

# BREAKING CHAINS

Ending Animal Exploitation for Good



by Alexandra S. Aderhold

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*To all the compassionate souls, be they vegans, non-vegans, animal rights activists, or future animal rights activists, who share a deep empathy for our fellow creatures, this book is dedicated to you.*

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# Introduction

*Welcome to my first written book „Breaking Chains – Ending Animal Exploitation for Good“. Within the next chapters, we‘ll not only discuss animal rights and philosophy but also delve into the depths of human resistance to veganism, and shed light on the biases and fallacies that hinder progress. Through exploring these cognitive barriers, readers will be able to gain a better understanding of their own blind spots, while empowering animal advocates to identify and address them effectively. But before we start, I want to share my own experiences with you.*

As someone who has always felt a deep connection with nonhuman animals, my journey towards embracing a vegan lifestyle was sadly not a linear path. It all began during my teenage years when I made the conscious decision to become vegetarian. There was this pivotal moment when I took a bite of a sausage my mother bought at a food market and encountered gristle, causing me to spit it out immediately. My mom explained that our own noses and ears contained similar tissues, and suddenly, I saw myself consuming someone who was just like me. It struck me as profoundly odd and made me question the ethics of my food choices.

But at that time, my understanding of the impact of my choices was limited – I believed the myth that fish didn‘t feel pain, I considered them as swimming vegetables, and continued to eat

them from time to time. Without realizing it, I had unknowingly adopted a pescetarian diet, although my initial intention was to follow a vegetarian diet, so no sentient animal has to die for me. With my newfound clarity as a „vegetarian“, I believed I had found a way to rescue animals from misery, thinking this alone would be enough for them.

Since my time in kindergarten, I have always been a rescuer, extending my help to injured hedgehogs and kittens struck by cars nearby. I also held an inexplicable fascination with raccoons and dalmatians, which was evident through my impressive collection of stuffed animal toys. But little did I know the hidden truths that lay far beyond my immediate surroundings – the profound impact of my diet, the products I owned, and the entertainment I engaged in.

Unbeknownst to me, there were industries profiting off the exploitation of animals, industries that thrived on the ignorance of consumers like me. I was unaware of the lies I had been told, the harsh realities obscured from my view. I used to believe cows produced milk solely because they were cows, unaware that it was a result of their role as mothers, providing nourishment for their calves, who were separated from them after birth. Similarly, I thought animals residing in zoos lived happy lives, blissfully unaware of the confinement and deprivation they endured. I used to believe that leather was simply a by-product, believing it was a responsible choice to use it rather than discard or waste it, as



I naively thought no additional animals had to be killed for my leather products. Watching animals on TV shows and movies, I was captivated by their cuteness and adorableness, unaware of the systemic exploitation perpetuated behind the scenes. During that time, my understanding was limited, and I lacked the awareness that could have guided me towards more informed decisions. Reflecting on those moments now, I find myself yearning for the knowledge I possess today.

As I approached the end of my twenties, living together with my partner, our shared love for documentaries and informative videos led us to stumble upon a [speech](#) by a remarkable individual named Ed Winters. After watching it together, we made the resolute decision to embrace a vegan lifestyle from now on. Shortly thereafter, we watched the documentary „[Dominion](#)“, which served as a stark reminder that we would never revert to a non-vegan lifestyle ever again. From that day forward, an insatiable thirst for knowledge consumed me as I delved deep into the complexities of this issue, driven by an overwhelming sense of guilt for having unknowingly supported the exploitation of other animals for such a prolonged period of my life.

I discovered the interconnected web of industries profiting from animal exploitation – from farmed animals to animal testing, from circuses to fur farms, the extent of cruelty and suffering inflicted upon innocent beings was staggering. The realization struck me



that our collective ignorance and complacency were enabling the perpetuation of these practices, and a strong desire grew within me to put an end to it. Armed with the truth, I could no longer turn a blind eye, I felt an urgent need to take a stand and make a difference. Although I had never personally taken an animal's life (excluding insects), I acknowledged my contribution to their deaths through financial support, and while I couldn't undo this, speaking up for the animals was the least I could do from now on.

One year later, I came across the book „Animal Rights: The Abolitionist Approach“ by Gary L. Francione and Anna Charlton, which provided me with the utmost clarity on the matter of animal rights. As fate would have it, during my initial read of the book, I found myself visiting a sanctuary in Austria where, for the very first time, I encountered cows up close. I vividly recall a profound moment when I embraced a cow who had peacefully settled down to bask in the mountain sun. Feeling her rhythmic breath and gazing into her eyes, it dawned on me what it truly meant to be sentient. Through her gaze, I recognized an individual, a being who reciprocated the connection, *someone* who looked back at me. In that instant, my bond extended to every creature on this planet, and I made a solemn commitment to utilize my abilities to safeguard and advocate for the fundamental rights of all animals. I also became the godmother of a calf named Cookie who was born shortly before the dairy farm transformed into a sanctuary. When I visited one year later and called out Cookie's name, she joyfully

recognized me and approached me, as she used to do, licking my hand affectionately. Seeing her unmistakable recognition reaffirmed my belief that these animals are not mere objects, but living beings with their own unique experiences. They actively participate in life, demonstrate cognitive abilities, and possess the remarkable capacity to think and remember. It is my hope that by sharing my story and the knowledge I have acquired, I can inspire others to make conscious choices that don't harm other creatures, urging us all towards a future where the exploitation of animals is but a distant memory, a dark chapter of our history books.

Upon reflecting on my personal journey towards embracing a vegan lifestyle, it becomes apparent that my experiences are part of a much larger narrative; throughout history, the utilization of nonhuman animals for human benefit has been deeply ingrained in our societies, perpetuated through repeated narratives handed down through generations. From using animals for labor, food production, scientific experimentation, entertainment, and various other purposes, their exploitation has been normalized and widely practiced. This reliance on animals has been fueled by anthropocentrism, by the belief that nonhuman animals are resources to be used at our disposal, that they are commodities that are only here to benefit us.

***However, as we have advanced technologically and gained a deeper understanding of animal cognition, emotions, and***

*their capacity for suffering, a growing awareness of the ethical implications of our actions has come to the surface. This awareness is one that we can no longer dismiss simply because we may not personally feel accountable, even though most of us are.*

While there may have been historical justifications for using animals in the past, such as limited alternatives or cultural norms, it is critical to acknowledge that times have changed. We now have a greater understanding of the complex interconnections between human animals, nonhuman animals, and the environment, as well as the potential consequences of our actions on the well-being of other species and the planet as a whole. Adapting to this changing landscape involves reevaluating our relationships with other animals and finding alternatives to practices that cause harm and suffering to nonhuman animals, it requires embracing a more compassionate, nonviolent and sustainable approach that respects the *fundamental value and rights* of all sentient beings.

The transition towards a more animal-friendly society is not without its challenges, as it necessitates significant shifts in our perception and treatment of animals, lifestyle choices, cultural attitudes, economic systems, complex relationship between our thoughts, beliefs, and actions, and legislative frameworks. However, it is a necessary, and I want to explain to you *why* in the following chapters of this book.

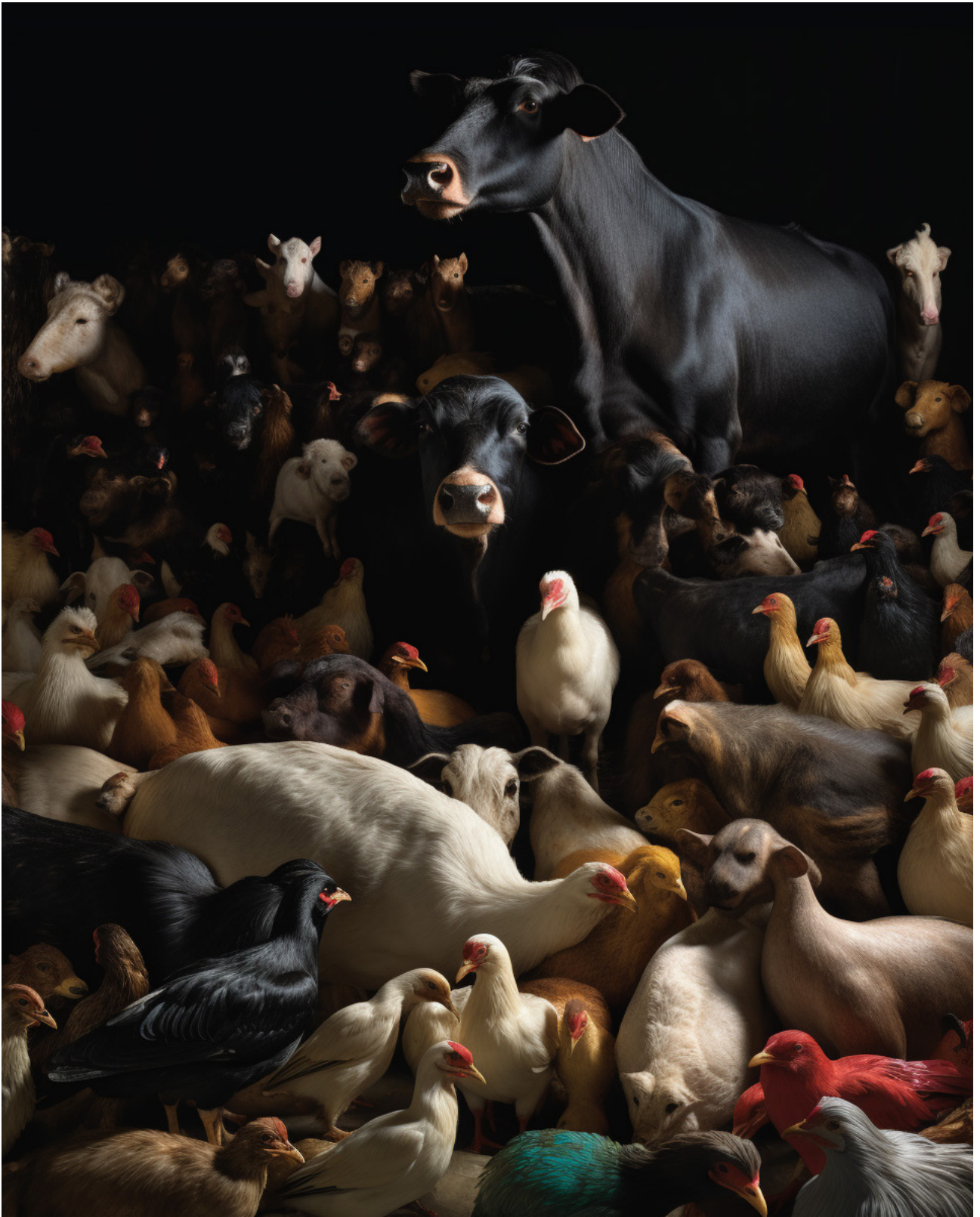
# The Status Quo

## The History of Animal Exploitation

The story of animal exploitation can be traced back to the dawn of civilization. As early humans transitioned from a nomadic lifestyle to settled agricultural communities, they began to recognize the value of animals as sources of food, clothing, and labor. The domestication of animals, such as dogs, cattle, and horses, revolutionized human societies, providing them with companionship, transportation, and increased agricultural productivity.

In ancient civilizations, animals played pivotal roles in religious rituals, symbolizing deities, and embodying cultural beliefs. From the sacred cows of ancient Egypt to the revered bulls of Mesopotamia, animals were venerated and sacrificed in honor of gods and goddesses. However, alongside this reverence, exploitation also thrived, as animals were used for warfare, entertainment, and as objects of luxury.

The age of exploration and subsequent colonization brought about a new wave of animal exploitation. As European powers expanded their reach, they encountered diverse ecosystems and wildlife previously unknown to them. Animals were hunted for their furs, feathers, and exotic specimens, which were sought





after for scientific exploration and display. This era also saw the establishment of plantations and the brutal exploitation of animals for labor, such as horses in agriculture and enslaved people forced to work alongside animals.

The advent of the Industrial Revolution marked a significant turning point in animal exploitation. The shift from agrarian societies to urbanized centers brought about a new demand for animal products, leading to the rise of factory farming. Animals were viewed as commodities to be mass-produced and exploited for maximum efficiency and profit; intensive farming practices, confinement, and the use of hormones and antibiotics became the norm, raising ethical concerns and fueling the animal rights movement.

But contrary to popular belief, animal rights and veganism are not a recent invention or a passing trend. Throughout history, there have always been individuals and communities who have chosen to live in alignment with their values by abstaining from the use of animal products. From ancient philosophical traditions that espoused nonviolence towards all living beings to religious practices that promoted compassion and ethical conduct, veganism has roots that extend far back in time. While the term „veganism“ may be relatively new, the principles and practices associated with it have been present in diverse cultures and civilizations for centuries.

Thankfully, in recent decades, there has been a notable shift in societal attitudes towards animal exploitation, driven by heightened awareness of animal welfare, environmental concerns, and advancements in scientific understanding. However, despite the well-intentioned efforts of the welfare movement, it has fallen short in adequately addressing the fundamental issues of animal exploitation. While incremental changes have been made to improve the conditions of animals within existing systems, the stark reality remains that we are witnessing a surge in animal exploitation on an unprecedented scale. The welfare approach, with its focus on incremental reforms, has proven insufficient in addressing the ethical problems deeply ingrained in our use of animals for human purposes.

As a result, adopting an abolitionist position, which we will be discussed in the next chapters, emerges as the logical and rational response to the pervasive issue of animal usage. By advocating for the complete end of animal exploitation and promoting alternatives that prioritize the inherent rights and well-being of all sentient beings, including humans, the abolitionist stance presents a compelling and morally just path towards a more compassionate and equitable society.

# Terrifying Numbers

The following numbers\* provide a glimpse into the extensive use of animals by humans in various industries. While the specific numbers may vary over time, it is important to acknowledge the widespread exploitation of animals for food production, clothing manufacturing, animal testing, entertainment, and the pet breeding industry. [\\*REFERENCES ON PAGE 158](#)

Every year, approximately 72 billion (72,000,000,000) land animals and 1.2 trillion (1,200,000,000,000) sea animals are slaughtered by humans for consumption, including their flesh, secretions, and reproductive byproducts.

Humans kill about 2 billion (2,000,000,000) land animals and 1 trillion 10 billion (1,010,000,000,000) silk moths every year for clothing.

It is estimated that more than 115 million (115,000,000) nonhuman animals are used and killed in laboratory experiments each year around the world.

Estimating the exact number of animals exploited for entertainment purposes in amusement and wildlife theme parks, animal shows, aquariums, carnivals, circuses, exhibits, fairs, motion pictures and television programs, museums, and zoos is

a challenging task. However, it is widely believed that the figure reaches millions annually on a global scale.

The global annual numbers for pet breeding facilities are difficult to estimate due to a lack of transparency. Nevertheless, by examining those facilities that do disclose their numbers, we can gain an understanding of the scale. In the United States alone, licensed facilities are estimated to house over 200,000 mother dogs solely for breeding purposes, resulting in the production of over 1.2 million puppies each year. It is disheartening to note that alongside this, approximately 1.5 million dogs and cats are euthanized in US shelters annually. These figures shed light on the magnitude of the pet breeding industry and the challenges it poses in terms of animal rights.

***Every second, our relentless exploitation claims the lives of a staggering minimum of 73,000 animals. On a global scale, approximately 2.3 trillion (2,300,000,000,000) animals are bred, caught, used, and ultimately killed by humans every year. This terrifying number excludes all animals used for entertainment purposes, the countless lives lost among wild creatures hunted by humans, and the countless insects that are also exploited and killed for consumption (such as bees, crickets, etc.).***

***Farmed animals make up 62% of the world's mammal biomass; humans account for 34%; and wild mammals are just 4%.***

# Understanding the Abolitionist Approach

The abolitionist approach, developed and popularized by Gary L. Francione, professor of law and philosophy, esteemed philosopher, and dedicated animal rights activist, and Anna Charlton, an attorney and animal rights advocate, is a philosophy that advocates for the end of all animal exploitation, viewing it as the only solution that is consistent with animal rights. This approach rejects the idea of animal welfare, which seeks to improve the conditions under which animals are exploited, in favor of animal rights, which seek to end exploitation altogether. By eliminating the use of animal products in one's lifestyle, veganism serves as a practical and ethical embodiment of this approach. Francione's and Charlton's influential works have contributed to shaping the discourse on animal ethics and activism, highlighting the importance of recognizing and respecting the intrinsic rights of animals.

Furthermore, the abolitionist approach is a *non-violent grassroots movement* that recognizes the power of individual actions in contributing to the larger objective of changing our societal perspective on animals. It acknowledges that every individual's choices and advocacy play a crucial role in challenging the existing norms and fostering a compassionate and just relationship with animals, emphasizing that institutional change remains elusive without individual transformation. In this context, veganism



emerges as a *moral imperative*, urging individuals to embrace a lifestyle that abstains from the use of animal products, respects their fundamental rights, and upholds animal rights. Animal rights are based on the idea that animals have inherent value and that their interests deserve consideration, regardless of their usefulness to humans. This means that animals have the right to be free from exploitation, just as humans have the right to be free from slavery or other forms of oppression.

The abolitionist approach to animal rights is based on the belief that *all* animals have inherent value and are entitled to equal consideration and respect. It recognizes that animals are not mere property or resources, but rather, from a philosophical perspective, they are moral *persons* with unique *personalities*, interests, and desires. This perspective challenges the traditional notion of animals as property to be exploited for human benefit and calls for a shift in our understanding of their subjecthood and the ethical responsibilities we have towards them. This approach also recognizes that institutionalized animal exploitation is a systemic issue that cannot be solved through acts of kindness or welfare improvements. Instead, it calls for a radical shift in society's values and practices, moving away from the use of animals for human benefit and towards a more just and equitable world. This shift involves recognizing that animals are not objects or commodities, but are sentient beings with their own unique experiences and perspectives. By promoting this approach, we can challenge the



status quo and encourage others to question their own complicity in animal exploitation.

Unlike other forms of animal advocacy, which focus on improving the conditions in which animals are kept and reducing the harm that is done to them, the abolitionist approach seeks to end *all* forms of animal exploitation. This means advocating for the complete cessation of animal use in industries such as food production, clothing, entertainment, the pet industry, and research.

Additionally, abolitionists reject any form of human discrimination, recognizing that the intrinsic value of individuals should not be determined by their race, gender, sexual orientation, age, abilities, or socioeconomic status. They extend this principle to their stance against speciesism, which involves the unjust and arbitrary exclusion of nonhuman animals from moral consideration based on their species membership. Abolitionists argue that moral exclusion based on any specific trait is fundamentally flawed and can never be ethically justified.

Now, let's explore the 6 fundamental principles of the abolitionist approach by Gary L. Francione and Anna Charlton. These principles distill the essence of their philosophy, and I strongly encourage diving into their books for a comprehensive exploration of each principle.

**I. Abolitionists maintain that all sentient beings, human or nonhuman, have one right– the basic right not to be treated as the property of others.**

**II. Abolitionists maintain that our recognition of this one basic right means that we must abolish, and not merely regulate, institutionalized animal exploitation, and that abolitionists should not support welfare reform campaigns or single-issue campaigns.**

**III. Abolitionists maintain that veganism is a moral baseline and that creative, nonviolent vegan education must be the cornerstone of rational animal rights advocacy.**

**IV. The Abolitionist Approach links the moral status of nonhumans with sentience alone and not with any other cognitive characteristic; all sentient beings are equal for the purpose of not being used exclusively as a resource.**

**V. Abolitionists reject all forms of human discrimination, including racism, sexism, heterosexism, ageism, ableism, and classism – just as they reject speciesism.**

**VI. Abolitionists recognize the principle of nonviolence as a core principle of the animal rights movement.**

# The Essence of Veganism

Veganism is a multifaceted concept and philosophy that extends far beyond dietary choices. It encompasses a justice movement that seeks to challenge and dismantle the exploitation of animals in various industries, urging individuals to live as vegan as possible and consciously eliminate the use of animal products in every facet of life. By understanding the diverse ways in which humans utilize animals, we can grasp the significance of veganism as a transformative lifestyle that promotes compassion, ethical awareness, and a profound respect for all living beings.

## Food

One of the most prominent aspects of animal exploitation is evident in the food industry. Animals are genetically modified, bred into existence, fed, raised, confined, and ultimately killed for human consumption. Regrettably, they are reduced to mere products, transforming them into items so detached from their sentient existence that we often fail to recognize them as living beings, perceiving them solely as resources, ingredients or sandwich fillings.

## Clothing & Accessories

The fashion industry, with its vast array of clothing and accessories, has long been intertwined with animal exploitation. It heavily relies on the use of animal-derived materials such as



fur, silk, feathers, leather, and wool, which are obtained through practices that inflict immense suffering and death upon countless animals. Contrary to the misconception that the fashion industry solely relies on byproduct animal skins, it actively participates in the deliberate breeding of animals for the explicit purpose of their exploitation in the name of fashion.

### Entertainment

Entertainment has become a prevalent arena where animals are frequently subjected to exploitation for the sole purpose of human amusement. This exploitation extends to various forms of entertainment, encompassing circuses, marine parks, movies, various sports and hobbies (such as bullfighting, cockfighting, dog racing, elephant polo, fishing, horse racing, rodeo, and many more), TV shows, and zoos. and an array of other platforms where animals are subjected to exploitation, either through forced performances, captivity, or direct harm.

### Pets

While pets hold a special place in our hearts as beloved companions, veganism encourages us to critically reevaluate our perception of pets and how we integrate them into our lives. Instead of breeding animals solely to fulfill our desires, it calls for recognizing animals as invaluable individuals who deserve rescue and care. Numerous animals patiently await adoption in shelters, and when we contemplate expanding our family, it becomes

crucial to prioritize providing a home for those in need rather than perpetuating the pet breeding industry. By embracing this mindset, we not only offer love and support to animals but also take an active stance against breeding and domestication.

## Testing

Animal testing for cosmetics or pharmaceuticals is a contentious practice involving experiments on animals that inflict extreme distress, harm, physical pain, psychological suffering, confinement in unnatural environments, and ultimately death. While achieving a complete end to animal testing may not be possible right now, we have to take action and support further research that aims to eliminate the need for animals in testing altogether, such as computer models and in vitro testing. Additionally, animal testing often proves to be unreliable when applied to humans due to biological differences.

Understanding veganism goes beyond perceiving it as merely a diet. It is a justice movement that challenges the systemic exploitation of animals in various industries, it encompasses a conscious lifestyle that seeks to minimize harm, promote compassion, and acknowledge the fundamental rights of other animals. By understanding the multifaceted nature of animal exploitation and the wide range of industries that rely on it, we are compelled to advocate for abolition and adopt veganism as a holistic paradigm for change.

# The Non-Vegan Standard

In today's world, we have intricately woven animal products into various aspects of our daily lives, extending far beyond what we consume and wear. From the moment we wake up until we go to bed, animals are deeply entrenched in the products we use, the structures we inhabit, and the systems we rely upon. It is a profound reality that often eludes our awareness or consideration, preventing us from recognizing the animal exploitation that lies hidden behind it all. Consider the following examples: razors, tampons, toothpaste, analog film, pillows, fabric softener, and a multitude of other everyday items that may contain animal-derived ingredients or be linked to animal exploitation in some form.

***While it may not be realistic to entirely abstain from all of these animal-derived components in every facet of our lives or find suitable vegan alternatives for each of them, it is vital to recognize the degree of animal exploitation present in our non-vegan world.***

## Built Environment

Streets and buildings, for example, are constructed using materials such as asphalt, cement, and mortar, which often incorporate animal-derived components. These materials, designed for durability and strength, may contain additives like bone char or animal fats, contributing to the non-vegan nature of our built environment.

## Cleaning Products

Cleaning our homes is an essential part of our daily routines, but many conventional cleaning products contain animal-derived ingredients or have been tested on animals. Detergents, fabric softener, dish soaps, and surface cleaners often include animal-based ingredients like tallow or enzymes derived from animals.

## Household Items

The seemingly innocent items we use for comfort and relaxation can unexpectedly harbor non-vegan components. For example, pillows and cushions may contain animal-derived materials such as down feathers, which are obtained through the cruel process of plucking from ducks or geese.

## Instant and Analog Film

Even in the realm of photography, where we capture moments and memories, animal products find their way into the equation. Instant and analog film, beloved by many for their nostalgic appeal, contain gelatin, a substance derived from animal connective tissues. This ingredient plays a crucial role in the development process, but its source is often unknown to the average consumer.

## Instruments

Animal materials also make an unexpected appearance in the world of music. Drumheads, for instance, are traditionally made

from animal skins, providing the desired tone and resonance. Similarly, accordion reeds, essential for producing enchanting melodies, can be crafted from animal skin. Violin and cello bows are traditionally crafted with horsehair, while bagpipes can incorporate materials like sheepskin or goatskin in the construction of the bag itself. Similarly, certain types of flutes and woodwind instruments, especially those made using traditional materials, may utilize animal-derived components such as bone, ivory, or horn for keys, embouchures, or decorative accents. While these instruments contribute to the rich tapestry of musical expression, their connection to animal exploitation remains largely unknown to many music enthusiasts.

### Medications and Pharmaceuticals

Many medications and pharmaceutical products may contain animal-derived ingredients or be tested on animals. From prescription drugs to over-the-counter remedies, a range of medications use gelatin, derived from animal connective tissues, as a binding or coating agent. Furthermore, certain capsules and coatings may incorporate animal-based ingredients like stearic acid, magnesium stearate, or even lactose from dairy. While these components may not be the primary active ingredients, their presence highlights the need for greater transparency and vegan alternatives in the pharmaceutical industry.



## Personal Care and Hygiene

In our pursuit of cleanliness and self-care, many personal care products contain animal-derived ingredients. Razors, for example, may incorporate lubricating strips that contain glycerin sourced from animal fat. Even tampons, a staple for menstruating individuals, can be made with animal-derived components, such as the use of animal-based adhesives, silk extract, or cotton treated with animal by-products. Toothpaste, another essential item in our oral care routine, often contains ingredients that are not vegan-friendly. Many toothpaste formulations include additives like glycerin derived from animal fat, as well as certain enzymes, such as lactoperoxidase, which may be sourced from animals. In some cases, toothpaste may even contain animal bone powder, which is used for its peeling effect.

## Vitamins and Dietary Supplements

Some supplements, such as vitamin D3, omega-3 fatty acids, or certain probiotics, may be derived from animal sources like fish oil, lanolin (from sheep's wool), or gelatin capsules. While vegan alternatives are increasingly available, it's crucial to read labels carefully and seek out vegan-certified options.

These categories merely scratch the surface of the unexpectedly non-vegan products we encounter, often without our conscious consent (and undoubtedly without the consent of the animals). Pet products, art supplies, fragrances, office supplies, and gardening



products, among others, further exemplify the pervasive presence of animal-derived components.

*In essence, we must acknowledge that within our world, the status quo dictates that everything is inherently non-vegan, necessitating a conscious assumption of this reality.* It reflects a society that prioritizes convenience, tradition, and profit over the well-being and rights of animals, with plenty of other non-vegan items that people may not be aware of. As a general guideline, vegans should therefore double-check the vegan status of *any* item before making a purchase. Whether it's online shopping or spending money elsewhere, it's essential to ensure that our spending aligns with our principles.

# Unmasking Animal Exploitation

## The Meat Paradox

The meat paradox refers to the perplexing contradiction between our compassion for animals and our consumption of their flesh. It is a concept that challenges our moral beliefs and raises questions about the ethical implications of our dietary choices. At its core, the meat paradox highlights the tension between our affection for animals and our participation in their exploitation for food.

On one hand, there is a common expression of empathy and care towards animals among many people. We genuinely value their companionship, advocate for their protection and well-being, and the thought of intentionally harming an animal appalls us. When confronted with distressing images or videos portraying animal suffering, the majority of individuals react with shock and distress due to their innate capacity for empathy. This compassionate attitude towards animals is in alignment with the core principles of animal rights.

On the other hand, our society has normalized the consumption of animal products as a fundamental part of our diet. Meat, poultry, and sea animals are prevalent in our meals and culinary traditions. The paradox arises from the fact that while we care for animals, we simultaneously view them as commodities to be raised,

slaughtered, and consumed. This paradox is influenced by a variety of factors, for example cultural norms and traditions. From an early age, we are exposed to a diet that includes animal products, making it deeply ingrained in our culinary habits and social practices. This cultural conditioning creates a dissonance between our compassion for animals and our willingness to participate in their exploitation.

Psychologically, the meat paradox triggers cognitive dissonance – a state of mental discomfort caused by holding conflicting beliefs or values. We may experience an emotional conflict when confronted with the reality of animal suffering in the meat industry while simultaneously enjoying the taste and convenience of animal products. To alleviate this discomfort, we may employ defense mechanisms such as rationalization, denial, or compartmentalization.

Moreover, it is not uncommon for some individuals to ridicule or mock those who choose not to consume meat or other animal products. This reaction stems from their own internal inconsistencies, as they are confronted with the disparities between their beliefs and actions when faced with someone who rejects the notion of consuming another sentient being. The mockery serves as a defense mechanism, allowing them to deflect the uncomfortable truth and maintain a sense of coherence in their own choices.

# The Vegetarian Dilemma

Vegetarianism has long been promoted as a compassionate choice, a way to reduce harm to animals by eliminating meat from our diets. However, we have to critically examine the limitations of vegetarianism within the context of the abolitionist approach to animal rights.

While vegetarians often believe that by abstaining from meat consumption, they are avoiding harm to animals, it is of utmost importance to recognize the contradiction in this belief. Despite avoiding meat, vegetarians often continue to support industries that exploit animals, such as dairy, eggs, and wool. Unfortunately, once these animals are no longer profitable, they are sent to slaughter. Therefore, we must understand that by participating in these industries, even indirectly, vegetarians are still contributing to the harm and ultimate death of animals.

Vegetarianism, although it may alleviate the direct consumption of animal flesh, fails to address the underlying issues of animal exploitation and the integral cruelty within various industries. Even within supposedly „higher welfare“ systems, animals are still subjected to confinement, separation from their young, and eventual slaughter once their profitability declines. Vegetarianism alone cannot protect animals from the exploitation and violence inherent in their commodification.

Despite its well-meaning intentions, vegetarianism inadvertently reinforces the objectification of animals by regarding them solely as sources of byproducts like milk, eggs, or labor. Vegetarians may still engage in practices that perpetuate the objectification of animals, for instance, some vegetarians may visit zoos, support cosmetic products that are tested on animals, wear items made from leather, wool, fur, or silk, and even obtain pets from breeders. This perspective aligns more closely with the mindset of carnism, which accepts the use and exploitation of animals as the norm, rather than with the comprehensive ethics of veganism.

To challenge the systemic exploitation of animals, we must move beyond the limitations of vegetarianism and embrace a more holistic approach. The abolitionist approach calls for the complete cessation of animal use in all forms, it advocates for a society that recognizes and respects the inherent rights of animals, rejecting their objectification and promoting their liberation. Veganism, as an embodiment of this approach, encompasses all aspects of our lives, extending beyond dietary choices to include our clothing, entertainment, and consumer decisions.



# **The Illusion of Reduction and Welfare**

Within the realm of animal advocacy, reducetarianism and welfarism emerge as distinct approaches, each bearing its own implications and ideologies.

Reductarianism, often advocated as a means to reduce animal product consumption, presents itself as a morally commendable approach. It promotes the reduction of animal exploitation, falling short of addressing the fundamental issue at hand: the commodification of sentient beings. Unfortunately, this approach has proven ineffective in curbing animal exploitation – in fact, the current reality reveals a paradoxical outcome: as reducetarianism gains popularity, we witness a surge in the overall exploitation of animals. Regrettably, many individuals employ reducetarianism as a convenient excuse to avoid embracing a fully vegan lifestyle, enabling them to perpetuate the cycle of animal exploitation while believing they are making a positive impact. It becomes evident that reducetarianism, with its focus on partial reductions, fails to confront the moral imperative of respecting animal rights right away and perpetuates the systemic exploitation of innocent creatures.

On the other hand, welfarism, as a framework, focuses on improving the conditions under which animals are exploited rather than questioning the exploitation itself. While it may seem



like a step in the right direction, welfarism fails to challenge the fundamental issue: the use of animals as commodities. By diverting attention to surface-level improvements, welfarism allows the continuation of animal exploitation under the guise of so called „humane“ treatment.

Behind the scenes, welfarism has also transformed into a profitable industry. Companies and organizations have capitalized on consumer concern for animal welfare, offering labels and certifications that promise „humane“ treatment. However, these labels often serve as marketing tools rather than genuine indicators of ethical practices. The commodification of animal welfare allows businesses to profit from the illusion of ethical consumption while perpetuating systemic exploitation.

Moreover, organizations like PETA, while advocating for reducetarianism and promoting welfare measures, fail to address the fundamental issue of animal commodification at hand. Rather than challenging this issue, these organizations promote the notion of „compassionate“ animal use, seeking to appease the public and alleviate any discomfort associated with the continued exploitation of animals. By focusing on surface-level improvements and perpetuating the illusion of ethical consumption, they inadvertently contribute to the continuation of systemic exploitation. Paradoxically, as these welfarist efforts gain momentum, the scale of animal exploitation only continues

to escalate. Despite the implementation of welfare regulations and initiatives, industries such as animal agriculture and fur farming persist and expand, resulting in unprecedented levels of animal suffering. This glaring contradiction exposes the inherent flaw in relying solely on welfarism to address the root cause of animal exploitation.

*To truly challenge the prevailing norms and bring about meaningful change, it is imperative that we shift our focus from reducetarianism and welfarism to the principles of animal rights, resolute in our commitment to make our message loud and clear.*

# Unraveling the Cycle of Exploitation

Breeding, including the insidious practice of genetic manipulation, lies at the core of animal exploitation, serving as the foundation for various industries that profit from the use and abuse of sentient beings. In this chapter, we will shed light on the distressing experiences endured by breeding animals, and how this relentless cycle perpetuates the disregard for individual lives, revealing the cold truth that welfare ultimately holds no sway in determining their fate.

Through the intentional reproduction of animals, breeding aims to produce offspring for various human purposes such as food, clothing, entertainment, animal testing, and companionship. It is an orchestrated process driven by profit motives, at the expense of the well-being of the animals involved. In addition to techniques such as artificial insemination and selective breeding, genetic manipulation plays a significant role in this exploitative system.

By engaging in genetic manipulation, breeders actively intervene in the genetic makeup of animals, manipulating their traits and characteristics to cater to human desires and commercial interests. This manipulation can involve introducing foreign genes, modifying existing genes, or selectively breeding individuals with specific genetic traits. Through this manipulative control over animals' genetic composition, breeders not only exploit

their reproductive capacities but also perpetuate a system that profoundly disregards their intrinsic value and natural autonomy.

Pigs, for example, naturally brown in color, are genetically manipulated to possess „clean“ pink skin, making their flesh appear more appetizing to consumers. However, this alteration leaves their fragile pink skin vulnerable to sun damage when they live freely outdoors in sanctuaries – an opportunity rarely granted to most farmed animals. Dairy cows are subjected to genetic manipulation to increase their milk production, pushing their bodies beyond natural limits. Through selective breeding and genetic modifications, breeders strive to maximize milk yield, disregarding the toll it takes on the cows' health and well-being. Similarly, chickens are genetically manipulated to rapidly gain weight *or* produce an excessive number of eggs.

It is important to note that the health issues faced by pigs and other animals when they exceed the designated slaughter age are often a result of genetic manipulation. Through selective breeding and genetic modifications, breeders prioritize traits that enhance market value but disregard the long-term well-being of the animals. As a consequence, these animals are susceptible to various health problems when they live beyond their intended age for slaughter, despite the potential for a healthier and more natural life on a sanctuary.

Consequently, mothers in the breeding industry, be they cows, pigs, dogs, cats, chickens, or any other species, face immense physical and mental strain as they face the relentless demands imposed upon them. They are subjected to repeated impregnation, often without respite, as their offspring are taken away shortly after birth. The constant cycle of pregnancy and separation inflicts profound emotional distress on these breeding mothers, denying them the opportunity to nurture and bond with their young.

Male animals in the breeding process also endure significant suffering. They are typically kept in confined spaces, treated as mere sperm donors, and subjected to *manual extraction of semen performed by humans, or electro-ejaculation (electric shocks through anus)*. Their lives are reduced to a utilitarian purpose, devoid of any regard for their well-being or natural behaviors. Once their reproductive capabilities decline or they are no longer considered commercially viable, they too will be sent to slaughter.

The destiny of breeding animals is determined from the moment they enter the world, as they face an unfortunate end once they cease to be financially viable – they are systematically killed, and replaced with new animals. Regardless of the conditions they endured or the treatment they received during their lives, their value is reduced to that of mere commodities. It doesn't matter if they were raised in pastures or confined in cramped cages, they are indiscriminately sent to slaughterhouses as soon as their

productivity wanes. The notion of welfare and the purported differences in treatment become inconsequential when profit margins dictate their destiny.

Understanding the exploitative nature of breeding underscores the urgency of advocating for an abolitionist approach. By rejecting the notion that animals are mere objects to satisfy human desires, we can strive for a world where *all* breeding is abolished due to its inherent cruelty. Going vegan, promoting adoption instead of breeding, supporting spaying and neutering initiatives, and raising awareness about the inherent cruelty of breeding practices are essential steps toward dismantling this exploitative cycle on all levels.

# The Hidden Horrors

And now, it's time to explore the harsh reality of animal exploitation across diverse industries and for a multitude of purposes. Prepare yourself for a sobering journey.

## Animal Testing

Animal testing, practiced for various industries, involves subjecting animals to painful experiments for cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, and other products. Innocent beings, such as rabbits, mice, dogs, cats, and primates, are exposed to chemicals, drugs, and procedures that cause immense pain and suffering. Due to physiological, anatomical, and genetic differences between species, the translation of findings from animal studies to human conditions are often limited and uncertain.

## Animal vs. Animal

Human exploitation of animals extends to instances where animals are used to exploit and harm other animals for entertainment or profit. Examples of such exploitative practices include fox hunting, a controversial activity where foxes are relentlessly pursued, often by a group of hunters mounted on horses, accompanied by a pack of trained dogs. Similarly, in dog races, greyhounds are trained to chase after a mechanical lure, often resembling a rabbit (while the dogs are trained for the race, real rabbits or other small animals are mostly used as lure), which can lead to injuries or even death.





Cockfighting is another cruel activity in which two roosters are forced to fight each other for the entertainment of spectators. These practices not only cause immense suffering and death to the animals directly involved but also perpetuate a culture of violence towards animals. These are just a few examples among countless others, showcasing humans' immense creativity in exploiting various multiple animals for entertainment.

## Flesh

In the meat industry, the dominant practices of factory farming and intensive livestock operations lead to a grim existence for animals. They are condemned to a life of confinement, crammed tightly together in overcrowded spaces where disease and suffering flourish. To counteract the unsanitary conditions, growth hormones and antibiotics are regularly administered, fueling accelerated growth but also contributing to health risks and environmental concerns. However, the ultimate fate of these animals is even more distressing – as they approach slaughter, they must endure a terrifying journey to the slaughterhouse, where fear and confusion heighten their suffering. Upon arrival, they face a range of gruesome practices including stunning, throat slitting, and dismemberment. Furthermore, with regards to pigs, gas chambers are employed as a method of killing them, subjecting these sentient beings to toxic gases that cruelly induce asphyxiation.

## Fur & Skin

In the fur and leather industries, animals' lives are commodified for the sake of fashion, as they are subjected to appalling conditions. Animals exploited for fur endure the distressing confines of cramped wire cages, while those used for leather also often face similarly terrible conditions, resulting in extreme levels of stress. The fur and leather industries are both built on animal exploitation, leading to the suffering and death of countless individuals who are subjected to cruel methods of slaughter, such as electrocution, gassing, or anal or genital electrocution. Contrary to popular belief, animal skin is *not* a byproduct or a natural material but a separate industry that involves extensive chemical processing to prevent decomposition.

## Menstruation

Hens are genetically manipulated to lay eggs unnaturally and continuously, producing approximately one egg *per day*, which surpasses their natural reproductive capacity, as they would typically lay only 12-15 eggs *per year*. It is important to note that eggs serve as the equivalent of a hen's period, a biological process that occurs naturally in their reproductive cycle. These remarkable creatures lose significant amounts of minerals with each egg they lay, and in nature, they would often consume their own unfertilized eggs to replenish those vital nutrients. However, this natural self-care mechanism is disrupted when humans collect their eggs. Additionally, practices such as debeaking, the removal

of a portion of the hen's beak, are employed to prevent aggression arising from the unnatural and stressful living conditions. The male chicks, deemed economically nonviable, often meet a gruesome fate, either suffocated or ground alive shortly after hatching, a cruel practice that further highlights the disregard for their lives.

### Mother's Milk

The dairy industry, often portrayed as idyllic, conceals a distressing truth. Through genetic manipulation and selective breeding, these animals are bred to have increasingly larger udders to produce far more milk than they would naturally, causing them to bear an excessive burden of weight that their bodies are not naturally designed to carry. In addition to the physical strain, cows and goats (and other animals exploited for their mother's milk) in the dairy industry are prone to infections, such as mastitis, due to the intensive milk production demands placed on them. Mothers endure the heart-wrenching separation from their babies shortly after birth, with the latter often confined to veal crates. These tiny enclosures deprive the calves of their natural freedom and social interactions, causing immense distress and physical discomfort. In addition to the separation, the calves are denied their mother's milk, which is essential for their growth and well-being. Instead, they are fed a replacement milk, typically made from powder and water, which cannot match the nutritional composition and bonding benefits of their mother's milk. This practice not only

inflicts emotional trauma on the calves but also deprives them of their natural nourishment and maternal connection. Tragically, their male offspring, deemed unprofitable, are often killed shortly after birth. Furthermore, cows and goats are subjected to constant impregnation through artificial insemination to maintain milk production, a process that takes a toll on their physical and mental well-being. Once a mother cow's and mother goat's milk production declines or she is no longer able to conceive, she is sent to slaughter, marking the tragic end to a life of exploitation.

### Wool & Silk

The wool industry, while seemingly harmless, hides the suffering endured by sheep. Sheep have been selectively bred to produce an excessive amount of wool, leading to a dependency on humans for shearing. The shearing process, intended to remove their wool, is often rushed and careless because workers are paid by the number of sheeps they can shear, leading to painful cuts and injuries. Once their wool production declines, like any other animal deemed unprofitable, they are sent to the slaughterhouse. Silk production unveils the exploitation of silkworms, who are boiled alive or suffocated in their cocoons to obtain their silk fibers.



# Houses of Slaughter

Slaughterhouses play a significant role in industries that exploit animals for profit, as animals ultimately face slaughter once they are deemed unprofitable. This includes various circumstances such as cows reaching the end of their reproductive cycle or producing reduced quantities of milk, or hens laying fewer eggs. In these cases, the animals are considered unprofitable and are subjected to the slaughter process, while the „undesirable“ disabled, sick, or small-sized animals are culled. This chapter aims to provide an in-depth examination of the standard procedures followed in conventional slaughterhouses, as well as the specific considerations surrounding halal slaughter.

Conventional slaughterhouses adhere to specific processes that transform living animals into products. The procedures, although varying across facilities, generally involve the following steps:

## Pre-slaughter

Animals, such as cows, pigs, lambs, turkeys, and chickens, endure the arduous journey to the slaughterhouse under crowded and stressful conditions, as permitted by the law. For instance, in accordance with the German Animal Welfare Act, they can be confined in cages during transportation for up to 14 hours, without being provided access to food, water, or adequate protection from the elements. Upon arrival, they are confined to holding areas



where they await their fate, surrounded by the scent of blood and the cries of their fellow beings.

### Stunning

After transportation and arrival at the slaughterhouse, the next step in the process is stunning, which is aimed at rendering animals unconscious before slaughter. Its primary purpose is to ensure the safety of the human operators by minimizing animal movement during the subsequent act of cutting their throats, and to establish an efficient workflow that enables workers to process a higher number of animals per hour. A variety of methods are employed in the process, including electrical stunning, captive bolt stunning, and gas stunning, such as the use of gas chambers for pigs. In addition to these methods, electric prods and rods are commonly used to handle the animals, forcibly positioning them during the stunning process. Certain species, such as chickens, geese, ducks, and other birds, are subjected to electric shocks in an electric water bath, which presents a particular irony for ducks due to their inherent inclination towards aquatic environments. However, it is important to acknowledge that stunning procedures often fail to immediately render animals completely unconscious, and it can take several minutes for them to lose consciousness or ultimately succumb to death. This unfortunate reality leaves some animals still aware of their surroundings, experiencing immense amounts of pain and emotional distress before proceeding to the next stage of the slaughter process.

## Bleeding and Slaughter

During this stage, larger animals like cows and pigs are suspended upside down on hooks before their throats are slit, with the possibility of some regaining consciousness due to failed stunning. Using sharp knives, slaughterhouse workers then sever the major blood vessels, causing the blood to drain from the animals' bodies, facilitating bleeding and ensuring their death. This process is carried out amidst an environment filled with fear, pain, and suffering. In the case of bird slaughter, the process is often highly mechanized, with conveyor belt systems and other automated machinery being extensively used, further detaching the process from human involvement.

## Halal Slaughter

Halal slaughter refers to a specific method of slaughter practiced in accordance with Islamic principles. The procedure involves swiftly and „humanely“ cutting the animal's throat with a sharp knife while pronouncing the name of Allah, ensuring that the animal does not see the knife. However, it is important to note that from the animals' perspective, this process does not alleviate their suffering or change their innate desire to live. They are still exposed to the distressing sights, smells, and sounds of the slaughterhouse, including the blood and the cries of their fellow beings, and they're ultimately facing their own inevitable death. Despite efforts to justify or legitimize the practice, it remains a violation of their fundamental rights, irrespective of the intentions

behind it. It is a reminder that there is no way to ethically or morally justify engaging in inherently wrong actions, regardless of the method employed.

### Further Processing

Following bleeding, the lifeless bodies of the animals proceed to undergo additional processing, which encompasses various actions such as evisceration (the removal of internal organs), dismemberment, and preparation for packaging. These activities transform the animal carcasses into final products that are subsequently processed and distributed for further processing or consumption. It is *our* demand for these products that perpetuates an ongoing cycle of exploitation, as the animals' lives are reduced to mere commodities for *our* consumption.

# Wild Animals

Wild animals face numerous challenges due to human activities, despite their apparent freedom in natural habitats. The destruction of their environments, primarily driven by practices like animal agriculture, contributes to the climate crisis and jeopardizes their survival. Additionally, wild animals are subjected to hunting, poaching, and other harmful actions, pushing them towards endangerment and disrupting ecosystems. Protecting these creatures requires collective efforts to preserve their habitats, mitigate the climate crisis, and combat practices that harm them.

## Fishing

It is often overlooked that the fish we consume primarily come from the wild, caught directly from the ocean. We extract vast quantities of these fish from the wild, surpassing the harvest of any other wild species, solely to meet human consumption demands or to feed farmed fish. These animals may not possess the same level of cognitive understanding as humans, but there is no denying their sentience and their ability to experience suffering. They endure the cruel fate of being forcefully dragged out of their ocean home, subjected to suffocation or the chilling grasp of ice-filled buckets, where they meet a slow and agonizing demise. The exploitation of wild fish has also significant implications for the delicate balance of our oceans, which are vital for the health of our planet and our own survival. Oceans play a crucial role in

maintaining oxygen levels, supporting diverse ecosystems, and regulating climate.

### Hunting for Fun

Hunting for fun, also known as recreational or sport hunting, such as fox hunting, involves the pursuit and killing of wild animals solely for entertainment purposes. This practice not only disregards the inherent value and rights of these animals but also perpetuates suffering and destruction of ecosystems. The pursuit of personal pleasure should not come at the expense of innocent lives and ecological balance.

### Hunting for Population Control

Hunting for population control aims to manage wild animal populations to prevent overpopulation and subsequent ecological imbalances. However, it often overlooks the inherent ability of ecosystems to self-regulate if left undisturbed. A notable example is the relationship between rabbits and wolves. When the rabbit population is abundant, wolves naturally prey on them, reducing their numbers. Conversely, when the rabbit population is low, wolves face food scarcity, leading to a decline in their population. This natural balance allows rabbits to repopulate, creating a self-regulating cycle. While population control measures may be deemed necessary in exceptional cases, it is crucial to explore alternative methods that respect the self-regulatory mechanisms of ecosystems. Non-lethal management techniques, contraception,

and habitat conservation should be prioritized as effective and compassionate approaches.

### Hunting for Trophies

Trophy hunting involves hunting specific animals, often endangered or rare species, for the purpose of obtaining trophies such as animal parts or skins. This practice not only has severe ethical implications due to its prioritization of personal gratification over the conservation of species and ecological stability but also violates the fundamental rights of animals. Trophy hunting not only endangers already vulnerable populations but also promotes a culture of valuing animals solely for their body parts or aesthetic appeal.

### Poaching

Poaching refers to the illegal hunting, capturing, or killing of wild animals, usually for profit. Poachers target animals for their valuable parts, such as ivory, fur, or organs, driving numerous species towards the brink of extinction. This illicit trade not only devastates animal populations but also fuels criminal activities and undermines conservation efforts. Efforts to combat poaching must be strengthened to protect the biodiversity and welfare of wild animals.

## The Impact of the Climate Crisis

The climate crisis poses a significant threat to wild animals and their habitats. Rising temperatures, deforestation, and habitat loss are directly linked to human activities, including animal agriculture. Animal agriculture, as one of the leading contributors to greenhouse gas emissions, exacerbates climate change and disrupts ecosystems. These changes have adverse consequences for wild animals, leading to habitat destruction, food scarcity, and increased vulnerability to extinction.

## Wildlife in Captivity

In the world of animal parks, zoos, and so-called „conservation parks,“ a troubling reality emerges – these establishments, often disguising themselves as advocates for conservation, prioritize profit over the genuine well-being of wildlife. Rather than serving as true sanctuaries, they have become commercialized tourist attractions, exploiting captive animals for financial gain. Under the guise of educational missions, these establishments capture, breed, and display wild animals solely to attract visitors and maximize revenue. However, the sad truth is that the animals within their confines are deprived of their natural environments and behaviors. Consider, for example, the polar bears at the Berlin Zoo, a poignant illustration of the consequences of such captivity. These magnificent creatures, adapted to the harsh Arctic environments, find themselves confined to enclosures that fail to replicate their natural habitats. Enduring the sweltering summer





heat of the city, they are deprived of the icy waters and vast expanses they require for their physical and psychological well-being. But the plight of polar bears in captivity is not an isolated case. Numerous other species suffer similar fates, forced to adapt to unnatural settings that bear little resemblance to their native habitats. Animals accustomed to roaming vast territories are confined to small enclosures, inhibiting their natural behaviors and social interactions. From big cats pacing restlessly in cramped cages to primates denied the freedom of the treetops, the consequences of captive environments are far-reaching and devastating. Furthermore, contrary to popular belief, zoos are unable to reintroduce captive animals back into the wild due to their dependency on confinement and lack of survival skills outside of these human-made enclosures. Moreover, only a small portion of the resources possessed by zoos is allocated to actual conservation efforts, with the majority of funds directed towards visitor satisfaction. Additionally, if zoos genuinely prioritized animal rights, it raises the question of why they continue to sell non-vegan food when it is clearly unnecessary to do so.

## Nothing Humane To Find Here

The argument surrounding the concept of „humane“ methods in utilizing and killing animals is a perennial one. The term „humane“ refers to showing compassion, kindness, benevolence, and consideration towards others, particularly towards sentient beings. Given this definition, we must critically examine whether the actions we undertake with animals can genuinely be classified as humane. Would we like to subject *ourselves* to these actions against our own will? Would we be comfortable subjecting our cherished *pets* to these actions? When faced with the difficult decision of letting our suffering pet go, would we prefer a compassionate and dignified euthanasia process or subjecting them to the „humane“ procedures of a slaughterhouse?

***In exploring the concept of „humane“ exploitation, I want to present a concise list of standard practices within industries and businesses that profit from the lives of animals. It is crucial to reflect on these practices and to ask ourselves if anything humane can be found here:***

Slaughter, Mutilation (including debeaking, disbudding, tail docking, castration, teeth clipping, branding, nose ringing), Confinement (such as veal crates, battery cages, gestation crates, farrowing crates), Forced impregnation, Separation of offspring, Intensive breeding, Stressful transportation and handling, Overuse

of antibiotics and hormones, Exploitation of reproductive systems,  
Denial of natural behaviors and environmental enrichment,  
Biotechnology and genetic manipulation, Live animal exports  
and long-distance transport, Painful and invasive procedures,  
Electric stunning, Throat slitting, Shredding, Gas chambers,  
Denial of veterinary care, Use of growth-promoting substances,  
Long periods of immobilization, Overcrowded and unsanitary  
conditions, Live animal dissection in education, Breeding for  
genetic abnormalities, and many, many more...

***And did you find anything humane here, or does this sound more  
like a manifestation of systemic and structural violence against  
nonhuman animals?***

# The Rights of Sentient Beings

## Animals as Property

In the world we inhabit, the majority of animals occupy a unique position – a strange paradox where they are regarded as property under the law while relying on us for their care and well-being. This stark reality denies them their freedom and strips away their bodily autonomy, rendering them perpetually dependent on our mercy.

Domesticated animals, particularly pets, find themselves in a peculiar in-between world. We welcome them into our homes, forming deep bonds of companionship and care, and yet, legally, they are considered our property – a contradiction that raises profound ethical concerns. As the author of this book, I'd like to share a personal experience rescuing Sunny, my cat companion, and the striking realization that arose when obtaining a property insurance for her. It dawned on me that, although I may not view her as mere property, I am legally considered her owner, which raises unsettling questions about the concept of ownership itself. This incident highlights the incongruity between the legal classification of animals as property and our moral responsibility to provide them with care and dignity, and to recognize their unique identities as sentient beings, rather than mere objects.



In the case of the majority of domesticated animals, farmed animals, their status as property is even more devalued compared to that of pets. While there are laws in place to protect pets from harm caused by humans, farmed animals and those used for other purposes do not receive the same level of protection. Their rights and well-being are disregarded once human interests come into play, allowing for their exploitation and domination as humans see fit.

At the core of this issue lies the question of *subjecthood*. While animals possess their own consciousness, emotions, and interests, experiences, their own *personality*, they are often reduced to the status of property, a *thing* to be used, devoid of intrinsic value. This stark dichotomy between „someone“ and „something“ reveals a moral dilemma that challenges the very foundation of our interactions with nonhuman beings. When we refer to *someone*, we recognize their inherent value, their personality, their capacity for emotions, and their entitlement to fundamental rights. Conversely, referring to *something* implies an object devoid of consciousness or subjective experiences.

Treating individuals as mere objects, disregarding their intrinsic value, undermines their dignity and denies them the consideration they deserve. Recognizing the difference between someone and something is pivotal in advocating for justice and compassion, as it necessitates the acknowledgment and respect of the fundamental rights of *all* sentient beings.

## Laws For Animal Protection

Animal protection laws are meant to serve as a vital safeguard for the welfare and rights of animals. These laws serve as a framework to prevent cruelty, promote responsible ownership, and ensure the well-being of animals. But do these laws *really* prevent cruelty, or do they rather allow us to use animals for our own benefit as we please? Let's have a closer look.

The German Animal Welfare Act for example, designed to uphold the noble cause of preventing unnecessary harm and suffering for our fellow creatures, claims to champion the welfare of animals, but *excludes* farmed animals, who are classified as agricultural commodities, from its protective embrace. While our beloved pets bask in the love and care within our homes, experiencing the warmth and affection of their owners, it raises a perplexing question: Why should farmed animals, who possess the same biological and emotional characteristics, and the same capacity to feel pain and suffer, be denied the same protection? It's a puzzling double standard that defies logic and compassion.

According to this law, it's perfectly legal to brand, castrate, cut, dehorn, mutilate, confine, dock, force-feed, genetically manipulate, harvest reproductive materials, intensively farm, slaughter, and subject farmed animals to other forms of exploitation, all within the bounds of the regulatory framework. However, this framework

also falls tragically short in safeguarding animals from *further* harm. The frequency of animal rights violations in Germany, much like in other countries where animals are treated as mere commodities, remains alarmingly high.

Animals used for entertainment purposes also face inadequate protection; the existing regulations fail to address the unnatural conditions these animals often endure, such as confinement, repetitive performances, and separation from their natural habitats and social structures. Moreover, the use of animals in research is permitted, allowing practices such as administering toxic substances, conducting invasive surgeries, confining them to cramped laboratory conditions, depriving them of natural behaviors and social interactions, infecting them with diseases, induce injuries, subjecting them to painful procedures, and exposing them to psychological and physical stress.

Even pets, who are commonly cherished as beloved companions but are legally classified as our property, do not receive comprehensive protection under this law. Breeding practices that prioritize physical characteristics over the health and welfare of animals often results in the breeding of animals with genetic disorders or traits that cause suffering. Another concern is the widespread practice of declawing cats, which is considered unethical due to its negative impact on the physical and behavioral health of the cats.



Moreover, it is disheartening to witness how certain industries, such as the pig industry for example, are legally sustained by taxpayer subsidies. These very subsidies enable the continuation of practices that confine sentient beings to gas chambers, subjecting them to immense suffering. By involuntary supporting these industries through taxes, we are inadvertently complicit in the perpetuation of unethical and unsustainable practices, even if we're vegans. It's a bitter pill to swallow, knowing that our money goes towards funding cruelty and environmental degradation, simply because the law permits it.

While animal protection laws exist, the discrepancies and gaps within these laws raise significant ethical concerns. The unequal treatment of animals, whether they are farmed or used for other purposes, underscores the necessity for more all-encompassing and compassionate legislation, making it imperative that such laws genuinely prioritize the well-being of these sentient beings and address the existing gaps in their protection.

# Fundamental Rights

There exists a common misunderstanding surrounding the concept of granting fundamental rights to animals. Some people argue against it, believing that granting animals rights would equate to allowing them to vote, drive cars, or engage in activities exclusive to humans. However, the foundation of animal rights within the abolitionist approach is not about attributing human-specific privileges to animals. Instead, it centers on recognizing the fundamental right of all sentient beings not to be treated as objects.

Fundamental rights extend beyond specific capabilities or activities. They stem from the inborn moral value of individuals and their capacity to experience suffering and joy, to form relationships, and to pursue their interests. Animals, like humans, possess these morally relevant traits. They possess a brain and a central nervous system, enabling them to experience the world, to experience their own reality, and respond to stimuli. They have their own interests, which may differ from ours but are no less important. They are sentient beings, capable of experiencing pleasure and pain, and they share with us the desire to live and thrive.

For example, consider the *interest* of fish to swim freely for even a short duration, such as 2 seconds. Who are we to deny them this

desire or to devalue it, to prioritize our own desires above theirs? It is about recognizing that animals are not means to our ends but individuals with their own needs, desires, interests, and autonomy.

The abolitionist approach to animal rights emphasizes the recognition that animals, like humans, possess the fundamental right to not be treated as the property of others. Just as we recognize the intrinsic value of human life and reject the notion of human beings as mere commodities, we must extend the same consideration to animals. They, too, are individuals who possess moral worth and deserve to be treated with respect and dignity – it is about recognizing that animals are not means to our ends but individuals with their own needs, desires, and autonomy.

***In conclusion, granting animals fundamental rights is not about giving them the ability to vote or perform human-centric activities. It is about recognizing their intrinsic value and respecting their fundamental right not to be used as property.***

# The Ethics of Animal Rights

Central to the ethics of animal rights is the recognition that animals are not merely *things* to be used and disposed of at our discretion. They possess their own interests, emotions, and capacity for suffering, rendering them individuals deserving of moral consideration. They, like us, want to live, with eyes to see, ears to hear, and brains to think and experience reality. This inherent similarity challenges the prevailing notion that morally irrelevant characteristics such as race, sex, or species can be used to justify excluding beings with interests from the moral community or devaluing their interests.

It is within this framework that we must confront the interconnectedness between human and nonhuman animal experiences, for similar interests *necessitate* similar treatment. That means that if humans possess fundamental rights that protect them from being treated as mere objects due to their inherent subjecthood, animals equally warrant such rights. Animals too are not objects, but someone experiencing their own life. Drawing on the distinction between *someone* and *something*, it becomes apparent that treating animals solely as objects for human benefit fails to account for their inherent value and agency as conscious beings.

Speciesism, the exclusion of someone based on their species, and human slavery are comparable because both animals and enslaved

humans share a fundamental interest in *not* being treated as property, yet are subjected to such treatment based on arbitrary criteria. Denying animals their basic rights solely on the basis of being animals is akin to justifying race-based slavery due to the alleged inferiority of the slaves' race.

The arguments supporting both forms of exploitation follow a similar structure, excluding beings with interests based on irrelevant differences that have no bearing on their inclusion in the moral community. The animal rights perspective asserts that if animals have moral significance, the principle of equal consideration necessitates an end to treating them as mere objects.

Even if animals are *treated* well within the context of exploitation, the act of *using* them as mere resources for our benefit is unethical. We have to understand that good treatment alone does not absolve us from the underlying ethical dilemma of using sentient beings for our own ends when their fundamental rights are still violated. This realization challenges us to reevaluate our actions and seek alternatives that prioritize respect, empathy, and the recognition of animals as individuals rather than commodities.

Throughout history, we have often justified our treatment of animals as mere resources by asserting that they lack specific characteristics possessed by humans. Yet, it is important to recognize that some animals exhibit these „special“ traits to a



greater extent than certain humans, while some humans may even lack them entirely. For instance, consider infants or individuals with severe disabilities who may not possess the same level of cognitive abilities as other humans. Despite their limited cognitive capacities, we firmly uphold their fundamental rights, irrespective of their state or capabilities. Granting basic rights is not merely an act of compassion or respect, but a *fundamental obligation* we have towards *every* individual. This raises the question: If we deem it unethical to use these traits to morally exclude humans, shouldn't we also consider it unethical to do so in the context of animals? This line of reasoning challenges us to confront our own speciesism.

The key point to acknowledge is that while specific characteristics may serve specific purposes, the only essential attribute for moral significance is *sentience*. Just as we should not treat impaired humans as mere resources for others, we must uphold the principle of equal consideration for all sentient beings. By acknowledging the rights of animals, we not only honor their inherent value and protect their interests, but we also foster a deeper respect for the intrinsic value of all forms of life, including human life. In this way, the recognition of animal rights aligns with the principles of human rights, emphasizing the interconnectedness and shared moral significance of *all* living beings. Hence, it becomes clear that animal rights *are* human rights.

## **In Dubio Pro Reo**

In our quest to understand and address animal ethics, it is vital to adopt a precautionary approach when considering the sentience of animals. This principle, often encapsulated by the Latin phrase „In dubio pro reo“ („In doubt, for the accused“) reminds us that if there is uncertainty about whether an animal possesses consciousness or the ability to experience sensations, it is preferable to assume they do. By adopting this mindset, we prioritize minimizing harm and ensuring the well-being of all beings.

As we explore the intricate world of animal consciousness, it becomes apparent that even seemingly small and less complex creatures exhibit signs of awareness. Honey bees, for instance, with their rudimentary neural systems, showcase fascinating behaviors that indicate their basic level of consciousness. Through intricate dances, they communicate valuable information within their social community, demonstrating their ability to perceive and relay crucial details about food sources and nesting sites.

Furthermore, honey bees exemplify complex social structures within their colonies, with specialized roles assigned to different members. The cooperative behaviors, division of labor, and intricate organization highlight their capacity for sophisticated social interactions and cooperative decision-making.



In addition to these fascinating behaviors, it is captivating to observe examples of collective intelligence found in certain animal groups. Ants, for instance, exhibit remarkable abilities to collectively solve complex problems and efficiently allocate resources. Similarly, honey bees, with their intricate communication, demonstrate a form of swarm intelligence that extends beyond individual consciousness. These examples showcase the fascinating ways in which certain organisms, through cooperation and coordination, can achieve tasks and exhibit behaviors that surpass their individual capabilities.

However, it is not only insects that challenge our understanding of consciousness. The realm of sentience extends beyond traditional boundaries, encompassing organisms like mushrooms, oysters, jellyfish, and other life forms that may possess varying degrees of consciousness or sensory perception. While their inner lives may differ significantly from those of animals with more complex neural systems, recent scientific research suggests that they, too, exhibit responses that can be indicative of awareness, albeit in different ways.

Mushrooms, with their intricate networks of mycelium, showcase a remarkable interconnectedness and adaptability as they navigate their surroundings. Oysters, despite lacking a centralized nervous system, display reflexive behaviors and responses to

stimuli, indicating a rudimentary level of perceptual capability. Similarly, plants, devoid of a centralized nervous system, possess mechanisms that enable them to detect and react to stimuli like light, gravity, and touch, allowing for a basic form of perception and interaction with their environment. Even jellyfish, with their relatively simple nervous systems, exhibit autonomous movement and respond to environmental cues, underscoring their ability to navigate their surroundings and display a certain degree of awareness. These examples demonstrate the remarkable diversity of life and its various manifestations of perception and interaction with the world around them.

By acknowledging the potential for sentience in beings across the spectrum of life, we uphold the principle of „In dubio pro reo.“ Embracing this principle allows us to err on the side of caution, extending moral consideration and avoiding harm to all organisms, regardless of their size or complexity. It reminds us of our ethical responsibility to minimize suffering and respect the inherent value of all beings in our moral deliberations. In our pursuit of animal rights, we must transcend anthropocentric perspectives, recognizing that the ability to experience pain and the desire to avoid harm extend beyond familiar boundaries.

Thankfully, a vegan lifestyle offers a compelling argument for minimizing suffering and death in general. By choosing to follow a vegan lifestyle, we consciously reduce the demand for animal

agriculture, ultimately decreasing the overall amount of plants and crops required to sustain those animals. This shift away from animal consumption translates to a decrease in both animal and plant deaths (including less crop deaths), as animals raised for non-vegan purposes consume vast quantities of plants throughout their lives. Thus, a vegan lifestyle aligns with the principles of minimizing harm and promoting ethical considerations for all living beings.

# Beyond Rhetoric

## The Impact Of Language

Language is a powerful tool for shaping attitudes and beliefs. The language we use to talk about other animals can reinforce and perpetuate the idea that animals are inferior beings, or it can challenge and subvert these ideas by highlighting their intrinsic value and rights.

To bridge the gap and affirm our place within the animal kingdom, the term „nonhuman animals“ serves as a powerful reminder. It urges us to acknowledge our own animal nature and reinforces the shared kinship between humans and animals. Moreover, employing the phrase „other animals“ embraces an inclusive approach to animal rights that recognizes our interconnectedness and equality within the broader animal community.

Our language should reflect this understanding by discarding the use of generic terms like „it“ or „things“ and instead utilizing pronouns like „he,“ „she,“ or „they,“ or even referring to animals by their individual names. Such choices elicit a profound impact on people's perception and engagement with the subject, challenging the norm of viewing animals as separate and igniting a heightened level of attentiveness. Just as we use „they/them“ when we don't know the gender of a person (e.g., „Someone has



lost *their* wallet, maybe *they* will come and pick it up!“), it makes sense to apply the same logic when it comes to nonhuman animals. This inclusive language recognizes that humans are not separate or superior to other animals, but rather interconnected members of the animal kingdom. By challenging the prevailing norm of „otherizing“ animals, addressing them with their appropriate pronouns captures attention and fosters a deeper level of attentiveness from most individuals.

Moreover, rather than employing terms like „meat“ or „livestock,“ we can adopt language that highlights the intrinsic worth of animals. By referring to „meat“ as „flesh“, animals as „farmed animals“ rather than „farm animals“, or using the term „animal individuals,“ we acknowledge their individuality and recognize their inherent value. Additionally, it is beneficial to avoid euphemisms in general when discussing animal products. For instance, we can say „animal skin“ or „skin of someone else“ instead of using the term „leather,“ and refer to eggs as „hen menstruation“ to promote a more accurate understanding. By choosing our words carefully, we can foster a more compassionate and truthful dialogue about animal exploitation.

# Effective Communication

This chapter explores the significance of communicating with non-vegans in a constructive and empathetic manner. It emphasizes the power of asking thought-provoking questions and adopting a collective „we“ approach rather than a confrontational „you“ perspective. For instance, saying „We (as a society) are using animals for human consumption, and it’s worth reflecting on the ethical implications of this“ invites individuals to engage in self-reflection without feeling personally attacked. This approach encourages dialogue and encourages non-vegans to join the collective effort for change. By fostering open dialogue and encouraging self-reflection, we can inspire change and create a more inclusive and understanding community.

One powerful strategy in engaging with non-vegans is to ask thought-provoking questions that allow them to arrive at the conclusions on their own. By guiding individuals to critically evaluate their beliefs and actions, we empower them to discover the ethical implications of their choices. For example, asking questions like „Have you ever considered the impact of our food and clothing choices on nonhuman animals?“, „What are your reasons to not live vegan?“, or „What values do you think underlie our treatment of animals?“ prompts self-reflection and opens the door to meaningful conversations.

Also, backing our arguments with scientific evidence and facts can be influential in fostering understanding and consideration of veganism. By sharing well-documented information on the ethical implications of animal exploitation, the environmental impact of animal agriculture, and the health benefits associated with a vegan diet, we can educate and enlighten others. It is essential to present the evidence in a clear, concise, and easily understandable manner, ensuring that complex concepts are simplified and readily absorbed.

When communicating with non-vegans, effectively conveying the principles of abolitionism is crucial, so instead of solely focusing on incremental changes within existing systems, it is important to highlight the vision of a world where animals are no longer treated as commodities. By emphasizing the ultimate goal of animal liberation, individuals are inspired to consider a more radical and transformative approach. This challenges the notion of limited choices by addressing the illusion that there are only two options: not living vegan or transitioning gradually, step by step. Instead, it emphasizes a third option that demands immediate action: going vegan right away because *after realizing what is right, why continue down the path of doing what is wrong?*



# Biases, Dissonance, Heuristics, and Fallacies

Confirmation bias, cognitive dissonance, heuristics, and logical fallacies are fascinating aspects of human thinking that have a significant impact on our beliefs and decision-making processes. Gaining an understanding of these phenomena and recognizing their influence is crucial for making more rational and informed decisions. By cultivating awareness of these patterns of thought, we can strive for greater objectivity and enhance our critical thinking abilities.

**Biases** are systematic patterns of deviation from rationality or objectivity in our thinking processes. In the context of arguments against veganism, several biases can come into play, affecting people's perspectives and influencing their arguments.

**Here is a compilation of common Biases that often arise in discussions about veganism:**

## Anchoring Bias

Anchoring bias is a bias that occurs when individuals heavily rely on the first information encountered as a reference point. In the context of veganism, people might base their judgments or arguments on initial experiences, cultural norms, or personal beliefs related to the consumption of animal products and their non-vegan lifestyle. This initial anchor can limit their willingness

to consider alternative viewpoints or adjust their position based on new information or evidence.

### Backfire Effect

The backfire effect, also a cognitive bias, influences individuals to resist changing their beliefs, even when confronted with contradictory information that challenges their worldview. In discussions about veganism, individuals may hesitate to acknowledge their evolving perspectives due to the fear that admitting a shift in mindset would imply their *past* involvement in unethical practices. Consequently, they prioritize upholding a facade of unwavering strength, even in the face of *knowing* that their arguments lack coherence and logical sense. This resistance stems from a misrepresentation of Darwin's original theory, distorted by the mantra of „survival of the fittest.“ The pressure to never show weakness and the need to prove our „fitness“ by maintaining a strong and unchanging opinion perpetuate this bias. However, upon deeper reflection, we come to recognize that the survival of a civilized society relies not on individual strength but rather on unity and cooperation. This means that being truly „fit“ involves the capacity to revise our beliefs when presented with new information that contradicts what we previously thought, adjusting ourselves to this new knowledge and finding ways to incorporate it, instead of stubbornly rejecting it.

## Confirmation Bias

Confirmation bias leads individuals to favor information that aligns with their existing beliefs while disregarding contradictory evidence. In discussions about veganism, people may actively seek out sources or narratives that support their preconceived notions about the ethical, health, or environmental aspects of a non-vegan lifestyle. They may overlook scientific research or testimonials that highlight the benefits of a vegan lifestyle, reinforcing their biased perspective.

## In-Group Bias

This bias refers to the tendency to favor and show positive attitudes toward one's own group or social identity. In the context of veganism, individuals who identify strongly with a non-vegan group, such as a specific cultural or social community, may exhibit bias against veganism due to loyalty or identification with their in-group.

## Moral Licensing Bias

Moral licensing bias is a cognitive bias where individuals use a past „good“ behavior to justify a subsequent „bad“ behavior. For example, people may argue that their engagement in other environmentally friendly practices grants them the moral license to continue living a non-vegan lifestyle. This bias allows individuals to maintain a sense of moral righteousness while disregarding the ethical implications of a non-vegan lifestyle.



### Status Quo Bias

This bias refers to the preference for maintaining the current state of affairs rather than making changes. People may have grown accustomed to a non-vegan lifestyle due to cultural, social, or personal reasons, which can create a resistance to adopting a vegan lifestyle. Status quo bias can lead individuals to perceive veganism as a deviation from the norm or as an inconvenience, making them less likely to objectively evaluate the ethical, health, or environmental arguments in favor of veganism.

### System Justification Bias

This bias describes the tendency to defend and justify the existing social, economic, or political systems. In the case of veganism, individuals may exhibit this bias by defending the current animal agriculture industry or justifying the consumption of animal products based on societal norms and practices.

***Cognitive dissonance*** is the psychological discomfort we experience when our beliefs or actions contradict each other. To resolve this discomfort, we may either modify our beliefs, change our behavior, or rationalize the inconsistency. For instance, a common example of cognitive dissonance in the context of veganism is when individuals claim to love animals, yet continue to support their exploitation, leading to a clash between their affection for animals and their lifestyle choices. This internal conflict can influence our perceptions and impact our willingness to consider alternative viewpoints.

**Heuristics** are mental shortcuts or rules of thumb that humans use to make decisions or solve problems quickly and efficiently, they are practical strategies that simplify complex situations by relying on previous experiences, intuition, or limited information. While heuristics can be helpful in many situations, they can also lead to biases and errors in judgment.

**Here is a compilation of common heuristics that often arise in discussions about veganism:**

#### Availability Heuristic

People often rely on the availability of information when forming opinions or making judgments. When opposing veganism, individuals often rely on compelling and readily available examples that strengthen their convictions, such as instances where vegan diets were purportedly associated with nutritional deficiencies or anecdotes of people who abandoned veganism citing health concerns. These readily available anecdotes may create the impression that such instances are more common than they actually are, potentially leading to biased perspectives against veganism.

#### Representativeness Heuristic

This heuristic involves making judgments or decisions based on how well an individual or event matches a particular prototype or stereotype. In the context of veganism, people may rely on stereotypes or misconceptions about vegans, such as perceiving

them as overly restrictive, ideologically extreme, or lacking in essential nutrients. These stereotypes can lead to biased judgments and arguments against veganism, as they overlook the diverse range of individuals who choose a vegan lifestyle and the various approaches to maintaining a balanced and healthy diet.

***Logical fallacies*** refer to flawed reasoning or misleading arguments that can deceive us into accepting unsound conclusions. They are errors in logic that can occur in various forms, such as appealing to emotions, attacking the person instead of their arguments, or making hasty generalizations. By understanding and recognizing common fallacies, we can navigate discussions more effectively and make informed judgments.

**Here is a compilation of common logical fallacies that often arise in discussions about veganism:**

#### Ad Hominem Fallacy

Attacking the person making the argument rather than addressing the argument itself. Example: „You’re born in a city, so you don’t know anything about animal farming or animals.“

#### Appeal to Authority Fallacy

Relying on the opinion of an authority figure rather than presenting evidence or logical reasoning. Example: „This famous chef says we should eat meat, so it must be true.“

### Appeal to Consequence Fallacy

Arguing that a statement or belief must be true or false based on its perceived positive or negative consequences. Example: „If everyone goes vegan, the economy will collapse and people will lose their jobs, so we shouldn't support veganism.“

### Appeal to Emotion

Using emotions instead of logical reasoning to make an argument. Example: „Imagine the joy and togetherness of traditional family gatherings, where everyone can bond over shared meals, including non-vegan dishes. Why would you want to deny your loved ones the pleasure and connection that comes from enjoying these cherished moments?“

### Appeal to Fear Fallacy

Using fear or threats to manipulate someone's opinion or behavior. Example: „If you go vegan, you won't get enough protein and you'll become weak and sick.“

### Appeal to Ignorance Fallacy

Arguing that a claim is true simply because it hasn't been proven false, or vice versa. Example: „There is no historical record of a successful vegan civilization, so it's clear that veganism cannot sustain a thriving society.“



### Appeal to Nature Fallacy

Assuming that something is good or morally right because it is natural. Example: „Animals eat other animals in nature, so it's natural for humans to do the same.“ It's important to recognize that not everything natural is necessarily beneficial or ethical. We can observe examples in nature such as cancer, a harmful disease, and instances of sexual aggression among animals. Despite their natural occurrence, these phenomena are widely recognized as negative, indicating that being natural does not automatically imply something is desirable or morally acceptable.

### Appeal to Tradition Fallacy

Arguing that something is right or justified simply because it has been done a certain way in the past. Example: „Eating animals has been a tradition for thousands of years, so it must be acceptable.“

### Anecdotal Fallacy

This fallacy occurs when an individual draws a general conclusion based on a limited number of personal anecdotes or isolated incidents, without considering a broader range of data or evidence. Example: „My uncle tried going vegan, but he became weak and got sick. Clearly, veganism is an unhealthy diet that doesn't work for everyone.“

### Bandwagon Fallacy

Believing that something is true or right because many other people believe it. Example: „Everyone I know eats meat, so it must be the right thing to do.“

### Equivocation Fallacy

Deliberately using ambiguous language or terms with multiple meanings to mislead or confuse the audience. Example: „Plants feel pain too, so there's no moral difference between eating animals and eating plants.“

### False Cause Fallacy

Incorrectly assuming that one event or action caused another simply because they happened in sequence. Example: „After I went vegan, I got sick, so veganism must have caused my illness.“

### False Dichotomy Fallacy

Presenting a situation as having only two possible options when, in reality, there are more than two. Example: „Going vegan step by step is better than not going vegan at all.“ This is clearly overlooking the fact that individuals can also make a conscious decision to embrace veganism immediately, recognizing the importance of taking immediate action to align their values with a compassionate lifestyle.



### Hasty Generalization Fallacy

Drawing a conclusion based on insufficient or limited evidence.

Example: „I know a vegan who got sick, so all vegans must be unhealthy.“

### Personal Incredulity Fallacy

Rejecting an argument or claim because it is difficult to understand or accept. Example: „I can't imagine living without cheese, so veganism must not be viable.“

### Red Herring Fallacy & Whataboutism

Both are tactics used to divert attention from the main issue by introducing an irrelevant topic or argument. Examples: „Veganism is impractical because there are more pressing global issues to solve.“ or „What about (new topic)...“.

### Slippery Slope Fallacy

Asserting that a particular action will inevitably lead to a series of increasingly negative consequences. Example: „If we stop using animals, the earth will be overpopulated by animals and they will take over the world.“

### Straw Man Fallacy

Misrepresenting or exaggerating someone's argument in order to make it easier to refute. Example: „Vegans want everyone to live on a diet of grass and lettuce.“

# Responding to Common Arguments Against Veganism and Abolition

When advocating for the abolition of animal exploitation and promoting veganism, it is common to encounter various arguments that challenge these principles. Understanding these arguments and providing effective counter-replies is crucial in engaging in productive discussions and fostering a greater understanding of the abolitionist approach. Let's explore some common arguments against veganism and the corresponding counter-replies.

## Arguments Related to The Status Quo

1. *„It's a personal choice not to live vegan.“*
2. *„Let people just eat what they want.“*
3. *„Our ancestors ate animals, and it helped us evolve.“*
4. *„It's survival, and humans are superior to animals.“*
5. *„Veganism is a first world issue and it's privileged.“*
6. *“There's no ethical consumption under capitalism”*
7. *„Veganism is inconvenient and requires a significant amount of effort. It's much easier and more convenient to follow a non-vegan diet.“*
8. *„It's natural / the circle of life.“*
9. *„It's tradition / culture / legal.“*

10. *„Veganism is too extreme. It's more practical to focus on reducing animal cruelty rather than eliminating it altogether.“*
11. *„Transitioning to a vegan lifestyle step-by-step allows for a smoother adjustment, making it easier to incorporate new dietary choices and habits.“*
12. *„Plants have feelings.“*
13. *„What about yeast/bacteria? Aren't those life-forms?“*

1. „It's a personal choice not to live vegan.“

Personal freedom of choice does not absolve us from the ethical implications of our actions. While individuals have the autonomy to make personal choices, it is imperative to acknowledge that not every choice aligns with ethical considerations. Opting to engage in the exploitation of animals for food, clothing, and other purposes disregards the inherent rights and well-being of these sentient beings. Such a choice is morally indefensible and contradicts the principles of justice and compassion.

2. „Let people just eat what they want.“

The freedom to choose what we eat is indeed a personal decision. Nevertheless, we also have to think about the ethical ramifications linked to specific ingredients. Fortunately, there are numerous vegan alternatives and recipes that provide options for individuals to enjoy their preferred meals while aligning with their values, allowing for a diverse and inclusive approach to food choices.

3. „Our ancestors ate animals, and it helped us evolve.“

The dietary practices of our ancestors may have included the consumption of animals, which played a role in our survival and evolutionary progress. However, our current understanding of nutrition and the profound impact our choices have on animals and the environment has prompted a reevaluation of our habits. Furthermore, scientific evidence, such as the study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (<https://www.pnas.org/doi/10.1073/pnas.2115540119>), suggests that our ancestors were predominantly plant-based, contradicting the notion that meat consumption was prevalent.

4. „It's survival, and humans are superior to animals.“

In a true survival scenario, it might be deemed understandable (though not morally justifiable) to resort to extreme measures, such as killing another individual for sustenance. However, the majority of us have the privilege of access to supermarkets, which transforms our circumstances from a matter of survival to one of personal choice. Moreover, the fact that humans may possess a higher level of intelligence or power does not grant us the authority to disregard the fundamental rights of other animals. If we were to adhere to the notion that strength determines what is right, we could potentially rationalize acts of murder or sexual assault as well.

5. „Veganism is a first world issue and it's privileged.“

Maintaining a non-vegan lifestyle while being fully aware of animal sentience and the environmental effects on *all* living beings (including humans) is a privileged stance that overlooks the inherent ethical concerns. Veganism is also a growing *global* movement that goes beyond socio-economic boundaries, including people from diverse backgrounds and cultures who choose to align their actions with ethical principles and compassion for all sentient beings.

6. “There's no ethical consumption under capitalism”

Our current capitalist system poses numerous challenges when it comes to ethical consumption but we can't forget about the importance of individual choices and the impact they can have. By embracing a vegan lifestyle, we actively reject the exploitation and commodification of animals, advocating for a more compassionate and sustainable approach to our interactions with other species.

7. „Veganism is inconvenient and requires a significant amount of effort. It's much easier and more convenient to follow a non-vegan diet.“

Transitioning to a vegan lifestyle may indeed require making some adjustments and facing inconveniences. However, it is crucial to recognize that the inconvenience argument should not overshadow the ethical considerations at hand. Merely relying on convenience as a justification for our choices does not make them morally



justifiable and it's important to acknowledge that the convenience of a non-vegan diet comes at the expense of immense animal rights violations and environmental degradation.

8. „It's natural / the circle of life.“

Appealing to the concept of nature or the circle of life does not justify the systematic exploitation and commodification of animals. While certain aspects of life and death may be considered natural, the practices involved in animal agriculture, such as selective breeding, artificial insemination, and factory farming, are human inventions that disrupt the natural order. We have the ability to transcend these practices and evolve towards a more ethical and harmonious coexistence with all living beings.

9. „It's tradition / culture / legal.“

Long-standing traditions, cultural practices, or legal frameworks do not automatically confer ethical legitimacy. History has shown that many practices, such as human slavery, or genital mutilation, have been deemed legal and traditional but ultimately recognized as grossly unethical. Ethical considerations should transcend cultural norms and legal frameworks.

10. „Veganism is too extreme. It's more practical to focus on reducing animal cruelty rather than eliminating it altogether.“

While incremental changes and efforts to reduce animal cruelty are commendable, the abolitionist approach recognizes that

true justice for animals lies in ending their exploitation entirely. Incremental reforms often fall short in addressing the root causes of animal suffering and can perpetuate the notion that animals are commodities to be used and killed for our convenience. By advocating for veganism and the abolition of animal exploitation, we aim to challenge the fundamental belief that animals are mere objects for human use and foster a society that respects the inherent fundamental rights and well-being of all animals.

11. „Transitioning to a vegan lifestyle step-by-step allows for a smoother adjustment, making it easier to incorporate new dietary choices and habits.“

Transitioning to a vegan lifestyle step by step might provide a sense of comfort at first, yet it is imperative to understand the ethical implications that cannot be overlooked. When we possess the knowledge of what is morally right, why persist in perpetuating actions that contradict our values? There are also plenty of [free resources](#) on how to go vegan.

12. „Plants have feelings.“

Even if we assume this to be true, a vegan lifestyle reduces harm to both animals and plants. Consuming animal products contributes to increased plant consumption, as the animals used for food are primarily fed large quantities of plants. Moreover, it's important to note that currently, there is no scientific evidence supporting the notion that plants possess sentience; they primarily react to

stimuli. Therefore, by adopting a vegan lifestyle, we minimize harm to both sentient beings and the plant kingdom.

13. „What about yeast/bacteria? Aren't those life-forms?“

Yeast and bacteria are indeed life-forms, but the ethical consideration of veganism is centered on minimizing harm and exploitation towards *sentient beings*. Although yeast and bacteria are living organisms, they lack the central nervous system, a brain, pain receptors, and the capacity for suffering that are present in *all* sentient animals.

### **Arguments Related to Food**

14. *“Other animals eat other animals.”*

15. *„I've seen the animals first hand at my trusted local farmer, they were happy and had a good life. It's all free-range.“*

16. *„Humans need meat to survive.“*

17. *„I only eat a little bit of meat.“*

18. *„We need milk for our bones.“*

19. *„But I could never give up cheese, I'm addicted!“*

20. *„But it tastes so good.“*

21. *„Animals are part of the food chain, it's natural to eat them.“*

22. *„It's our instinct to eat meat.“*

23. *„We need to eat animal products for nutrition.“*

24. *„Vegans are responsible for all the soy production and deforestation.“*



25. *„Eating fish is okay as they don't feel pain.“*
26. *„Animals would overrun us when we stop eating them.“*
27. *„But I can't get Vitamin B12 from a vegan diet, and supplements are unnatural.“*
28. *„But the animals are dead already, it would be a waste to not buy or eat them.“*
29. *„Eating soy-based products can lead to feminization in men and disrupt their natural hormone levels.“*
30. *„We have canine teeth, so we should eat animals.“*

14. *“Other animals eat other animals.”*

While certain animal species engage in predatory behaviors, including acts like rape and murder, their actions lack the moral agency found in humans who possess the capacity for moral reasoning. As moral beings, we have the responsibility to choose a compassionate and nonviolent path, recognizing that relying solely on the natural world for moral guidance can lead us astray.

15. *„I've seen the animals first hand at my trusted local farmer, they were happy and had a good life. It's all free-range.“*

While personal experiences with farmed animals can evoke positive emotions, it is vital to consider the broader ethical implications of animal exploitation. Regardless of the conditions or labels associated with animal products, the fundamental issue at hand is the violation of animals' rights. Ethically, it is irrelevant where the animal is located or how well they are treated when

their rights are still infringed upon. We also have to ask ourselves whether there is a significant distinction between ending the life of an animal that has suffered in poor conditions and ending the life of an animal that has enjoyed good conditions. In both instances, whether they had a miserable or joyous existence, truth remains that we prematurely end their existence in both scenarios.

16. „Humans need meat to survive.“

Protein is essential for human survival, and all plants contain protein. A vegan diet can provide all the necessary nutrients for optimal health and well-being without the need for animal protein.

17. „I only eat a little bit of meat.“

Even if we consume only a small amount of meat, it signifies our continued view of animals as commodities and our inadvertent support of animal exploitation.

18. „We need milk for our bones.“

For generations, we have been taught to believe in the inherent benefits of consuming dairy products for maintaining strong and healthy bones –this notion has become deeply ingrained in our cultural and societal beliefs. However, emerging research, as highlighted in recent studies (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4212225/>), challenges this long-standing assumption. These studies provide compelling evidence that contradicts the belief that dairy consumption is associated with improved bone

health. Moreover, when we consider that dairy is the mother's milk of another species, specifically meant for the nourishment of a rapidly growing calf, it raises the question of how we can believe it is naturally designed for human consumption.

19. „But I could never give up cheese, I'm addicted!“

Cheese made from cow's milk naturally contains casomorphines, compounds that play a role in the strong bond between calves and their mothers. These casomorphines can contribute to addictive tendencies, highlighting the importance of recognizing their addictive properties.

20. „But it tastes so good.“

While taste is undoubtedly a personal preference, it is important to recognize that palate pleasure alone is not a sufficient justification for causing harm and taking the life of another sentient being. Our taste buds should not outweigh the ethical considerations and moral implications associated with the choices we make.

21. „Animals are part of the food chain, it's natural to eat them.“

While it is true that animals have historically been a part of the food chain, our moral progress as a society challenges the notion that „might makes right.“ As humans, we possess the capacity for empathy and moral reasoning, allowing us to question and transcend our primal instincts. We have evolved to recognize that the mere ability to consume someone does not justify doing so.



22. „It's our instinct to eat meat.“

Unlike true carnivores, we lack innate hunting instincts that override our ethical considerations. Many individuals are sensitive to witnessing animal mistreatment, and the majority of people today would never engage in hunting and consuming animals raw with all their natural features, including eating their eyes, anus, eyeballs, and fur.

23. „We need to eat animal products for nutrition.“

A vegan diet can adequately provide all the necessary nutrients, challenging the notion that animal products are essential for nutrition. Extensive scientific research has shown that plant-exclusive diets can offer an abundance of protein, iron, calcium, and omega-3 fatty acids. This notion is further supported by respected health organizations like the American Dietetic Association (<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/19562864/>), which affirm that properly balanced vegan diets can be suitable for individuals across all age groups, including pregnant women, infants, and the elderly.

24. „Vegans are responsible for all the soy production and deforestation.“

Blaming vegans for all the soy production and deforestation is a misguided perspective. In reality, a significant portion of soy production is allocated for animal feed to sustain the industries involved in animal exploitation.





25. „Eating fish is okay as they don't feel pain.“

It is a misconception to believe that fish do not feel pain. In fact, fish, like other sentient animals, possess a brain, a central nervous system, and pain receptors that enable them to experience pain and suffer. Scientific research has demonstrated their capacity to perceive and respond to painful stimuli. Just because fish may express pain differently from mammals does not diminish their ability to experience suffering.

26. „Animals would overrun us when we stop eating them.“

The transition to a vegan world would occur gradually, driven by changes in supply and demand. Industries would gradually phase out the breeding of animals, resulting in a decrease in farmed animal populations. It is important to note that no animals would be left to run free; rather, they would not be brought into existence in the first place as a consequence of the shift towards veganism.

27. „But I can't get Vitamin B12 from a vegan diet, and supplements are unnatural.“

It is a common concern that a vegan diet may lack Vitamin B12, which is nowadays primarily found in animal-based foods. However, Vitamin B12 is actually produced by bacteria, and historically, humans obtained it from unwashed plant foods that were contaminated with B12 by bacteria living in water and soil. While supplements are often used to ensure sufficient B12 intake on a vegan diet, they are not unnatural. In fact, many commercially

available B12 supplements are derived from bacterial fermentation, similar to the natural sources of B12 found in unwashed plant foods. It is worth mentioning that animals raised for food also have to be supplemented with B12.

28. „But the animals are dead already, it would be a waste to not buy or eat them.“

While it may seem like a waste to not consume animal products, it is important to recognize that supporting the demand for these products perpetuates the cycle of breeding animals into existence solely for human consumption. By abstaining from purchasing animal products, we can send a clear message to the industry that there is no longer a demand for further exploitation. It is through our choices that we can create a shift towards a more compassionate and sustainable future. Additionally, it is important to distinguish between situations of survival, where resource scarcity may necessitate certain actions, and situations of choice, such as being in a supermarket, where we have the ability to make informed decisions aligned with our values.

29. „Eating soy-based products can lead to feminization in men and disrupt their natural hormone levels.“

This claim is not supported by scientific evidence. While soy and other plant foods contain phytoestrogens, which are plant compounds that have a similar structure to estrogen, they do not function in the same way as human estrogen. Phytoestrogens

have a very weak estrogenic effect in the body and do not disrupt hormonal balance. In fact, studies have shown that moderate soy consumption can have potential health benefits, including a reduced risk of certain cancers. It is important to base our understanding on scientific research rather than myths or misinformation.

30. „We have canine teeth, so we should eat animals.“

Our possession of canine teeth, whether we are omnivores or herbivores, does not imply that we are *meant* to consume animal flesh, and it certainly does not determine the ethical considerations involved. Unlike carnivorous animals, our canine teeth are not primarily designed for tearing raw meat; they are much smaller and less prominent compared to the sharp, elongated canines of true carnivores. Instead, our canine teeth are better suited for biting and tearing into larger fruits like apples, reflecting our natural inclination towards a vegan diet. Interestingly, gorillas possess very large canine teeth, which they primarily utilize to impress others and tear apart large plants. This showcases the versatility of these teeth beyond meat consumption. Furthermore, our digestive system is not optimized for the efficient processing of raw meat, it is rather designed for a slower digestion process, similar to the digestive tract of gorillas, which have an elongated digestive system to accommodate the longer digestion time required for plants. Additionally, unlike carnivores, our bodies do not naturally produce vitamin C, and the relatively weak acidity

of our stomachs further supports the notion of our biological adaptation to a vegan diet. Biologically, humans *are* herbivores who have adapted to consume a range of foods, including both plant-based and animal-based sources. However, scientific evidence indicates that relying heavily on animal products can lead to health problems such as elevated cholesterol levels, clogged arteries, and heart disease.

### **Arguments Related to Animals**

31. *„Animals are bred to be eaten.“*
32. *„The animals are killed humanely.“*
33. *„Animals are not morally significant“*
34. *„Animals are not capable of experiencing suffering or having complex emotions like humans.“*
35. *„Animals just live in the moment, that's why they don't care about what we do to them.“*
36. *„Animals are not as intelligent as humans.“*
37. *„Animals will go extinct if the world goes vegan!“*
38. *„Avoiding harm is impossible. Vegans also harm animals in the process because many rodents and mice are killed in crop production.“*
39. *„Cows need to be milked.“*
40. *„Farmed animals live a better life than they would in the wild.“*
41. *„Hunting and fishing for wildlife management and conservation efforts is important and necessary!“*

31. „Animals are bred to be eaten.“

Animals being bred for consumption does not alter the fact that they are sentient beings with fundamental rights. Regardless of the market demand for their breeding, we cannot morally justify treating them as mere resources, products, or commodities, thereby infringing upon their inherent rights.

32. „The animals are killed humanely.“

The claim that animals are killed „humanely“ is inherently flawed, as the concept of killing someone humanely is contradictory and incompatible. True humane treatment would imply respecting the fundamental rights of animals, which includes not intentionally causing harm or taking their lives for human consumption.

33. „Animals are not morally significant“

It is crucial to recognize that the key factor determining moral significance is sentience. Just as we reject the notion of treating impaired humans as mere resources, we must uphold the principle of equal consideration for animals. By embracing this perspective, we foster an enhanced respect for the value of *all* forms of life, overcoming the bias of speciesism.

34. „Animals are not capable of experiencing suffering or having complex emotions like humans.“

Research in the fields of biology, neuroscience, and animal behavior has provided overwhelming evidence that animals are

sentient beings capable of experiencing pain, pleasure, and a wide range of emotions. They have complex cognitive abilities and social structures, and they display behaviors that indicate their capacity for joy, fear, love, and grief. Denying the emotional and cognitive lives of animals is a disservice to the scientific evidence and disregards their intrinsic value as individuals deserving of moral consideration.

35. „Animals just live in the moment, that’s why they don’t care about what we do to them.“

Animals possess cognitive abilities that allow them to think in future terms. For instance, when a dog seeks to be petted by a human, they demonstrate an understanding that approaching the human will result in receiving affection – this is evident from their deliberate choice to approach the human rather than going to the fridge in anticipation of receiving petting. This behavior indicates that the dog can anticipate the future outcome of their actions and make decisions accordingly. Animals do not simply live in the moment; they possess the ability to think ahead, even if it’s just for a brief moment. Moreover, when considering individuals with cognitive disabilities who lack the ability to think about the future, would we similarly conclude that their lives hold no value?

36. „Animals are not as intelligent as humans.“

The argument that animals can be morally excluded due to their lack of human-like intelligence fails when examined in the context

of human beings. If we were to exclude individuals based on their intelligence or cognitive abilities, we would encounter absurd and morally inconsistent outcomes. Just as we do not exclude humans with lesser cognitive abilities, such as babies, based on their intelligence, it is morally inconsistent to exclude animals for the same reason. The use of intelligence, or any other specific trait, should not serve as a basis for denying animals their moral standing. It is a form of moral exclusion and oppression, and it perpetuates speciesism, a biased perspective that favors humans over other species.

37. „Animals will go extinct if the world goes vegan!“

By refraining from supporting the breeding of animals into existence, we contribute to a gradual shift away from existing farmed animals and the exploitation they endure. If this leads to the decline or extinction of certain genetically modified animals, it is a justified outcome, as their existence and continued exploitation should not be solely based on human visual pleasure.

38. „Avoiding harm is impossible. Vegans also harm animals in the process because many rodents and mice are killed in crop production.“

Although it is true that animals are unintentionally harmed during the production of vegan foods and clothing, it is important to consider that the animals used for food and clothing consume vast amounts of plants. Consequently, they also contribute to a significant number of crop deaths. Although we can aim to



develop methods that eliminate crop deaths completely, the use of animals for food and clothing *inherently* involves intentional harm to animals. Therefore, if our goal is to minimize harm in crop production, adopting a vegan lifestyle becomes a necessary step to take.

39. „Cows need to be milked.“

Cows have been selectively bred and genetically manipulated to produce excessive amounts of mother's milk, often leading to overstimulation and discomfort of their mammary glands. When cows are not regularly milked, they can experience pain due to the pressure and fullness caused by the accumulation of milk. It's crucial to recognize that cow's milk is naturally meant for their calves, not for human consumption, the idea that we require cow's milk is no different from claiming a need for donkey, rat, horse, or giraffe milk. Moreover, it is worth noting that regulations permit a certain tolerance of pus and blood in dairy products due to the unavoidable consequences of genetic manipulation in cows, which often suffer from regular infections in the dairy industry. This reality highlights the ethical concerns surrounding the exploitation of cows for their milk production.

40. „Farmed animals live a better life than they would in the wild.“

The argument that farmed animals have a better life than they would in the wild overlooks the fact that farmed animals, as we know them today, do not exist in the wild. It also fails to



acknowledge the deprivation of their natural behaviors caused by intensive farming practices. While life in the wild presents challenges, it also allows animals to live according to their instincts and engage in natural behaviors. In contrast, farmed animals often face confinement, overcrowding, and the denial of their basic needs, ultimately leading to their inevitable fate in the slaughterhouse due to their status as property.

41. „Hunting and fishing for wildlife management and conservation efforts is important and necessary!“

While the goal of wildlife management and conservation is indeed important, we have to question whether hunting is truly necessary for achieving these objectives. The abolitionist approach advocates for a comprehensive shift away from exploiting and harming animals, including through hunting. Instead, we can promote non-lethal and sustainable alternatives such as sterilization, habitat preservation, and ecosystem restoration.

### **Arguments Related To Personal Views**

42. *„I support vegans! I could never do it myself, but I’m an ally!“*

43. *„Morality is subjective.“*

44. *„You can’t be 100% vegan.“*

45. *„You’re not vegan if you kill food moths and other pests!“*

46. *„What if you were stranded on a desert island with a pig?“*

47. *„One person can’t make a difference.“*

48. *„I don't want to feel like an outsider when it comes to family dinners and social gatherings because I want to enjoy the same meals as everyone else.“*
49. *„I don't have time to deal with that issue and to do something about it.“*
50. *„Due to my depression and mental health issues, it presents a challenge for me to transition to a vegan lifestyle immediately.“*
51. *„God put animals here for us to eat, so it is our right and purpose to consume them as part of our diet.“*
52. *„I don't have money to support animal rights organisations!“*
53. *„Veganism is an ideology that imposes beliefs on others, and it may not be appropriate to force children or pets to be vegan.“*
54. *„It's too expensive to go vegan!“*
55. *„They way vegans act puts me off being vegan.“*
56. *„But you have an iphone which is also unethical, so it's okay for me to eat a burger from time to time.“*
57. *„Wearing fake fur and fake leather is not vegan at all.“*

42. *„I support vegans! I could never do it myself, but I'm an ally!“*  
 True allyship goes beyond mere words, as it demands tangible actions. By consciously opting not to adopt a vegan lifestyle, we inadvertently contribute to the continued exploitation of animals, rendering our claims of being a „vegan ally“ empty and insincere. To genuinely embody allyship, it is essential to wholeheartedly embrace a vegan lifestyle and actively work towards ending animal exploitation instead of perpetuating it. By consistently taking

action, we have the power to genuinely show compassion towards others and create a meaningful impact. It's time to not just talk the compassionate talk, but to walk it as well. Anything else is just lip service.

43. „Morality is subjective.“

If morality is subjective and purely based on personal opinion, then *any* action could be considered justifiable, including acts like rape and murder. However, we universally condemn these acts as immoral, which demonstrates that morality extends beyond personal beliefs. Morality is not simply a matter of opinion; it is grounded in the objective recognition of harm and the understanding that intentionally causing harm is morally wrong. It might be a subjective framework influenced by cultural, religious, and individual perspectives, but that doesn't mean that everything we do is ethical just because we consider it moral. Take, for example, the deliberate act of running over a cat and the unintentional act of stepping on an ant. These actions arise from distinct intentions, where one can be deemed both immoral and unethical due to the intentional harm caused, while the other may be considered morally acceptable and ethically sound as it lacks the intent to cause harm.

44. „You can't be 100% vegan.“

Being 100% vegan can be challenging in a world where animal products can be found in unexpected places, including streets and

buildings, personal care products like toothpaste, and even the adhesive components utilized in our mobile devices. This does not absolve us of our responsibility to minimize harm and strive towards a more compassionate lifestyle though. Rather than using these limitations as an excuse, we should focus on the actions we can take to reduce animal exploitation and make a positive impact.

45. „You’re not vegan if you kill food moths and other pests!“  
Although veganism advocates for avoiding harm and exploitation of animals to the best of our abilities, there are situations where our own survival and health take precedence. When faced with food moths and „pests“ that pose a threat to our food supply or other essential aspects of our lives, our priority shifts to safeguarding our sustenance and minimizing potential risks. It’s important to explore alternatives like living traps, repellents, or maintaining cleanliness to prevent their presence or nests without resorting to killing, providing us with moral options in these situations.

46. „What if you were stranded on a desert island with a pig?“  
If I were stranded on a desert island, I would explore all possible options for survival that align with my values of nonviolence and compassion. I would prioritize understanding the local ecosystem, including what edible plants are available and what the natural food sources for animals like pigs are. Additionally, I would explore alternative sources of sustenance, such as diving into the

ocean to search for edible algae. Even in a survival situation, I believe it is essential to seek nonviolent solutions and prioritize the well-being of all living beings, including animals. While I would exhaust all possibilities first, if no other options were available, using other animals for survival might be excusable.

47. „One person can't make a difference.“

Grassroots movements have a significant impact on driving social change. Although one person may feel small, history has shown that when a committed minority reaches around 4% of society, it can be a tipping point for larger transformation. The suffragette movement is a powerful example of how dedicated individuals can inspire others and ultimately bring about significant shifts in society. By actively participating in grassroots movements, raising awareness, and inspiring others, individuals can make a meaningful difference and shape the course of history.

48. „I don't want to feel like an outsider when it comes to family dinners and social gatherings because I want to enjoy the same meals as everyone else.“

It is understandable to desire inclusion and enjoy communal meals, but it is also important to understand that these desires do not justify the continued exploitation of animals. Instead, we can view these gatherings as an opportunity to engage in dialogue with our loved ones and have meaningful conversations about animal rights. Also, our families have the freedom to consume whatever they

desire on the remaining days of the year, as we cannot impose a vegan lifestyle on others. However, as a gesture of respect towards vegans, it is considerate to abstain from consuming non-vegan products when they are present. This demonstrates empathy and understanding, as non-vegans can still partake in vegan food options, whereas the reverse is often not feasible and can be disheartening for those who follow a vegan lifestyle. By making compassionate choices and inviting our families to a vegan meal, we can actively showcase alternatives that are not only equally delicious and satisfying but also inclusive of everyone's dietary preferences.

49. „I don't have time to deal with that issue and to do something about it.“

Veganism, as a non-action approach, actively contributes to a more compassionate world by refraining from participating in animal exploitation. By simply choosing not to engage in such practices, we create a significant impact. While the initial transition to a vegan lifestyle may require a bit effort, it ultimately becomes as effortless as before once we have made the switch. This nonviolent path empowers us to distance ourselves from practices that infringe upon the rights of animals, allowing us to live in alignment with our values of compassion and respect.

50. „Due to my depression and mental health issues, it presents a challenge for me to transition to a vegan lifestyle immediately.“





While mental health issues can be difficult to navigate, we have to understand that our ethical responsibilities extend beyond our personal circumstances. Just as we wouldn't justify engaging in sexist or racist behavior due to mental health issues, the same principle applies to our treatment of animals. Seeking support from mental health professionals, joining vegan support groups, or connecting with online vegan communities can provide valuable guidance to navigate the immediate transition to a vegan lifestyle.

51. „God put animals here for us to eat, so it is our right and purpose to consume them as part of our diet.“

If God exists and they put animals on Earth for us to consume, why did they give them the ability to suffer and feel pain? Wouldn't that be very cruel? It seems more likely that God intended for us to show compassion and care for all their creations. Perhaps God is testing us to see if we have the empathy and kindness to treat animals with respect and not cause unnecessary harm.

52. „I don't have money to support animal rights organisations!“

It's important to recognize that supporting animal rights organizations or charity financially or in any other capacity is not a mandatory requirement when embracing a vegan lifestyle. Also, *all* animal rights organizations promote welfareism rather than veganism or the complete abolition of animal use, which means that they're actually promoting continued animal exploitation.

53. „Veganism is an ideology that imposes beliefs on others, and it may not be appropriate to force children or pets to be vegan.“

When we raise children, everything we teach them is literally shaping their worldview and influencing their beliefs. It is our responsibility as parents to guide them and instill values that we consider important for their well-being and the world they will inherit. Just as we teach children about kindness, empathy, and respect for others, veganism is a philosophy that promotes these very principles. It teaches them to recognize the moral value of animals and to make choices that align with their compassionate values. After all, it is widely understood that children generally display an innate empathy towards animals, and deviations from this norm are often seen as potential indicators of concerning behavioral tendencies. At this point, it is also important to distinguish between indoctrination and education – veganism, as an ethical stance, encourages critical thinking and informed decision-making regarding the consequences of their actions and the impact on sentient beings and the environment.

Dogs and cats can thrive on vegan diets, as supported by scientific research, given that they receive appropriate nutritional considerations and guidance from veterinarians to fulfill their dietary requirements without relying on animal products. It is vital to prioritize the welfare of animals and make informed decisions that align with our ethical values, ensuring the well-being of both our companion animals and the animals trapped in the food system.



54. „It's too expensive to go vegan!“

Contrary to the perception that veganism is costly, there are numerous affordable options available for those who choose to adopt a vegan lifestyle. Basic food staples such as beans, rice, noodles, bread, lentils, quinoa, oats, potatoes, corn, chickpeas, tofu, tempeh, and a variety of seasonal fruits and vegetables are usually cheap in comparison to highly-processed foods, readily accessible at every supermarket, and can form the basis of affordable and nutritious vegan meals. By incorporating these versatile and cost-effective ingredients into their diet, individuals can enjoy a wide range of delicious vegan dishes without straining their budget.

55. „The way vegans act puts me off being vegan.“

The actions and behaviors of a few individuals within the vegan community should not overshadow the collective efforts and values of the movement as a whole. Although there may be some vegans who come across as aggressive or judgmental, it is important to recognize that they do not represent the entirety of vegans.

56. „But you have a iPhone which is also unethical, so it's okay for me to eat a burger from time to time.“

It's true that the production of electronic devices like iPhones involves ethical concerns, it's vital to address each issue separately instead of using it to justify unethical choices in other areas.

Highlighting one issue shouldn't undermine the significance of others, but rather inspire us to pursue progress on multiple fronts.

57. „Wearing fake fur and fake leather is not vegan at all.“

Just as we strive to ensure that vegan meat alternatives are widely accessible, we should also aim to provide a variety of vegan alternatives for clothing and accessories. One example of positive progress is the clear marking of vegan products, such as the vegan DocMartens with a distinctive beige tag on each shoe. Clearly labeling vegan items, whether it's food, clothing, or makeup, helps raise awareness and ensures that people have access to alternatives that align with their values. This promotes informed decision-making and empowers individuals to choose cruelty-free options. While wearing fake fur or fake leather can be considered vegan as it avoids animal harm, it's important to acknowledge that confusion may arise when vegan alternatives are not clearly marked.

### **Arguments Related To Humans**

58. *„Veganism prioritizes animal rights over human rights and social justice.“*

59. *„Other issues are more important.“*

60. *„Veganism threatens the livelihoods of small-scale farmers and agricultural workers.“*

61. *„Not everyone in the world can go vegan.“*

62. *„Veganism lacks accessibility in marginalized communities, perpetuating food insecurity.“*

63. *„Veganism perpetuates food imperialism and disregards the socio-economic dependence on animal agriculture.“*
64. *„Prioritizing human rights alongside animal rights ensures we address the struggles of marginalized communities. We also have to fight white supremacy within veganism, as not every nonwhite person has the same ability or access to adopt a vegan lifestyle.“*
65. *„Humans need trained animals like service or police dogs.“*
66. *„In a vegan world there would be no pets, which is terrible. Humans need companion animals so they don't feel alone.“*

58. *„Veganism prioritizes animal rights over human rights and social justice.“*

Just because we care about one social justice issue, it doesn't mean we can't care about other issues. Veganism is not a zero-sum game where one set of rights must be prioritized over another. It is a philosophy that recognizes the inherent value and rights of *all* sentient beings, meaning that veganism embraces the belief that *animal rights are human rights*. So by advocating for animal rights, we are not detracting from the importance of human rights or social justice. In fact, many individuals and organizations involved in the vegan movement actively work towards addressing various social justice concerns.

59. *„Other issues are more important.“*

It is not a matter of choosing one issue over another. We can and should care about multiple issues simultaneously. Recognizing the

ethical imperative of veganism does not diminish the significance of other pressing concerns but broadens our capacity for compassion and justice.

60. „Veganism threatens the livelihoods of small-scale farmers and agricultural workers.“

While it is true that veganism may have an impact on certain sectors of the agricultural industry, it is important to remember that societal progress often involves transitioning away from practices that are deemed unethical or harmful. Just as the abolition of slavery led to the demise of industries that relied on forced labor, the shift towards veganism reflects a growing recognition of the ethical concerns surrounding animal exploitation. Furthermore, the vegan community is actively engaged in supporting farmers during this transition. There are initiatives and resources available to help farmers shift towards vegan agriculture, providing assistance in areas such as alternative crop cultivation, sustainable farming practices, and marketing strategies for vegan products.

61. „Not everyone in the world can go vegan.“

It's not solely about the actions of others, but rather the choices and actions each of us, as individuals, can make. It may be true that not everyone in the world can readily adopt a vegan lifestyle but this does not negate the responsibility for those who have the ability to do so. We have to understand that *convenience* should





not be confused with *necessity*, and while living a vegan lifestyle may present occasional inconveniences, it is crucial to distinguish between situations where it is merely inconvenient and situations where it is genuinely impossible to live fully vegan. Inconvenience should *never* be used as a justification for unethical practices. When we possess the capacity to choose veganism, it becomes our *moral imperative* to embrace it and strive to live as vegan as possible.

62. „Veganism lacks accessibility in marginalized communities, perpetuating food insecurity.“

It's important to acknowledge the socio-economic barriers faced by marginalized communities, and to advocate for the availability of affordable and easily accessible vegan options in food deserts and low-income neighborhoods. But it is equally essential to understand that veganism is a universal philosophy that can be embraced by individuals worldwide – the presence of vegans across the globe highlights the inclusivity of this lifestyle.

By challenging the exploitative practices of the food industry and promoting sustainable and equitable food systems, veganism has the potential to contribute to addressing systemic issues of poverty and food insecurity. It is necessary to foster dialogue, understanding, and collaboration to ensure that all communities have access to healthy and ethically sourced food options.

63. „Veganism perpetuates food imperialism and disregards the socio-economic dependence on animal agriculture.“

The notion that veganism perpetuates food imperialism and ignores the socio-economic dependence on animal agriculture fails to fully grasp the nuanced nature of these matters. Veganism is rooted in a fundamental desire to challenge exploitative practices across various industries, including food, clothing, entertainment, research, and pet industries, with a particular focus on addressing the systemic inequalities and injustices embedded within animal agriculture. This philosophy acknowledges the urgent necessity to revolutionize our food systems, reallocating resources from animal agriculture to sustainable and vegan alternatives. By advocating for a transition to vegan alternatives and promoting sustainable farming practices, veganism not only seeks to safeguard the fundamental rights of sentient beings but also strives to dismantle the structures that perpetuate food imperialism and cultivate a more equitable global food system.

64. „Prioritizing human rights alongside animal rights ensures we address the struggles of marginalized communities. We also have to fight white supremacy within veganism, as not every nonwhite person has the same ability or access to adopt a vegan lifestyle.“ Simultaneously addressing multiple forms of oppression while recognizing the importance of animal rights is crucial, as animals deserve their own rights movement, being marginalized and voiceless. Drawing a parallel between white supremacy and the

ability or access of nonwhite individuals to adopt a vegan lifestyle is an unfounded argument because the decision to stop viewing animals as products, resources, and commodities is a mindset that can be embraced by people of all races and backgrounds. The presence of nonwhite vegans worldwide serves as evidence that anyone can choose to live a compassionate and ethical life, regardless of their racial or cultural background. We have to focus on promoting inclusivity and understanding, rather than perpetuating unfounded claims that divide and create unnecessary divisions within the vegan community.

65. „Humans need trained animals like service or police dogs.“

The abolitionist approach challenges the notion of relying on trained animals like service or police dogs, acknowledging that the current methods often involve intense training where the animals are subjected to breaking their spirit and suppressing their natural instincts. In many cases, these animals undergo rigorous training regimens that aim to mold them into obedient beings, disregarding their inherent autonomy and well-being. Instead, we should advocate for alternative methods and technologies that respect animal rights.

66. „In a vegan world there would be no pets, which is terrible.

Humans need companion animals so they don't feel alone.“

Humans seek animal companionship to alleviate loneliness, but our responsibility in the overpopulation crisis and strain

on animal shelters cannot be ignored. In a vegan world without intentional breeding, the concept of traditional pets might change, but it doesn't mean there wouldn't be opportunities to care for and help animals in need, such as stray animals or those injured or orphaned. While it may not happen within our lifetime, striving towards a more responsible and compassionate approach is essential. This approach would prevent the perpetuation of conditional love, where animals are brought into existence solely to fulfill *our* emotional needs, akin to expecting children to solely care for us when we're older. Instead, we can advocate for adoption, spaying/neutering, and promoting a culture of responsible animal care that goes *beyond* the concept of pet ownership and prioritizes the well-being of nonhuman animals over our own desires.

# The Perfect Dialogue

The following dialogue exemplifies my approach to engaging in a conversation about animal rights and veganism with the intention of advocating for the abolition of all forms of animal exploitation. Through thoughtful communication, this dialogue aims to inspire the other party to reconsider their views and embrace a compassionate perspective that respects the rights of animals.

The dialogue has three different stages:

1. Clarification and Building a Common Base
2. Questioning a Non-Vegan Lifestyle
3. Agreeing on Veganism as The Only Rational Response

V (vegan) and N (non-vegan) are engaged in a conversation when the topic of veganism arises. Before it continues, it's a good idea to ask N if they know what veganism is.

## **1. Clarification and Building a Common Base**

V: Do you know what veganism is?

N: Well, it means not eating animals or anything that comes from animals, right?

V: A vegan diet is certainly a foundation of vegan living. Veganism, however, extends far beyond that. It is a powerful animal rights movement, a justice movement, that rejects the exploitation of

nonhuman animals as mere resources, objects, or property. It acknowledges them as sentient beings with inherent rights rather than mere things. Have you ever thought about the distinction between someone and something?

N: Humans are someone, anything else is something, right?

V: Well, something could be a chair, and someone could be me or you, for example. It's perfectly acceptable to use a chair as we please because it lacks sentience. It does not experience its own reality, feel pain, or have any needs. It doesn't care when we kick it or lock it up. However, both you and I, as well as all the other animals, are different. Do you think it's okay to use someone, regardless of how they are treated during the process?

N: No, it's not okay to use someone. But those are just animals; they're different from us.

V: What specific characteristic of animals justifies excluding them from our moral community and treating them differently?

N: They are not as intelligent as we are.

V: So, if a human is not intelligent enough, is it acceptable to morally exclude and treat them differently?

N: No, of course not. But animals are not humans.

V: Is the distinguishing characteristic species?

N: Yes.

V: Moral exclusion based on species is just as discriminatory and morally reprehensible as excluding someone based on their gender or skin color, wouldn't you agree? ...



## 2. Questioning a Non-Vegan Lifestyle

N: ...Yes, I suppose so. But if we treat the animals well, it's not so bad for them, right?

V: ... The problem is not how we treat animals. It's that we use them in the first place. By using animals, we prioritize our interests over theirs, assert ownership rights, and objectify these sentient beings, even though they are not objects but individuals. In the human context, we call this slavery.

N: But animals are different from humans. We need them for food and other things.

V: Actually, we don't need to use animals for our survival or well-being. In fact, numerous scientific studies have shown that a vegan diet can provide all the necessary nutrients for a healthy life. Additionally, advancements in vegan alternatives have made it easier than ever to find cruelty-free options for clothing, cosmetics, and other products. So, the question becomes: Is it justifiable to exploit and use animals for our convenience and pleasure when we don't have to?

N: I guess I've never really thought about it that way.

V: It's understandable. Society has conditioned us to view animals as commodities to satisfy our desires. But we have the capacity to challenge these ingrained beliefs and adopt a more compassionate and ethical stance towards animals. It's about recognizing their inherent value and granting them the fundamental rights they deserve...



### **3. Agreeing on Veganism as The Only Rational Response**

N: ...I see your point, but isn't it unrealistic to expect everyone to go vegan?

V: I understand your concern, and it is true that advocating for everyone to adopt veganism overnight may seem unrealistic.

However, it is important to recognize that the goal of promoting veganism as the only ethical response to animal exploitation is not based on practicality alone. It is grounded in the belief that justice and compassion should extend to all sentient beings, regardless of species. Ultimately, veganism is the only rational response to the moral dilemma posed by animal exploitation.

N: I never thought about veganism from this perspective before. I suppose it's time for me to reevaluate my choices and consider making a change.

V: That's wonderful to hear! There are plenty of resources, recipes, and communities that can help make the transition easier.

Rather than viewing it as a daunting task, think of it as a series of conscious choices, one meal at a time, with each vegan meal being a step towards aligning your actions with your values and contributing to a more compassionate world!

That's just an example of how a conversation could take place (and how my conversations usually go). It's also helpful to tell the non-vegan person that adopting a vegan mindset allows for immediate and meaningful change, and that by replacing unethical

ingredients with ethical alternatives and consciously evaluating our purchases, we have the power embrace veganism *right away*. This shift in mindset enables us to see that going vegan is not only feasible but also an empowering choice within our reach.

To better understand someone's resistance to veganism, it can also be helpful to ask *why* they haven't made the switch yet. By knowing their reasons, we can address their concerns and debunk any arguments that may be holding them back. This dialogue can help them ethically recognize that their justifications for not adopting a vegan lifestyle cannot withstand ethical scrutiny.

With this approach, people are often very receptive to the idea of change, as they typically don't agree with violating the fundamental rights of others (animals qualify as „others“) and don't wish to participate in such practices any longer. It's worth noting that most people may not have been exposed to the concept of animal rights, but once they become aware of it, they are more likely to align their beliefs and actions accordingly.

*When discussing veganism, it's important to remember that not everyone will immediately embrace the idea. People have different beliefs and perspectives, and not everyone will care about animal rights or other animals at all. While we can engage in longer conversations, it's essential to understand that some individuals may not be receptive. These people are not the target audience.*

# Challenging the Status Quo

## The Truth About Sanctuaries, Shelters, and Vets

Animal sanctuaries, shelters, and veterinary practices play vital roles in the well-being and care of animals. Sanctuaries provide a haven for animals to live freely and peacefully until their natural deaths, away from the cycle of exploitation. Shelters serve as temporary homes for animals in need, rescuing them from abandonment or abuse and working tirelessly to find them loving forever homes. Veterinary practices ensure the health and welfare of animals, providing medical care and guidance to promote their well-being. Together, these institutions represent our collective commitment to compassion and the protection of animal rights, although built-in challenges and contradictions within the system serve as reminders of the ongoing progress needed to align their practices with these principles.

### Sanctuaries

The truth about sanctuaries unveils a paradox within our existing system that often fails to account for places where animals can live freely until their natural deaths. Many sanctuaries, despite their noble mission, face legal hurdles due to the lack of specific provisions for their unique purpose. As a result, they are typically classified as farms for animal farming under the law, which leads to certain regulations that contradict their true nature.

One unfortunate consequence of this classification is the requirement for animals on sanctuaries to wear ear tags, identifying them as „livestock“ in the eyes of the law. This labeling is a legal formality rather than a reflection of their status within the sanctuary, where they are regarded as individuals deserving of care, compassion, and freedom. The necessity for such tags highlights the inadequacy of our legal framework to accommodate spaces solely dedicated to providing a haven for animals to live out their lives in peace. Another challenging aspect is the process that unfolds when an animal passes away at a sanctuary. In most cases, a specialized vehicle for carcass transportation is dispatched to collect the deceased animals, while in certain countries, additional processing may take place, such as the transformation of the remains into fertilizer. This practice may seem contradictory to the sanctuary's purpose, but it is sometimes the only available option because sanctuaries were never intended to be part of the established system.

## Shelters

Shelters often find themselves overwhelmed with animals, especially during the holiday season, due to excessive breeding and the demand for animals from breeders. Unfortunately, this influx of animals means that some individuals at shelters may struggle to find new homes, leading to overcrowding and limited resources. When shelters become too full, they face difficult decisions, including the possibility of euthanizing sick or older animals

to make space for incoming animals. This heartbreaking reality highlights the dire consequences of an inadequate system that fails to provide sufficient support and resources for animal shelters.

### Veterinarians

While veterinarians hold a pivotal position in delivering vital care for animals, it is disheartening to acknowledge that the majority of them do not adhere to a vegan lifestyle. This reality raises ethical concerns regarding the consistency of their principles and practices in providing compassionate treatment to their animal patients. Furthermore, veterinarians occasionally visit farms to oversee living conditions and „welfare“ regulations, where animals are subjected to exploitation, thereby raising apprehensions about their involvement in supporting industries that sustain and perpetuate the cycle of animal exploitation.

These complex issues surrounding sanctuaries, shelters, and veterinarians highlight the need for systemic changes and greater awareness. Prioritizing adoption, responsible pet ownership, supporting animal sanctuaries, and promoting veganism within the veterinary profession can collectively reduce shelter populations, and nurture a culture of care and compassion.



## Activism and the Abolitionist Approach

While personal choices such as adopting a vegan lifestyle are important, they are not enough to create the systemic change necessary to end animal exploitation. Advocacy and activism play a crucial role in raising awareness, shifting cultural attitudes, and pressuring policymakers and corporations to take action.

Advocacy and activism can take many forms, from writing letters and signing petitions to participating in protests and direct actions. However, the most powerful approach to advocating for animal rights is to engage in direct conversations with others about the issues and encourage them to consider their own complicity in animal exploitation. *This can be a challenging and uncomfortable process, but it is necessary in order to create meaningful change.*

The significance of discussing animal exploitation with those close to us cannot be overstated, as personal connections and shared values have a profound impact. It is essential to stress that our intention is not to pass judgment or criticize individuals, but rather to inspire critical thinking and introspection regarding their actions. Taking a stand against speciesist attitudes falls squarely within our purview and carries the same weight as confronting any manifestation of discrimination, be it based on race, gender, or any other characteristic that unfairly subjects certain beings to prejudice and harm. Through these dialogues, we can set in

motion a ripple effect of change – our friends, family, and co-workers possess their own networks and spheres of influence, thereby amplifying the impact of challenging speciesist beliefs within our immediate circles and contributing to a broader societal transformation.

Some other examples of effective activism include:

- Organizing protests and demonstrations to raise awareness about animal exploitation and advocate for policy changes.
- Conducting undercover investigations to expose the harms of animal agriculture and other industries that exploit animals.
- Supporting animal sanctuaries and other organizations that provide refuge and care for animals rescued from exploitation.
- Engaging in online activism through social media, petitions, and other forms of digital advocacy.

In advocating against injustice, it is not always necessary to subject people to graphic footage. Just as we don't need explicit scenes of rape to convey its wrongness, the same applies to the exploitation of nonhuman animals. While footage can be important for awareness, it can also be distressing and cause total disengagement. However, we must make clear that everyone *should* be willing to confront how their „food“ and „clothes“ are sourced, as many remain oblivious to the harsh realities involved. We could, for example, offer people the option to watch footage on their own



time or provide support in viewing it together. This approach respects individual boundaries while fostering understanding and action.

It is important to recognize that activism can take many different forms, and that there is no one „right“ way to get involved in the animal rights movement. Some people may choose to focus on advocacy and policy changes, while others may prioritize direct action and protests. What truly matters is our collective unity in spreading a clear and resounding message: *We have to abolish all animal use, and welcome the ethical principle of refraining from treating individuals as mere commodities.*

## Single Issue Campaigns

Single issue campaigns, although well-intentioned, can be problematic when it comes to promoting the broader goals of the abolitionist approach. While they may raise awareness about specific animal products, they can inadvertently lead to a distorted perception of acceptable alternatives and fail to convey the comprehensive message of animal rights. This chapter explores the limitations of single issue campaigns and highlights the importance of a clear and consistent message in advocating for the end of all animal use.

Single issue campaigns often center on one specific animal product, such as fur, while disregarding others like leather or wool. This narrow focus can unintentionally create the impression that certain forms of exploitation are more acceptable than others. By solely targeting one industry, we risk promoting the notion that shifting from one animal product to another is a satisfactory solution, perpetuating the cycle of animal exploitation rather than challenging it at its core.

While single issue campaigns may play a role in raising awareness about specific forms of animal exploitation, we have to recognize their limitations. By solely focusing on individual products or practices, we risk diluting the message of animal rights and perpetuating the notion that some forms of exploitation are more

acceptable than others. The abolitionist approach advocates for the complete end of all animal use, it recognizes that animals are individuals with inherent rights and should not be treated as commodities. By focusing solely on one aspect of animal use, single issue campaigns may overlook the larger objective of achieving full animal rights and liberation. Embracing the abolitionist approach ensures a consistent and unwavering commitment to ending *all* forms of animal exploitation.

## Second-Hand Skin

In our pursuit of a vegan world, it is necessary to understand the profound impact of our choices, not only in terms of what we consume directly but also the messages we send through our actions. Buying second-hand animal products, such as leather or fur (which is the same product except for the hair), reinforces the notion that it is acceptable to wear the skin of another being, a product derived from the exploitation and suffering of animals. When we purchase second-hand animal products, we perpetuate the idea that animals are mere commodities, their bodies and skins objects to be used and discarded.

Just as we would find it abhorrent to support or wear human skin due to its inherent ethical concerns, we must extend the same principle to animals. Our choices should reflect a rejection of speciesism, the unjust discrimination based on species, and a commitment to equality and compassion for all beings.

By consciously abstaining from second-hand animal products, we send a powerful message to the world. We declare that we will not contribute to the demand for animal exploitation, and we refuse to be complicit in a system that commodifies living beings. Our choices become a beacon of empathy and a catalyst for change, urging others to question the ethics of their own actions.



# Animal Liberation

Animal liberation embodies a compassionate and nonviolent approach that involves the direct rescue of animals from farms and facilities. While this approach is undoubtedly commendable and understandable, it falls short in addressing the larger issue at hand – the persistent cycle of animal exploitation.

## The Individual vs. the System

Rescuing animals from farms and facilities undoubtedly makes a profound difference for the individuals fortunate enough to be saved. However, it is vital to recognize that these acts of rescue do not fundamentally challenge the underlying mechanisms of exploitation. As long as the status quo remains intact, new animals will continually be bred to replace the ones rescued. A broader approach is required, one that focuses on transforming societal norms and dismantling the systems that perpetuate the commodification of animals.

## Objects vs. Lives

Nonhuman Animals, despite their sentience, are legally categorized as property. Consequently, when individual humans undertake acts of rescuing or „stealing“ animals from industries, their actions are viewed as vandalism, property damage, or a disruption of production, while the legal system permits the killing of animals, as owners are entitled to do as they please with

their property. This perception of animals as mere possessions has even led some governments to label animal rights activists as terrorists, perceiving them as a threat to industries and their property. Furthermore, powerful lobbies often advocate for laws that criminalize actions such as filming inside slaughterhouses or farms, protecting the interests of the industry rather than ensuring transparency and accountability. This highlights a fundamental truth: there is a profound distinction between inanimate objects and living beings. The difference between vandalizing a window and inflicting harm on a sentient being, such as breaking an arm or taking their life, is morally significant and demands our unwavering attention.

### Challenging the Status Quo

To bring about meaningful change, the primary objective should shift towards challenging the very foundations of animal exploitation. While rescue missions may represent a moral imperative to intervene and save lives, they are not be the most effective form of activism in dismantling the systemic oppression of animals. Instead of dedicating all efforts to rescue missions, we have the power to advocate for change in our immediate surroundings, engaging with family, friends, and coworkers. Simultaneously, we can strive for legislative reforms, advocate for policy changes, and spearhead educational initiatives that address the root causes of animal suffering.

## **A Tail-Wagging Call for Compassion**

In our journey as animal rights activists, we often encounter situations that challenge our moral compass and test our commitment to justice and compassion. Imagine walking down the street and witnessing a disturbing scene on the other side: someone mercilessly beating a defenseless dog. What would you do in that moment? Would you turn a blind eye and walk away, silently condoning the cruelty? Would you join in the violence, perpetuating the cycle of harm? Or would you find the strength within you to intervene, to stop the suffering and protect the innocent dog?

This scenario forces us to confront our values, empathy, and sense of justice. The choice we make in that pivotal moment speaks volumes about our character and our commitment to making a difference in the world. But let us take it a step further and delve deeper into the underlying message this scenario conveys.

What if, instead of a dog, it was a little pig, a chicken, a bunny, or a lamb being subjected to the same brutality? Would our response be any different? Would we even pay someone to inflict suffering on them? Would it make a difference if we don't see the suffering that we cause? The essence of veganism lies in extending our compassion beyond the confines of species and recognizing the inherent worth of all beings. Just as we would instinctively



intervene to protect a dog, we must apply the same principle to every sentient creature, regardless of their species.

The story of the beaten dog serves as a poignant reminder of the transformative power of compassion and the profound impact each of us can make in the fight for animal rights. As activists, it is our duty to be the voice for those who cannot speak for themselves, to defend them, to stand up for them, to challenge the status quo, and to forge a path towards a world where exploitation is replaced with empathy, and violence is replaced with compassion.

The abolitionist approach to animal rights is a radical but necessary framework for achieving a more ethical world by advocating for the end of all animal exploitation and adopting a vegan lifestyle. We must work towards a world where animals are no longer viewed as commodities or objects to be used for human purposes, world where *everyone* is safe and free from exploitation.

Although this approach may seem daunting and challenging, it is important to remember that change begins with individual actions and advocacy efforts. By educating ourselves and others, supporting ethical organizations and campaigns, making ethical choices in our daily lives, and engaging in activism, we can make a significant impact towards achieving animal liberation, and ending animal exploitation for good.

# Science

## The Scientific Case for Veganism and the Abolitionist Revolution

The abolitionist approach places the spotlight firmly on justice for animals but it is important to acknowledge that veganism is bolstered by scientific evidence beyond ethical considerations. The profound impact on the environment and human health are additional facets that substantiate the case for adopting a vegan way of life.

### Animals

Scientific evidence unequivocally confirms that animals experience their own reality, pain, emotions, and possess a high degree of sentience. Many studies have shown that animals have complex social structures, demonstrate empathy, and exhibit behaviors indicative of self-awareness. The evidence challenges the notion that animals are mere commodities and highlights their moral value and the need to respect their fundamental rights.

### Environment

The environmental impact of animal agriculture is substantial and well-documented. According to the United Nations, the „production“ of farmed animals is responsible for a significant share of greenhouse gas emissions, deforestation, water pollution,

and habitat destruction. Additionally, raising animals for food requires large amounts of land, water, electricity, and feed resources, exacerbating issues such as land degradation and water scarcity. Shifting to a vegan lifestyle can significantly reduce these environmental burdens and contribute to a more sustainable future, ultimately fostering a healthy planet that benefits all living creatures, including human and nonhuman animals.

## Health

Scientific research consistently highlights the health benefits of a vegan lifestyle. Numerous studies have shown that vegan diets can help prevent and manage chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, obesity, and certain types of cancer. Vegan diets tend to be higher in fiber, antioxidants, and essential nutrients while being lower in saturated fats and cholesterol, and they are also associated with lower risks of hypertension and metabolic syndrome.

Vegan diets address global health concerns, including antibiotic resistance, as the use of antibiotics in animal agriculture promotes the emergence of drug-resistant bacteria, posing a serious risk to human well-being. By transitioning away from animal products, we can reduce the need for antibiotics in the food system, thereby safeguarding the effectiveness of these life-saving drugs.

## Revolutionizing Food Production

In recent years, the world of food production has witnessed remarkable advancements aimed at ending animal exploitation

and promoting more sustainable practices. Two key areas that have gained significant attention are vertical farming and vegan alternatives like mock meat. Vegan meat alternatives have become increasingly popular due to their ability to mimic the taste and texture of meat while eliminating the need for animal slaughter. Vertical farming is revolutionizing agriculture by utilizing vertical layers and pipes or stacked systems to maximize food production in limited spaces. By employing controlled indoor environments, vertical farming minimizes the need for extensive land, reduces water and electricity usage, and eliminates the use of harmful pesticides. This innovative approach holds immense potential for sustainable local food production, improving food security, and ending reliance on traditional animal farming. Vegan alternatives, such as mock meat, have.

In our pursuit of progress, it is crucial to recognize that science is not a matter of belief, but a pursuit of *understanding* grounded in *empirical evidence*. By embracing the principles of scientific inquiry, we can challenge preconceived notions, expand our knowledge, and make informed decisions that benefit *all of us* and our planet Earth that we call home.

## References

I would like to acknowledge and share some of the valuable resources that greatly contributed to the creation of this book. Also, in the chapter „Terrifying Numbers“, I calculated the total animals killed per second using the provided links below.

<https://abolitionistapproach.com>

<https://www.careelite.de/en/online-live-animal-kill-counter>

<https://www.fourpawsusa.org>

<https://ourworldindata.org/wild-mammals-birds-biomass>

<https://www.hsi.org/news-resources/statistics>

<https://www.pnas.org/doi/10.1073/pnas.2115540119>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4212225/>

I would also highly recommend watching these compelling documentaries and speeches:

[Dominion](#) – film about standard practises in animal exploitation

[Violated](#) – film about standard breeding practises

[Slay](#) – film about animals used in the fashion industry

[Speech by Ed Winters](#) – speech that turned my partner & me vegan

For additional information, including documentaries, scientific resources, scholarly papers, authoritative sources, and helpful tools that support veganism, I invite you to visit:

<aderholdprojects.com/veganreferences>



# Knowledge To Go

## Key Concepts In A Nutshell

### Abolition

Abolition refers to the goal of eliminating all forms of animal usage and establishing a society where animals are not treated as commodities. It seeks to challenge and replace practices that harm or exploit animals with alternative, cruelty-free, and rights-respecting approaches.

### Animal Rights & Fundamental Rights

Animal rights refers to the belief that animals are entitled to fundamental rights and protections, similar to human rights, based on their capacity to suffer and experience well-being. It advocates for the ethical treatment and consideration of animals, challenging their use as mere resources for human purposes. Fundamental rights are the basic rights and entitlements that are considered inherent and essential to *all* sentient individuals. In the realm of animal rights, fundamental rights pertain to the recognition and protection of the basic needs, welfare, and interests of animals, emphasizing their right to live free from suffering and exploitation.

### Anthropocentrism

Anthropocentrism is a relentless viewpoint that positions humans as the central focus, considering them the most important and

valuable entities while disregarding the interests of other beings and the environment. At its essence, anthropocentrism asserts that humans have an inborn entitlement to utilize and exploit other living beings and the Earth's resources for their own gain.

### Cognitive Distortions

Cognitive distortions, including biases, dissonance, heuristics, fallacies, and other related phenomena, are important to consider in the context of veganism. They refer to systematic errors or biases in thinking that can lead to inaccuracies, irrational beliefs, or flawed reasoning. They are common patterns of thought that deviate from objective reality, and they can influence our perception, judgment, and decision-making. Cognitive distortions can occur in various contexts which can affect our understanding of ourselves, others, and the world around us.

### Ethics & Morality

Ethics, as the study of moral principles and conduct, provides a *systematic framework* for evaluating what is morally right or wrong, good or bad, and just or unjust. It offers a reasoned approach to analyzing and justifying moral judgments and actions. On the other hand, morality encompasses personal beliefs about what is right or wrong, good or bad, and just or unjust. It is a *subjective framework* influenced by cultural, religious, and individual perspectives. When someone says, „I'm against this or that,“ they are expressing their moral stance based on their



own values. Morality is often shaped by personal convictions and can vary between individuals. It is important to note though that personal convictions about what is right or wrong do *not* necessarily make an action ethical. For example, when a person believes that committing murder is the right thing to do, it may align with their personal morality, but it does not make the act ethically justified. We universally condemn these acts as immoral, which demonstrates that morality extends beyond personal beliefs. Morality is not simply a matter of opinion; it is grounded in the *objective recognition of harm* and the understanding that intentionally causing harm is morally wrong. We have to differentiate between unintentional actions, such as accidentally walking over an ant, and intentional actions, such as deliberately driving over a cat.

### Exploitation & Oppression

In the context of animal rights, exploitation refers to the unjust use of animals as resources for human purposes, it involves treating animals as commodities and disregarding their inherent rights and well-being. Animals are denied their bodily autonomy, as they are subjected to confinement, invasive procedures, and other forms of control over their bodies without their consent. This violation of their bodily autonomy is a fundamental aspect of the exploitation they endure. Oppression, on the other hand, signifies the systemic mistreatment, subjugation, and deprivation of rights experienced by animals at the hands of humans. Both exploitation

and oppression contribute to the ongoing suffering and injustice inflicted upon animals.

### Fact vs. Opinion

Facts are objective, verifiable statements based on evidence and universally accepted as true, while opinions are subjective, personal expressions influenced by individual perspectives and beliefs. Facts, which can be supported by independent confirmation such as scientific evidence, stand as objective truths, while opinions, lacking universal validation, remain subjective expressions of personal perspective. Facts provide a foundation for rational discourse and informed decision-making, while opinions contribute to personal expression and diverse viewpoints. Understanding the difference between facts and opinions is essential for critical thinking and making well-informed choices.

### Grassroots Movement

A grassroots movement, within the context of the abolitionist approach, is a decentralized and bottom-up effort driven by ordinary individuals. It recognizes the power of individual actions and advocacy to bring about societal change regarding animal exploitation. By promoting inclusivity, empowerment, and collective responsibility, grassroots movements challenge the status quo, raise awareness, and inspire others to question their complicity in animal exploitation. This approach acknowledges that without individual change, we cannot expect institutionalized

change. It emphasizes that the transformation of the system relies on the willingness of individuals *within* the system to question and challenge existing norms, paving the way for a more compassionate and just society for animals.

### Humane

The term „humane“ is often associated with actions or practices that exhibit compassion, kindness, and consideration towards others, including animals. However, in the context of animal rights, the concept of „humane“ treatment is scrutinized, as it questions whether any of these practices can truly be considered humane when they involve the use, exploitation, or harm of animals.

### Inherent Value

Inherent value refers to the intrinsic worth and importance that all sentient beings possess by virtue of their capacity to experience their own reality, pleasure, pain, and a range of emotions.

Recognizing inherent value is a cornerstone of animal rights philosophy, advocating for the ethical consideration and respect of animals' interests and well-being.

### Lip Service

This refers to the act of expressing support, agreement, or promises verbally or superficially without taking any meaningful action to back up those words. It involves making empty or insincere

statements to create the appearance of support or commitment without actually following through or making a genuine effort. Lip service often lacks substance, sincerity, or true dedication, and it is commonly used to deceive or placate others without taking any substantial action or making any real changes. Lip service in veganism can be seen when individuals claim to support animal rights or express sympathy for animal suffering, yet continue to consume animal products and contribute to animal exploitation.

### Logical Consistency

Logical consistency involves applying consistent reasoning and ethical standards across different situations. It requires us to examine the coherence and fairness of our arguments and ensure they remain valid when applied to other contexts. Through this process, we can detect any inconsistencies or biases that may arise. For instance, if we reject the idea of purchasing or wearing clothing made from human skin because we recognize humans as sentient beings deserving moral consideration rather than commodities, it is imperative to employ the same logic when it pertains to animals. Failing to do so would be deemed speciesism, a form of discrimination based on species.

### Moral Imperative

As explained in the section on „Ethics & Morality,“ these concepts serve unique but interconnected functions in shaping our comprehension of what is morally justifiable. The notion of



a moral imperative accentuates a compelling moral obligation or duty that surpasses individual preferences and necessitates the acknowledgment of fundamental principles and values. Within the realm of animal rights, the moral imperative manifests as the imperative to embrace a vegan lifestyle, aligning our actions with the ethical imperative of respecting and protecting the rights and well-being of animals.

### Nonactions

Nonactions, like nonviolence, require a conscious decision to refrain from participating in specific actions, abstaining from activities that perpetuate harm and violence. Not participating in animal exploitation exemplifies this concept, as it involves a deliberate decision to refrain from contributing to the mistreatment and exploitation of animals. Nonactions do not require us to actively do something; rather, they involve a conscious decision to *not* do certain things.

### Plant-Based vs. Plant-Exclusive

„Plant-based“ refers to a dietary or lifestyle approach focused on consuming predominantly plant-derived foods like fruits, vegetables, grains, legumes, nuts, and seeds. However, it is important to note that „plant-based“ does not necessarily equate to vegan, it just focuses on plant-derived foods while allowing for non-plant elements. While a plant-based diet minimizes or *eventually* excludes animal products from time to time, it lacks the

explicit commitment to avoiding all forms of animal exploitation found in veganism. „Plant-exclusive,“ on the other hand, goes beyond the concept of „plant-based“ by explicitly embracing a vegan lifestyle. It signifies a commitment to consuming only plant-derived foods, completely excluding any animal products or by-products. Therefore, we have to be mindful of products labeled as „plant-based“ without a specific vegan label, as they may still contain animal-derived ingredients or be produced using animal exploitation.

### Reductarianism

Reductarianism is an approach that promotes the reduction of animal product consumption as a means to address animal exploitation. While it may be seen as a step in the right direction, the abolitionist approach offers a more comprehensive perspective. Abolitionism challenges the notion of animals as commodities and argues for the complete end of animal exploitation. It rejects the idea that reducing consumption alone is sufficient for fulfilling our moral obligation and emphasizes the need to recognize animals as individuals with intrinsic value. By advocating for the abolition of all forms of animal use, the abolitionist approach seeks to create a world where animals are no longer treated as mere objects for human desires.

## Single Issue Campaign

A single issue campaign is an advocacy effort that concentrates on a particular aspect of animal exploitation, such as fur or animal testing. Although these campaigns are well-intentioned, they can inadvertently distort perceptions of acceptable alternatives and fall short of conveying the comprehensive message of animal rights. This can lead to the mistaken notion that certain forms of exploitation, like the use of leather being socially accepted while fur is not, are more permissible than others. Consequently, it perpetuates the cycle of animal exploitation rather than addressing it at its fundamental core.

## Sentience

Sentience refers to the capacity to perceive, experience sensations, and have subjective experiences. Sentient beings, including human and nonhuman animals, have the ability to feel pleasure, pain, and other emotions, which serves as a basis for considering their interests and welfare in ethical decision-making.

## Someone vs. Something

The distinction between „someone“ and „something“ in the context of animal rights highlights a fundamental difference in how we perceive and treat nonhuman beings. When we recognize an individual as „someone,“ we acknowledge their inherent value, consciousness, emotions, and entitlement to fundamental rights. This perspective encompasses their interests, experiences, and



capacity to suffer or thrive, whereas in contrast, referring to an individual as „something“ implies an objectification that disregards their consciousness and subjective experiences.

### Speciesism

Speciesism refers to the unjust discrimination or prejudice based on an individual's species membership. It's a deeply ingrained societal bias that perpetuates the unequal treatment of animals, and involves valuing the interests and well-being of certain species, typically humans, over those of other sentient beings. It also involves a hierarchy within the animal kingdom, where humans may prioritize the interests of certain animals, such as dogs, over others like cows and pigs, based on attributes such as perceived intelligence, cuteness, or any other chosen trait. However, this hierarchy falls short in protecting even the species at the top, as humans also exploit „highly valued“ animals such as dogs, dolphins and apes for various purposes.

### Subjecthood

Subjecthood refers to the status of a sentient individual with interests, inherent rights, and moral value, capable of experiencing subjective states and being influenced by the environment. While subjecthood has traditionally been associated with human animals, nonhuman animals can also be regarded as moral *persons*, given their possession of unique *personalities*, display of emotions, cognitive capacities, and engagement in social behaviors.

## Veganism

Veganism is a lifestyle that refrains from using or consuming animal products, including food, clothing, and items tested on animals. Furthermore, vegans make conscious efforts to minimize their contribution to animal exploitation by striving to live as vegan as possible. This includes actively opposing the use of animals for entertainment purposes, and choosing to adopt animals from shelters rather than perpetuating the demand for commercially bred animals. Vegans recognize and respect animals as sentient beings with inherent worth and fundamental rights, rejecting the notion of treating them as commodities or resources.

## Vegetarianism & Carnism

Vegetarianism and carnism display parallel characteristics in their treatment of animals as commodities. While vegetarianism is primarily recognized as a dietary choice and carnism as a belief system that rationalizes animal consumption, both ways of life share a significant commonality. They involve the consumption of animal products and do not challenge the underlying notion of animals being used for human purposes. Vegetarians, like carnists, may still engage in activities that exploit animals, such as wearing leather or visiting zoos. In contrast, veganism takes a different stance by rejecting the commodification of animals altogether.

## Virtue Signaling

Virtue signaling, in the context of veganism, refers to the act of expressing or displaying one's adherence to vegan principles and values, often with the intention of gaining social approval or appearing morally superior. It involves making public statements or engaging in actions that signal one's ethical stance without necessarily reflecting a genuine commitment to animal rights or making significant efforts to create meaningful change.

## Welfare

The concept of animal welfare, although concerned with improving the treatment and conditions of animals, fails to address the fundamental issue of using and exploiting them for human purposes. It emphasizes the quality of their treatment without questioning the injustice of their exploitation. Animal rights, on the other hand, focuses on challenging the very notion of using animals as resources and advocates for their rights and liberation from human exploitation. It recognizes that regardless of how well we treat animals within existing systems, the fundamental violation of their rights remains the core concern.

# Final Thoughts

## In Memory

In remembrance of the trillions of nonhuman animals who endure unimaginable suffering at the hands of humans *each year*, whether for food, clothing, animal testing, entertainment, or the pet industry. Let's think about them for a minute...

Cows, pigs, chickens, turkeys, sheep, goats, rabbits, geese, fish, horses, mules, donkeys, minks, foxes, chinchillas, elephants, tigers, lions, bears, monkeys, baboons, chimpanzees, gorillas, and orangutans, dolphins, whales, seals, sea lions, dogs, cats, hamsters, gerbils, ferrets, crabs, lobsters, mollusks (including clams, oysters, scallops, and squid), bees, silkworms, reptiles (such as snakes, alligators, and crocodiles), birds (such as parrots, canaries, budgies, finches, and cockatiels), mice, rats, guinea pigs, turtles, frogs, lizards, spiders, ants, moths, beetles, termites, grasshoppers, crickets, dragonflies, ladybugs, mantises, butterflies, earthworms, leeches, giraffes, parrots, zebras, camels, kangaroos, penguins, eagles, falcons, wolves, hyenas, lemurs, otters, meerkats, flamingos, hippos, rhinos, cheetahs, jaguars, leopards, anteaters, koalas, raccoons, ostriches, emus, macaws, cockatoos, peacocks, sheepdogs, polar bears, and many, many more.

**Every second, our relentless exploitation claims the lives of a staggering minimum of 73,000 animals.**

*The estimated reading time for this book is approximately 120 minutes. It's worth noting that during this relatively short time, a minimum of 525,600,000 nonhuman animals have been killed by the hands of humans.*



## Image Contexts

Page 3:	Animals Roaming Free in the Wilderness
Page 11:	Animals Crowded in Dim Barn
Page 18:	Exotic Chameleon Confined to Terrarium as Pet
Page 27:	Rabbits Subjected to Animal Testing
Page 34:	Sheep with Eartag Identification
Page 43:	Calf Isolated After Birth in Veal Crate
Page 48:	Pig on Slaughterhouse Killfloor
Page 57:	Lion Confined in Zoo Cage
Page 62:	Fish Confined in Fish Farm Facility
Page 71:	Monkey Enclosed in Laboratory Glassbox
Page 78:	Silkworm Moth and Cocoons for Silk Production
Page 85:	Horse with Cow Leather Harness
Page 92:	Dolphin Confined in Marine Park
Page 101:	Dog Mother and Offspring in Breeding Facility
Page 106:	Lobster in Kitchen
Page 115:	Hen Transported in Livestock Trailer to Slaughterhouse
Page 122:	Honey Bees in Industrial Honey Production
Page 129:	Octopus on Sea Food Market
Page 136:	Mink in a Mink Fur Farm
Page 143:	Alligator Skinned for Leather
Page 150:	Dog Genetically Altered for Human Aesthetic Preferences
Page 159:	Bear in Circus Captivity
Page 166:	Baby Turkeys in Factory Farm
Page 175:	Parrot Exploited as a Tourist Attraction
Page 179:	Animal Souls

## Thank you

This book is dedicated to my beloved cat companion, Hokus, who recently passed away. From the moment I adopted him at a shelter in Berlin, we had an unbreakable bond that spanned 14 remarkable years. The profound impact of the passing of this *one* individual has intensified my sense of urgency to write this book – it made me feel that I want to make the world as vegan as I possibly can, that I want to do everything I can, in my own lifetime, to save as many precious lives as possible through my activism, and hopefully this book will help me along the way.

The inception of this book is owed to the profound impact of Gary L. Francione's and Anna Charlton's work, which touched my life in ways I could never have anticipated. It was through their insightful books that I was introduced to the transformative idea of the abolitionist approach, igniting a passion within me to promote its message far and wide. May this book serve as a tribute to their remarkable legacy and a testament to the enduring influence of their teachings.

A big shoutout also goes to my fellow vegan animal rights activists. This book wouldn't exist without you, and I wouldn't be vegan.

Also a big thank you to my partner Florian, who is supporting me through thick and thin, in every aspect of my life.



This book will be continuously updated to incorporate necessary additions or revisions that I deem important for its content, and it will always be accessible for free on my website. The images in this book have been generated by an AI, while the written content has been meticulously crafted and curated by me, and reviewed with the guidance of an AI.

***If you disagree with anything I've said in this book, or if you have any arguments against veganism that you believe I have not addressed in this book, please reach out to me at [contact@aderholdprojects.com](mailto:contact@aderholdprojects.com)***

This is *your* sign to go vegan today.

*Breaking Chains – Ending Animal Exploitation for Good*

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