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Toward a Vegan Feminist Theory of the State

Corey Wrenn

Consumption is the lynchpin of capitalist relations. For this reason, women and other animals, who are systematically packaged as consumable objects to be bought and sold in marketplaces, are particularly vulnerable. Consumption is a practice that necessitates inequality: some will consume, and some will *be* consumed. It is a demonstration of control over others.

In her seminal work, *The Sexual Politics of Meat*, Carol J. Adams (1990, 26) writes of anthroparchy¹ and material relations: “People with power have always eaten meat.” In a capitalist system, power is concentrated through the exploitation of vulnerable groups, and this vulnerability is exemplified in “meat.”² “Meat” in this context refers not only to the butchered flesh of Non-human Animals but also the fragmented flesh of human women. In both cases, it holds true that, “consumption is the fulfillment of oppression” and “the annihilation of will” (Adams 1990, 47). Power rests on the consumption of feminized bodies, human and nonhuman alike.

Power is thus defined by access to and control over the feminine, but as this chapter will demonstrate, it is *made possible* by this feminine exploitation as well. Vegan feminism expands traditional analyses of power and identifies an intersection between systemic violence against women and other animals (Adams and Gruen 2014; Kemmerer 2011). It necessitates a

conscious acknowledgement of both sexism and speciesism in any class analysis or theory of the state. Patriarchy, anthroparchy, and capitalism are systems that perpetuate the oppression of many for the benefit of few. Within the confines of these interlocking oppressions, consumption is fetishized, and feminized bodies are systemically made vulnerable to interpersonal and institutional violence. Society, in other words, is structured to disadvantage and hurt women and other animals in the process of extracting value and privilege from them. Females are made into “meat” (the commodified and butchered bodies of the feminized), and the making and selling of “meat” is a primary function of capitalism.

This chapter will examine how the female body gets caught in this grind, specifically building on Marxist critique to incorporate a vegan-centric ecofeminist analysis. Traditional approaches most often take a gender-neutral or species-neutral approach, which inappropriately conflates the privileged human male experience as the universal experience. As will be demonstrated, an intersectional lens unveils a system of oppression that is anything but even or universal in its effect. Only through an examination of the suffering of those who are generally made invisible in the narrative can the true mechanics of the system be revealed.

MISOGYNISTIC SCRIPTS

It is useful to clarify that sex and gender are distinct categories, and gender, not sex, is typically the primary focus of feminist critique. Gender refers to the socially constructed expectations ascribed to individuals based on their biological sex. In Western culture, masculinity is a performance of domination, while femininity is a performance of subordination. Thus, any force or entity of domination, control, and violent power can be said to be masculinized, whereas any display or entity of subordination, powerlessness, or vulnerability can be said to be feminized. Importantly, anything and anybody that exhibits feminine gender role characteristics can be considered feminized. Women are feminized, nature is feminized, Nonhuman Animals are feminized, and even proletariats in the Marxian sense are feminized. Femininity is defined by its powerlessness in relationship to masculinity, which in turn is defined by its domination of the feminine. The entire capitalist system in this sense is a patriarchal one, as Nonhuman Animals, women, and exploited workers are all feminized through subordination.

In the anthroparchal-patriarchal capitalist system,³ Adams (1996) suggests that feminized bodies are both literally and figuratively butchered to facilitate their oppression in a culture of consumption. Among human women, dozens of misogynistic words are regularly employed in the English language (Lakoff 2004), and women are heavily sexually objectified across

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all mass media (Collins 2011). Both linguistically and figuratively, women are fragmented as legs, breasts, and bottoms; they become a collection of parts and orifices. In such a system, women's bodies are for sale, and the language lands the sale. This may be relevant from an ecosocialist perspective, which acknowledges a societal hyperfocus on production and capital accumulation that is detrimental to the natural world (Löwy 2015), as well as an ecofeminist perspective (which more specifically focuses on gendered exploitation in the natural world) (Adams and Gruen 2014). Like women, Nonhuman Animals are objectified, butchered, otherized, and offered for consumption. Making "meat" is a profitable endeavor.

By way of an example, I pass a small New Jersey restaurant known as Cluck-U Chicken on the way home from work each evening. Located on a major intersection in town, Cluck-U specializes in "fried chicken" and "chicken wing" products. Its mascot is both highly masculinized and humanized with an exaggerated chest and bulging biceps. Advertising materials include cartoons depicting him as "Chicken Man" or "Super Chicken" in the style of popular comic superheroes. Although the chickens bought, sold, and eaten here are predominantly female-bodied, this mascot speaks instead to a perceived male consumer. The relationship here is highly gendered. Males consume, while non-males are consumed; males fuck, while non-males are fucked. Although the eatery's mascot is a chicken in a college basketball uniform (insinuating that "Cluck-U" could be short for "Cluck University"), the double entendre is clear. "Cluck-U" reads similarly to "fuck you," a common expression of aggressive derogation and sexualized depredation among English speakers. This meaning is in all likelihood intentional, as Cluck-U's branding is meant to be interpreted in the context of consuming the feminized body parts of dead chickens. This is a man's marketplace.

In addition to the connotations conjured by Cluck-U's name and mascot, its slogan, "It's an addiction," further exemplifies the masculinization of capitalism. Consumption is framed as sexualized, insatiable, and *uncontrollable*. Men just cannot help but to use women and eat other animals. To be sure, capitalists willfully nurture this addiction. Cluck-U is only one example of many. Addiction ensures continued consumption (it also keeps the citizenry in a state of powerlessness and dependency) (Schaeff 1987).⁴ Arousal addiction is also thought to disempower and depoliticize, especially so for targeted male consumers (Zimbardo and Coulombe 2012). Addiction terminology surfaces in the context of other gendered relationships of consumption, specifically in men's narratives of rape or pornography use. Framing male violence as "uncontrollable" ideologically masks the fact that it is actually agential and deliberate (Adams 1996).

Misogyny, in other words, becomes a script of oppression in a capitalist system. Gender is difference, and difference is conjured to stimulate

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market growth. For instance, advertisers carefully craft particular foods as feminine or masculine in hopes of increasing sales (Parkin 2004). This advertising is so thoroughly effective that a physiological reaction can be cued in consumers based on their gender identification (research demonstrates that men's esophagi will dilate at the mention of steak and women's to the mention of salad). This capitalist-driven psychology ensures that Non-human Animal products remain firmly in the privileged realm of masculinity, securing their profitability in the androcentric (male-oriented) marketplace. Consumers learn a sexist script that translates across anthroparchal, patriarchal, and capitalist systems. Men are positioned as privileged consumers and free agents with interests to speak of in the marketplace, while women and other animals are simply traded goods in that marketplace. They are objects of resource and highly vulnerable in an economy that relies on their relative powerlessness.

CAPITALISM AS AN AFFRONT TO NATURE

Patriarchy and capitalism are inherently linked as they are both hierarchical systems of domination that rely on force and control in their maintenance and growth. In the simplest sense, capitalism relies on class oppression, whereas patriarchy relies on gender oppression. Oppression in both systems is the logic of production. What it means to occupy a particular class or gender will more or less depend on the inclinations of elites occupying the top levels of the social hierarchy. Feminist theory, however, specifically identifies gender as the basic qualifier in the formation and maintenance of social stratification (Marxist analysis instead envisions a relatively genderless class framework). That is, feminism suggests that all systems of oppression (speciesism and capitalism included) are fundamentally products of a more ancient form of sexism. With imperfect research implements and cloudy or adulterated historical record, it is difficult to determine which oppression takes precedence in the larger history of humanity's evolution, be it sexism, speciesism, classism, or something else entirely. Perhaps they are best understood as interlocking systems. The script of misogyny does, however, appear to guide speciesism and other forms of capitalist oppression in several ways. In *Toward a Feminist Theory of the State*, Catharine A. MacKinnon (1989, xi) observes that state power, under closer inspection, ultimately emerges as *male* power. Most importantly, she also identifies gender distinction as a fundamental inequality that is intentionally exploited by the state. As she explains it, "Sexuality is to feminism what work is to Marxism: that which is most one's own, yet most taken away" (1989, 3).

This mechanism was mostly lost on Marx, whose theory views women as defined by nature, not by society as are men (MacKinnon 1989, 13). It is this

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sexist underpinning (that some social inhabitants are defined by nature and are thus more subordinated than others in society) that immediately conjoins the experiences of women and other animals. This connection necessitates that a feminist critique of capitalism also acknowledges the plight of other beings excluded from the social structure narrative, those who are objectified nonpersons in the “natural world.”⁵ Just as Marx views women’s role-taking as bound to the natural (whereas men’s roles in the class system are considered more of an accident that became institutionalized), a human-centric society understands the roles of other animals as “natural.” Nonhuman Animal roles are thought a result of social Darwinism or nutritional necessity. Sociobiological explanations of this kind (the same that work against women, disabled persons, persons of color, and poor persons) form an ideology that naturalizes and normalizes socially constructed relationships. As Marx himself has emphasized, ideologies support a false consciousness; they distract and mislead economic participants from the true and actual mechanisms of oppression. The traditional Marxist understanding of work as a male behavior exacerbates the invisibility of others, as it inaccurately paints women and other animals as things of nature who are uninvolved in the creative manipulation of their environment.

Indeed, Marx’s understanding of women’s plight in the capitalist system (that capitalism is seen as an affront on the “natural” role for women in the home) is quite sexist by modern standards (MacKinnon 1989).⁶ With many women pulled into factory work in the nineteenth century, Marx suggests that woman’s absence from the home is responsible for “denaturalizing” them, a process that creates significant harms for children.⁷ This same logic appears in liberal understandings of Nonhuman Animals in the capitalist system, as evidenced in the hyperfocus on factory farming. As many activists and nonprofits will attest, the goal of the anti-speciesism movement is not necessarily to liberate Nonhuman Animals entirely, but only to return to earlier forms of oppression that are deemed to be more “natural” or “humane.” That is, the capitalist system is “denaturalizing” Nonhuman Animals: it is disrupting the “natural” order of things and the “natural” role of other animals. The emphasis is not on the exploitation of women or Nonhuman Animals, *per se*, but rather on the disruption or distortion of traditional exploitations that were idealized in an anthroparchal-patriarchal system.

What this suggests is that, if the capitalist system were to be replaced or significantly modified in some way, the prevailing social order of male rule and human supremacy would remain supported. The problem is not that women and other animals are being exploited. It is that they are being exploited in ways that challenge older, more established institutions of oppression which are perhaps romanticized as a result of their harms being more carefully concealed within the fabric of social life. The human factories of Marx’s era and the factory farms of today’s industrialized speciesism

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erode these illusions and force the consumer to confront the discomfoting realities of oppressive social relations.⁸

Certainly, the oppression of women and other animals existed outside of capitalism, but capitalism is nonetheless thought to prevent women and other animals from reaching their “true potential” as doting housewives and “happy meat.”⁹ Welfare capitalism has subsequently emerged as a means to alleviate this affront to the dignity of sentient beings. Capitalists take the lead (with state encouragement) in the support of social services and charities. In tending to the overall well-being of laborers in this way, control over the means of production need not be relinquished. Laborers thus remain especially disempowered and dependent upon the paternalistic benevolence of their employer. This also aggravates social stratification by creating a hierarchy of need among those who may or may not qualify for assistance (Esping-Andersen 2006). Though human and nonhuman welfare may be marginally improved, the logic of domination thus remains the same so long as hierarchies remain intact.

WHEN FEMINISM BUTCHERS VEGANISM

Critical feminist theories of the state are thus actively engaged in recentering gender in the socialist dialogue. The status of Nonhuman Animals, however, remains inadequately addressed. They are persons who are not readily identified as men, women, or proletariats, and this leaves their inclusion tenuous and their position highly vulnerable. Unfortunately, many of those who are married to the neoliberalized incarnation of feminism see meaningful acknowledgement of Nonhuman Animal interests (hitherto referred to as veganism) as a matter of personal choice and can seem bothered when asked to examine their own role in exploitation.¹⁰ For her part, MacKinnon (2004) fails to grant the attention warranted to the nonhuman experience given the magnitude of species-based oppression, though she does explore the relationship between human and nonhuman oppression in pornography, as evidenced in her publication on “crush” films and the failure of civil rights legislation to protect women and other animals alike.

Feminists such as MacKinnon have criticized traditional critiques of capitalism as androcentric and insensitive to the unique experiences of women, but the feminist critique itself shows itself to be hierarchical in its anthropocentrism. Indeed, much feminist theory erases the Nonhuman Animal experience entirely. If feminism is to fully acknowledge that capitalism is not a gender-neutral phenomenon, it must become species-inclusive in scope. The unpaid or underpaid labor of women undergirds capitalism, but the experience of nonhuman females is no different in this regard. Female cows labor in dairies where they undergo repeated sexual assaults,

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forced pregnancies, and separation from their children before eventually being shipped to slaughterhouses, their still adolescent bodies having become “spent” in the process. Hens are genetically manipulated and physically tortured with starvation, dehydration, and sensory deprivation to coax hundreds of eggs out of each animal until their weakened bodies, too, will be shipped to slaughterhouses. Other species such as pigs, sheeps,¹¹ horses, turkeys, dogs, and rabbits are similarly confined, assaulted, and killed by the millions as standard practice in capitalist production.

The female body is especially valued in the capitalist system, as it is the machine that creates product (such as breast milk and eggs), but also maintains the system through reproduction (in producing offspring). Sexism and social discrimination against the female body erase this great value and also cheapen its labor. In other words, while female bodies are extremely profitable and integral to the capitalist functioning, they are ideologically devalued as a means of naturalizing the oppressive conditions females endure and extorting more production for less cost. For instance, one survey estimates that American housewives on average work 94 hour weeks, which, if paid, would be worth a salary of more than \$133,000 (Woodruff 2013). Yet, housewifery is neither salaried nor especially prestigious. It is this same devaluation which applies to nonhuman labor. Each pregnancy carried by a “dairy cow,” for instance, earns her “owner” approximately \$278 in milk sales (De Vries 2006). She also provides value in carrying the pregnancy to term, birthing the calf, and becoming “meat” when she is “culled” after her reproductive abilities wane. In wider culture, however, the roles of housewives, “dairy cows,” and other feminized positions carry little prestige and might even be stigmatized.

In fact, the female body is so integral to the Nonhuman Animal industrial system that non-females are apt to destruction soon after birth in a number of different industries. In the capitalist system, value is tied to productivity, so the reproductive capacities of female-bodied animals of various species are fundamental to economic functioning, while unproductive and nonproducing bodies decrease in value to the point of worthlessness. Sick, feeble, older, and infertile bodies with low production value and little or no hope of future production value are made vulnerable to violence (Jones 2014a). For instance, male chicks in the egg industry are subject to immediate suffocation or mincing in industrial grinders, while male calves exiting the dairy industry face infanticide in the production of “veal.”¹² The same holds true for nonproducing human bodies who frequently find themselves socially ostracized and victims of institutionalized discrimination.

Vegan feminism acknowledges a speciesist economic system that is not only capitalistic but also patriarchal. Flesh consumption, for instance, is linked to strength and thus believed integral to men’s success in the capitalist system. As a “marker of nationhood, social status, and gender”

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(Cudworth 2011, 84), “meat” is the embodiment of oppressive power. Throughout history, colonizers have understood a plant-based diet to be an indicator of economic inferiority and poverty (Adams 1990). Sometimes the act of colonization itself creates this poverty, and Nonhuman Animals vanish from the colony’s diet as a consequence, as was the case with Ireland pre-independence (Wrenn, forthcoming). Subsequently, vegetarians and vegans come to represent failures in a capitalist worldview. Flesh consumption is a marker of power, and those who are less able to engage it are disproportionately women, children, persons of color, elderly persons, infirm persons, and impoverished persons. These groups all become feminized in this powerlessness; they can neither consume vulnerable bodies nor adequately contribute to a capitalist system through production.

A vegan feminist theory of the state, however, is specifically concerned with making visible the plight of Nonhuman Animals in their fueling of human economy. The invisibility of Nonhuman Animals’ oppression in the anthroparchal-patriarchal capitalist system is such that few take notice of the cows, chickens, pigs, and other animals killed to produce the “hamburgers,” sandwiches, and snacks that sustain proletariats and bourgeoisie alike, women and men alike, and labor activists and feminists alike. Little notice is given to those animals killed or displaced to facilitate both labor exploitation and sexual exploitation. As is the case with women’s oppression, the unrecognized exploitation of Nonhuman Animals makes possible the exploitation of proletariats. Just as women’s unpaid work in the home as manifest in cooking, cleaning, childcare, and elder care allows men to go forth into the public sphere to sell their labor for many hours a day, so too does the unpaid work of Nonhuman Animals in the provision of clothing, food, transportation, and supervision of the home allow the proletariat, regardless of gender, to conduct their work.

By way of an example, the industrialization of cows’ milk in the nineteenth century freed working class women to leave babies and young children in the care of others during work hours (Allen 2009). Cows’ milk also formed the basis of women’s care work in tending not just to their children but also to sick, disabled, and elderly persons who were thought to benefit from the believed high digestibility and healthfulness of milk (Boland 1906). In other words, the capitalist exploitation of male laborers relies on the exploitative domesticity of women, but human exploitation, regardless of gender (or perhaps *because of* gender), relies on the exploitation of other animals. Gender *and* species, as categories of difference, maintain the hierarchy of oppression necessary for capitalism’s functioning.

Of course, I am not the first to take notice of these intersections. Vegan socialists have been advocating for the recognition of other species in the class struggle (Nibert 2013), and vegan feminists understand that the

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oppression of Nonhuman Animals is patriarchal in nature and closely mirrors that of women (Adams 2013; Hall 2010). However, ecosocialist theory displays shortcomings similar to that of nonvegan socialism. It assumes a gender-neutral approach, which either diminishes the unique trials of the female body or incorrectly predicts a trickledown effect, whereby the liberation of the (male) proletariat will also liberate other oppressed groups such as women and other animals. This oversight has much to do with the gender identity of prominent vegan socialist theorists, who, as predominantly male-identified, generally fail to notice how misogynistic scripts order human-nonhuman relations. Sociologist Erika Cudworth (2011) has been more explicit in exploring the intersections of gender and species within the confines of capitalism. Nonhuman Animals, she insists, are gendered in the agricultural system, and the institution of human dominance itself is gendered as well.

For many sociologists of the Marxist tradition, the prevailing economic means of production is thought to determine a society's structure and stratification. In a capitalist economy reliant upon endless production and consumption, women and other animals become the raw materials and vital labor in a society already following misogynistic scripts for many centuries prior. A feminist theory of social structure becomes invalid should it stop short of Nonhuman Animals' vital role in this formula. By focusing only on women's experience, it remains individualist in scope. This individualism obscures the collective condition of oppression and serves to maintain a false consciousness.

WHERE DOES CAPITALISM GET ITS PROTEIN?

Females feed and nourish the economy in many ways. The feminization process facilitates patriarchal exploitation of many kinds of bodies regardless of sex, but it is the female body (with the understanding that there is considerable variation across biological sex characteristics) which is disproportionately exploited. Capitalism runs on females. Females produce the next generation of laborers who will toil in factories and farms, soldiers who will monger for more resources, police officers who will control unrest, and leaders who will maintain ideologies of oppression. Females also tend to the hearth. They ensure that laborers, soldiers, officers, and leaders are well fed and their heirs attended to, so that men can fully focus their efforts in the public sphere.

Women's devalued status in the capitalist system is also functionally important in regard to the role they play in consumption. Food in particular plays a key role in economic relations, though it is often overlooked in its deceptive mundanity. As early socialist feminists such as Charlotte

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Perkins Gilman attested, women restricted to the domestic sphere not only support men's ability to participate in the public sphere in caring for men's home, children, food, and clothing, but men are also supported when women become consumers of the products he creates (Allen 2009).¹³ This consumption role comes full circle when women are made responsible for food purchasing and preparation, often purchasing adulterated or poor quality foods to the extreme profit of capitalist producers (a particular issue before food safety laws took effect in the early twentieth century).

Women's individualized experience in the home is a more extreme form of individualism experienced by men in the public sphere. Within the confines of domesticity, Victorian and Edwardian feminists identified that women were quite literally isolated from outside processes and other women as potential comrades. Accessing information or mobilizing for social change became all the more difficult.¹⁴ Gilman (1911) was also insistent that women's role as cook kept her in a perpetual state of wage-slavery. It was a form of drudgery that, inefficient as it was for women themselves (women of her time spent the better part of the day busied with food preparation), served an important function in upholding androcentrism. More recent research demonstrates that women's home magazines and cookbooks further uphold anthroparchy and patriarchy in that they tend to emphasize women's place in the home and other animals' place on the dinner plate (Cudworth 2011). As such, cooking is an intensely political act.

The physical bodies of these females feed as well, nourishing capitalist functioning. Be it breast milk, eggs, or the production of edible offspring, females are the literal fodder of capitalism. As Adams (1990) identifies, Non-human Animal products for consumption can be understood as "feminized protein" in this regard. First, animal protein is frequently a product of the female reproductive system, as is true of eggs and breast milk. Second, many flesh products butchered for human consumption come from female bodies. For instance, "hamburger" and chicken "meat" derives largely from expended animals who labored in egg and dairy industries. Third, these nonvegan products, regardless of make or origin, come from Nonhuman Animal bodies that were dominated and exploited in the production process. This inevitability ensures that *all* nonvegan products are thus feminized. In this way, the capitalist system is not simply carnivorous but also patriarchal in its design.

It is not only domesticated (or *domesecrated*) Nonhuman Animals who are vulnerable in an anthroparchal-patriarchal capitalist system. Free-living animals, too, are subject to systemic oppression on a number of fronts. First, these feminized communities can be displaced, either through habitat destruction or through intentional extermination, to make way for disproportionately male-led, male-owned, and male-profitting farms, resource extraction, or other such industries. Secondly, these free-living communities

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can be harassed and subjected to a number of violent executions at the hands of “hunters” equipped with guns, traps, and high-powered crossbows. As are farm “owners” and agricultural elites, “hunters,” too, are overwhelmingly male (Luke 2007).

The institution of “hunting” is justified in a number of additional ways that work in the service of an anthroparchal-patriarchal capitalist system.¹⁵ First, it is considered a way to affordably supplement a family’s food supply. The killing of free-living Nonhuman Animals is understood, in this context, as another means for the male “breadwinner” to offer added value to the home. In the United States, where food security is tenuous for many (generally a result of the exploitative economic system and capitalism’s facilitation of poverty), the ideology of “hunting” as a matter of thriftiness or economic necessity is a popular one. In any event, it lacks empirical truth. For the most part, “hunting” is actually a rather expensive enterprise. In addition to the high license fees (state and national “game” management entities solicit many millions of dollars in revenue from licensing each year) (Anderson 2012), participants will likely need to purchase highly expensive weapons (which require regular maintenance), ammunition, camouflaged clothing, and many other crutches or advantages designed to improve their kill rate such as packaged pheromones or tree stands. Kill limits mean that the price of each corpse can be many times that of one produced in the agricultural system when the costs of licenses and equipment are considered. Participants may also need to take time off work, potentially eating into their paid employment (a particular problem for workers with part-time or precarious employment). Despite the enormous advantage given to men with high-powered rifles, camouflage, tree stands and the like, the success rate is not especially high.¹⁶ Time invested into stalking Nonhuman Animals has a much lower return than other solutions for economic supplementation. Furthermore, in those instances when a participant is successful in killing others, time must be invested in the butchering of their bodies. There is also the financial expense required to both store and preserve the flesh. Lastly, the risk is also considerable. “Hunting”-related accidents are responsible for hundreds of injuries and deaths to the participants themselves (2,891 Americans between 2002 and 2007 alone) (IHEA 2016) but also to nonparticipating citizens and nontarget Nonhuman Animals (Anderson 2012). Those who are seriously injured might be hampered in their ability to engage in paid employment. For those killed, they leave their families in an even greater compromised position.

“Hunting” is not only engaged to survive poverty under capitalism, it may also work to satiate frustrated proletariats. Ecofeminists observe that “hunting” is sometimes framed as a way for men to achieve sexual release (Kheel 1995) or “let off steam” to the benefit of wives left at home who are spared his abusive behavior (Adams 1990). Whether as a means to supplement

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income or deflect aggression, the fragility of capitalism is artificially protected through the outsourcing of costs to vulnerable feminized groups, namely free-living animals. In doing so, an additional level of oppression is implemented with “hunting.” A system reliant on male rule and economic exploitation will only compound suffering, allowing for few rational or life-affirming strategies of survival.

MOTHERHOOD AND MISSING CHILDREN

Although capitalism heavily relies on female bodies, this reality is relatively obscured from popular consciousness. The capitalist system is thus degenerated. Advertisements selling hens’ eggs or cows’ milk exemplify this phenomenon. Although hens and cows are often anthropomorphized as “girls” or “ladies,” their mother status is frequently concealed. In a typical advertisement for Bregott¹⁷ “dairy products,” a cow stands in a sunny field under a bright blue sky. The image reads “Girl Power.” On Bregott’s Instagram social media page, dozens of portraits capture these “girls” as they graze, relax, and play. Very rarely are the children of these “girls” pictured. Indeed, the invisibility of childbirth, nursing, and parenting is a consistent theme. Consider also the “Happy Cows Come from California” television campaign for Real California Cheese or Laughing Cow’s advertising imagery. These cows are shown as giggling, trivial, and carefree. These are not depictions of ideal mothers or even competent mothers. Depicting these cows as mothers would disrupt the fantasy presented to the human consumer; the presence of calves forces the viewer to acknowledge the intended purpose of cows’ breast milk. Instead, *farmers* are more frequently pictured nurturing calves when calves are visible at all. In this way, farmers are presented as caring stewards, while the bovine mothers are dematernalized as silly and immature good-time girls. Characterized as such, they are not to be taken seriously as willing participants in this seemingly harmless, live-and-let-live industry.

It is worth considering that “girl” language encourages consumers to only superficially conceptualize “dairy cows” as female. Subsequently, the audience will not be invited to acknowledge that they are actually mothers. Motherhood reminds the audience that these animals do not exist solely for the pleasure of the consumer. It is a reminder of their connectedness in complex social relationships, their responsibilities for others, their love for others, and others’ love for them. Motherhood is essential to the reproduction of the capitalist system, but it must be hidden from the public sphere lest its sentimentality interferes with business. That said, it is also true that characterizing mothers as “girls” is certainly accurate in the sense that these are immature cows who are still juveniles themselves. While bovines live

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an average of two decades, their average age at slaughter is just four or five years.¹⁸ In this way, their own childhoods are erased as well.

Chicks, too, are generally absent from egg commercials. Even in those advertisements that seek to amplify the “naturalness” of the farms from which the eggs are sourced, industry fails to depict the most natural aspect of egg production: the creation of chicks. Hens are shown frolicking in open yards, chasing bugs, and chatting away as though existing in an enclosed, childless, monogender society for the express purpose of ceaselessly producing eggs for another species to consume is the epitome of nature’s intention. It is this same seamless idyll of “natural order” that normalizes human oppression, nonhuman oppression, and, under capitalism, a number of other oppressions. “Nature” as an ideology facilitates a false consciousness that disempowers and protects the system as is. Chicks are replaced by the sterile imagery of crisp, clean white eggs that seem to appear almost by magic. The raw emotion and organic mess of egg laying and childbirth are rendered invisible in speciesist advertising, presumably so as not to spoil the consumer’s appetite. The birds’ eggs humans are invited to dine on only vaguely refer to the femaleness of the hens involved in creating them.

As with cows’ breast milk, hens’ eggs are degendered. Gendering eggs and egg production would create an awareness uncondusive to consumption. As is the function of advertising, this strange fantasy fashioned by capitalist elites is taken for granted as “normal” and “natural” by the audience. It is facilitating consumption by obscuring the unpleasanties of production. Subsequently, the absence of children goes unnoticed. Pornography also engages this approach by encouraging the viewer to consume without emotional attachment (Dines 2010). The omnivore is thus encouraged to become a “playboy,” enjoying the pleasures of nonhuman bodies with no ethical qualms and no strings attached. Like playboys who are subscribing to pornography “for the articles,” nonvegan consumers also mask the crass consumption of vulnerable bodies with narratives of admirable moral behavior (this is one reason why consumption of “organic” or “free-range” products is linked with class).¹⁹ Eating higher welfare products of speciesism is thought of as a means of treating Nonhuman Animals to a “good life,” and nonvegans are reframed as good shepherds of sustainability and community health.

The irony of erasing nonhuman mothering and childhood is especially poignant in the American “milk carton kids” affair. Missing children notices were memorably printed on milk cartons for a time in the 1980s in a campaign to locate the disappeared. When a boy went missing on his newspaper route one morning in Iowa, desperate relatives turned to their family business and began printing his image on the back of their product (99% Invisible 2015). In addition to its primary purpose of spreading awareness, the campaign’s latent function was evidenced in its ability to bond, connect,

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and repair the human community in a time of crisis. What began with one local dairy would soon spread to the cartons of competitors seeking similar altruistic recognition. The pretense of caring helps a brand to stand out, and capitalizing on missing children cases would be no exception. “Dairy cows” thus extended their maternalism beyond the baby bottles of infants and the lunchboxes of school children. Now it embraced motherless children scattered to the winds, suffering unimaginable violence at the hands of presumably male perpetrators. Historian Paul Mokrzycki-Renfro comments, “There is a sense of familial unity that I think milk helps to offer; maternal nurturance. And also being this item around which people gather” (99% Invisible 2015). Like the frantic human mothers, “dairy cows,” too, seemed to be calling the milk carton kids back to their bosom.

Of course, the nonhuman children of these milking mothers—the calves—were never themselves considered worthy of notice. *Their* abduction and *their* assault are only a matter of course. The violence that these nonhuman children endure is unsettling and is strategically hidden from view. Hundreds of dairies volunteered their services to the milk carton campaign, and their participation served as a gesture of good will, but more than a civic duty, these missing children notices also humane-washed the product. In the process, nonhuman children were further invisibilized, and the exploitation of their mothers was further romanticized.

Ultimately, the milk carton campaign was not successful in bringing missing children home, but the campaign *did* raise awareness about violence against children. That is, it brought light to male violence. As a result of this uncomfortable exposure, the campaign was deemed depressing and traumatizing; it began to foster negative responses from consumers. Humane-washing and maternalism, having been employed with the intention of selling more product, were thus subsumed by the overpowering reminder of patriarchal violence. As a result, the dairies ceased participation. Drawing attention to missing children of any species is bad for business.

MILKING THEM FOR ALL THEY’RE WORTH

Vegan feminism seeks to make visible that which is made invisible in humane-washed industry narratives, and the 2014 film release *The Herd* exemplifies a graphic attempt to enact this strategy. The film’s plot rests on the captivity and torture of several young women who are exploited for their breast milk (and one prepubescent girl who will presumably replace the older captives in maintenance of the system). Viewers are encouraged to consider how the normalized, institutional captivity and torture of female bodies is a horror show in the human context but entirely routine in the

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nonhuman context. The film subsequently bills itself as a vegan feminist project, but vegan feminist theory is not so simplistic. Indeed, the film actually presents itself as an example of important shortcomings in single-issue veganism.

Veganism, too, can be complacent in obscuring the experiences and the suffering of vulnerable groups by more privileged media producers and storytellers. Most, if not all, of the women featured in *The Herd*, for instance, appear to be white-identified. This invisibilizes the experiences of many women of color who already feel the strain of embodied institutionalized exploitation. These experiences are no fantasy of film production; what is unthinkable for privileged women is a strategy of survival for destitute women. *The Herd*, in other words, asks the audience to think critically about the female suffering involved in food production, but it fails to acknowledge how this feminized oppression is endured by nonhuman *and* human bodies. Indeed, while vegan spaces enjoy a female majority and are generally presumed inclusive, they are notoriously white- and Western-centric (Wrenn 2016). The presumably privileged location of the filmmakers likely accounts for the film's failure to acknowledge how very normalized the exploitation of breastfeeding mothers actually is within the capitalist system, regardless of species. Vulnerable groups are subject to systemic violation, which is otherwise thought a sacred or fundamental right to more privileged mothers. To have autonomy over one's own lactation and custody over one's own young is a marker of social privilege, humans included. Many poor women are pressured into adoption at incredible profit to charities and governments (Joyce 2013), or coerced into using unhealthful infant formulas at the behest of the large food corporations that produce them (Gaard 2013). Wealthier women, in the meantime, are privileged enough to purchase the breast milk of other women for their children if they so desire, and it is disproportionately poor women who will feel compelled to sell their milk to satisfy this demand.²⁰ Indeed, women of color—colonized, enslaved, or otherwise oppressed—have long acted as wet nurses to more privileged women (Joshel 1986). Today, they continue this tradition in a patriarchal capitalist system that commodifies their milk. As *The New York Times* reports: "Breast milk, that most ancient and fundamental of nourishments, is becoming an industrial commodity [. . .]" (Pollack 2015). While male-owned corporations stand to profit, vulnerable women, especially women of color, are apt to exploitation. In response to one company's attempt to target African American women in Detroit, for example, the Black Mothers Breastfeeding Association in solidarity with a number of other similar organizations penned an open letter that urged: "[. . .] African American women have been impacted traumatically by historical commodification of our bodies. Given the economic incentives, we are deeply

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concerned that women will be coerced into diverting milk that they would otherwise feed their own babies” (Green 2015).

Eggs and wombs, too, are increasingly commodified. Poor women are encouraged to “donate” eggs for a compensation of a few thousand dollars. Besides the potential psychological consequences of doing so, there are a number of physical risks involved, including an inability for donors to have their own children afterwards (Pearson 2006). The surrogacy industry is another affront to women’s well-being. While women in the United States also act as surrogates for hire, increasingly childbirth is being outsourced to developing nations, namely India, China, and the Ukraine (Twine 2015). Through this control of reproduction, patriarchy and anthroparchy thus serve similar functions in the capitalist system:

[. . .] both daughters and dairy cows were the property of males who presumed the right to force females—whether they be called wives, slaves, or livestock—to bear more or different offspring than they would otherwise choose. [. . .] both require fairly relentless preoccupation with and control of reproduction [. . .] (jones 2014b, 98)

This legacy harkens to the shared word origin of “husband” and “husbandry,” terms that imply patriarchal mastery and control over both wives and “livestock.” The commodification of female bodies is not only a vegan issue but also a feminist one.

It would be a mistake for vegan feminist theory to overlook this visceral shared experience between human and nonhuman females. Forced sex and impregnation was and *is* a lived reality for many women. As with unproductive nonhumans in speciesist institutions, women can also face neglect or death for failing to produce an heir. Henry VIII famously ordered the public execution of Anne Boleyn and several other wives for failing their duties in this regard. However, many women in India and other developing nations face disfigurement or execution in “accidental fires” and acid attacks for failing to produce adequate capital for their husbands, be it sufficient dowry, adequate servitude in the home, or the production of a male heir (Stone and James 1995).

BUYING AND SELLING BODIES

In early 2016, beachgoers in Argentina spied and captured a newborn Franciscana dolphin,²¹ pulling her from the water and releasing her to the mercy of dozens of grabbing hands hoping to use her as a photo prop. As the story went viral and made international news, audiences were horrified by the cruelty this infant endured. Outside of the normalizing confines of capitalist industry, her death was seen as tragic, and yet, there was nothing

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necessarily unexpected about her treatment. The Kimmela Center for Animal Advocacy (2016) explains:

It is difficult not to see the connection between how this young dolphin was used and what happens at the institutionalized versions known as zoos, aquariums and circuses. The only difference is that one has to pay for a ticket to gawk at, touch or ride on the animals at one of these facilities. But the psychology is the same.

As this incident demonstrates, anthroparchal-patriarchal capitalism facilitates a social structure that normalizes the exploitation of vulnerable bodies for the entertainment of those in power.

Here, again, the connection to women's struggle is strong. Prostituted women endure comparable debasement and violation, their bodies treated as commodities to be bought, sold, and used. Much of the abuse she endures (groping, hitting, or aggressive penetration) is not included in her price and is certainly not consented to. Once commodified, however, her abuse becomes institutionalized and sanctioned. The cruel violation and violence inflicted on the infant South American dolphin who passed away in a state of terror as she was passed through the hands of so many excited and entitled humans highlights how vulnerable feminized bodies of all make remain in a society where the owning and consuming of bodies is a culturally valid practice. Rates of assault, rape, and murder are high for prostituted girls and women (Moran 2013). Nonprostituted women, too, are endangered in a society that normalizes the entitlement to feminized bodies. Research demonstrates that the legalization of prostitution, for instance, creates a sharp increase in demand (Jeffreys 2008). Sex trafficking increases as a result, as does the likelihood of experiencing sexual assault for all women in the community, prostituted or not. Likewise, research also demonstrates that the arrival of slaughterhouses in a community increases the prevalence of rape against female citizens (Jacques 2015). The commodification of some female bodies, even if comprising only a particular subset of the larger population, spells danger and degradation for *all* female bodies.

Women and Nonhuman Animals are the original proletariats. They are less likely (or not likely at all) to own land or any means of production. To survive, they rely only on their labor. In many ways, however, this contract with the state (the exchange of labor for survival in society) is not consensual. As survivor of prostitution Rachel Moran (2013, 159) explains, "[. . .] choice and consent are erroneous concepts here. Their invalidity rests on the fact that woman's compliance in prostitution is a response to circumstances beyond her control, and this produces an environment which prohibits even the possibility of true consent." In other words, an extremely exploitative economic system severely reduces or even eliminates agency. It is a system that predisposes feminized bodies for entry into exploitative

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industries. Moran (2013, 183) presses us to consider that, so long as prostitution is deemed an acceptable institution in some areas of society and entry into the industry depends on one's social vulnerability, women *as a class* are oppressed in this context. "The acceptance of prostitution," she offers, "makes all women potential prostitutes in the public view [. . .]." The ideology of misogyny thus normalizes the buying and selling of bodies and degrades the status of women in general. Moran's logic can be expanded to suppose that, so long as the consumption of Nonhuman Animals is deemed acceptable, no feminized group will be safe. In a system that normalizes the exploitation, ownership, and consumption of female bodies, all manner of feminized persons are made vulnerable. Misogynistic scripts can be enacted on anyone in almost any context, so long as they are deemed legitimate in the culture.

Because so much of the work undertaken by human and nonhuman females is nonconsensual, undercompensated, and unpaid in capitalist societies, a discussion of the relationship between the capitalist system and the slave system is also warranted. Slave and capitalist systems are often conceptualized as distinct systems, with the rationalized capitalist system (boasting a supposed equality of opportunity) overtaking the irrational slave system (wherein social mobility and consent are privileges enjoyed only by the owning class). The victory of the industrialized American North over slavery in the South is one popular narrative that depicts capitalism as prevailing in the name of democracy. It is, however, a misnomer that slavery ended with abolition in the United States (Baptist 2014). Capitalism, in fact, continues to foster the systematic ownership of vulnerable groups. It *necessitates* nonconsensual use of others' bodies and labor in a number of ways. The American North profited considerably from slavery before emancipation in the 1860s. For that matter, many institutions of the North were made possible or at least viable by the original boost of wealth and labor provided by slavery. By way of an example, many prestigious northern universities such as Yale, Brown, and Harvard were launched with donations made by wealthy slave "owners" in the community (Wilder 2013). Some of the grounds were built and maintained by enslaved persons as well.

The feminist perspective understands the slave system as a patriarchal one (Wertz 1984). As a dominated group, enslaved persons can be understood as feminized. When slavery as an institution is conceptualized as inclusive of Nonhuman Animals, this gendering becomes stronger. Rarely, however, is the nonhuman experience considered in the Western or global historical narrative of progress. Millions upon millions of horses were and still are purposefully bred, broken, and driven to their deaths after years in the harness pulling humans and cargo in the name of commerce (Nibert 2013). Many whale populations were brought to the brink of extinction as millions drowned or exsanguinated at the end of a harpoon to fuel the

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lamps that lit streets and factories. Billions and billions of animal bodies were born, killed, processed, and consumed by workers of all industries. Again, these relationships are not only anthroparchal but also patriarchal, as they demonstrate male power over feminized, vulnerable nonhumans.

When the critical lens is explicitly gendered, the enslavement of female bodies becomes visible as foundational to a viable capitalist system. Slavery as a mode of production may predate the capitalist system, but it does not exist outside of it. Slavery was only absorbed and masked by ideologies of free markets and equality of opportunity. Indeed, there are more slaves toiling in today's economy than at any other point of human history, including the era of the transatlantic slave trade (U.S. Department of State 2013). Most of these slaves are girls, women, and other animals (Free the Slaves 2015).²²

INTERSEX AND GAY ANIMALS ON THE MARGINS

While this chapter has argued that the state relies extensively on the exploitation of the female body, it is important to acknowledge that other bodies, thus feminized, are also necessary for the state's function. Importantly, transfeminist theory recognizes that the "female body" in the strict biological sense is inconsistent; bodies vary tremendously across species and resist clear categorization (Noble 2012). It also recognizes that one need not possess a vulva, vagina, or cervix in order to be feminized. Recall that gender refers to role, not biology. Femininity as a category depends on subservience in relation to masculinity. In other words, anybody of any make or shape can be feminized if they are oppressed under patriarchal conditions.

Nonetheless, female bodies in possession of wombs that are capable of biological reproduction are especially prized under capitalism. Those bodies which are thought "incomplete" in this regard may be especially endangered. As with the human species, intersexuality exists among farmed animals as well at about the same rate of 1 in 2,000 (Abdel-Hameed 1971; Davis 2015). Like their human counterparts, intersex farmed animals (referred to as "free martins" by speciesist industries) are pathologized. This is evident when "farmers" speak to the difficulty in "diagnosing" this "abnormal" (read: infertile and unproductive) body type. While intersexuality cannot be prevented, the genitals of baby animals are inspected for quality assurance, and defectors are presumably destroyed. The Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service explains: "The cattelman [*sic*] can predict the reproductive value of this heifer calf at birth and save the feed and development costs if he is aware of the high probability of freemartinism" (Lyon 2007). As with male-bodied "dairy calves," male-bodied chicks, and other undesirables in the capitalist

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system, intersex animals are not deemed valuable enough to warrant nourishment and care. They are denied the right to exist.

The treatment of intersex farmed animals mirrors closely that of intersex human animals, many of whom have undergone painful and impairing, nonconsensual surgeries by medical practitioners who likewise understand the intersex body as deviant and problematic in a binary society. The intersex community has protested these “corrective” surgeries, as well as the hormonal treatments that are often administered as an act of state violence (Davis 2015). For humans and nonhumans in the capitalist system, a body that cannot produce is a body that is not valued.²³ This lack of productive value is at once a site of extreme vulnerability.

The intersex body, both human and nonhuman, disrupts a gender-based hierarchical society and is apt to state manipulation, control, and extermination. Ecofeminist patrice jones (2014b) suggests that a gendered capitalist system, so thoroughly reliant on reproduction for its sustenance and growth, also mandates a “compulsory heterosexuality” whereby homosexual or asexual animals are forced into heterosexual relationships. While much of this systemic violence is associated with the horrors of factory farms in “breeding” practices, even innocuous animal businesses engage in compulsory heterosexuality. jones (2014b, 97) explains: “Dog lovers who decry puppy mills still feel free to decide whether, when, and with whom the canines under their control will partner.” A gendered capitalist system is thus inherently exploitative of heterosexuality and the female body, but it also exists as a source of immeasurable violence and marginalization for nonconforming bodies and orientations.

FEMALE LABOR IN THE NONHUMAN ANIMAL RIGHTS INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

While the industries of capitalism hold considerable blame in the exploitation of female bodies, it is interesting that similar misogynistic mechanisms also surface in the efforts to disrupt them. A primary reason for this occurrence springs from the tendency for social movements to themselves become agents of capitalism (Chasin 2000; Smith 2007). Care, empathy, love, and even sex are vulnerable to commodification in social justice industries. As movements raise social awareness to inequalities, they also inspire new markets when emerging concerns can be monetized and activism can be bought and sold. Furthermore, gender difference and sexism lubricate market processes, and, unfortunately, this relationship does not cease to be relevant in the confines of social change spaces. As capitalism infiltrates movements, scripts of misogyny simply transfer to resource mobilization efforts. This happens in at least two ways. First, the bodies of human women are exploited to provide free or meagerly compensated labor,

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sexually or otherwise.²⁴ Adams (1996) observes that women's caregiving roles are invisibilized in anti-speciesism spaces, largely a result of a patriarchal culture that is also unacknowledged. Secondly, the bodies of feminized nonhumans (and disproportionately female-bodied nonhumans at that) are exploited without consent to the benefit of activists or organizations.

Researchers have noted that social movements fundamentally rely on gender in both emergence and outcome (Taylor 1999). This reliance has not always developed from an equitable relationship. To name just a few examples, the abolitionists of the nineteenth century (Davis 1981), the Civil Rights movement of the mid-twentieth century (Robnett 1997), and the gay liberation movement of more recent times (Chasin 2000) have documented histories of exploiting women's labor in the service of more visible male leaders. The Nonhuman Animal rights movement, too, while estimated to be 80 percent female-identified, is predominantly led by men and disproportionately celebrates male contributions (Gaarder 2011).²⁵ In the patriarchal and hierarchical structure of a corporatized social movement space, the threat to female integrity is *inherent*. More and more Nonhuman Animal rights organizations rely on female labor for efficient and economic operations. Much of this work is voluntary, while the rest is extremely underpaid (Coulter 2016).²⁶ In addition to the drudgery work relegated to women in Nonhuman Animal advocacy, women are also disproportionately engaged in emotional labor (Adams 1996; Coulter 2016; Gaarder 2011), a pattern that is especially pertinent in the affecting and psychologically taxing space of protest (Jasper 2011).

Increasingly, this exploited labor comes in the form of prostitution. That is, women are recruited to enter public spaces adorned with little or no clothing to attract passersby. This attraction is expected to translate into social, cultural, and economic capital such as notoriety, membership, or donations. While some of these prostituted women are admirably attempting to raise awareness to Nonhuman Animal suffering, it is an important distinction that these activities almost always take place within the confines of the organizational identity. Women may be holding signs featuring the organization's name or logo (sometimes the branding is as prominent as the anti-speciesist message itself), or the participants may be distributing leaflets or fliers that are heavily decorated with the organization's information. Women's bodies are thus sold on street corners to the advantage of "nonprofit" pimps. The oppression of female bodies is as much a matter of securing wealth as it is a matter of securing male privilege. Nonhuman Animals, whose bodies are pictured in this protest imagery, are also used for organizational gain in this way. They, too, are feminized, and their participation in campaigns are not consensual. Indeed, the sexist exploitation of women and other animals blend seamlessly in protest, protecting the very hierarchies of domination they were designed to dismantle.

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LIBERATORY VEGAN FEMINIST FUTURES

A vegan feminist theory of the state identifies a species-inclusive patriarchal social structure that is dependent upon hierarchy and domination. Male violence flourishes under capitalism, while powerful misogynistic ideologies naturalize or invisibilize feminized oppression. Capitalism's false promise of equality in opportunity is a privilege enjoyed only by groups in power and has little meaning for most women and other animals. Feminist scholars have suggested a reconfiguring of society in general but also the domestic sphere in particular, so that all genders can experience liberation (Allen 2009). If Nonhuman Animals are not accounted for in the feminist vision for the future, however, the scripts of misogyny will remain viable, and oppression will remain ever present. The redesigned home front would need to ensure the elimination of Nonhuman Animal products from the closets, cabinets, and dinner table. As ruling classes gain in power, their consumption of animal foods and nonhuman labor increases. The process applies to entire societies as they rise in the global system and begin to amass wealth (Sans and Combris 2015). Speciesism is as integral to upholding capitalism as is sexism, and speciesism is made possible by the same misogynistic scripts. A feminist approach to dismantling capitalism must include a vegan component, or it is rendered impotent.

Capitalism systematically exploits feminized bodies for smooth and efficient functioning. To do so, it engages class oppression, it stigmatizes and devalues disabled and intersex bodies, and it aggravates sexism and racism in human communities, in addition to the billions of nonhumans also impacted. The strength of vegan feminist theory lies in its intersectional consciousness to these processes (Kemmerer 2011). That is, it recognizes that oppression under capitalism directly impacts the life chances and well-being of various marginalized identities, human *and* nonhuman. Intersectionality theory, born of Black feminism, notes that racism, sexism, classism, and other systems exist in a matrix of domination (Collins 2003). Ecofeminist theory grounds this matrix in the larger natural environment, ensuring that Nonhuman Animals and ecosystems are included in the framework. In turn, vegan feminism emerges from this ecofeminist dialogue to distinguish species as an identity in its own right. While it acknowledges that barriers of access can make participation difficult for some, it also positions veganism as a more or less obligatory expression of political solidarity for other species. In the Marxian tradition, vegan feminists nurture an imagination for change and employ consciousness-raising as a regular tactic. This is an approach promoted by MacKinnon (1989) as well, prized for its power to subversively challenge an oppressive system.

As a juggernaut of oppression, capitalism will require collectively engaged disruption in a number of ways in addition to shared awareness. First, those with the means of doing so can discontinue the consumption of Nonhuman

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Animal products, *all* of which are sourced from a relationship of domination. This is important as a political matter, and, to a lesser extent, an economic one. Politically speaking, veganism represents solidarity with oppressed nonhumans. It sends a message of dissatisfaction with a speciesist social structure and desire for justice. Veganism educates, and it leads by example. As an economic matter, anti-speciesist consumption can also contribute to the struggle in the promotion of vegan companies. However, nonvegan industries are intensely powerful and politically protected. Vegan research does not reliably indicate that purchasing-power can significantly manipulate the structure of the food system given the immense control that industry lobbyists wield over the state (Simon 2013; Wrenn 2011, 2016). In other words, activists may be disappointed should they presume to fight capitalism with capitalism. A more sophisticated strategy will be required.

A vegan feminist theory of the state offers not only a critique of the anthroparchal-patriarchal capitalist system but also an imagination for a just future. Upturning capitalism will necessitate, at the very least, a disruption of misogynistic scripts. It will necessitate the abolition of prostitution, pornography, nonvegan food systems, and other institutions that involve the commodification and domination of feminized groups. It also requires an egalitarian approach to social justice activism, one that does not compromise women's integrity in order to "sell" concern for Nonhuman Animals. In short, a species-inclusive critique of the capitalist state will be incomplete if it remains gender-neutral in its scope.

As Kendra Coulter (2016) insists, an "inter-species solidarity" is imperative. It is the *hierarchical structure* of anthroparchy, patriarchy, and capitalism that must be dismantled. The very concepts of "gender," "species," and "class" must ultimately be questioned as these are categories known to serve hierarchies. Hierarchies are themselves social constructions and are thus vulnerable to radical change. In the socialist tradition, Gilman (1911) envisions a society where work is communally conducted, not disproportionately burdened on the lowest classes (Allen 2009). Silvia Federici (2012) also suggests that recreating the commons is one important feminist means of resisting the alienating nature of capitalism. As such, moving away from a corporatized nonprofit structure that monetizes activism to instead embrace a structure that is grassroots and community-based might be appropriate. Values that characterize nonprofitization (privatization, concentrated power, hierarchies of authority, allegiances to industry and the state, copyrighting, and controlled resources) are contrary to vegan feminist goals. The commons is community-centered, not capital-centered.

In said commons, the interests of *all* persons must be accounted for. Gilman (1911) imagined a vegetarian society²⁷ in her utopian novel *Moving the Mountain*, where "hunting," zookeeping, and even predation ceased to exist. More recently, Federici (2012, 145) continues this species-inclusive

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approach, insisting that overcoming our “state of constant denial and irresponsibility” in regard to our consumption patterns is a vital first step for reconstructing the commons. In this regard, veganism is feminist resistance. It rejects the legitimacy of powerful groups that dominate and consume less powerful groups. Veganism imagines a society grounded in respect for the autonomy and dignity of all bodies.²⁸ Subsequently, veganism may speak specifically to the plight of Nonhuman Animals, but it holds genuine implications for other feminized bodies as well. The forced domination of feminized bodies constitutes an injustice. As a consequence, veganism must be absorbed into the repertoire for change, as it explicitly acknowledges that consumption is socially constructed and, at present, hierarchical. MacKinnon (1989, 140) writes of sexual objectification, “To be sexually objectified means having a social meaning imposed on your being that defines you as to be sexually used, according to your desired uses, and then using you that way. Doing this is sex in the male system.” It is a mistake to ignore the plight of Nonhuman Animals in the context of socialist or feminist analysis. Nonhuman Animals experience sexual objectification as the designated nonhuman other; they, too, are feminized and sexually exploited by a patriarchal capitalist system.

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NOTES

1. This is a term developed by Erika Cudworth (2011) which refers to the institutionalization of human domination.

2. Language that is speciesist, sexist, or euphemistic will be placed in quotation marks to denote its contested meaning.

3. Adams (1996) refers to this as the “sex-species system.”

4. Schaefer actually understands addiction and patriarchy to be mutually supporting.

5. This term is meant to encompass urban-dwelling and domesticated animals who are often invisibilized by the natural/“man-made” binary (Noske 1989).

6. Some scholars disagree with this interpretation and instead understand Marx’s scant writings on women’s condition to be much more feminist in nature (Brown 2012).

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7. Modern sociological research demonstrates that women's employment outside of the home does not damage children and may actually advantage them (Barnett and Rivers 2004).

8. Some of Marx's writings acknowledge the capitalist exploitation and genetic manipulation of Nonhuman Animal bodies (what he describes as "disgusting") already well underway in Victorian England and Ireland (Saito 2016).

9. "Happy meat" is the colloquial term used in vegan spaces for Nonhuman Animal products that are purportedly produced in humane conditions.

10. As one common example of this response, please see the video, *Does Feminism Require Vegetarianism or Veganism?* by popular feminist project, *Everyday Feminism* (Edell 2016).

11. "Sheeps" here is used intentionally to avoid mass terms, which work to objectify other animals.

12. Information on agricultural practices is derived from fact sheets produced by nonprofits such as Farm Sanctuary.

13. While women's work plays an important function, this importance should not negate the inherent conflict to the arrangement. Given the opportunity, many women might opt for greater agency and independence in their economic condition.

14. Wives and mothers have never been universally isolated or completely powerless. As Schirmer (1989) identifies in women's collective action against institutionalized violence, motherhood can be political. Mothers may also be deeply committed to civic engagement in the public sphere, as evidenced in the influence of the National Parent-Teacher Association (Crawford and Levitt 1999). Mothers (and house-husbands/stay-at-home fathers) certainly utilize public spaces to engage in parenting and other collective behaviors, and binary notions of public and private realms can invisibilize this citizenship (Prokhovnik 1998).

15. Sociologist Gail Dines (2010) notes that pornography magazines enjoy levels of popularity comparable to "hunting" magazines and other publications themed in violence, demonstrating an important intersection of sexism and speciesism in the marketplace.

16. Only 48 percent of killers stalking deer in 2011 were successful. This number is double that of the mid-twentieth century before the industrialization of "hunting" (Dougherty 2013). The success rate for killing other "food" animals such as turkeys is much lower (Prettyman 2010).

17. Bregott is a Swedish dairy company.

18. Information on agricultural practices is derived from fact sheets produced by nonprofits such as Farm Sanctuary.

19. Dines (2010) argues that the *Playboy* enterprise explicitly appeals to an imagined upper class ideal to encourage consumption. Lower class persons who desire social mobility may consume *Playboy* pornography to attain a sense of being higher classed, while higher class persons who consume the decidedly less "classy" *Hustler* material can do so without an affront to their identity as a sort of "slum-diving." Speciesist industries engage this play on class identity in the marketing of Nonhuman Animal products as well.

20. Some mothers exchange breast milk freely as a community service online or through milk banks. Having access to networks of this kind or the leisure time to donate, however, will also reflect the social privilege of participants (Azema and Callahan 2003; Lindemann et al. 2004).

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21. Also known as the La Plata dolphin, the Franciscana dolphin is an endangered species native to South American oceans and estuaries.

22. Reports on trafficking and slavery do not generally include the plight of Non-human Animals.

23. Cis-women, too, who are childfree, involuntarily childless, or infertile can experience stigma (Miall 1986).

24. Lauren Ornelas, founder of the Food Empowerment Project, discusses the gender disparities in compensation in a panel presented at the Resistance Ecology Conference 2015 titled “Critiquing Privilege in Animal Advocacy Circles.” It is available on Vimeo at <https://vimeo.com/131004617>.

25. As of early 2016, 66 percent of the inductees to the Animal Rights Hall of Fame operated by Farm Animal Rights Movement (FARM) are male. As of March 23, 2016, 60 percent of the best-selling books on Amazon in the category of “Animal Rights” are male-authored.

26. According to the HSUS 2013 990 IRS form, the average salary for its highest compensated male employees is \$166,080, while the average salary for its highest compensated female employees is only \$90,526. This is a difference of 54 percent and partially reflects the absence of women in more prestigious, better-compensated positions in the organization. As further evidence, the 2014 990 IRS form filed by Farm Sanctuary reports only one female employee as highly compensated; Vegan Outreach’s 2014 form reports none. These figures do not include the litany of other affiliates who are not reported on IRS documents. These organizations, however, rely heavily on female volunteers. For instance, Vegan Outreach’s street team (available at <http://www.teamvegan.biz/team>) is, at the time of this writing, approximately three-fourths female-presenting.

27. This utopian society is not wholly vegetarian. Gilman (1911, 74) imagines that “meat” could be available on request in the now familiar “happy meat” vein. One character in the novel explains, “The way we manage about meat is this: A proper proportion of edible animals are raised under good conditions—nice, healthy, happy beasts; killed so that they don’t know it!—and never kept beyond a certain time limit.”

28. Ecofeminists in particular promote social relations that are based on caregiving and community (Adams 1996), which directly challenges the exploitative and conflict-focused domination approach favored by capitalism.

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