

Speaking Up for Animals

An Anthology of Women's Voices

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Introduction

Lisa Kemmerer

Women should be protected from anyone's exercise of unrighteous power ... but then, so should every other living creature.

—*Mary Ann (Marian) Evans (George Eliot), 1819–1880,*
from a letter (“George”)

Abundantly pierced punk teens and older women with simple silver hair filled the large greeting room—females outnumbered males by about ninety-eight to one. Still, the single person in charge, the one who welcomed us from the front pedestal, was a man. I thumbed through the conference program, focusing on keynote speakers: Paul, John, Ken—suspiciously masculine-sounding names. As the weekend wore on, I mingled overwhelmingly with women while listening to a battery of male speakers, most of whom took the time to thank a handful of women for their unwavering dedication—their unpaid, behind-the-scenes work both for animals and to support the men behind the podium.

I had just arrived at my first animal rights conference, but it was clear that I had not arrived at a socially progressive gathering. Here, as elsewhere, men held leading roles while women filled supporting roles. Men spoke while women listened. Men founded organizations, and women joined those organizations. What I did not understand at that time were the many powerful links between patriarchy and factory farming—between the exploitation of women (their lack of voice and power, and their tendency to be exploited by men), and the exploitation of nonhuman animals (their lack of voice and power, and their tendency

to be exploited by men). Clearly, neither did the people who had put on the conference.

For those inclined to notice, the similarities between the exploitation and subjugation of women and nonhuman animals are difficult to ignore. For example, Wyeth-Ayerst Laboratories, Inc., produces estrogen replacement called Premarin (also sold under the name Prempro). Premarin is made from the urine of pregnant mares, who are, specifically for this purpose, tethered in small stalls for four or five months out of each year. Their foals—some 40,000 strong—are shipped off to be fattened and slaughtered after a mere four months, when they would normally still be nursing.

The Premarin market exists because of the archaic assumption that a woman's body is problematic, that there is something inherently not-quite-right about female biology, and that women therefore require the care of medical professionals—traditionally males (Ehrenreich and English 6). Premarin is on the market because people have been led to believe that a woman's natural ways of aging are a sickness in need of a cure. This attitude toward aging is indubitably linked with the patriarchal, exploitative view of females as childbearers, a view which makes a woman's aging and menopause appear to be problematic and undesirable. "Marketed as a cure for menopause, Premarin hurts both female horses and female humans in order to provide profits for a pharmaceutical corporation" ("Sexism"). Needless to say, most corporations are owned and managed by males.

Hunting provides another apt example. In Euro-American cultures (and many other human communities), both hunting and heterosexual sex are assumed to be fundamental to manliness. This ridiculous link between sex with women and killing "wild" animals is made explicit in the language of the hunt: Bullets are called "balls," firing is referred to as "discharge," hitting a body with a bullet is called "penetration," and firing prematurely is called "premature discharge" (Kheel, "License" 91–92).

Other forms of animal exploitation show similar linguistic evidence of an exploitative patriarchal viewpoint. For example, the terms "livestock" and "cunt" similarly present individuals as means to others' ends, "Live stock" presents a living, thinking, feeling, individual as disembodied merchandise awaiting sale, while "cunt" presents a living, thinking, feeling, individual as a disembodied vagina awaiting sex. Similarly, elk and moose are often called "game" and are shot for sport; incidentally female elk and moose are also labeled as "cows"—like those we exploit for their nursing milk and flesh. And, of course, "cow" is also a derogatory term for human females.

Hunting "ethics" are also a product of patriarchy. They are "predicated on the need to harness an aggressive, sexual energy and to channel [this

energy] in appropriate ways,” in order to foster “the continuation of man’s aggressive drive” (Kheel, “License” 92, 95). This aggressive drive is not questioned, but merely channeled.

When pressed, hunters who claim that they just want “to be out in the wilderness,” will admit that the kill is essential—or at least the hope of a kill. As it turns out, there is no correlation between hunting and hiking, climbing, backpacking, kayaking, or any other outdoor activity. Hunters do not purposefully linger in the woods after a kill, but quickly begin the process of preparing to head home with the corpse. For hunters, the kill is the climax—the most important moment. They are not driving into the woods (or sometimes actually walking) for the sake of beauty, but in the hope of a kill. The kill can be likened to male orgasm. Sex is traditionally thought to be over when the man has an orgasm, and the hunt is never so decisively over as it is after a successful kill. “Without the pursuit of orgasm, sex typically is thought to have no meaning or narrative structure; without the intent to kill, the hunt, we are told, has none as well” (Kheel, “License” 91). As a teacher, I impatiently listened to a young man matter-of-factly defend the importance of hunting because he found the experience “orgasmic.” From his point of view, all that mattered was how exciting and wonderful the experience was for him. The “side effects” of the man’s preferred action—the experience of the deer and the woman—are deemed to be so irrelevant that they are not even mentioned.

In patriarchal cultures men hold the lion’s share of power, and therefore tend to control sex. In the United States, for example, sexual assault—including rape—is common. Nearly 20 percent of the U.S. female population has suffered rape or attempted rape (“Facts”). Rape is generally about power, not sex. Rapists simply enact, albeit in an illegal manner that is shunned by the majority, a general cultural tendency to view females as “objects that can be used for pleasure without regard for [a woman’s] wishes or subjective experiences” (“Sexism”). The sex trade is also flourishing under the patriarchal objectification of women, paid for by men who are willing and able to own or rent a girl (or sometimes a woman) for sex. Those who are exploited are comparatively powerless, and cannot refuse sexual advances or deny the wishes of those who pay (someone else) for their services.

In these situations and many others, men own and control the bodies of women as they own and control the bodies of sows and cows and hens. Sexual exploitation of human females for the benefit of males is mirrored in contemporary animal industries. Men who control animal industries exploit females for their reproductive abilities as if nonhuman animals were objects devoid of will and sensation. Sows are treated as if they were

bacon factories and cows are treated as if they were milk machines. Sows, cows, hens, turkeys, and horses are artificially inseminated to bring profits to the men who control their bodies and their lives. Women in the sex trade are similar to factory farmed females, “Locked up and raped daily, these women and children suffer unspeakable physical and emotional trauma. Like the hens in egg factories, many are murdered when their bodies have become so exhausted by the abuse that [they are] no longer profitable to maintain” (“Sexism”).

Even comparatively privileged women in relatively fortunate marriages can readily be likened to sows and cows: Marriage grants a man “legal license to his wife’s sexual and reproductive services, [while] the model of animal husbandry grants agribusiness and wildlife managers access to the bodies and reproductive services of other-than-human animals” (Kheel, *Nature* 231). The reproductive abilities of women and other female animals are controlled and exploited by those in power (usually men) and both are devalued as they age and wear out—when they no longer reproduce. Cows, hens, and women are routinely treated as if they were objects to be manipulated in order to satisfy the desires of powerful men, without regard to females’ wishes or feelings.

While feminists and animal advocates both struggle against patriarchal exploitation, overtly associating women with nonhuman animals (as I have just done) unsettles many—if not most—feminists (as well as the vast majority of nonfeminists). Such an association is viewed as demeaning, just as it is viewed as demeaning in patriarchal societies to associate men with anything that is feminine—such associations are damaging to men. Similarly, comparing the lowly cow to a woman is viewed as further endangering the already diminished status of women: Overtly associating women with turkeys and pigs is viewed as a “substantial threat” to women (Scholtmeijer 233), because farmed animals are “property”—dumb, despicable, and expendable—and are cruelly exploited as a matter of economic habit. Women, who have tended to be treated similarly, must be extricated from such situations and from any such associations. “The suggestion that the otherness of nonhuman animals can inform the otherness of women, therefore, appears to be counterproductive, to pull women down into a condition of defeat along with the animals” (Scholtmeijer 234).

Consequently, feminists have often highlighted the “otherness” of nonhuman animals while highlighting similarities between women and the men who hold power. Biologically speaking, any two humans will be more similar than a human and any other species. But the position of most

women in patriarchal societies is closer to that of chickens and cows than it is to that of men who hold power. Consider, for example, the labels given to human females: bitch, bitch in heat, cow, heifer, sow, pussy, kitten, hen, biddy, chick. When I type “bitch” in Google, and click on “images,” I do not find pictures of dogs, as I would expect. Instead, I find pictures of women. Women are also verbally associated with nondomesticated species, like foxes and the cougars. Language tells us much about the place of women in society in relation to men and nonhuman animals.

There is an ugly, unmentioned truth behind a feminist’s tendency to associate women with men, rather than with similarly exploited pigs or cattle: Those who purposefully distance women from other female animals hope to liberate female humans *while leaving nonhuman animals in the category of exploitable “other”* (Scholtmeijer 257; Adams, “Feminist” 204). But it is reprehensible for individuals who are seeking release from oppression to purposefully leave others in the dungeons of exploitation—even to condemn others to such exploitation—in the process of working to extricate themselves.

In any event, this selfish approach has not worked, and the reason for this seems somewhat obvious: As long as we foster power-over—whether over pigs or turkeys or women—most human females will remain under the control of men, along with pigs and cows and chickens (who will generally remain yet lower on the rungs of power). In seeking to stand above nonhuman females, women help to maintain a hierarchy through which they are held below men. As long as we support a hierarchy, as long as we support a system which grants some individuals power over other individuals, men will dominate over women. Hierarchies entail power-over, and the power of one individual over another inevitably supports oppression. Those who seek to pass “exploitation ‘down’ the ladder” (Kappeler 335) will never eradicate oppression, they will simply continue to “mirror patriarchal oppressors” (Dunayer 19). Feminists who “engage in this kind of denial, [who] support and participate in the oppression of the less powerful” in the hope of elevating themselves, are “not only hypocritical” but also engage in a “profound betrayal of [feminism’s] deepest commitments” (Adams and Donovan 8).

Women who seek equality must not support the oppression of nonhuman animals. To oppress others while seeking your own autonomy and freedom is selfish and inconsistent. In any event, if women are ever to achieve equality, we must topple hierarchy *en total*. Activists and theorists who fail in this regard adopt the same sort of “exclusionary theorizing” that they ostensibly reject (Gruen 61). Feminists who refuse to acknowledge that

they are animals are similar to “men who prefer to ignore that women are human” (Dunayer 19). For those who seek freedom “from violation by the powerful—power and privilege must not be more widely shared, they must be radically dismantled” (Kappeler 335).

FACTORY FARMING FEMALES¹

For most women (as for most men) links between sexism and speciesism are not readily apparent. We have been conditioned *not* to see exploitation. For example, men generally have no idea how patriarchy affects women—unless they go out of their way to learn. The same is true for women with regard to cows and pigs and chickens and turkeys. Therefore, this section exposes the realities of speciesist exploitation, more specifically animal agriculture—realities that are purposefully hidden behind closed doors and false advertising.

Both women and nonhuman animals have traditionally been viewed as property—“things” to be owned and controlled by those in power. While the plight of women is linked with that of nonhuman animals through a single system of oppression, through their comparative powerlessness and invisibility, and through sexual exploitation, it is important to elucidate these similarities through concrete examples. Links between women and nonhuman animals are nowhere more apparent than through the vulnerabilities of mothers and their young, and the control of pregnancies and offspring; this particular form of oppression is nowhere more blatant than on factory farms.

Reproductive Commodities

Cows

Cows, like humans and other mammals, only lactate when they have given birth. In order to produce milk, cows must be repeatedly, forcibly, artificially impregnated. Each time they are impregnated, cows carry their young for nine months, then their calves are stolen shortly after birth (though they try desperately to defend and protect their young). Cows have a strong mothering instinct (as do most mammals), but how can they protect their newborns against exploitative human oppressors? They invariably lose their babies, and then bawl for days.

The motherless calves are then sold for veal: The veal industry exists because people buy yogurt and ice cream, cheese and milk. The veal industry was created to take advantage of an abundant supply of calves

who are merely byproducts of the dairy industry. “Dairy” calves are either killed shortly after birth, and sold as “bob” veal for low-quality dishes (like frozen TV dinners), or they are chained by the neck in a two-by-five-foot wooden crate, where they are unable to turn, and where they can neither stretch nor lie down comfortably. While we drink their mothers’ milk, these miserable little beings are given a milk substitute that is deficient in iron and fiber. This creates an anemic, light-colored flesh that is prized by those who purchase veal.

These unfortunate calves are usually slaughtered when they are four months old. The veal industry confines and kills one million calves every year.

Life is no better for those calves who are kept to produce dairy products. “Dairy” calves’ tails are “docked” to prevent swishing around udders and equipment. But tails are a cow’s best defense against annoying insects in all of the areas they can’t otherwise reach. Nonetheless, their tails are docked. During tail docking, “bladed clamps” are secured to a one-month-old calf’s tail, then blades cut through flesh, vertebrae, and tendons. These calves are also “disbudded”—the buds from which their horns would normally grow are seared from their skulls. An undercover investigator (Mercy for Animals) who witnessed this procedure noted that the calves were muzzled with cable and their heads were tied to steel fencing. Once the calves were immobilized “workers used a smoking iron to burn out their nascent horns, searing through flesh and bone and leaving behind molten, bloody cavities” (“Dairy’s” 11). Despite their bound mouths, the calves bellowed, “wheezed, frothed and strained” (“Dairy’s” 11).

When they are old enough to be impregnated and to bear young (only to have both their calf and their milk stolen), they endure mechanized milking for ten out of twelve months per year (including seven months of their nine-month pregnancies). To be milked, cows are herded into a milking parlor with the help of electrified gates, which presumably keep the herd moving, but which can only shock the cattle who are at the back of the herd. These unfortunate cows are perpetually shocked if they are trapped behind other cattle in clogged passageways.

Once in the parlor (a name that elicits images of soft chairs, tea, and books), a cow is locked into place via metal bars on each side of her neck. Milking machines are roughly and hurriedly attached to the cow’s teats, and she stands there while her nursing milk, which she generated to feed her calf, is extracted. This process is repeated two or three times each day.

Genetic manipulation and dietary controls cause extraordinary and unnatural milk output—fifty pounds of milk per day. Cows naturally produce

just over two tons of milk per year, but recombinant bovine growth hormone (rBGH) and recombinant bovine somatotropin (rBST)—synthetic human-created hormones—have increased milk flow so that cows now provide as much as thirty tons of milk annually, enough for *ten* calves. In this unhealthy and unhappy existence, one in five factory farmed “dairy” cows secretes pus from her udder (which invariably mixes with her milk).

Most cows coming from the dairy industry are pregnant when they are slaughtered. Cows are so exhausted by the dairy process that they are “spent” and sent to slaughter after just four or five years of repeated impregnation, birth, hormone doses, and machine milking. (Those few cows who find their way to sanctuaries can live upwards of twenty years.) “Dairy” cattle are much older than cattle who are slaughtered to produce beef, so their flesh is considered low quality, and is used for soup, burgers, or processed foods.

Many people become vegetarians to avoid supporting cruelty and premature death, but purchasing dairy products causes the slaughter of cattle just as surely as does eating a hamburger: When we buy the nursing milk of mother cows in our local supermarkets, we support the oppression and premature deaths of both “dairy” cows and “veal” calves. It is not financially feasible to keep so many millions of calves and cows—cows who are too young to produce milk, who are males, or who can no longer continue to produce extraordinary quantities of nursing milk. *Both “dairy” cows and their unfortunate young are slaughtered for human consumption while yet young.* Additionally, vegetarians who avoid flesh for moral reasons must remember that “dairy” cows are invasively impregnated, their young are stolen, and then their nursing milk is stolen, and all of this is done because people buy dairy products. While most calves born into the dairy industry live a short and horrific life, mother cows endure prolonged suffering—year after year. Those who are willing to adapt their diet to avoid supporting extreme cruelty and premature death must not shift to a vegetarian diet that increases dairy products. To reduce extreme suffering and premature death, we must cut back on *all* animal products.

Dairy farmers control, manipulate, and capitalize on a cow’s reproductive abilities—her nursing milk and her calf—and finally her flesh. To add insult to injury, the dairy industry has convinced consumers that cows’ nursing milk is essential for good health. If milk is essential to human health, how have people in China lived so long without dairy products—and with comparatively much less osteoporosis?

Like Premarin, dairy products are completely unnecessary. Like those who produce Premarin, those who produce dairy products have gone to great lengths to make people believe that their product is essential. This

is not the case. In truth, the “mammary glands of cows are exploited in order to produce a product that harms the mammary glands of women” (“Sexism”). Milk products have been linked with ovarian and breast cancer (“Cancer”) as well as early onset of menses (Cohen). If we aren’t willing to quit dairy for the sake of suffering, exploited cows, we ought to quit for our own sake.

Sows

Because cows are exploited specially for their female biology—for their nursing milk—it is perhaps easier to grasp the link between sexism and speciesism with regard to cows, and perhaps more difficult for feminists to see the link between the oppression of women and the oppression of sows. A brief visit to a pig farm would quickly put any uncertainty to rest. In lieu of a pig farm tour, an explanation will have to suffice.

Pigs are intelligent and social, in many ways similar to dogs. They are also very tidy: When pigs have sufficient space, they do not defecate in areas where they sleep or eat. More than 95 percent of today’s pigs are factory farmed, spending their entire lives crowded in small, concrete, indoor pens. On factory farms, where a few extra feet of cage space reduces profit margins, pigs must live in their own feces, urine, vomit—even amid the corpses of other pigs (as discovered by many undercover agents).

One hundred million pigs are raised and slaughtered every year. Among these unfortunate pigs, breeding sows are the most unfortunate. Like cattle in the dairy industry, sows suffer a continuous cycle of artificial impregnation, controlled birth, and the stealing of their young. During four months of pregnancy, breeding sows are isolated in gestation crates—small metal pens just two feet wide—where they stand on cement floors. Lack of space prevents them from turning, or even lying down comfortably, and the sides of larger sows perpetually rub on surrounding bars.

When it is time to give birth, sows are transferred to similarly cramped farrowing crates, with concrete or metal floors, and bars that prevent mothers from reaching their piglets—while allowing the young to reach the mother’s teats. Short chains or rubber straps are sometimes used to immobilize the mother, allowing for perpetual nursing (in order to fatten the piglets for slaughter). This intense, unlimited nursing frequently causes lacerations and painful infections on sows’ udders, but they have no choice—they are unable to move.

Normally piglets nurse for about fifteen weeks, but factory farmed piglets are taken from their mothers at just two or three weeks of age. These piglets are weaned in crowded, concrete “nursery” pens surrounded by metal

bars, with little more than one square yard of floor space per pig. They are slaughtered at about six months of age, though pigs lucky enough to find a home in a sanctuary can easily live beyond fifteen years.

Five days after her piglets have been taken, a sow is again forcibly, artificially impregnated. Sows endure at least two pregnancies, births, and nursing stints per year, generally giving birth to more than twenty piglets annually. When a sow is no longer considered productive (after birthing four to seven times), she is sent to slaughter, usually at about four years of age.

As with cattle, in a system as cruel as factory farming the lucky ones are slaughtered young. Factory farmed sows, who are repeatedly impregnated and perpetually confined, have weak bones and muscles, heart problems, and frequent urinary tract infections. The concrete that they stand on causes crippling leg disorders, which leads to arthritis, and a lack of exercise causes obesity—which farmers *strive* to create, breeding and feeding pigs so that they will grow as quickly as possible. (Transgenic pigs have recently been bred to grow even faster.) With barely enough room to stand or lie down, and no bedding to speak of, many sows have chronic sores on their shoulders and knees. Respiratory diseases are also common: 70 percent of factory farmed pigs suffer from pneumonia. Despite these common problems, throughout the course of a year one in four commercial pig operations never summons a veterinarian.

Deprivation, chronic pain, and frustration cause sows to adopt neurotic coping behaviors. Sows would normally build a nest of leaves or straw before giving birth. In their barren cells, sows repeatedly and desperately try to build a nest, moving their heads backwards and forwards pointlessly in a rhythmic fashion, gnawing on metal bars that surround them. Overcrowding and boredom also cause aggression, which is why pigs' tails are chopped off and their teeth cut at birth (without anesthesia). Giving pigs more space would allow them to create nests, root, and wallow—normal pig behaviors—which would also prevent neurotic behaviors and aggression. But from an economic point of view, it is cheaper to dock tails and cut teeth than it is to provide pigs with adequate space; a pig's psychosis does not affect a pig farmer's bottom line.

“Laying” hens

Battery hens are also exploited because of their female biology—because they lay eggs. Factory farmers exploit 300 million “laying” hens each year.

Shortly after hatching, without anesthesia, female chicks are “de-beaked”—the tips of their sensitive beaks are sliced off with a hot blade,

cutting through bone, cartilage, and soft tissue. This procedure is intended to reduce injuries caused by stressed birds in overcrowded conditions, but it comes with a price: Debeaking causes many fragile little chicks to bleed to death or die of shock, but newly hatched chickens are considered expendable in the poultry industry.

When they are just eighteen weeks old, four or more young hens are placed in crowded 1.5 square foot cages (slightly bigger than your average microwave oven) even though one hen's wing span is roughly 2.5 feet. In these crowded conditions, their wings constantly rub against wire, causing featherless sore spots. Nonetheless, these cages are piled one on top of the other in giant sheds, where the hens remain until they are sent to slaughter.

Hens lay eggs (and cows produce milk) as part of their basic, biological functioning, and they do so in excessive quantities due to biological manipulation—not because they are well cared for or contented. Even the most miserable human, if provided with adequate food, is likely to menstruate (pass eggs) and lactate (produce milk) after birth. Common sense tells us that the same is true for chickens (and cattle). Though these hens are miserable, they ovulate, and when they ovulate they feel a strong nesting urge, which they cannot satisfy in their cramped wire cages. Hens are forced to lay their eggs under their crowded feet, on wire, and their eggs simply roll onto a conveyor belt to be taken away and boxed. Though each hen annually produces upwards of 250 eggs (while their wild counterparts lay roughly twenty eggs per year), factory farmed hens are never permitted to build a nest, sit on their eggs, or tend young—or even step out into the sun or onto dust or grass.

When a hen's egg production goes into a natural decline (after a few months), they are put through "forced molt," in which they are starved and kept in total darkness for as long as eighteen days. This shocks the hens' exhausted bodies into yet another egg-cycle, and simultaneously causes hens to lose a great deal of weight. Some lose more than 25 percent of their body weight, and 5 to 10 percent of the hens die in the course of forced molt—all of the hens suffer terribly. But this cruel practice increases profits by bringing on another cycle of ovulation. Hens who die during forced molt are considered no loss whatsoever to the industry because their egg production has already declined, and factory farmers quickly rid themselves of such birds if they cannot shock them into another laying cycle.

Due to their abnormal rate of ovulation, factory farmed hens sometimes suffer from "cage layer fatigue," a condition in which they become "egg bound," and die because they are too weak to expel yet one more egg. Factory farmed hens also suffer from prolapse (the uterus is expelled along

with an egg), egg peritonitis (an inflammation), cancers, severe liver and kidney disease, and infectious bronchitis (caused by living in their own excrement). Because it requires a tremendous amount of calcium to produce egg shells, hens also commonly suffer from calcium deficiencies, and often suffer from broken bones and paralysis.

Chickens at sanctuaries can live up to fifteen years, but factory farmed hens are destroyed roughly one year after they hatch. “Egg-laying” chickens are bred for egg production; they don’t grow fast or large enough to bring a profit in the flesh market, so it is not cost-effective to send these birds to slaughter. Millions of spent hens are therefore thrown into wood chippers, alive. Undercover investigators documented Ward Egg Ranch (California) throwing more than 15,000 live, “spent” laying hens into a wood-chipping machine. Despite tremendous outcry from a newly informed and horrified public, the district attorney declined to prosecute, noting that disposing of live hens in a wood-chipper is legal, and is a “common industry practice” (“Factory”).

Roughly half of a hen’s offspring are males. Like calves exploited for veal in the dairy industry, male chicks are an unwanted byproduct of factory farming. Two hundred million newly hatched male chicks are discarded every year. These chicks are of no economic value to the egg industry (or to the flesh industry, because roosters are too aggressive to be kept in cramped factory-farming conditions); these little fellows are gassed, crushed, or simply thrown into garbage bins, where they dehydrate or asphyxiate, or they are tossed into a grinder or chipper (like their spent mothers). Eyewitness accounts describe struggling, peeping chicks dismembered by metal blades. Their little fluffy bodies, when ground to oblivion, can be sold as fertilizer, or as feed for other farmed animals—who would naturally eat only grass and grains.

When laying hens are sent to slaughter, though just beyond adolescence, they are much older than “broilers,” who are raised for flesh. The flesh of “laying” hens is therefore of less value, and is used for soups, baby food, stock cubes, school dinners, pot pies, the restaurant trade, animal food, or other low-grade products, for which their “spent” bodies are shredded.

Please know that you cause extreme suffering if you purchase dairy products or eggs from your local stores. Both of these industries cause extreme, prolonged suffering and premature death. If there was not a market for products like skim milk, omelets, peach yogurt, mozzarella cheese, egg salad sandwiches, and strawberry ice cream, all of the aforementioned suffering would cease. No one person can shut down the entire industry, but every dollar spent on dairy and eggs is a vote for these cruel industries. Every

dollar spent on dairy and eggs is a vote in favor of this ongoing exploitation and premature slaughter that targets females: pregnancy, birth, and tending young offspring are central both to female biology and to factory farming.

“Broiler” hens

Hens are not only exploited for their reproductive abilities, but also for their flesh. Hens in the broiler industry are crowded by the thousands into warehouses that hold up to 100,000 birds. Roosters are far too aggressive to live in these unbearably crowded conditions. Consequently, like hens who are exploited for their eggs, “broilers” are sexed, and females are debeaked just after they hatch, while males are cast into a bin to suffocate, or into a chopper to be ground to bits.

Chickens have natural sleep rhythms that are determined by daylight and darkness. Light deters hens from sleeping, which encourages them to eat too much, which causes them to gain weight rapidly. Most of the windowless sheds that are typical of the battery hen business are therefore equipped with artificial lighting that remains on for most of a twenty-four hour period, perpetually disturbing and manipulating the hens’ sleep patterns. Can you imagine being kept awake most of your life—rarely being allowed to sleep soundly, comfortably, or for a full night?

Not only is the lighting manipulated to help fatten hens, but they are also given high-protein feed and growth-promoting antibiotics, and they are genetically altered to make them grow twice as fast, and twice as large, as their recent ancestors. “Broiler” hens reach four pounds—slaughter weight—in just six weeks. But their immature bones cannot possibly support such unnatural weight gain, and these hens live in chronic pain for the last weeks of their short lives. Consequently, factory farmed hens do not move much “because it hurts” (John Webster, *The Guardian* [October 14, 1991] in “An HSUS”). But those who are interested in profits see this as a benefit—a hen who does not attempt to move about freely is likely to gain yet more weight.

Hens trapped in the broiler industry are handled with the expectation that their lives will be very short, and significant losses are expected—individual hens do not matter. The floors of these giant, crowded sheds are quickly covered with excrement, creating lung-damaging air. Broilers stand and lie in their own heaped droppings, developing blisters, ulcers, and burns on their feet, legs, and breasts from living in their own nutrient-rich manure. Because hens in broiler sheds are confined in crowded, unsanitary conditions, thousands succumb to heat prostration, infectious disease, and cancers. Hens that humans manipulate for their flesh also die frequently

of heart failure because their hearts and lungs cannot sustain such fast and excessive growth (*Feedstuffs* in “Viva!USA”).

“Broiler” hens reach “market weight” just forty-five days after they hatch, at which time workers enter the dismal sheds, grabbing the frightened, overweight birds by a wing, leg, or head—whatever they can grab—then cramming them into crates stacked on trucks. The terror-stricken, plump birds, with weak hearts and fragile bones, dislocate and break hips, legs, and wings; hemorrhage internally; and suffer heart attacks as they try desperately to escape. The end, like their lives in general, is a testament to human cruelty and indifference.

More and more people are moving from “red” flesh to poultry flesh in the hope of staving off heart attacks, strokes, and cancers linked with the consumption of these animal products. This change in demand has bolstered the “broiler” industry.

Slaughter

Transport and slaughter are as miserable as the lives of factory farmed animals. Mammals are supposed to be “stunned” (rendered unconscious) before they are killed (federal Humane Slaughter Act, 1958), but slaughter (like most contemporary businesses) is shaped and driven by economic factors: In the slaughterhouse, the quicker each animal is killed, the higher the profit margin. Time is money. Workers must be paid for their time, and while one animal’s body is on the dismemberment line, no other corpse can be processed. Consequently, speed is essential, which works against our government’s extremely minimal attempt to reduce suffering. A USDA survey concluded that stunning was either “unacceptable” or a “serious problem” in 36 percent of sheep and pig slaughterhouses, and 64 percent of cattle slaughterhouses. Even more remarkable, chickens, turkeys, ducks—all poultry—are exempt from the Humane Slaughter Act, *even though 90 percent of those killed in U.S. slaughterhouses are birds*. While slaughter is inherently ugly, contemporary assembly-line slaughter is unconscionable.

Economic considerations also make transport horrific for factory farmed animals. It is cheaper to absorb high transportation mortality rates than it is to pay for enclosed transport trucks. Consequently, though factory farmed animals must travel as much as eighty miles per hour in all weather conditions, they are transported in open trucks, without food, water, or protection from rain, snow, or intense heat. Some farmed animals inevitably freeze to death during transport, while others die of heat stress or suffocation.

When they reach the slaughterhouse, misery is extended and enhanced by a system in which the suffering of nonhuman animals counts for nothing.

Roughly one million factory farmed hens are killed each hour for human consumption. (Turkeys, who are raised and slaughtered in the same way that “broiler” hens are raised and slaughtered, are also killed in large numbers.) On arrival at the slaughter house, hens are dumped onto a fast-moving conveyor belt, but some of the flapping and frightened birds inevitably miss the belt and fall onto the ground. Once on the ground, they are either crushed by machinery or they die of starvation or exposure.

Hens who land on the conveyor belt are hastily hung upside down by their legs in metal shackles. For the sake of efficiency, most slaughterhouses attempt to immobilize birds before slaughter—it is much easier to kill a bird when she is not struggling, so the birds soon pass an electrified basin of water. As the hens move along the assembly line, turning their upside-down heads to see what might befall them next, they are supposed to touch the electrified water. Needless to say, many hens, particularly smaller ones, miss the water. Even if their heads touch the water, the shock does nothing to help the suffering of the hens. A strong shock would damage the flesh and reduce profits, so managers tend to err on the side of less current. As a result, birds are usually immobilized by the electric basin, but remain sentient—they are aware of and can feel everything that happens to them.

After they pass the electric water basin, a hen’s throat is supposedly cut either by hand or with a mechanical blade. Slaughter lines run up to 8,400 chickens *per hour*, so accuracy is the exception rather than the rule—the Livingston plant (California) kills nearly 600,000 chickens daily (Morrissey 12). Afterward, whether or not their throats have actually been slit, birds are submerged in scalding water (to loosen their feathers). If a hen’s throat is not slit, or was not slit properly—which includes millions of birds annually—she is boiled alive.

Cattle also suffer enormously between feedlots and their untimely deaths. Four corporations slaughter more than 80 percent of the 35 million cattle killed annually in the United States. A standard slaughterhouse kills 250 cattle *every hour*, a rate at which it is impossible for workers to assure a quick or relatively painless death. In any event, killing cattle all day at high speeds does not create an attitude of caring or compassion. Hidden videos testify to the many animals who are hoisted onto the slaughter assembly line kicking, struggling, and fully conscious. The *Washington Post* (April 2001) related the words of a slaughterhouse employee and his friend, Moreno:

The cattle were supposed to be dead before they got to Moreno. But too often they weren’t. “They blink. They make noises,” he said softly. “The head moves, the eyes are wide and looking around.” Still Moreno would

cut. On bad days, he says, dozens of animals reached his station clearly alive and conscious. Some would survive as far as the tail cutter, the belly ripper, the hide puller. “They die,” said Moreno, “piece by piece.” (*Washington Post* [April 2001] in “Factory Beef”)

As noted, animals arrive at slaughter exhausted, thirsty, hungry, and terrified. Every year 100,000 factory farmed cattle arrive at slaughter injured, or too dispirited to walk (Kirchheimer); undercover investigators have repeatedly documented downed animals who are kicked, beaten, pushed with bulldozers, and dragged from transport trucks with ropes or chains, though they are fully conscious, in pain, and bellowing pitifully. Cows exploited in the dairy industry, because they are older and their bodies have been exhausted by perpetual pregnancy, birthing, and milking, are among the most pitiable during transport and when they arrive at slaughter.

“Free Range,” “Cruelty Free,” “Organic,” and “Natural” Labels

Some people seek to avoid supporting the excessive cruelty of factory farms by purchasing products with special labels, *but these labels do not satisfy even the most basic requirements for a compassionate consumer*. “Free range,” “cruelty free,” “organic,” and “natural foods” industries exploit farmed animals for flesh, nursing milk, and reproductive eggs almost exactly as do other factory farms.

“Organic” labels protect farmed animals in only one, meager way: Organic labels indicate that farmers only feed organic foods to their victims—no hormones. Organic guidelines provide no further protections for farmed animals. Therefore animals who are exploited for “organic” foods are raised, maintained, transported, and slaughtered *just like their “non-organic” counterparts*: They are debeaked, dehorned, detoed, castrated, and/or branded, and they are kept, transported, and slaughtered in the same deplorable conditions.

“Organic” labels do *nothing* for a cow who is still perpetually impregnated and milked, who still loses her calf to the veal industry—or to protect her calf, who is still sold at birth to the veal industry to be slaughtered. “Organic” products are designed to optimize human health and reduce environmental degradation. Those who invest in organic products are not making a choice that promotes the well-being of farmed animals.

Despite the ugly truth of organic products, it is increasingly common for those touting “organic” products to claim that their label includes “rules about the humane treatment of animals” (“What Do”). (I suppose

organic industries justify this because they have one inconsequential rule that ostensibly benefits their imprisoned, exploited farmed animals—they receive organic feed.) One need only look up the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990—today’s organic guidelines (<http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELPRDC5060370&acct=nopgeninf>) to see that organic regulations are not designed to alleviate the prolonged, extreme suffering of factory farmed animals—and they certainly do not do so. Neither do we vote against cruel animal exploitation if we buy “natural” or “all natural” products. In fact, these labels don’t even protect consumers, because they don’t indicate products that provide all-natural ingredients.

“Natural” labels merely indicate that a product has no “artificial flavors, colors, or chemical preservatives” (“What Do”). There is no requirement that cows, pigs, or hens who were exploited to create “natural” products be treated any differently from how other factory farmed animals are treated. Farmed animals who are exploited for “natural” products are not allowed to live in natural conditions—they are not even allowed to satisfy their most basic natural behaviors. Despite consumer assumptions about what “natural” means with regard to animal products holding this label, the USDA’s “natural” food labels *only* regulate “the presence of artificial additives and the degree of processing” (“Farm”).

“Free range,” “cage free,” and “certified humane” labels are just as meaningless for farmed animals as are “all natural” labels. Just like farmed animals enslaved by organic industries, farmed animals exploited by “free range,” “cage free,” and “certified humane” producers are routinely debeaked, disbudded, detoed, castrated, their tails are docked, and/or they are branded (depending on their species). Neither do “free range” and “certified humane” labels protect cows from perpetual impregnation, pregnancy, birth, calf-snatching, transport, or dismemberment (slaughter) at a very young age. Finally, “free range,” “cage free,” and “certified humane” labels fail to help “spent” hens, who are sent to slaughter at the same youthful age.

Eggs and chicken flesh marketed as “free range” very rarely have more space than hens crowded into battery cages, and they may or may not be able to step outside. *If* they can step outside, their outdoor pen is likely tiny, crowded, and barren—it is simply not profitable to keep fewer hens on more land; it *is* profitable to keep more hens on less land. It is perfectly legal to keep twenty thousand or more “free range” hens in captivity such that each hen is allotted no more space than is encompassed in an average-size sheet of paper, “with little or no access to the outdoors. If the hens can go outside, the exit is often very small, allowing only the closest hens to get

out” (“Free-Range”). For those few who might be able to access the small doorway that leads to the outside world, much-touted “free range” may be “nothing more than a muddyard saturated with manure” (“Free-Range”).

Facilities that bill their eggs as “cage free” are equally uninspiring:

“Cage-free” means that, while the hens are not squeezed into small wire cages, they never go outside. “Cage-free” hens are typically confined in dark, crowded buildings filled with toxic gases and disease microbes the same as their battery-caged sisters. And like their battery-caged sisters, they are painfully debeaked at the hatchery. (“Cage-Free”)

Uninformed visitors arriving at an organic egg farm were surprised to find that, despite “certified humane” and “free range” logos,

100,000 debeaked hens [were] crowded into five 400 foot long sheds, each holding “a sea of 20,000 brown hens,” so densely crowded the floor was invisible.... The “range,” even if the hens had been outside, was just “a bare patch of dirt between the sheds.” (“Organic”)

In our capitalistic system, farmed animals are merely units of production—“live stock.” It is therefore inevitable that millions of farmed animals raised for profit will be viewed—and treated—as if they were expendable, especially in the poultry and dairy industries. Male “dairy” calves have no reason to exist on dairy farms, and male chicks have no reason to exist on egg-producing farms, or in poultry flesh industries. Yet male calves and male chicks are inevitably produced by these industries. How might “free range,” “certified humane,” or “organic” labels protect male calves in the dairy industry, when these calves have no economic value except through a veal industry that emerged to capitalize on a plethora of unwanted “dairy” calves? Similarly, “free range,” “cage free,” and “certified humane” labels do nothing to protect male chicks, who are a natural and constant byproduct of poultry industries, yet are economically useless. In our capitalistic system, what is to keep these newly-hatched chicks from being tossed into garbage bags and chippers? What do concerned consumers imagine a business might do with millions of animals who are born/hatched every year on their premises, who must be fed, watered, and housed, but who are useless to their economic enterprise?

Farmed animals who are exploited for “free range,” “cage free,” “certified humane,” and “organic” products are also sent through an identical transport and slaughterhouse process as other factory farmed animals, at the same

youthful age. “Free range,” “cage free,” “certified humane,” and “organic” labels cannot satisfy the compassionate (or ethical) consumer.

For the sake of farmed animals, who suffer terribly in their artificially short lives, please do not reject red flesh in preference for poultry flesh. Please do not replace flesh with eggs or dairy products. Please do not buy animal products that try to disguise cruel exploitation behind meaningless feel-good labels such as “free range,” “cruelty free,” “organic,” and “natural.” For the sake of your own health, and for the sake of farmed animals, please eliminate (or at least reduce) your consumption of animal products.

FEMINISM AND ANIMAL LIBERATION

Cows, sows, and hens are exploited in our food industry *because* they are females—because they produce young, provide nursing milk, and ovulate. Because of their female biology, cows, sows, chickens, and turkeys endure longer periods of time in more rigid confinement than other factory farmed animals. Because of their sex, cows, sows, chickens, and turkeys are manipulated and exploited from motherless infancy to premature death, through a host of forced pregnancies and stolen offspring.

Controlling reproduction is central to patriarchy. Just as cows, sows, and hens “are oppressed specifically so that their reproductive organs can be exploited,” many people recognize “that the original point of patriarchy was to control the reproductive systems of women” (“Sexism”). Females—sows, cows, hens, women, and girls—suffer under patriarchy. We suffer because of our sex; our female bodies are exploited by and for men who hold power. If *we* detest and try to prevent male control over *our* bodies—how can we turn away from these much more helpless, and much more cruelly exploited fellow females, let alone contribute to their suffering and premature deaths?

Perhaps these domesticated, servile cows, sows, and hens are far too much like women and girls to be worthy of respect or concern in our patriarchal society: Cows, sows, chickens, and turkeys provide men with what they desire, are never as intelligent or strong as their oppressors, and are completely unable to bring about their own liberation. Men and women alike—even some animal activists—exhibit “culturally conditioned indifference toward, and prejudice against, creatures whose lives appear too slavishly, too boringly, too stupidly female, too ‘cowlike’” to be worthy of our concern (Davis 197). Human beings are much more likely to speak up on behalf of killer whales and tigers—animals associated with freedom, strength, independence (manly attributes)—than for the billions of females

whom *we* exploit when we buy dairy, eggs, and flesh. What will bring us to care about the much maligned and neglected individuals who have been “bred to docility, tractability, stupidity, and dependency” to provide us with milk, eggs, and flesh (Davis 201)?

Not only do we harbor patriarchal indifference to uniquely female suffering, but additionally, most of us are ignorant of the horrible cruelty inherent in factory farming. It is easy to buy a bucket of chicken or a carton of vanilla yogurt *without even knowing* about the females whose sad lives lie behind these unnecessary products. It is easy to forget that mozzarella and cream come from a mother’s munificence—mothers who would have desperately preferred to tend their young, and to live out their lives with a measure of freedom and comfort—or not to be born at all. Most consumers are unaware of the ongoing, intense suffering and billions of premature deaths that lurk behind mayonnaise and cream, cold cuts and egg sandwiches.

Even with the onset of contemporary animal advocacy, and the unavailability of at least some knowledge of what goes on in slaughterhouses and on factory farms, most of us choose to look away—even feminists. Collectively, feminists remain largely unaware of the well-documented links between the exploitation of women and girls, and the exploitation of cows, sows, and hens. Similarly, few people are aware of disturbing national and international rape statistics—especially statistics on domestic rape and our high incidences of wife battery. The abuse of women and girls is not of much concern or interest in patriarchal societies, where “female” problems are systematic.

Similarly, many feminists don’t care about the females whom *they* exploit—at least not enough to alter their diet. Most of us have grown accustomed to consuming nursing milk, reproductive eggs, and flesh; who wants to give up macaroni and cheese, or that heaping bowl of chocolate ice cream, when pretty much everyone else continues to indulge? Anyway, it is much more glamorous to protest the cruelties of Japanese whalers (cruelties caused by *other* people), or lament the suffering of the poor in Darfur (problems that exist in *other* nations)—than it is to reconsider one’s own consumption of cheddar or hamburger.

Those who *are* willing to work for change, and make changes, too often do so only for the sake of their own liberation, without much thought to the oppression of others—especially other species. Feminists lobby against sex wage discrepancies, gays fight homophobic laws, and the physically challenged demand greater access—each fighting for injustices that affect *their* lives, and/or the lives of *their* loved ones. Yet these dedicated activists usually fail to make even a slight change in their consumer choices for the sake of much more egregiously oppressed and exploited individuals. While

it is important to fight for one's own liberation, it is counterproductive (not to mention selfish and small-minded) to fight for one's own liberation while willfully continuing to oppress others who are yet lower on the rungs of hierarchy. While fighting for liberation, it makes no sense for feminists to trample on gays, for gays to trample on the physically challenged, or for the physically challenged to trample on feminists. It also makes no sense for any of these social justice activists to willfully exploit factory farmed animals. Can we not *at least* avoid exploiting and dominating others while working for our personal liberation? Those who seek greater justice—whatever their cause—must make consumer choices that diminish the cruel exploitation of others. As a matter of consistency and solidarity, social justice activists must reject dairy products, eggs, and flesh.

There is no other industry as cruel and oppressive as factory farming. With regard to numbers affected, extent and length of suffering, and numbers of premature deaths, no other industry can even approach factory farming. Billions of individuals are exploited from genetically engineered birth, through excruciating confinement, to conveyor belt dismemberment. Consequently, there is no industry more appropriate for social justice activists to boycott. Even if we aren't prepared to take a public stand, or take on another cause, we must at least make a private commitment on behalf of cows, pigs, and hens by leaving animal products on the shelf at the grocery store.

WOMEN AND ANIMAL ADVOCACY

While it is one thing to strive for a cause that fundamentally and primarily benefits *you*—your freedom and equality (or the freedom and equality of those you know and care about), or for your environment (on which you depend for survival)—it is quite another matter to struggle on behalf of a cause that does *not* benefit you directly. As social justice activists, we must remember how ardently we wish that those in power would help bring change. The oppressed wish that those in power could empathize enough to understand the wrongness of what is happening, and how much *they* would need and appreciate the active participation of those in power to bring about a measure of justice. With regard to farmed animals, we are the ones who are in power. We are the ones who have the power to change our consumer habits. We are the ones who either put our money down for their lives, or boycott animal products.

Historically, feminists have set the stage for a more expansive activism, for an ethic that reaches beyond one's immediate, personal gains. Feminists have often taken on other social justice causes. For example, Irish-born

Francis Cobbe (1822–1904), an early British suffragette who was denied a formal education, worked for social justice on many fronts. She struggled to curb violence against women, especially domestic violence, and advocated for improved education for girls. Cobbe identified financial dependence as a primary cause of domestic violence, and noted that transferring a woman’s property rights to a man in marriage doomed her to dependence, thereby placing women in a vulnerable position. With such unjust laws ruling marriage, Cobbe advocated for the single life. She

was obviously not concerned with men’s evaluation of her suitability as a servant for them. She was far more concerned with their unsuitability as leaders and lawmakers, and made many caustic and challenging comments about the limitations of male logic, the tyranny and injustice of male rules, and the flagrantly self-interested way men had organized society to make women available to them. (“Francis”)

Cobbe was outspoken, thoughtful, and determined—she exposed patriarchy for what it is—rule by and for men.

Inasmuch as Cobbe did not enjoy the denigration and powerlessness that came with her sex, she perhaps intuited that other individuals also preferred at least some measure of control over *their* lives. In addition to working on behalf of women and girls, Cobbe worked to reform poor laws, and to change animal experimentation. In her meticulous book, *Vivisection in America* (1890), Cobbe detailed the realities of animal experimentation in the United States, advocating for an end to vivisection. She catalogued species used for experimentation, the numbers of creatures involved, and noted how these victims of science were exploited. After informing readers of the horrors performed behind closed doors in the name of science, she challenged people to reflect on their understanding of morality, and asked that readers help abolish such injustice:

[W]hether the practice be useful or useless, we ask you to reflect whether it be morally lawful—(not to speak of humane, or generous, or manly)—to seek to relieve our own pains at the cost of such unutterable anguish as has been already inflicted on unoffending creatures in the name of Science? You now know, to a certain extent, what it is that the advocates of vivisection really mean when they ask you to endow “Research.” Will you—bearing their experiments in mind—pay them to repeat such cruelties? (Cobbe)

Francis Cobbe stands out amid social activists of her day because she not only worked for her own liberation, but also for the liberation of the poor

and for the liberation of nonhuman animals. She was sensitive to those who were yet more devalued than women and girls; she noticed that nonhuman animals were among the most needy and downtrodden. In 1875, she founded the world's first organization fighting animal experimentation, the Society for the Protection of Animals Liable to Vivisection (SPALV); in 1898 she founded the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection (BUAV). More than a century later, both groups continue to fight vivisection.

Similarly, Caroline White (1833–1916) advocated for an array of social justice causes. She objected to slavery, was an advocate for children, and in 1883 founded the American Anti-Vivisection Society (AAVS) to fight the exploitation of nonhuman animals in education, research, and product testing. AAVS was the first organization to challenge powerful, privileged U.S. animal experimenters in a court of law on cruelty charges. White also started a congressional investigation of “livestock” transportation in railroad cars. Her efforts led to legislation requiring railroad workers to feed and water farmed animals in transport at least every twenty-eight hours.

Francis Cobbe and Caroline White were forerunners in a long line of contemporary women working on behalf of nonhuman animals, many of whom simultaneously took on other social justice causes. Increasingly, women have turned their energy toward the selfless but desperate cause of nonhuman animals in disproportionate numbers. Animal advocates are *overwhelmingly* female (in contrast with the environmental movement, for example, which is *overwhelmingly* male).

Given this demography, it is surprising how few contemporary feminists understand the many ways in which patriarchy undergirds both the oppression of women and the oppression of nonhuman animals. While contemporary authors such as Carol Adams, Greta Gaard, and Marti Kheel continue to expose these oppressions as interlocking, feminists and animal advocates rarely recognize one another as essential allies. When feminists and animal advocates recognize that they are on the same side, they will each markedly increase their strength, their power, and their chances of bringing about meaningful and lasting change.

AUTHORS AND ESSAYS

This anthology of essays written by women highlights diversity within a vibrant and growing animal advocacy movement. Authors in this anthology come from different nations, different races, different age groups, and different focuses; they are educators, writers, researchers, musicians, undercover investigators, artists, scholars, lawyers, and ministers working on behalf of

wild animals, animals confined in laboratories, farmed animals, or homeless companion animals. They speak of the beauty and suffering of pigs, dogs, fish, cats, cattle, chickens, primates, seals, lobsters, and bears. They live and work in Malaysia, Singapore, the United States, Lebanon, India, Canada, and Australia—including Indian, Lebanese, Malaysian, American, African-American, and Latino activists—and they each share a strong commitment to animal activism.

It is interesting to note that only a few authors in this anthology mention partners or families, and when they do, mention is made only in passing. Such references are buried somewhere in the middle of a narrative that is focused on the lives of pigs on factory farms, stray dogs, or chimpanzees. In more than one instance, I needed to ask authors to “say a little more” about a partner or child who seemed to drop out of the sky between rallies and rescues, three quarters of the way through a narrative—a side-issue in their central story of suffering and need and activism. Contributors were invariably focused beyond their immediate family—on the bigger picture, rather than the insular life of the home. On reflection, this seems profoundly healthy. For these women, their greatest contribution to the next generation is working toward greater justice.

Most authors in *Speaking Up for Animals* are activists; they are not accustomed to writing essays for anthologies. They graciously squeezed in a little writing between rescuing a flock of hens, investigating a new tip from an informant, or traveling abroad for an extended tour of education and outreach. Some authors know English only as a second (or third) language. Consequently, authors frequently submitted a rough draft and allowed me to finish their work while they flew across continents to plead on behalf of cattle, or rushed to the defense of circus elephants. Using e-mail and Track Changes, working together, we turned their understanding, experience, and knowledge into the chapters of this anthology.

PART I: PONDERING WHAT I PUT IN MY MOUTH

Dana Medoro admits that she came to animal liberation “in a rather slow and awkward way.” She remembers learning how factory farmers trap sows in gestation crates, and how, in response to this new information, she “wailed inarticulately all the way home.” She writes, “I knew the industry was bad, but I didn’t know it was *that* bad.” Ultimately, Medoro took up action on behalf of factory farmed pigs, joining a weekend protest that revolved around a life-sized, papier-mâché sow. Her journey through ignorance and

lamentation to outreach led her into unexplored areas of communication that are foundational to advocacy, and Medoro ponders which methods of activism worked, which didn't, and why. As an animal activist explaining the truths of animal exploitation, she notes that it is "important to be dexterous when advocating for animals because it's difficult for people to absorb the shock." She adds, "I understand the resistance—as someone who really did shuffle, all stiffly and sideways, sort of like a crab, toward the cause of helping animals, and I would hate to be told that I arrived too late or that I didn't do enough."

Pioneer of "Open Rescue," **Patty Mark** risks personal safety and freedom on behalf of nonhuman animals. She and a handful of fellow activists enter a factory farm in the wee hours of the morning and "steal" some gravely ill and dying hens—and they videotape their crime. They hand the evidence over to the media, and their illegal rescue is broadcast to the general public, exposing the horrors of factory farming to citizens relaxing in soft chairs after a hard day at work . . . and simultaneously exposing their own "illegal" acts. Activism is often risky business—as it always is to expose the truths of economic powers—but Mark is compelled to carry on, "Chickens have captured the minds and hearts of our rescue teams," she notes. "Their intelligent and amiable personalities are largely unknown among humans. Chickens are wonderful beings."

Dressed in black and armed with flashlights, thirteen-year-old **Kymberlie Adams Matthews** and her sister crept out of their house in rural New York under cover of darkness to see what lurked in their neighbor's long sheds. That dark night, Adams Matthews unwittingly gained her first glimpse of a poultry farm, "Hundreds of thousands of hens were crowded together in small, decrepit wire cages. Dead hens scattered the floor." Leaving the hens to their fate, the girls fled in terror. But Adams Matthews returned as an adult, and her essay carries us to twelve tornado-damaged battery sheds in Ohio Valley, "Topsy-turvy cages, mangled limbs, loose feathers everywhere. Squacks and screeches and fading peeps told of the suffering." Adams Matthews shares a fundamental truth of animal advocacy, "It's brutal. It's unfair. But it's true: There will always be those I cannot save."

In 2005, **Lorri Houston** (previously Bauston, cofounder of Farm Sanctuary in 1986), founded Animal Acres, a 26-acre farm outside of Los Angeles. At her new sanctuary, Houston continues the same work she has done for the past twenty-five years—lobbying for change and rescuing farmed animals, and exposing the grizzly, hidden realities of factory farming. Rescued residents of Animal Acres—like Henny the hen and Colin the goat—speak for themselves, touching the lives of thousands of visitors

each year. Houston comments that “sanctuaries provide a positive way for the public to learn that farmed animals are friends, not food.” With their winsome personalities, residents at Animal Acres remind visitors of what they were told when they were children: Be careful what you put in your mouth.

Gail A. Eisnitz wanted to help nonhuman animals, but no one would hire her. She took whatever animal advocacy job she could find, and created jobs where there weren’t any. When she landed a job as an investigator for the Humane Farming Association, Eisnitz “traveled from slaughterhouse to slaughterhouse collecting eyeballs and bladders from veal calves,” exposing toxic drugs sold to unsuspecting citizens in supermarkets. She also spent “five years crisscrossing the country documenting the routine dragging, strangling, skinning, scalding, and dismembering of fully conscious animals at essentially every slaughterhouse” she visited. Her work ultimately gained national attention, and she is now widely known and highly esteemed for her courageous, hard-hitting publication, *Slaughterhouse*.

Artist **Sue Coe** remembers raiding school laboratories to rescue mice and guinea pigs with a gang of other young activists. She also remembers the screaming that came from inside a slaughterhouse near her childhood home. Coe, now an internationally acclaimed artist, still sees and hears sorrow in her community; she describes the sad lives of cows and calves on the dairy farm next to her home, “Profit over life. The crime is economics,” and we are “trained to keep quiet.” Coe has no intention of keeping quiet—though she may not utter a word. The “apex of Western civilization is the art of denial,” Coe writes. She has fostered the art of exposing truth. Coe records and documents the atrocities of factory farms on canvas, re-representing “to the viewer’s eye” that which has too long been hidden.

At 35, **Linda McDaniel** “felt God’s call to the ordained ministry.” Gifted with “a special sensitivity for all life forms,” McDaniel brought fresh eyes to the Bible, critically exploring scriptural accounts of God’s relationship with nonhumans, visions of the Peaceable Kingdom, the concept of “soul,” and writings on salvation. McDaniel brings scripture to bear on the problems of factory farming: Environmental destruction, exploitation of poor farmers, harm to human health, and the ungodly exploitation of sentient beings. She writes, “Christ intends the Church, led by the Spirit, to work to bring people and animals into one community. God is reshaping me in this new and different ministry to lead a skeptical Church to a broader understanding of God’s plan for creation.”

Heather Moore is a freelance writer, working on a home computer with one firm goal: helping nonhuman animals. Moore’s essay “The Fiercest

Predators of the Sea,” exemplifies freelance activism. Her essay highlights the sentience, social structure, and individual personalities of lobsters and octopuses—as well as the cruelty that is inherent in both our fisheries and our kitchens. Her entertaining and informative essay stands as testimony to the effectiveness of writing as a form of animal advocacy.

PART II: WORKING FOR WILDLIFE

Sue Pemberton rescues and rehabilitates pinnipeds. She introduces us to Coneely, a premature harbor seal who was born six weeks before due date; Anniversary, a bulbous sea lion who arrived comatose at the rescue center; and D-Day, a teenaged California sea lion who showed up on Pier 39 weighing a whopping 400 pounds and sporting a twelve-inch fishing flasher. When 58,000 gallons of bunker fuel spilled into San Francisco Bay, Pemberton rescued gooey birds who were visibly “stunned and in shock.” Despite the obvious importance of her rescue efforts, she was told to “stop or face arrest” for working around bunker fuel, labeled a hazardous substance. “That was quite possibly the dumbest reason I had ever heard, in a life or death situation, to stop rescue efforts,” she comments. Pemberton, prepared to “ruffle some feathers” and face arrest, notes that advocacy is the least we can do “to reverse a little bit of our careless damage.”

Like many authors in this anthology, **Phaik Kee Lim** vividly remembers commonplace animal abuse from her childhood, and her helplessness in the face of ongoing animal suffering. She turned these bleak memories to good cause, and has worked with Friends of the Earth Malaysia for more than twenty-five years, working behind the scenes with pen in hand to improve the plight of nonhuman animals. Lim explains how a few skillfully placed strokes of ink, when combined with a will to bring change, can push powerful officials to enforce laws on behalf of critically endangered animals such as African chimpanzees and Indonesian orangutans. Lim notes that even those with few resources “can speak up or write letters to encourage change.”

Deborah D. Misotti was lost after the death of her sons . . . then she sang with a gibbon. Founder of a Florida primate sanctuary (Talkin’ Monkeys Project, Inc.), Misotti is painfully aware that gibbons in captivity are denied the most simple and seemingly inalienable rights, such as the right to travel across a forest canopy by swinging from their long arms, and the right to communicate with others of their kind by lifting their beautiful voices in song. At Talkin’ Monkeys, Misotti provides life-long care for nonhuman primates who have been rescued from unfortunate situations under the

grip of capitalistic human exploitation, whether through trade in “exotic pets,” research laboratories, or breeding facilities. By reaching out to others in need—in this case a gibbon named Webster—Misotti heals alongside other primates at the Talkin’ Monkeys sanctuary.

Lynette Shanley abandoned a well-paying, mainstream job in order to search for a more meaningful life. She volunteered at a local hospital and soon brought home Marcus, a cat who taught her something of the world beyond humanity. She began rescuing cats and joined various animal advocacy groups, but Shanley found that she worked best alone and subsequently founded two nonprofits, one for wildcats and one for primates. Over the course of her work, Shanley illegally enters primate quarters, exposes and shuts down zoos, lobbies to change public school practices, and pushes for stronger laws regulating trade in “exotic pets.” She reminds advocates that patience is critical to success, and demonstrates how saving nonhuman animals is a healing experience that can simultaneously save one’s own life.

As a child, **Amy Corrigan** saved worms from the sidewalk, nurtured a passel of soft and fluffy toy animals ... and chewed on cow flesh for dinner. But when she came upon vivid posters depicting animal exploitation—cats “with electrodes screwed into their brains, ... a live fox being torn limb from limb by hounds; a sheep having her throat cut with a look of absolute terror in her eyes”—her fate was sealed. As a young adult Corrigan headed for Thailand, where she rehabilitated a slow loris, shared an elephant’s final moments, rescued sun bears, and raised baby gibbons. These experiences, and her determination to bring change, have led her to continue the tradition of educating passersby with posters and leaflets, with one major difference—she hands her literature to people in Singapore. She writes, “The most important decision I have made in my work with nonhuman animals was the decision to move to Southeast Asia, to be part of an animal welfare movement still in its infancy.”

PART III: POTPOURRI—FROM DANCING BEARS TO UNDERCOVER INVESTIGATION

“Sometimes in life, you cross paths with people who inspire you, touch your soul, and leave you changed forever. This happened to me when I met Ingrid Newkirk, the founder of PETA.” In her work for PETA India, **Anuradha Sawhney** apprehends aggressive *madaris* who illegally force bears to dance in the streets, and when possible, relocates these beleaguered bears to

sanctuaries. She also rescues animals who have been exploited and damaged by scientists, transporting these unfortunate victims to a life of peace and well-being in one of India's animal sanctuaries. Sawhney also educates the public about animal suffering and human health concerns associated with a diet rich in animal products. Sawhney reflects on years of activism, "this was the job I had always wanted, but until I joined PETA India I had not known that it was possible to work for animals as a career."

Kris "Risa" Candour was a vegetarian at sixteen and a vegan two years later, and she turned school presentations and paper assignments into activism and into educational activities for teachers and classmates. In college, she protested circuses, fur shops, vivisection, rodeos, joined the Primate Freedom Tour, and protested with "die-hard" British activists during a semester abroad. As an African American, Candour is intimately "aware of racism and its subtle manifestations as prejudice." Her mother taught her to handle race oppression with "refined defiance," an approach that also came in handy for animal advocacy. As a graduate student, she was ready to cofound her own organization, Justice for All Species (JAS), connecting animal advocacy with other social justice movements—most notably racial equality. As "a minority in a minority movement" Candour advises animal advocates to "recognize ways that we might improve, especially concerning how we relate to and take care of one another."

Animal advocacy is never easy, but it is even more difficult in the midst of war. **Joelle El-Massih**, a founding member of Lebanon's Beirut for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (BETA), stresses the close bonds she formed with other activists, and writes with tenderness of the dogs she protects from a world saturated with violence, indifference, and unending need. Despite the challenges that lie before her, El-Massih faces down Hezbollah to feed, water, and transport some of war's most innocent victims and works to educate locals on the subject of spay-neuter and heightened compassion. But animal advocacy is a hard sell in a land so long torn by violence, a nation where food is sometimes scarce among human beings.

Psychologist and ecologist **Gay Bradshaw** remembers when she struggled to balance her "personal life of feeling" with "the professional world of the mind." As a scientist she tiptoed around affection and caring for the sake of reason and research until she came to see that life as a conventional scientist was stifling vital aspects of her humanity. She simultaneously came to understand that this stunted approach "was not serving animals." A pioneer in interspecies trauma studies, Bradshaw's research explores symptoms of trauma shared by children, women, political prisoners, elephants, chimpanzees, and parrots. She writes, the "animal rights movement is about

coming to our senses, about understanding the subtle connections that link the horror of dolphin hunts with the sensation of Sea World and a seafood dinner.” Her essay—and her research—expose crucial connections between nonhuman animals and the human animal that continue to help a reluctant humanity to come to its senses.

The final essay, written by **Michele Rokke**, carries us from a Minnesota farming community to the mysterious world of undercover investigations. Working for People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), Rokke spent nine months undercover in a notorious research facility, Huntingdon Life Sciences (HLS). As a result, Rokke attests “unequivocally that animal testing is a fraudulent system, designed to garner profits.” She describes forays into enemy territory—HLS—as “Agent Nerd,” disguised behind ridiculous glasses and large hats that concealed a hidden camera and recorder, wearing “an enormous bra, loaded with equipment packed in a lot of socks.” She quips, “I never had so many people, men and women, check me out.” While Rokke reveals an indomitable sense of humor, she admits to having “untold scenes of suffering freeze-framed in my mind There is no such thing as a ‘worst case of cruelty’—they are all the worst.”

TAKING ACTION

Unlike most of us, activists who submitted essays for this anthology have seen farmed animals in unconscionable confinement. They have stood amid the unbearable pain of animal experimentation, tried to catch companion animals abandoned in war zones, and worked with demoralized animal individuals who have been kidnapped from their homes to entertain an easily bored humanity. They have seen firsthand how human ignorance, indifference, and corporate greed affect nonhuman animals. As a consequence, they work to bring change. I hope that their essays will help readers to better understand the atrocities that we collectively cause nonhuman animals, and will allow readers to see our complicity in animal suffering. This book features many ways that we can help alleviate this ongoing, egregious animal exploitation, and I hope that readers will be inspired to get involved.

My hope is that readers will support the animal advocacy organizations represented in this anthology (most of which can be found online), and/or a local organization, such as a spay-neuter van operating in your area. As you read these stories, please choose from among the many organizations represented in this anthology and send a donation. (Proceeds from this book will be returned to animal advocacy as well.) Animal advocates—

social justice causes in general—*always* (desperately) need donations *and* volunteers ... and almost always have job openings. Battered-women's shelters and spay-neuter clinics alike depend on volunteers to help with letter campaigns, protests, and educational activities. They cannot function without our support and assistance.

I also hope that this anthology elucidates shared concerns among feminists and animal advocates, and stands as testimony to the importance of women to the animal liberation, animal rights, and animal welfare movements. I hope that readers will come to better understand the many links that connect different forms of oppression—that connect social justice activists working for seemingly different causes—and the important contribution that women have made, and continue to make, on behalf of such causes. Indeed, the same patriarchy that oppresses women oppresses nonhuman animals. Farmed animals and “housewives,” “lab” animals and prostitutes, dancing bears and girls in the sex trade—all have too long been exploited by the same patriarchal hierarchy wherein the comparatively weak are exploited for the benefit of the powerful.

Those who are aware of history, of patriarchy, and of the feminist movement tend to understand how difficult it is—and how important—for people to rethink basic behaviors in order to bring about deep and lasting change. We must rethink how we speak, how we spend our time, and what we consume. This is as true for fighting sexism as it is for fighting speciesism—or any other form of domination, exploitation, and oppression. We must change *our* lives first, and most fundamentally. I hope that readers working to improve the lives of girls and women, on reading these essays, will realize that they can and must choose not to continue to exploit nonhuman animals while working to liberate girls and women. I hope that feminist readers who do not already understand the links between sexism and speciesism will come to see that feminists must also speak up on behalf of nonhuman animals.

Oppressions are linked. We cannot free human beings without freeing cows, sows, and hens along with women and men who are systematically oppressed by those in power. Rather than seek to fight our way up the patriarchal ladder, those working for social justice need to dismantle hierarchies, and cease to exploit *all* those who are less powerful—even if we must give up a few culinary favorites in the process. (Those who have taken up a plant-based diet for any measure of time never want for fabulous foods. From my experience, people who discover the vast array of wonderful plant-based foods that are readily available in most of our communities never look back.) Each of us decides, over the course of our daily lives,

whether we will ignore the suffering of nonhuman animals who are caught in laboratories, veal crates, circuses, and slaughterhouses, or choose to invest in compassionate, healthy alternatives. I hope that readers will rethink their consumer choices, monies that have long been offered at the expense of nonhuman animals—overwhelmingly female and exploited *because* of their female biology. *We* choose where our money goes, and in the process, we choose whether to boycott cruelty and support change, or melt ambiguously back into the masses.

Activists such as those represented in this anthology can only point the way; they cannot change the world all by themselves. The rest of us must also take action, and we must first make the necessary changes in our daily lives. *You* ultimately decide, every day, whether or not your life will speak on behalf of the oppressed, or remain an inaudible but decisive tool for the status quo. The women in this anthology each made their decision, now you must make yours.

NOTE

1. Information on factory farming is from VIVA! USA (<http://www.vivausa.org/visualmedia/index.html>) (or VIVA! in the UK), HSUS (<http://video.hsus.org/>), PCRM (<http://www.pcrm.org/resources/>), Farm Sanctuary (<http://www.farmsanctuary.org/mediacenter/videos.html>), PETA (<http://www.petatv.com/>), and Vegan Outreach (<http://www.veganoutreach.org/whyvegan/animals.html>).

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