tennis has been the sport I have mainly focused on for the past 25 years. Tennis is really a complete sport. It works your whole body. It not only takes physical stamina but mental stamina as well. What better way to help animals and to promote a vegan lifestyle, then to kick &\$%#@ on the tennis court?

I'm currently a nationally ranked tennis player, and I've been ranked as high as #8 in the United States in my age division. My goal is to make the United States National Senior Team (the equivalent of Davis Cup or Fed Cup for senior players). Every tournament is a chance for me to be a voice for the animals. Every final that I make it to, or award that I'm given, is an opportunity for me to wear one of my vegan shirts. A chance for me to reach a large audience, just by what I'm wearing. I can't tell you how many vegan conversations have transpired

after people noticed my vegan shirts at events.

Credibility through your sport is also a very important aspect in promoting veganism. I train very hard in order to perform well at events and attain my national ranking. That ranking in turn enables me to be featured on websites and in newspapers and magazines. People usually ask me how I do what I do at my age, and that in turn opens up a conversation about veganism.

What drives me now is my desire to help the animals. It's not about my ego or about attention. It's about playing for the animals. When I am having a tough time on the court, I think of the animals all over the world who are having a REALLY tough time and need me to be their voice.

Peruvegan

I had a vegan cookbook in my head for quite a while, but had no time to work on it. Every day I worked full-time, worked out, walked my rescue pups, then came home to make dinner and collapse! Only to start it all over the following day.

After I retired, I really started to work on my cookbook. Attending a casting call for the Food Network and getting invited back for a camera interview really got the ball rolling! My idea was to write a vegan Peruvian cookbook. I have a wonderful vegan

husband who is a native of Peru, and I've been making him vegan Peruvian food since we went vegan 15 years ago. I also wanted to show the world how delicious Peruvian food is, especially vegan Peruvian food!

After months of cooking, tasting, photographing, and penning my recipes to paper, my cookbook was finally finished. My cookbook was a mix of traditional and innovative Peruvian recipes, without all of the animal products. Now, how to get it published? I initially sent my idea and a few recipes to one publisher, and my idea promptly got rejected. I was a nobody in the vegan cookbook realm, so I realized that my chances of getting my cookbook published were slim to none (closer to none). After much thought and research, I decided that self-publishing was the way to go. I decided to publish through CreateSpace, which is an Amazon company. CreateSpace has great resources and tips for how to format, self-publish, and distribute your book. Getting my print book formatted and uploaded was a fairly painless process through CreateSpace. However, getting it formatted into the Kindle version was another story! The Kindle version is uploaded in a different format than CreateSpace, and it took me about five tries to get it right. But finally I got it. I must not be the only one, because I have seen ads on Craigslist for help in uploading books to Kindle. I feel sorry for

the people when I read those ads! But if I can do it, anyone can. In February of 2014, my cookbook called Peruvegan was published. It's available on Amazon in both paperback and Kindle. Little did I know at the time that writing the cookbook was the easy part. The hard part is the marketing that comes after the cookbook is published! I've been really blessed by the exposure that Peruvegan has received in newspapers and magazines. The feedback has been great. The most common thing I hear is how easy and delicious the recipes are, and how there isn't anything else out there like my cookbook. My hope is that it will appeal to both vegans and non-vegans alike, and save the lives of many animals.

Using My Words

As a kid, I always loved to write and English was what I excelled at in school. I forgot how much I loved to write when I was in law enforcement. That type of writing isn't very creative and is really "*Just the facts ma'am.*" Thankfully, I am now a resident blogger for Happy Cow and am having a great time with it! I initially wrote to Happy Cow soon after my cookbook was published, to see if they were interested in reviewing it. During that exchange, they asked me if I wanted to blog for the website. That was something that I hadn't even considered before that point, but it sounded like a fun way to promote veganism!

At first, I was a little worried that I would run out of things to say (well, anyone that knows me would never believe that) but I haven't so far! But seriously, I really enjoy writing articles, posting recipes, and doing interviews on all things vegan for Happy

Cow, and I hope that I am contributing something that both vegans and non-vegans find useful.

Shaping The Future

No one knows what the future holds for them, but I believe in making your own destiny. Right now, I hope I am making a difference for the animals, by being their voice to promote veganism. My plans are to continue writing articles for Happy Cow, to someday make the United States National Senior Team in tennis, and to maybe (after I recover!) publish another cookbook.

I know most people may not have as much time to devote to promoting veganism like I do, but every little thing counts. If you have a passion and a message to deliver to the world, you just need to find your path. I am by no means extraordinary, and if I can do it, anyone can. The trick is to find what you are really good at, and find a way to use that strength in order to help the animals, the earth, and each other.

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Breast Milk For Thought

Sofia Todorova



Scrolling down the newsfeed, a post caught my attention: “*Human breast milk. Vegan, or not vegan?*” The thread had turned into a forum of sorts, debating the ethics of using human breast milk as a mainstream initiative for vegan consumption. The consensus being real men love boobs, of course. Hence human breast milk could neatly segue pre-vegan men to veganism.

The pro-breast-milkers spoke of consent and how using human breast milk would *not* go against an ethical vegan ethos. The against spoke of how humans are animals too, so by virtue of kind, human breast milk could never be a vegan option, post-weaning.

Though truly bizarre, the breast milk question is not completely unfounded. The absolutism of defining vegan boundaries is still milky. From the great honey debate to wearing second-hand leather, perhaps there is a spot on the menu for human breast milk, after all?

But milk aside, the absurdist debate stems from another, very relevant topic. While breast objectification is far from new, can there be any merit to a breast-milky segue to veganism; by virtue of the fact that men love boobs? That is, via the objectification of the bosom.

The message being that men’s adoration for boobs, will so instinctively and uncontrollably, see them ditch beefsteaks, for tofu steaks. Naturally.

The power of boobs must not be undermined. Buxom breasted, small waisted, nude women with vegan slogans, are showcased in animal rights campaigns all the time.

The message being that men’s adoration for boobs will, instinctively and uncontrollably, see them ditch beefsteaks for tofu steaks. Naturally. However, is this erring (or blatantly shrieking) on the side of sexism?

In this regard, the word ‘men’ really applies only to cis men with a heterosexual orientation, while omitting gay, trans, male-identifying, and asexual men, for instance. And furthermore, it omits women. Why do women not make the boob-loving cut? Where does the plethora of orientations within the LGBTQIA+ community fit into all this?

What does this mean for non-human animals? Does the ethical pursuit of enhancing their status, in this dire plight, justify the use of all necessary means? Including exploiting women - irrelevant of possible ramification?

After all, it’s their choice to publicly shed their layers, to begin with. Or is this all a symptom of a bigger problem, with roots systemically entrenched in all aspects of life?

Is it no longer sexist and exploitative if women participants in nude campaigns are willing and consenting? Are these women in fact exercising their feminism? After all, it’s their choice to publicly shed their layers, to begin with. Or is this all a symptom of a bigger problem, with roots systemically entrenched in all aspects of life?

Heteronormativity is a remnant social mechanism; spawned from the dominant patriarchy. To endorse it as the status quo, is to perpetuate a sexist culture. Creating a safe zone for a dangerous message - that

heterosexual, cis men (specifically) are the norm and all the rest are the ‘other’, the lesser.

It is not a question of whether the plight of animals trumps women’s liberation, or whether heteronormative attacks against sexual minorities is secondary to animal liberation.

Though it is true, I support women consensually shedding their clothes in public and everywhere they please, this is not all that is happening when an organisation with ethical claims uses a naked female body in an exploitative manner. It is not a question of whether the plight of animals trumps women’s liberation or whether heteronormative attacks against sexual minorities is secondary to animal liberation.

They are not mutually exclusive.

The animal liberation movement is a social justice issue and a unity ought to be weaved between it and all social justice movements, including animal liberation and women’s liberation. An intersectional approach is mandatory, should we want to radicalise the situation. That is, to attack the issue at the roots and permeate affective change.

Animal agribusiness is based on the exploitation of the female reproductive system – campaigns with sexist baselines exploit non-human and human animals alike, which fuels the proverbial machine. In the words of Carol J. Adams, there is a “*sexual politics of [...] meat*”.

Unless we attempt to solve the issue (exploitation of animals) at its core and focus on the true cause, we are not fixing the issue beyond a superficial and flimsy mend.

It would be a temporary band aid fix, at best. While at the same time perpetuating sexism and the oppression of sexual minorities.

Yes, men ought to ditch beefsteaks (and all animal products), but it doesn’t stop with men. The onus is on everyone, regardless of gender and sexuality. And not because we love boobs – as worthy of adoration as they truly are, but because animals deserve total liberation.

This perpetuated ‘real man’, boob-obsessed notion pertains only to a narrow definition. So too does this ideal of what sexy is considered to be. Though unsightly, it’s time we swiftly rip the sexist band-aid off and see the dirty scab for what it truly is: a mechanism for healing.

Crust Punk Mac n Cheese

This is a total no-fail baked mac n (vegan) cheese, perfect for a potluck, or keeping all to yourself for a weekend of Netflix binges and eating mac n cheese for every meal.

Ingredients

- 1 pound of your favourite pasta
- 2 cups vegan cheese shreds (I use Daiya)
- 1 1/2 cups unsweetened, non-dairy milk.
 - 1 Tbsp vegan margarine
 - 1/3 cup nutritional yeast
 - 2 Tbsps all-purpose flour
 - 1 Tbsp lemon juice
 - 2 tsps mustard
 - 1 tsp garlic powder
 - 1 tsp onion powder
 - salt and pepper to taste

Top crust ingredients

- 2 Tbsps melted margarine
- 1 1/2 cups breadcrumbs
- 2 Tbsps nutritional yeast
 - 1 tsp dried basil
 - pinch of salt
- 1/2 cup vegan cheese shreds

1. Cook pasta and strain. Place back in its pot away from heat.
2. In medium sized saucepan, heat soy milk and vegan margarine on medium heat. When your margarine has melted, sift in your flour. Whisk until the mixture thickens (about 3-4 minutes).
3. Turning your heat down to a simmer, whisk in nutritional yeast, mustard, garlic and onion powder, lemon juice, salt, and pepper to taste.
4. To this mixture, add your vegan cheese shreds. Stir until the shreds melt. Taste and adjust seasoning if necessary.
5. Pour the vegan cheese sauce onto your pasta. Transfer to a casserole dish, and top with your 1/2 cup vegan cheese shreds.
6. Toss your dry crust ingredients in melted margarine, and sprinkle on top. Broil on low until your crust becomes golden (about 5-7 minutes, probs).

Sarah Louise

[The Cozy Vegan](#)

Make the Most of Your Online Community

Ashley N. Flitter

Whether you live in a big city or a small town, connecting with people online is a great way to feel like you're a part of something. But how can you make that something grow?

Though veganism continues to gain popularity, many vegans may still find that they feel isolated on a day-to-day basis. This is especially true for vegans who live outside of major metro areas or vegans who have special interests, such as bodybuilding, raw veganism, blogging, etc. With its increasing popularity, more and more vegan sub-groups who focus on an even smaller niche of vegan culture, such as 80/10/10 or no-oil diets, have gained traction as well.

For those that fall into these groups, finding regular camaraderie can be difficult in person, but in today's connected world, it's becoming ever easier to find like-minded people who want to discuss these specific topics. However, even though it may be easier to find those people, there's still the matter of building a community with them. And that's what it's all about, isn't it? Many of us aren't just looking for a one-off chat now and then; we want to feel like we are a part of something bigger.

Strategies for Building a Strong Community

All that being said, there are a few strategies that you can use that will not only help you

find like-minded individuals, but will also help you either create a community around those interests or integrate yourself into an existing community.

Do Your Research

Given the number of niche groups that have popped up over the last couple of years, finding a community can be overwhelming. The main thing to remember here is that not all vegan communities are necessarily the right fit. Before you jump in, you should do your research and make sure the group is right for you. These days there's a group for just about any interest you can think of, so take the time to find the perfect fit.

Make it Personal

Before you begin posting, it's a good idea to reach out to individual members (or the moderators) personally. Sending them a private message is a way to introduce yourself and your story and it can develop a level of trust before you even become part of the group. Additionally, having an open conversation with a group member before you decide to join can help you get a better sense of if the group is the right place for

you. If you know the group is going to be a good place to voice your opinions and ask questions, the initial nervousness or trepidation about joining will be minimal.

Be an Active Voice

While it's perfectly normal to be a little nervous about interacting with a new group of people, just as it is in real life, trolling community sites and pages doesn't do anything for you or the community. For an online community to be successful, there has to be communication between members. If you only read other's posts and never offer your own voice, it's not a conversation at all. By posting to the group, you not only provide something of value to others, but the more you talk the more you will feel like a valued member. Achieving that sense of value and input will make the online community feel more like a real-life relationship instead of something that's much less tangible.

Listen

Lending your voice to the conversation is important, but sometimes being an active listener is key too. While it's important to be comfortable venting or sharing your experience with the group, be mindful of other's time and interests. Each time you ask a question or look for advice, it takes time from community members' lives to respond and contribute to the conversation. You should always respect their time by

acknowledging that sometimes listening and offering your own feedback is more important. Remember, it's all about balance and ensuring that you are both adding value to the community and feel as though you are getting value from it.

Take it Offline

Whenever possible, you should try to take your online community relationships offline. This can come in the form of a conference or event that you know many in your community will be attending (veg fests and animal rights conferences are good examples) or organizing your own meet-up with people from your area. Online communities are a great way to meet people with similar interests, and chances are there are at least one or two other people in the group that live close enough to you.

Play Nice

At the end of the day, you will get out of the community what you put into it, so be sure that you are acting the same as you would in a face-to-face interaction. It's good to remember the old adage, "*Treat others as you want to be treated.*" Always be open to new ideas and offer constructive feedback. The more you do this for others, the more they will do it for you, thus making the community both a source of support and a source of knowledge for all of its members.



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Veggie Fried Rice

Ingredients

6 cups of filtered water
2 cups of brown rice
2 garlic cloves, crushed
1 onion, diced
Small amount of ginger, grated
1 cob of corn, kernels cut from the cob
1 zucchini (courgette), grated
1 carrot, grated
1 cup broccoli florets
1/2 red capsicum (pepper), diced
1/2 green capsicum (pepper), diced
1/4 pumpkin, grated
8 mushrooms, diced
300g firm tofu (1 packet), finely sliced
2 falafel, diced
Soy sauce or tamari

1. Cook brown rice in boiling water for about 30 minutes until tender.
2. Saute garlic, onion, and ginger in wok.
3. Add all vegetables into the wok and cook until tender.
4. Add tofu and falafel and mix well.
5. Combine cooked rice with the vegetable mixture.
6. Add soy sauce to taste.
7. Serve as a main meal or side dish. Can be cooled and served as a salad.

Leigh-Chantelle

Taken from "There's a Vegan in the Kitchen: Viva la Vegan's Easy and Tasty Plant-Based Recipes".



Art, Theatre, and Animal Rights

Robbie Nuwanda

There are many different ways of being an activist and it is important to understand the medium you're using to try and make your connection. Mine in the most part is trying to be evocative through art, particularly in writing.

For many hundreds of years, art has been used to make a statement. So, as a vegan and a writer, I am constantly looking to use any developed and natural gift with language in the fluttering telling of imagined ideas congealed into visual stories to be pro-vegan. Which puts one in an odd place. It is easy to deal with and nail in a philosophical essay by highlighting the obvious moral reasons for our ethical way of living. But using art to change someone's mind is quite different. In a philosophical essay, there is more emphasis in putting forth a valid argument in a convincing and thought out way that is straight forward. Whereas art is an experience, a unique and personal experience, that is supposed to come with twists, moving you in a myriad of ways, and providing sudden revelations out of nowhere in realisations within the piece.

The Message

Art as activism needs to address each person in a way that has their mind engaged, sentiments stirred, and the whole fibre inadvertently marching down a moral path in the pursuit of persuading art from an intense experience. To some extent, art has a unique position because people usually choose to see art. The fact it is their initial

choice means that they're more likely to be receptive and prone to listening compared to a protest they happen to walk past, which usually sees them glancing over and rolling their eyes dismissively. I've experienced this first hand as I'm sure many of you have.

So when I write plays, particularly with the ethical production company I have started up called Give 'Em The V's (that is still in its infancy and currently looking to recruit more people) there is much to consider. Depending on the length of the piece, you nevertheless have the audience's attention and you need to take advantage of the fact. You want to provoke a strong positive reaction that is likely to lead to someone going vegan, or at the very least thinking about the issue and being more educated on what happens to animals with the hope of them becoming vegan in the future. Nevertheless, the intention is to educate and evoke the plight of animals.

However, this is not a medium or way in which the stampede mentality is likely to ever work. It is quite easy to have the shutters down and be very tight-lipped and defensive in experiencing art if this is the approach, particularly within a narrative of some sort. This advantage of receptiveness and attention straight-away with art means

that you have to approach activism slightly different. Art, particularly with a narrative, that you want to be effective cannot be in your face like a vegan rant. It needs to be subtle and built up.

With plays I've done with an animal rights element to them, I always try and make the human side the main plot and the animal element the sub plot that develops over the narrative when the audience have already identified with the characters, been absorbed by the story, and are able to follow through with an emotional engagement to where the story leads. An animal rights play where the first scene is overtly vegan in its content and message, sadly, will put many people off straight away. It is about being creative and clever, being thought-provoking and emotive within the medium. The best activism art isn't shouting at you, it's coaxing you in with a whisper. It makes it your choice to lean in, to hear more, and because of that it makes every evocation of your emotions all the more powerful.

The Plays

I find that a fresh perspective needs to be looked at when coming up with an idea. It is not the main issue, it is the side issue where the stories lie and the opportunity to write an evocative and well crafted piece that allows you to explore the issue in a somewhat manipulative and educational way that leads

you through a human's eyes. There must be a desire to write the piece well as a piece of art, as well as a potential performance of activism, in order for it to have the effect you want. For example, I have a play where a dairy farmer sees the cows differently after seeing his wife go through a complicated and dangerous pregnancy. In another, a delivery company pilot has to deal with seeing his cargo for his flight is monkeys on their way for vivisection. During the play, the audience sees how it affects him with all that time in the sky knowing what he's flying them to and how he is used to just flying personal and business parcels around.

By creating and sharing these human stories, I am able to pursue the issues and allow the animal element to slowly become more prevalent as the story goes on, which hopefully leads to changing the world, one audience at a time.

My animal rights play repertoire include Innocence is a Chameleon, Froze Out, Blood or Blood, and Belly of the Beast. If you're involved in productions and potentially interested in using them, please don't hesitate to get in touch via my website:

www.robbienuwanda.com

FOCUS

Defiant Debates
& Dissident Discourse

a review essay by
Jess Huber

Defiant Daughters is an anthology of short essays by twenty-one people who are female-identified. This collection acts as a kind of literary homage to Carol J. Adams whose pivotal work *The Sexual Politics of Meat: a Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory* (1990) touched the lives of each and every author. These vignettes are tales of triumph and tales of quiet reflection by a very diverse group of authors who discuss issues of race and ethnicity, disability, queer experience, and intersecting identities and oppressions.

The idea that meat is both an object to be consumed and a source of power to be wielded represents a rich and important debate within the text itself.

One of the key themes examined throughout this anthology is the suggestion that meat is represented as both masculine patriarchal power and objectified female oppression. The idea that meat is both an object to be consumed and a source of power to be wielded represents a rich and important debate within the text itself. Margaret Perret notes that “*one of the leading reasons for [her] veganism, and one of the most direct intersections between women’s oppression and animal exploitation, is that female animals are doubly exploited for both their flesh and reproductive capacities*” (135). Ashley Maier takes up this discussion as she examines the glaring similarities between the unethical treatment of animals and domestic abuse but she has trouble finding an audience. So many of the authors in this text express their gratitude for Adams’ work because Adams provided a space to engage feminist vegetarian discourse.

From this discourse comes the freedom and empowerment to act. Laura Wright believes that “*becoming vegan, in its most feminist manifestation, meant doing something actively in response to a cultural stasis that dictated dietary behaviour with which [she] simply did not agree*” (192).

In “Teenage Wasteland” Kate Larson writes “*sexism gets deep inside of us. Body shaming wraps itself around our limbs, clings tight and contracts. We see it and we learn it. We police each other, we police ourselves, and it’s wrong, it’s a useless pursuit*” (116). In a few short sentences, Larson exemplifies some of the main discourses that exist in this anthology around food surveillance, body shaming, sexism, the social mores that restrict us, and the feminist discourse that seeks to dismantle those restrictions. These essays are diverse and yet three prevalent narratives exist:

- a) authors read Adams’ book in college or grad school,
- b) became vegetarian as a child when they realized connection between live animals and dead dinner meat, or
- c) they made the connection between vegetarianism and feminism and asked “*how does someone become a something?*” (Taylor 91).

This questioning of someone becoming a something speaks to the absent referent that marks Adams’ theory.

In the forward to *Defiant Daughters*, Adams writes “*I wrote the book I needed when I became a vegetarian in 1974. In writing what I had needed to read, I ended up writing what others needed too*” (viii). How often have we as vegans heard that said, or

seen the same sentiment written? Bloggers write the blogs they need, bakers write the vegan recipes they need to feel like a baker again, and small business owners open the stores that stock vegan goods so they have somewhere to shop. Like feminism, veganism is a lifestyle, a daily practice and an ethical theory that informs our choices and gives us a sense of direction and in many cases, a very identity. For Adams, body and mind are tangled in the writing of her book and the telling of her story. Speaking in third person she writes “*out of her fleshy existence, out of the deeply-felt and then lived insights, she crafts words. Flesh becomes words*” (ix). It’s fascinating to think that she has written herself into her book and that we read of her flesh as we read of her refusal to eat flesh and the dilemmas that creates in her life. In writing that her body is text, we as readers consume Adams in a way that omnivores consume animals. This metaphorical eating places the reader in a position to question everything they know about food, eating, and human and animal relations – the very point of Adams’ work.

This compassion is refreshing since much of vegan discourse revolves around this idea of policing what others eat.

While this book does share similarities with other vegan and feminist texts, *Defiant Daughters* does not condemn omnivores: a stance for which I am grateful. Vegans must be realistic in that our choices are very personal, very intimate, and very ingrained in our life. Omnivores have equally intimate beliefs and opinions about their eating habits that must be respected if any kind of real dialogue is to exist. This anthology

welcomes authors that return to eating meat or dairy as a way to cope, out of necessity, or simply to feel like they belong again. This compassion is refreshing since much of vegan discourse revolves around this idea of policing what others eat. This anthology is also refreshing in the lack of vegan fat-phobia. Lagusta Yearwood writes:

“Books like Skinny Bitch, which promote veganism while using the exhausted and exhausting tropes of one body type being the only acceptable body type all women must aspire to don’t really help the cause. In my view, they create vegans who lack any sort of awareness of the broader reasons to stop eating animal products and instead treat veganism as a diet, which most women will abandon if it doesn’t immediately ‘work’ for them” (226).

When was the last time you saw the term “size diversity” in a vegan or vegetarian text?! As Yearwood calls on vegans to be more aware, I must call on *Defiant Daughters* to answer a question or two.

Veganism, the choice to refrain from consuming animal products as nourishment, is always a privileged position.

While I believe this is an important and poignant anthology, I do question the absent referent in this book. While *Defiant Daughters* is diverse in a number of ways, there are many moments of assumed and unacknowledged privilege. Veganism, the choice to refrain from consuming animal products as nourishment, is always a privileged position. A grand claim I make, yes; but it is a claim with which you will be hard-pressed to disagree. The absent

referent of *Defiant Daughters* is those who are forgotten by vegans. The people missing from this text are those who cannot be vegan for financial or socio-economic reasons, the people who cannot access a plant-based diet with any regularity, and the people who have to work in chicken factories to earn a living. While this book has much to offer, the voices left out of this text are telling and must be remembered. Adams suggests that we write the books we want to read and I must ask that we talk about changing what we want to read to be as inclusive as possible.

I have heard vegans making arguments that seem contradictory to me in the same way that I've heard feminist friends espouse beliefs I just cannot support.

This book speaks about changing conversations and while Adams' work and the essays in *Defiant Daughters* do highlight diverse and important discourses, I am left wanting more. Perhaps in the future the writers of this text or the readers of this discussion will gather the stories of the forgotten desperately trying to enact feminist and vegan lifestyles. Let these defiant daughters lead the way to discussions that challenge and provoke more insight and more inclusive debate. I have heard vegans making arguments that seem contradictory to me in the same way that I've heard feminist friends espouse beliefs I just cannot support. I have heard these same vegans say that everyone can be vegan, anyone can thrive on a plant-based diet, and this just is not the case. I believe there is value in writing the books "we" want to read. I also believe that "we" have the responsibility to

expand the definition of "we" to include as many as possible. If there are any authors so capable, it's Carol J. Adams and those who find solace and support in her work.

Books like this are meant to spark discussion and provide a platform for debate. There are intriguing, intimate, and intelligent tales in this book. But throughout, I kept asking "yes, okay, but what's next?" This book pays homage to Adams' work and her influence, but I kept hoping for more. It's time for vegans to turn our attention away from ourselves, and onto the social and economic problems that prevent veganism from being more accessible. One primary example of this lack of accessibility is Colleen Martell's question of how to exist in harmony with fellow diners. Martell asks "how can I maintain passion and fervor for a minority view in such a way that every meal doesn't become a war zone" (82)? As someone who frequently defends her eating choices, I can appreciate Martell's desire to eat without being questioned and without needing to constantly explain her choices and her ethics. But it's no war zone. In fact, it's the opposite – a place in which arguments for peaceful treatment of people and animals are in abundance.

We can't say "it's just a phrase" any more than we can discount the differences between veganism and vegetarianism.

Language isn't casual. Word choices matter. Comparing a dinner table to a war zone devalues those who are living in places filled with terror and conflict. We can't say "it's just a phrase" any more than we can discount the differences between veganism and vegetarianism.

Just as I became a bit discouraged by the rhetoric of this text, in wonder the authors that place privilege and oppression front and centre and leave no one relegated to margins. Sarah E. Brown writes “*coming out as vegan and/or lesbian is still a privilege in some areas of society*” (202) and Sunaura Taylor’s “Crippling the Sexual Politics of Meat” is particularly moving. Taylor articulates her own position, asks questions, and still finds ways to question her own internalizations and the contradictions her work poses. I am ashamed to say that I had never considered that the animals people consume are indeed disabled. Taylor found “*that the disabled body is everywhere in the meat industry. The vast majority of animals we eat are themselves disabled – what I have called ‘manufactured to be disabled.’ They are mutant producers of meat, eggs, and dairy*” (93). Taylor continues to describe and engage Adams’ concept of the absent referent while insisting on an inclusive discourse that privileges depth of experience.

Regardless of the criticism faced, Dallas Rising also attempts to engage the absent referent and prevent the absence from becoming permanent. In her essay called “Happy Rape, Happy Meat,” Rising uses rape as an analogy to define animal abuse and has been critiqued, questioned, and belittled for this analogy. Rising makes important points, bravely links her theory with her own life, her own history, and her own trauma. Rising is trying to create a discussion that is real, with no absent referent, and one that is firmly grounded in experience.

There is nothing vague about Rising’s veganism, nothing conceptual or abstract.

Rising is the voice for those who are silenced by all too often “*vegans are happy*” rhetoric.

There are vegans who will never agree with me, but as a feminist, I put people first. I want to listen to those who want to be vegan but cannot. I believe the authors in this text would do the same.

As critical thinkers, we have a responsibility to question what we read, as we read. We can question what we enjoy, and critique what we find fascinating. I enjoyed reading these essays, and I certainly came away from this experience with more knowledge than when I began reading. I do still have lingering questions. I am left wondering about the voices missing in this text and the people living in remote areas who are concerned about animal rights however, the most ethical option available to them is to hunt. There are vegans who will never agree with me, but as a feminist, I put people first. I want to listen to those who want to be vegan but cannot. I believe the authors in this text would do the same. An anthology is a bit like gathering a group of creative people at a table and saying “*Let’s talk.*” They won’t all agree, they will have different ideas, conflicting opinions, and some may have an agenda that another simply may not recognize. But every person at this table has a voice, and the opportunity to speak. Kate Jacoby makes an important and inclusive point when she writes of the guests at the restaurant she owns with her husband: “*our diners are both from around the globe and around the corner. They are strict vegan and they are hunters. They are lefty, liberal*

community organizers, and they are high-paid pharmaceutical reps. But however our guests live their lives, I never forget what an honor it is for me to make my living doing what I do” (232). Jacoby suggests that we can all eat at the same table. While some might disagree and would prefer to eat only with the vegans, the reality is that more is accomplished when we talk to each other.

Veganism isn't for the faint of heart. It's not about happy animals or pictures of avocados next to the pet goat. It is about being realistic about what we consume and why. It's not about judgment, but reality.

For those who believe that feminism is no longer necessary, one read through this anthology will quickly silence them. A staggeringly high number of authors represented here have been raped or sexually assaulted, or work with those who have been abused. They are not numbers or statistics, but people who are trying to enact ethical and peaceful lives despite the violence they have encountered. Their stories are all too similar, and all too common; however, for the non-feminists, these people and their histories are the absent referent or the someone turned into the something. A statistic. Veganism isn't for the faint of heart. It's not about happy animals or pictures of avocados next to the pet goat. It is about being realistic about what we consume and why. It's not about judgment, but reality. It's wonderful when veganism can be expressed through happiness, but so too must the realities be heard.

As I call for more discourse and more inclusive debate, Editor Kara Davis agrees.

She writes in the Afterword “we at Lantern are hoping that this project doesn't end with the publication of *Defiant Daughters*.... there's plenty of room for continued discussion of the relevance of the sexual politics of meat, in new and innovative applications” (251). I am left wondering what would occur if vegans and feminists stopped thinking of ourselves as constantly defending and started thinking about ourselves as listening to the reasons why people aren't vegan? What would happen if we quietly and respectfully listened before we jumped on the offensive or to our own perceived defence? What would it be like just to listen, observe without judgment, and to avoid the all too constant “*but coconut oil can do that too*” refrain. I believe that a future publication could do just that.

Overall, *Defiant Daughters* is a text full of hope. In every situation, whether the author has revealed a devastating trauma, or simply recalls part of her history, she ends with a nod to the future. In a time of feminist backlash, and in these times of the #notallmen and the misguided #heforshe campaign, we need intelligent, accessible discourse that offers us space to think, read, and write about the sexual politics of meat and the meaty politics of sex, gender, and identity.

And so, another issue comes to an end.

Goodnight *robots*,
Goodnight *bed*,
Goodnight from *the magazine you just read*.

