

# Veganarchism

Philosophy, Praxis, Self-criticism

Joseph Parampathu

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# Part 1

# Animal Liberation—A Primer

Total and utter liberation with no qualifiers, no restraints, and no caveats—that is our only goal. As animal liberationists we mean that we want all animals to be free from the oppression of human supremacy, of capitalism, of speciesism, of all hierarchies. Until we achieve this end we will not be settled in this matter. This is not a struggle to be fought at some future date or after some precondition is met. The struggle waits for no advance in technology or values, and it will not stand by for a convenient time. We fully believe that today we have the ability to destroy the structures which oppress all animals, including humans, and if we have the ability to do so, then we ought to do it, too.

There is no question that oppression exists today and that animals are exploited by humans each and every day. Because we are aware of the injustice that exists, we must, as free-thinking people, condemn it and fight against it. The only response to being conscious of the hierarchies of speciesism, animal subjugation, and the commodification of animal bodies is liberation. We will not stop until this liberation is achieved. We will not stop; we will not compromise; and we will not take half-measures. Liberation means the complete and utter end to these hierarchies. The false narrative of bourgeoisie logic is that animal liberation must, by definition, mean some existential loss in the stance or relative position of humans. Of course, this logic is wholly circular and comes down to nothing more than a question of chauvinist might over reasoned care. Hierarchies are dually oppressive in that they prevent the subjugated individuals from fully self-actualizing, and also deprive our world of the communal future that is possible. When we allow animals to self-actualize and exist with us as equal partners in the benefits of free life we all benefit from this relation. In the current system animal bodies are churned under the slaughterhouse factories of capitalism for the profit of a miniscule few at the expense of traumatized slaughterhouse workers, peasant farmers, urbanites with no other options but harmful, addictive foods, and finally all inhabitants of this world that we continue to hurtle towards an untimely death in the pursuit of profit for these few capitalists. As anticapitalists we must be liberationists. As animals we must be liberationists. As vegans we must be liberationists. As anarchists we must always be liberationists first, last, and all the way through.

Liberation must be the goal in our world as well as in our personal lives. How we interact with people, with animals, and with our ecology are the practical reality of our ethical values. By fighting hierarchies where they exist and creating horizontal systems of distributed power we ensure that liberty becomes the norm and not the exception. When we create systems that allow people and animals to cooperate in

mutual aid, we prefigure the order of anarchy. Eliminating hierarchy is a matter of combating the real structures that exist in our world supported by state systems and the capitalist framework, but it also means changing and enlightening the cultural norms that enforce existing oppressions. Speciesism is a type of cultural supremacy framework by which we can hold certain species of animals to be more valuable or worthy of consideration than others.

Speciesism is the unjust decision to provide different considerations to species for unjust reasons. Speciesism as a tendency is intimately tied with the relation that animals hold to human cultures within the context of the use and abuse of animals. How animals are used for work, entertainment, display, leisure, food, and physically as a commodity at the convenience of humans is a result and cause of speciesism. When people designate certain animals or animal species as “pets” and some as “farm” animals or some as “work” animals and some as “zoo” animals, these are the discriminatory choices that stem from the supremacist framework inherent to a human class that views itself as separate and unequal to its animal kin. Capitalism values animals for the profit their lives can derive for capitalists. Liberating animals is a necessary step to freeing ourselves from the terrors of capitalist hierarchy. Anarchism holds that all uses of power are abuses, and all of these uses of animals are, by nature, abuses.

When we “otherize” animals as a separate set of beings not worthy of the respect, love, and dignity which we expect to be treated with ourselves, we reveal the supremacy that underlies human interactions with animals. This unnecessary division is a consequence of and necessary predecessor to the capitalist relations which encompass our relations with animals. If we seek to discard the hierarchies intertwined in capitalism, we must understand and remove the human supremacist framework from our culture. Actively choosing to be anti-speciesist is the practical ecological embodiment of a life ready and willing to fight capitalism.

So how do we move towards a liberation framework that encompasses all animals and all the earth? Would it be possible, today, for this liberation to become a reality? While it is unlikely that total liberation will be achieved on a timescale that can be measured in days, we can work towards a future that ensures we will get there at some point by growing the emphasis on the parts of liberation that are already a reality—or close to it. Delaying these strides toward freedom would be a betrayal of the struggle for liberation. Every day that we choose to perpetuate the reality of speciesism is another day that animals must live under the crushing weight of the capitalist system. Knowledge of this struggle is the call to action itself—to ignore this call would be to support the continued destruction of animal lives, habitats, and bodies for our own convenience or sadistic pleasure. Being conscious of the status of animals within our capitalist system as below the bottom class, as property, we see that accepting this system even passively is to benefit from our supremacist position within it.

To ready the world for liberation we must be, ourselves, equipped and able to operate as equals in solidarity with all animals and the larger ecosystems of which we are a part. Being cognizant of the role these ecosystems play in our own future and taking the

steps we can to prevent their degradation are vital to our shared future. This means fighting all and any attempts to destroy the environment through harmful processes and industries, and it also means acting on the philosophy that humankind exists as a small part of a larger world in which we reside. We must choose to take action where we can to prevent the continued encroachment of capital and industry into the last bastions of free Earth that remain. Fight capitalism at the last frontiers and replace capitalism where it already exists. We can claim this world from the capitalists. For ourselves and for our ecosystems, we will prevent the ecocide towards which capital attempts to draw us.

While it is undeniably true that we are ready for this total liberation, it is just as undeniably true that the capitalists and neoliberals of the world are entirely ready to prevent that same liberation and its consequences. Freedom is not something that will be granted to us, the earth, or the animals, but something that we must take from the hands of those who seek to oppress us. The system is ready and willing to fight to protect its claims and does not mind destroying the whole world in the process. If we do not fight for liberation, we become a nonfactor in the struggle that will destroy everything that we have. Our homes, our biomes, our psyches and our bodies will be degraded by the insatiable quest for growth that capitalism continues. Unless we strike this scourge where it stands, the parasite of capital will continue to wreak havoc on our world and we will continue to be disregarded as our world is destroyed for the profit of the few. That is why we fight. We fight out of self-defense and the collective knowledge that no one will step up to save our world unless you do. To eliminate the oppression of capitalist hierarchies and to liberate all beings towards a future that is in ecological harmony with ourselves. We exist in one big ecosystem, and we better fight like it.

# From Class Analysis to Class Warfare – Zooicide and its Repercussions

Though contemporary animal activists generally consider class analysis and class warfare to be central to the question of figuring a future that is inclusive of and in concert with non-hierarchical human-animal interactions, it is not uncommon for otherwise leftist persons to argue that non-human animals deserve a lesser consideration, cannot feasibly be accommodated and included in a human world, and cannot now, or likely ever, be considered central to the revolutionary cause. This view is shortsighted and steeped in the dominant ideologies that consistently arise to protect the status quo.

We argue that animals must be given consideration and treated as subjective individuals with their own desires and needs including autonomy, self-actualization, and independence. We argue that revolution is not a matter of resources and technology but a matter of allocation and property. As long as animals remain property, their inferiority will be manufactured to perpetuate this notion and benefit the capitalists who claim ownership of them. Make no mistake—when a person claims that animals deserve to be treated as property, they have chosen to be not just the liberal supporter of this hierarchal system, but the bourgeoisie beneficiary of their supremacy. When we subjugate animals and perpetuate the belief that humanity is by nature superior to other animal species we profit from this hierarchy in the same way that capitalists destroy forests to profit off animal agriculture or poison waterways to offset the costs of environmental responsibility. As long as animals remain a class in conflict with humans who demand supremacy, violence and class warfare are inevitable. We argue that no class, human or otherwise, ought to be considered second to any other, and that all components of our society require justice, not to be reserved for some future date, but at every moment, as a consequence of their existence and nothing more. If it is inconvenient for animals to be liberated today, we ask, on behalf of every animal body crushed by the machine of capitalism: when will it be convenient? Being anti-capitalist requires understanding that some things exist outside the bounds of exchange value. How much does a life of suffering cost when it is your own life? How much of an inconvenience would you tolerate before completely subjugating someone else's existence?



Without hierarchies this choice does not exist. A liberated world does not require you to choose between your own suffering and that of another.

Sue Coe and Stephen Eisenman in their book *ZOOICIDE: Seeing Cruelty, Demanding Abolition* provide moving illustrations and a striking analysis of the cruelty and death inherent to the zoo industry. When animals are treated as oddities and trinkets to be locked up and made into a spectacle they will always be the subjects of exploitation. The empty claims that zoos provide an educational benefit or cultural value by exposing urban dwelling people to the exotic lifestyles of animals is a farce. When a “wild” animal is put into a zoo, it no longer maintains its “wildness;” anything that remains “wild” or “exotic” about the animal is a trinket from its time prior to imprisonment (which is generally nonexistent, as activists have worked to criminalize the selling of wild-born animals into this trade). The animal exhibited in the zoo exists solely as a symbol of its once-wildness, become commodity, of its once-animal-ness, become property.

The zoo remains a dystopian reality that showcases not the strength or beauty of our animal counterparts, but of the weakness and ugliness of our own choices. We choose to treat these animals like so many pieces in an art display, with their own enjoyment a last priority to the first of the pleasures of its bourgeoisie owners or its supreme audience. If an animal acts out in defiance against its imprisonment or otherwise attempts to assert its own agency, it is discarded as an inconvenience. To the industry of entertainment built on exploitation of animals, allowing this act of defiance would be blasphemous against the premise of its own pseudo-benevolence. Animals should be happy to be in such a carefree and pampered life, free from the horrors of their natural savagery. The zoo argues: It is their privilege to be imprisoned. As liberationists it is against this becoming-property that we will always stand and fight. When we allow the exploitation of animals we degrade ourselves and our fellow animals. The false sense of superiority that the zoo, the lab, the hunting ground, and the slaughterhouse are meant to impart is as vapid as it is self-assuring. This belief is, in reality, only a property relation, or a class distinction. As long as these places exist, by their private ownership (ownership for private human profit) and exclusivity as such, they will continue to present the false justification for their existence that a world devoid of exploitation is impossible—that we need to maintain this form of living simply because it is what we have now. The immanence of bourgeoisie ethics and the melancholy relation of commodities to which it dooms us is that only by existing can it justify its existence. If animals were free to exist side-by-side with humans, what zoo would be worth visiting? If the sad reality of zoos were cleared of the veneer of exoticism, what person would stand for a zoo’s existence, let alone its profiteering?

Circus Roncalli is a German circus that phased out live animals in 2018 to focus on a show consisting of holographic projections of animals. Such advancements have paved the way for zoos without caged animals that can provide educational value and help expose urban-dwellers to animals without causing harm to animals themselves. But when it comes to live animals, studying or observing them in the unnatural en-

vironments of zoo's and circuses provides little benefit to the public. Interacting with animals can spark intrigue and help educate people, but doing so in such a manufactured environment is completely lacking. Treating animals with the respect and dignity due to all autonomous beings requires us to interact with them in a setting where these animals are truly free, and no zoo or circus could provide that experience.

While zoos and circuses falsely claim to provide humans with a convenient window into the lives of animals from diverse wild habitats, that is not the only realm where capitalism puts animals in cages for the sake of privatized knowledge. Animals are routinely subjugated to experimentation in labs around the world as the preliminary living beings in a series of tests before human experimentation. Technologists claim that animal experimentation is a necessary step to provide preliminary knowledge prior to determining safety in human trials and that the subjugation of animals to these tests is the only way to prevent causing undue harm to humans. Animal experimenters argue that removing animal experimentation would potentially risk human safety and cause increased uncertainty with regards to scientific experimentation or product testing. They hold that animals provide a suitable analogue for human biological systems and allow for the advancement of scientific knowledge in incremental steps before risking human lives. The logic goes, many animals have similar structures and physiologies to our own, so by examining the effects of stimuli on a graduated series of animals steadily advancing in sameness until we arrive at the human species, we will gain the most knowledge about the stimuli and their effects with the least risk to humans, as individuals and as a species.

Peter Singer, in his book *Animal Liberation* makes the case that laboratory studies on animals are useless and a remnant of a time when we were ignorant enough to grant these studies more weight than they deserve. The central contradiction in vivisection logic he lays out is that either non-human animals are so different from humans that they can justifiably be objects of experimentation but will not yield any useful results (because of their vast difference from humans), or non-human animals are so similar to humans that useful information can be gleaned from experiments on them, but they cannot justifiably be objects of experimentation (because of their similarity to humans). This is the false logic of human supremacy. To support animal experimentation, one must accept the false confidence that animal experimentation will provide useful information about later human experimentation but simultaneously believe that animals are so different from us as to not require similar consideration for their suffering and subjugation. Only from within the blinding ideology of supremacy can one accept this false confidence. Fundamentally, as anarchists we hold that even this argument is unnecessary. There is no level of usefulness that would justify the exploitation of other beings who have the capacity to suffer and to live. As an ethical utilitarian, Peter Singer asks us (as Jeremy Bentham did centuries before) to consider when evaluating if animals are due this consideration, not the question *Are they sentient?* but rather the more important *Do they suffer?* Singer argues that what is most important to this

question of whether or not animals, by their existence, require moral consideration, is whether or not they can feel pain.

While it is common amongst leftists to halt the analysis of class conflict prior to examining the relations between humans and non-human animals, this analysis is a necessary part of the larger question that arises from capital relations. As long as capital exists, non-human animals and humans will both be subjects of its devastation, and their relationships will suffer from its toxic grasp. The fight for animal liberation is anti-capitalist by nature while also remaining as its own coherent struggle. As both struggles move forward it is necessary to fight in both arenas to maintain the steady march of the oppressed against the oppressor in combined struggle for total liberation free of the needless concern that struggling in one aspect will take away from the other. As anarchists we fight for all that are oppressed and we move tirelessly towards a future where oppression does not exist. The fight will be constant and it may be long, but it will be won.

# You are What (or Whom) You Eat—Food as Philosophy

Anarchist action is inseparable from anarchist philosophy because it is only through the praxis of anarchist works and action that we realize the commitments of anarchy. When we accept the charge of animal liberation we must align each of our actions within the larger framework created from this understanding. As animal liberationists, contributing to this ecological hierarchy through taking part in avoidable support of exploitative systems that capitalize animal bodies is unacceptable.

Well, of course we want to live in equality and solidarity with our animal family, but why should we live our lives this way, now? Of course, we want animal liberation but isn't it something we win after the immediate struggles of class struggle within human structures? No! Animal liberation is not some piecemeal reform we expect to progress towards—it is the foundation upon which we build our philosophy, and we actualize that ideology by living it in our lives. Animal liberation philosophy does not support classism, racism, sexism or other hierarchies, it lies within the intersection of work fighting eco-fascism in our world. When we make the conscious choice to treat animals with the dignity and respect we give to all autonomous creatures, we provide the proof that animal liberation is a viable future by showing its success in the present. By living as liberationists today, we provide the proof in practice that liberation should exist today, and we join the struggle for freedom in solidarity with our fellow animals by helping to create the world where we live in and for our collective freedom.

We have to harmonize our values with our actions because to do otherwise would be to exist divided against ourselves. Imagining only the theory of animal liberation and not its practice would be a ridiculous joke, and one with which the animals do not have the luxury of living. Every day animals suffer because of our choices and their lives, bodies, futures, and freedoms are taken from them by the capitalist world we live in. Unless we act now and act decisively we might as well accept that the fight is over. Make no mistake, it will be a fight. The value produced by the animal agriculture industry in the United States exceeded \$180 billion in 2019. This money is exceedingly concentrated in the hands of a few, powerful farm giants and food conglomerates. From 2001 to 2011, the share of cropland owned by the largest sized farms, those with 2000 acres or more, grew their share from 24.1% to 34.3% of all cropland. The increasingly few and increasingly powerful hands that control these profits are those who stand the most to lose from the animal liberation movement. These concentrated enterprises use sophisticated teams to navigate the bureaucratic field of corporate welfare offered to

agricultural entities. While these subsidies touted as support systems for small farming operations, they are overwhelmingly awarded to large capitalists who continuously bankrupt and takeover their smaller neighbors and continue to concentrate land and wealth while socializing the harm they cause to local and global ecosystems. Their wealth is a horde amassed on the backs, bodies, and labor of animals which they treat as wholly owned property. They extract the marketable resources from our collective ecology and leave the toxic waste products for us to clean up, while charging us for the privilege of this pilfering.

When people speak up about animal rights and act up in defiance of the prevailing cruelty that claims to own animal bodies and uses them for private profit, the animal agriculture industry listens and responds with force. Animal activists have been shut down by agriculture-gag laws, conspiracy and organized crime charges, as well as terrorist and “national security” statutes. Animal activists have been deemed by law enforcement officials to be the foremost domestic threat to law and order, and animal liberationists have faced severe penalties for attempting to fight the commodification of animal bodies. The Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act in the United States specifically broadened the definition of terrorism to include damage to property, when in the furtherance of damage to the animal agriculture industry, a strict departure from its traditional definition only in reference to harm to living people (for the purpose of causing terror). These industries lobby for power in government and government, by its compliance, tells us that these are the constituents for which it cares. They know there’s a war on, do you?

When someone chooses not to fight for animal liberation, they are passively supporting the system that continues to oppress us all and perpetuates the culture of dominance over animals. In the same way that these corporations and the state prey on non-privileged humans, speciesism attempts to place humans and other desirable animals above the rest. By uniting with other animals in the collective fight against these oppressors we realize our own power. It is the state and capital that needs to subjugate us to survive, and without our subjugation they will not survive. By fighting against this system, we monkey-wrench capitalism and prevent it from being profitable. Believing that you are “too busy” or that we are “not ready” for animal liberation is an acceptance of the power structures continuing to make speciesism and animal property a concrete reality. Fighting the capitalist-supremacist hierarchy requires an understanding of the importance and power of positive praxis as a tool to bring about our own liberation.

What we consider to be food and how we interact with the world through our eating is a most intimate and personal question. That question is the essence of the personal politics that governs our basest interactions with the world around us and our place within it. People who eat animals often defend their choices through appeals to culture and identity. It is true that the ways we choose to eat and the way we define our place in the world can have important ramifications for our own self-identity. It is out of respect for this responsibility that we choose not to partake in a system of

nourishment that would require the subjugation of our ecosystems, land, and animal counterparts. Because we understand that our cultures and identities are perpetuated by our choices and not the other way around, we must set the standard through our actions. When we make ecologically conscious food choices, we encourage cultures of responsible stewardship and practical knowledge of the consequences of our actions. We throw off the yoke of false-identity that capitalism evokes through consumerist mentalities. If our traditions perpetuate the hierarchies that lead us on the path to ecocide, why throw more of a potentially good future after a problematic past? If we do not respect each other by what we choose to put on and leave off of our plates, we can never earn the respect of those for whom we fight.

# Beyond the Liberalism of Rights-Based Activism

Living in a speciesist and carnist world, an animal liberationist might often hear the question: “Oh, you are an animal rights supporter?” This question of course misses the mark completely. There is no concern about rights that the liberationist need worry about. The surety of anarchist philosophy is not in providing a neat answer for each question, but in a useful theory of asking the questions that force us to consider the needs and subjectivities of increasingly inclusive circles of beings. By questioning the premises of these questions we arrive at radical understandings of the hierarchies that form our own preconceptions, allowing us to conceptualize new futures unburdened by these preconceptions. In fighting speciesism, we must remember not to succumb to such diversionary discussions as whether animals deserve rights or not. Of course, if any being deserves rights, all animals deserve them and the associated benefits, but as anarchists we deny the merit of this discussion. Animal liberation is the starting point, not the end, of our struggle. The burden of proof in this question lies in the court of those who seek to dominate through the theft of even the most basic necessities from other beings. We deny that life requires any justification beyond its own existence, and we resist all claims to the contrary.

To argue over the existence of rights and their pertinence to the question of the animal and human relationship is irrelevant because rights are the tools of the bourgeoisie class in maintaining the status quo which we aim to upend. By focusing the discussion on which privileges animals should be afforded and denying all others, the hegemony of propertarian liberalism hopes to define a maximum cost to maintaining its own bottom line. There are currents within the animal welfare movement which seek to increase the circles of legal protections for animals as they fall below some threshold of danger for extinction or normality or cuteness, and these struggles do deserve our time and effort, but they are out of necessity for winning immediate relief for animals and do not address the systemic issues which plague the prevailing paradigm. While the work of these activists has been vigorous and at times extraordinary, this perspective dooms us to work within the capitalist framework. We miss the forest for the trees. When we worry only about animals that exist on some list of endangered species or suitable pets, we lose sight of the larger structures which result in the existence of these lists, and in doing so we continue the practices and institutions which will ensure some animals will always be more favored than others due to the arbitrariness of human taste, attention, and fervor. What we seek is independence, autonomy, and liberation for all

animals, for all the earth, and for all existence. We subject no struggle to the priority of another, because each of these liberation goals exist within our greater struggle for full and collective autonomy.

Aaron Koeck, in an essay, “Rights, Privilege, and Power” for Center for a Stateless Society, wrote that a “right is simply that which the nation-state allows or tolerates, a mere concession in favor of its own power and stability.” Koeck argues that rights are paternalistic guarantees by the state to step in and offer to remedy issues in the only way the state knows how—through its violence. The state uses the prospect of rights to get disadvantaged groups to call on its might, both invoking and legitimizing its position as arbiter of correct and incorrect. Whenever we have to bend to using state power, we will have our movements coopted by the state’s own desire for power, by its own frameworks for justice and hierarchy, and by its own assertions of superiority. While it claims to provide a tool to solve our own issues, we become the tools of its own legitimation. By turning to the state in times of crisis, we continue the precarious relationship of dependence that the state promotes, and we further the state’s own agenda of replacing and destroying our own structures of power and solidarity with its own structures of hierarchy and alienation. In an essay on the all-but-inaccessible abortions in the United States, Marlene Gerber Fried argued that the abortion rights movement had put itself in a precarious position because “its focus has too often been on maintaining the legal right to abortion, while the unequal ability of different groups of women to exercise that right is slighted.” Government fights for rights on its own terms, not ours. It modulates our victories through its own biases in administering justice, and it coopts our movements to enforce its own agenda. When we balance the fight for animals so narrowly on rights-based strategies, we risk winning rights that can never be used. When the state grants that animals ought never to be harmed, but grants that animals designated as farm animals, lab animals, or otherwise are not that type of animal, we fall victim to the same blunder of abortion rights activists who had thought the war was won when access became the battleground upon which their opponents seized ground, leveraging the power of the state to modulate access to abortion as another means by which the state regulated privilege and property. Even when we win concessions from the state, the state continues to administer these concessions in such a way as to perpetuate its own desires. The state says: “Yes, you are right that animals deserve consideration for their welfare, so we will outlaw killing animals, except when it can be shown to be useful to humans or profitable to corporations.” It says: “Yes, you are right that testing should only be conducted on animals if it is ethical, so we will require experimenters to prove each experiment is ethical before it can be conducted.” The concessions that are won today become the talking points that prop up the capital system we must fight tomorrow. This exercise could be conducted indefinitely and still liberation would be out of reach. Half-measures are not acceptable because capitalism is incessantly flexible to these apparent victories. As we move to a point half way between liberation and the status quo, capitalism accepts the old halfway point as the new boundary limit of radicalism and steps its goalposts back so that our compromise



becomes our undoing. As the saying goes, before an object reaches anywhere it reaches its halfway point, and so on. Or in this inverted relativism, as we move closer to an understanding of acceptable capitalism, the extremists of capital become closer to the status quo, and so on.

Private property norms only value things that increase the potential for private profit. This relation of property to value will always undervalue the social benefits of a healthy environment and strong ecosystems. Deep ecological movements present a shift in paradigm away from valuing the environment for its benefit to humans and toward a belief that ecologies are valuable by their own existence. We have an obligation to preserve the existing ecologies and understanding our own relation to our environment if we are to be responsible members of our world. Further, understanding and furthering the evolutions of these ecologies over time is a fundamental part of learning how to meaningfully coexist in collective global growth. Preservation for its own sake is immanence, but life, for its own sake, is transcendent. A holistic liberation philosophy requires an understanding of the environment as something that we cannot separate from ourselves and in which both our and our environment's value can only be realized through a mutual respect for all living things and all the components of our complete world.

Instead of this reliance on property norms as the capitalist savior to a capitalism-created crisis, we must form the liberation strategies that pave the way towards a new understanding of our relation in and to our world that allows us to exist in harmony and to the benefit of that world and ourselves. When we see that we are not separate from this world, but rather a part of that whole, we understand ourselves as necessary components to its success and we realize it as the context within which we can thrive.

We are not separate human advocates on behalf of non-human animals. We are animals and we fight for our own liberation and in doing so the end of the hierarchy that pits our animal class against itself through the creation of a speciesist unjust hierarchy of class division. We understand as individuals aware of the lie that is speciesism and rejecting human-supremacy that this hierarchy only cheapens our own struggle for liberation. We fight for ourselves as animals. We liberate ourselves because it is what we deserve. When we exclude beings from our liberation struggle, we put ourselves in the perilous position of becoming the oppressor and living out a false justice. If we were to fight for a narrow liberation and define out classes of animals from our struggle, we provide the justification for our own eventual expulsion from this privileged class and perpetuate the contradictions inherent to hierarchal class struggle. Freeing ourselves from the blinds of speciesism is a necessary part of our own becoming-liberated and a prerequisite for a liberated world. We will never be able to realize a world free from hierarchy until we rid our own selves of the supremacist views that arise from a speciesist viewpoint.

When we enslave animals, we solidify our own existence in slavery. The damage that bourgeoisie society perpetuates is not just in the degradation of community but in the alienation necessary to maintain the hierarchies of bourgeois life. To swallow

the lie of human-supremacy we must first be alienated from our own animal-ness and conceptualize the human as outside of and above animals. Shallow egoism is the feed lot of speciesist framework. Until we are able and willing to radically attack the frameworks that allow these injustices to continue, we will continue to be controlled by our own apathy. Animal liberation is human liberation and there is no anarchist liberation that will be complete until we are all free, equal, and communally self-actualized by our existence within an environment that supports each and all individuals.

# Where do Animals Fit in Anarchism?

Brian Massumi in *What Animals Teach Us about Politics* puts forth a radical perspective about the lessons that humans can learn about politics and reality from the animals around us. Massumi praises the way that animals play to both display and question the desires, motives, needs, and boundaries of others and points to us to ask why we refuse to do the same. Are we so obsessed with our own apart-from-nature that we believe we cannot learn from such a rich exercise? If we are willing to move beyond the constraints of what we claim to be human then we find a rich world waiting for us; we find a world that is full of opportunities, intricacies, and nuances that flavor each of our possible interactions with the world around us.

Massumi challenges us to accept the “rawness” of instinct and intuition which we often look down upon, thinking that as scientific man we are beyond the reach of nature. Claiming that we are separate from, and not derivative of, our natures (or to use a different term evolutionary psychologies) perpetuates a dangerous fallacy that continues to lead us down the path of self destruction that is the continued degradation of the natural world and the environment necessary for our survival. The complex strategic assessments required by animals in the scenarios of their daily lives require understanding of social issues, assessing reward criteria and potential for loss, and the self-awareness to make judgment calls as to their own ability to achieve success. Animals utilize understanding of in-groups and out-groups and the collecting of information about rivals through indirect techniques and intelligence gathering. Integrating this information into the complex social fabric that runs throughout their lived experiences, animals take part in the intricate experience that is not essential to life, but the consequence of living. The hubris and greed that dominate the capitalist ego appear ridiculous beside the realities which we glean from the beauty of play. As long as we put the false transcendence of domination over the real liberation of our ecological codependence and mutual aid, climate catastrophe will be an inevitability.

From the games of play fighting, animals work through, and teach us the value of working through, the lines which we will not cross and the lines which cross over from civility into horror, or war, or pain. If we are so afraid of these questions that we instead wall ourselves up in the guise of academia and law, we lose sight of the humanity which our actions seek to promote and the ecology which we seek to empower. By exploring these lines, we preserve the autonomy of each individual over the hierarchies of culture or statute and use healthy conflict as a means of arriving at consensus. When we face

these questions head on and interact intimately in dialogue and play with our fellow animals we come to a real, intuitive understanding that promotes respect and dignity for all.

The idea of play as an animal trait is explored further by David Graeber in an article titled *What's the Point If We Can't Have Fun?* Graeber asks us to consider the beauty of play as an alternative explanation for a multitude of scientific orthodoxies. He points out the simplicity of accepting that an animal can do something for enjoyment and the absurdity of trying to justify play as an economically rational action. By opening the discourse widening our understanding of alternate theories we are able to more soberly discover our own misconceptions.

The politics of animality is not just an acceptance of the reality of nonhuman nature, but an acceptance of the ideal of more-than-human as part of being human. We do not escape humanity by being not-human. Rather we must transcend the human milieu by synthesizing the human and the more-than-human and in doing so enjoin ourselves with the nature of the radical ecology that can guide the future of humanity. A humanity that is both more-than-human and intentionally natural moves beyond the immanence of patriarchal capitalist society and into the liberation of a truly ecological community. We fight against private domination and subjugation by exploring the limits of humanity and transcending our own preconceptions.

As we free ourselves from the prisons of our own perceived limits of humanity, we become more-than-human. We transcend the false consciousness of the human as beyond nature, and embrace the reality of ourselves as entwined with our animal counterparts as interdependent beings in a shared world. There is no essential trait that makes humans by nature separate beings in the complexity of our world and its infinite combinations. It is by our existence itself that we justify our continuation, and as such we support the survival of all our ecological fellows. When we accept not a place or position but an existence within and as part of the environment we inhabit we exist in this more-than-human space that is both human and non-human. By embracing this perspective, we open ourselves to a critical theory of ecology that is more than preservation and beyond balance, but fully entwined with our natural selves and conscious beings as our ecological selves.

# Can Animals Be Anarchists?

Before we can live liberated from the hierarchies of speciesism, carnism, and ecological privatization we must destroy the false line that we draw between the human and natural world or the human and animal world to use as the basis for our own claims to superiority. We seem to think that by claiming this separateness from nature and from animals, we can see the world without being part of it; we can judge the world without being judged; we can experience the world without being experienced. In perpetuation of this delusion, we hurtle ourselves faster and faster towards the early death of the planet we hope to call home. We must transcend this fabricated division and proceed in union with ourselves and our natures to an equitable future.

Why don't animals today live in freedom if that is what they want? The institutional barriers that emanate from the webs of capitalism and the state prevent both animals from seizing freedom for themselves and humans liberating animals in any individual sense. Until the animal classes achieve complete liberation from the human-animal hierarchy, we will live in a speciesist world. When today we seek to live as equals with our animal family, we are accosted at every turn by some statute or norm that acts to predetermine our behavior and condemn our relation as equals beyond the purview of rational thought. Laws require animal companions to be completely subservient to their human counterpart or otherwise be confined to a life that does not extend beyond the confines of a cage, fence, or house. In every sense animals are treated as property within the capitalist state, and as such are at the receiving end of all the oppressions inherent to such a second-class status. They cannot travel, eat, or live freely without the state impressing upon each moment of their lives as to the status of their ownership. To be caught without a human-owner is to risk appropriation into the animal-industrial complex.

Dr. Melanie Joy's book *Why We Love Dog, Eat Pigs, and Wear Cows* explores the cultural control that the oppressive philosophy of carnism requires. Animals designated as commodities as food or clothing are not to be seen by the general public in their living form. They must be separated from humans so that the commodities derived from their existence can be equally alienated from their living existences. The cow-as-animal does not exist in capitalism, because the cow is only its commodity parts—it is a production unit for leather, meat, gelatin, sugar refining, et cetera. Ignorance is the foundational belief that allows supremacist beliefs like carnism to thrive. The industry of animal agriculture needs to maintain this ignorance in the larger public to prevent meaningful revolt against its unsavory business decisions. The idea of the living animal must be alienated from the commodity product through modifying language,

remote factory farm locations, and specialized supply chain infrastructure to turn the separation of life from the living animal through its mechanized slaughter into a simple technological nuance of industry. In the factory of the concentrated animal feeding operation the living being of a cow, or pig, or bird, or fish is nonexistent. Their moral life and the duty to prevent undue harm becomes a barrier to the profit of the machine. Of course, if it were possible to create these products more cheaply without having to fuss with animals or workers the industry would happily oblige, but why should they worry when they have complete control over their domain and they claim full dominion over these animals' existences. Dr. Joy writes that internalized carnism leads a series of beliefs that people use to protect themselves from the realities of their own supremacy. It becomes necessary to objectify and de-individualize animals so that they do not have subjective experiences, because to acknowledge these subjective experiences would require accepting the inhumanity of causing them a lifetime of harm for a momentary luxury. While our own lived experience disproves that animals can be objects or automata, it becomes necessary to dichotomize animals into categories of internal classes. Some are for eating, some for wearing, and some for petting. When the realities underlying these hierarchies peak out at us, it becomes necessary again to shield ourselves through the veil of disgust or distortion. We ban live animals from being sold in markets but have no problem with shelves packed with the processed pieces of their bodies. Their physical living presence becomes too close of an experience to understanding the reality of our own depravity so we can only take the parts of their bodies that have become morphed so wholly as to not resemble the living body at all. No feet or heads, only cutlets and patties. No scales or feathers, only slabs of meat with bone as a handle or plucked and sanitary skin as a flourish. Carnism, Dr. Joy describes, is an internal psychological matrix within a social matrix. This carnist schema of matrix within matrix acts as a lens that distorts the reality that we perceive, and filters parts of the world that enter our reality, further concentrating our existing biases. Escaping this carnist trap is as simple as the problem is complex. Caring about animals is all that is necessary. The carnist schema attempts to protect us from this simple tendency, our own desire to care—to identify with animals.

Carnism as a spectacle of collective irrationality requires a separation from reality that can occasionally meld into the sublime. Carrie Packwood Freeman writing about the spectacle of tradition and state-industry propaganda that is the American presidential Thanksgiving turkey pardoning notes that cultures often use sacrifice as a way to collectively atone for or free themselves of blame from the decision to eat animals. She writes about the discourse of humor and self-congratulating that surrounds the pardoning affair. As the President pardons one turkey to live the remainder of its days (for it's unnaturally large body will collapse very soon) as a mascot for the animal agriculture industry instead of its product, the nation's people (including the President) are freed from the moral responsibility to contemplate the turkeys they choose to eat later that same day as they pat themselves on the back for allowing one turkey to make it to its token "retirement" from a life of being food.

Veganarchists see this position for what it is—a class relation. Within the hierarchy of capitalist profit systems, animals are a class that must be subjugated by humans. Animals require a human chaperone, a human signatory, in every state of being. Property norms reduce ecosystems into tracts of land and reduce the biomes of our ecology to so many line items on the balance sheet of our world. Capitalism marches relentlessly into every facet of our understanding. Like an infectious contagion, it seizes every vulnerability to distort our perceptions and wipe out non-capitalist paradigms. As long as capitalism exists somewhere in the world, it insists that nothing can remain outside its domain. There cannot be a resource untapped or a land not surveyed. Everything must either be privatized or discarded, and so that this choice can be made, it must first be examined and its value determined. Capital has predetermined that animals are not of value in and of themselves, but only as property. It considers them not agents, but commodities.

How do we move from the non-freedom of capitalism and the industries that prey on animal bodies to an anarchy that provides space and respect for all creatures? Does anarchism alone provide all the answers to the tension between human-supremacists and anti-speciesists? It is entirely possible (and terrible) to imagine an anarchism that could exist without removing the hierarchies that oppress animals. As veganarchists we hold that this would not be proper anarchism but something short of it—and we discard any half-anarchisms as being rather, not-anarchisms.

To ensure that our anarchist world will be free from barriers to animal liberation we must act in concert with and for the benefit of our animal family. That means eliminating all sources of animal subordination for entertainment, science, production, and labor. By treating animals with the respect and moral consideration due to all creatures as are our equals, we ensure that they do not fall into conflict with us over resources, freedoms, or obligations. As equal members in our anarchist futures, animals will necessarily be free to live their lives by our enabling humans and animals to live and exist together without the barriers to this freedom that are the consequence of a speciesist framework. We exist to provide mutual aid to each other within the collective framework of our ecosystem. This means accepting their place within the consensus-making process and working in good faith to understand the requirements, needs, and desires of animals as classes and as individuals.

The future we create is not necessarily as clear or simple to envision as simply removing barriers and hoping for a better future to evolve from these negative freedoms. We must engage positively with ourselves and our ecosystems to find the balance that is needed to keep all stakeholders involved in the process of living in this world. We are not advocates on behalf of animals because animals are not our wards. We work with animals to create the new world and eliminate the systems of domination that continues to prevent these harmonious relations from existing.

# Is Veganism Necessary to Anarchism?

Anarchists tend to shy away from any discussion of philosophical ‘red-lines’ that might confine the umbrella which contains anarchist ideologies, and rightly so. The danger of accepting these constraints to anarchist philosophy is an attempt to retain the dynamic nature of its philosophy which mirrors anarchism in practice. If we put chains around anarchism, then we might well end up recreating the nightmare of oppressive hierarchies which we struggle against today. We might end up alienating curious people who feel unwelcome in our communities because they are used to being alienated by a system that expects conformity. Acknowledging that reality, there are many struggles that are inseparable from anarchism as they fall within the purview of the many anti-hierarchy struggles that we fight, and being as such they are anarchist. It is within this umbrella that we find all components of anarchism that are both necessary to and resultant of anarchist thought: feminism, anti-racism, anti-ableism, anti-classism, anti-speciesism, etc. A vegan lifestyle requires an evaluation of meals as praxis as well as potential areas of struggle. As anarchists we constantly strive to analyze our relations to understand the holistic effects of our relationships, to reflect on means and ends and work to live a life that furthers our liberation struggles. Anarchism is a call to action, and veganism is a call to action that anarchists must heed.

A vegan lifestyle necessitates a rejection of commodities derived from animals. This rejection is a reaction to the fundamental understanding of a veganarchist that animals are not property and their bodies are their own. Someone who acknowledges animals’ bodies as being the sole being of the animals themselves has taken the first logical step towards a veganarchist understanding. They realize that in a world where we reject the alienation of the capital system we reject all attempts at commodifying our bodies or those of the animals around us. When animals’ bodies, bodily secretions, or body parts become commodities to be bought, sold, and amassed according to the whims of capitalists controlling the means of production and extracting surplus value from animals and humans alike, the capitalist system succeeds in devaluing animals to the point that they become property. In this becoming-property, the animal ceases to be a living entity and becomes an object of capitalism. This is the natural end of all labor within the capitalist mega-machine. Identifying with non-human animals in the struggle for liberation is a struggle of labor against capital. Struggling against the machine of capital requires freeing the bodies that wrestle to be freed from its weight, and on whose backs it profits. It is this commodification of life which veganarchists



reject. Animals are not property and their bodies are not for buying and selling. Ownership of a body outside your own is a farce and a mockery of the agency necessary for ownership. If a one can be said to own anything, one must first own oneself, and this ownership is solely derived from the nature of one's existence. This egoism of existence is what defines the self-ownership of all animals. In union with the animals around us, we reject any system that robs animals of this agency of being.

Vegan living is a practice that embodies an anarchist perspective of resistance to hierarchies present in speciesist perspectives and seeks to subvert the prevailing capitalist notion that animal bodies are for the use and disposal of humans. While it is both possible and common to be vegan but not anarchist, we would argue that to be anarchist and live an anarchist life necessitates treating animals with the respect and dignity due to all those with whom we find solidarity in the struggle for liberation. Within localities in which vegan living is possible and unlikely to impede upon other struggles, and particularly in places where it is not burdensome, no alternative to veganism exists for anarchists. In times and situations in which animal and human life are contesting in the struggle for life, it is possible to imagine scenarios in which the bodies of otherwise deceased animals, including humans, may be reutilized for the betterment of existing ecologies. Truly, anarchism is a living philosophy and we do not hold the dead so sacred as to imagine that deference to the dead ought to be cause for depriving anything to the living. In practice, we hold that these instances are so rare as to generally only exist in the hypothetical, and further we understand that until we escape a capitalist framework, repurposing the bodies of the once living necessarily encompasses the future deaths of the currently living; within capitalism the practical expectation of a culture that normalizes the use of the dead body as property is that the living form becomes a means of producing the dead body—and thus the living once again falls into conscripted service underneath the hierarchy of those living better. Nevertheless, in keeping with the anarchist tradition of being wholly anti-ableist, it is necessary to come to an understanding about the limitations under which certain people live and the possibility that not all can conceivably live a vegan life without enduring extreme stress or even possibly risking their lives.

In instances in which lives can be saved and vastly improved by the medicine, nutrients, and other products which may only be derived from animal and human bodies, as radical ecologists we implore the animals involved in these decisions to be cognizant of the harm and suffering which may be inflicted upon our animal counterparts in furtherance of these noble ideals. Anarchism is blind to no struggle and a radical politics of consensus from all cohorts requires an honest understanding of the harms and benefits of each choice we make. How we choose between temporary and permanent harms at all levels is an extremely individualized decision that depends upon the specific circumstances involved in each choice, but an anti-speciesist framework compels us to evaluate these choices for their merits devoid of any notions of human-supremacy and the entitlement that this bias tends to engender. We are confident that liberation perspectives can have a positive impact on vast areas including medicine, health, and

science while respecting the autonomy and freedom of all members. These areas provide vast room for healthy discussion and radical perspectives on mutual aid can offer a powerful counterweight to the capitalist norms that dominate these decisions today.

# Radical Social Ecology

The term “radical ecology” encompasses a range of ideas that include theories and philosophy coined by Arne Naess and spread by thinkers like Murray Bookchin. Radical ecology attempts to synthesize deep ecology and social ecology to point out the failure of a “shallow environmentalism” to adequately address the issues and deeper problems inherent to capitalist systems of domination. This shallow environmentalism treats humans and, in particular, humans in developed countries, as the sole beneficiary of a system of domination that exploits the poor, the non-human, and the non-living, while claiming a paternalistic moral desire to save them.

Radical ecology does not just move humans away from the center of its philosophy, but also holds that humans are a part of an interconnected system of living beings, ecosystems, flows and dependencies that hold inherent value as parts within and of a whole ecology. Further, through its influences in social ecology, radical ecology attempts to form a political analysis and liberation philosophy of the foundations of many of the frameworks that underpin social exchanges, values, and notions. Social ecology and ecofeminism have pushed the boundaries of using environmentalism and ecological analysis to understand the effects and critiques of capital that play a part in the destruction of our ecologies.

Social ecologists note the centrality of societal relations of domination and subordination to the destruction of ecologies in continuation and furtherance of this dominance. They further point out that to move beyond deep ecology as a critique and into a form of praxis, we must create a politics of action that attempts to restructure or destroy these social systems to liberate or preserve these ecologies. Radical ecology attempts to work through these issues through experiments in radical social formations or group dynamics that seek to understand and improve social-ecological relations.

A tendency within vegan movements and radical ecology that must be addressed here is a choice to form eco-centric arguments. Eco-centrists put the survival and preservation of ecosystems as centrally important and hold that all lives are equally important, irrespective of class, gender, species, or type. While we hold that all lives are important we do not choose to make value judgments on the importance of any one life or group of lives over another. We do not hold that the preservation of any particular ecological status quo is necessarily more correct than another. Valuations of life in this way are what capitalist systems attempt to do constantly when they arbitrate between choices based on overly simplistic and highly centralized notions of value, need, and benefit.

All life is wonderful in the individual, and life is further wonderful in the aggregate in the ecologies that include us. Both of these can be true and accepted and we need not make blanket choices to sacrifice some in the furtherance or subordination of others. Radical vegan ecology requires us to be willing to have hard conversations about the choices we make and to recognize that there is no simple way to make certain decisions but that it is necessary to be expansive in our understanding and open to new methods of developing consensus around collective decisions.

# Eco-Feminism

Eco-feminist critiques of environmental degradation as a response to the patriarchal relationship of man to nature have provided powerful new lenses with which to analyze the capitalist-created crisis amongst us. As long as we are plagued by patriarchal domination, we will never be able to live sustainably or non-capitalistically as the tendency towards domination necessitates the property relation which yields the privatized gains and socialized losses that have typified the modern ecological nightmare.

The methods which capitalism and patriarchy use to dominate women and resources are the same methods they use to dominate the environment that makes up the natural world. Feminist analysis can help us to understand both the methods of domination which we fight as well as the potential for struggle against this domination. As we view the environmental movement and its response to capital as an extension of the feminist movement we expand our ability to combat environmental subjugation in every form. When capitalists exploit, claim, privatize, and control the resources that make up our environment locally and globally, they appropriate autonomous stakeholders in the public community for private profit. When we understand the control of the environment as form of sex-violence in the commodity form, we can envision new futures for the liberation of the environment and new strategies for radical justice in the face of ecological abuse. Feminist analysis is a powerful tool for dismantling the domination of capitalism. Averting ecological collapse will require an anti-patriarchal approach. As anarchists we hold no struggle as privileged over another, and we fight in concert and in union with all struggles which work towards our common goal. Eco-feminism is the union of the anti-sexist and pro-ecological struggles of our movement.

Karen Warren in her essay *The Power and the Promise of Ecological Feminism* states that “[e]nvironmental degradation and exploitation are feminist issues because an understanding of them contributes to an understanding of the oppression of women.” She argues that “oppressive conceptual frameworks” are used as the logic of domination that pervades the popular zeitgeist and pretends to justify the destruction and appropriation of the environment. These are the same frameworks that men use to dominate women in patriarchal societies. The ecological movement is feminist because it can help us understand the oppression of women and the feminist movement is ecological because it can help us understand the oppression of the environment. We must analyze and criticize these frameworks of domination if we hope to free ourselves from the yokes of environmental degradation, domination, and destruction.

The environmental movement must keep the feminist struggle in mind and understand the successes and roadblocks of the feminist movement. If we do not learn from

our sister struggles then the ecological movement is doomed to the graveyard of single issue politics. Environmentalist anarchists need not attempt to weigh one struggle against another. All struggles are part of the anarchist struggle. As environmentalists we must be aware of the opportunities for women's liberation within environmental activism. Especially so in developing regions, the confluence of capitalism, patriarchy, and ecological domination come together to disempower women where they are most at risk of being harmed by these oppressive frameworks and regimes. When we fight to keep environmental resources free from the private control of capitalists, we prevent these resources from being used to alienate and oppress women in these regions. In our increasingly global world, it is even more necessary to understand the ability of any privation or domination in any part of the globe to have cascading effects on all others. The global impact of environmental disasters and crises increasingly make it impossible for the disadvantaged to survive sudden catastrophe when they are already in a precarious situation. Environmental degradation by corporate interests is a direct attack on the poor and the disadvantaged who are suppressed from fighting back against this ecological terror.

As anthropogenic climate change threatens to irreparably destroy life on earth, or at the very least eradicate all human life and leave behind an Earth without us. The reasons for large scale denial regarding the effects, magnitude, and certainty of this change and the terrible future this presents to all life on Earth include the psychological enormity of the issue and apparent relative powerlessness of the individual in the face of global crisis. Needless to say, the most disadvantaged, poor, women, and those of the so-called "developing" regions will be and have been the first and hardest hit by these impending transformations. We already see this in the way that catastrophic climate disasters today are being linked to anthropogenic climate change. In these disasters, the willingness of a community to have resilient infrastructure that protects all people can have a dramatic effect on the loss of life caused by these disasters. The confluence of denial with regards to the causes that lead to these disasters and the unwillingness to protect people from their effects leads to an increasingly segregated society that condemns those it classifies as lesser peoples to the majority of the deaths in these avoidable tragedies.

Ariel Salleh, a prolific ecofeminist, wrote about the potential for a critical ecotheory that can transform the libidinal denial of humans as an embodied form of nature, a necessary prerequisite for new perspectives on anthropogenic climate change and potential futures for humans in concert with the rest of our natural world. We must understand ourselves as part and parcel to our natural world and not as objective scientific viewers or capitalist resource managers. Until we throw out this false separation, we will never solve the problems that it causes, including these preventable climate disasters. Salleh suggests a shift in framework from the Anthropocene (the era wherein the earth as a whole is affected by the existence and actions of humans) towards the andro-cene. This shift regards an end to the agriculture anthropogenic model of geological and libidinal domination, destruction, and commodification of the

Earth as so many plots of resources or crop futures to a model that encapsulates all being and nonbeing in an effort to continue the existence and prosperity of a healthy natural world, including humans.

As an intersectional feminist critique, eco-feminism provides feminism with a re-evaluation outside the feminist heterodoxy of the place and relations of power between gender and species. Disgust as a reaction to ecofeminism as essentialist dogma is unwarranted and unjustified. The deconstruction that ecofeminism requires is the questioning of what it is to be human, from a constructionist, not essential position. Ecofeminism does not aim to debase feminism or women, but to reposition the perspectives on human-ness as an essential quality within our understandings of race, gender, class, and sexuality.

In *The Sexual Politics of Meat*, Carol J. Adams grounds the ties of vegetarianism and veganism to anti-oppression radical politics and early feminism. Adams further claims that reactionary views against the vegetarian body of eco-feminist thought represents a further domination of woman by the prevailing orthodoxy. She points to growing vegetarian movements in support of the French Revolution and amongst women attempting to lighten the oppressive yoke of producing labor-intensive dairy products and cooking time-consuming meats for their unhelpful families. Adams further argues for a critical feminist-vegetarian theory that centers the ethical imperative to consider animals as beings who exist for their own sake and the necessary critique of the capitalist-patriarchy complex that attempts to dominate our ecology into destruction.

Eco-feminism promises that we can move beyond the dominant capitalist patriarchal ideological framework that is destroying the world as we know it. The end of property and the end of patriarchy and the end of speciesism are all one struggle. We must fight these sister struggles in concert and work towards a world devoid of all hierarchies. There is no ecological freedom without sexual and gender freedom and there is no animal liberation without the end of property and misogyny.

# De-Colonizing our Ecologies

Domination and control are the central themes of everyday eco-fascism in the capitalist environment. The language and methods of environmental destruction mirror the colonization of empire throughout history continuing into the present. As we fight for the ecological independence of our world, we march in solidarity with decolonization efforts throughout the world.

Liberation movements fighting to remove the oppression of foreign powers act in concert with our own methods and philosophy within the Earth and animal liberation movements. In the same way that oppressed peoples fight back against dominant structures through a pluralism of direct action, protest, and effective speech, we bite back against the speciesism that subjugates animals to humans. In an interview with *Earth First! Journal*, Rodney Coronado, a longtime environmental activist and Pascua Yaqui warrior, described the intersection of environmental and anti-imperialist movements: “Long before contemporary environmentalism and animal rights, there were human resistance movements fighting for the same things we’re fighting for today. People being murdered for standing by the very same beliefs we say we are about in EF!” The environmental destruction these imperialists wrought was intertwined with the cultural domination they sought. As they extracted the natural resources of colonized land, they subjugated the labor of the peoples they attacked. Coronado continued, “indigenous resistors were the first anti-globalization movement, fighting the imperialist economic and social policies of European governments and the impact they had on the environment and our lives, which were really inseparable.”

Fighting back against the capitalist machine is never easy, but the movement today can learn a lot from the struggles of people who fought before us. In 1969, a group of indigenous peoples protested through a takeover of Alcatraz, an island in San Francisco famous for its prison. The indigenous group presented the American government with a proclamation demanding purchase of the land for a nominal sum, citing the American government’s own valuations in indigenous agreements. While the land was ultimately reclaimed by the American government, the protest lasted 19 months and its visibility lead to direct results for Indian activism and reignited decolonization efforts. These movements provide a reminder of how activism can be used to reclaim land from the capitalist system. When maintaining the capitalist status quo becomes expensive and impractical, movements for liberation can exploit the weaknesses of capital and make a farce of its own dogma.

Chris Kortright wrote in an article *Colonization and Identity* about the various similar themes within colonialism. The force, dominance, and control that typify colonial



relations are not dissimilar from the ecological relation that speciesists use to define human supremacy. Kortright discusses the ability of decolonization as a practice to help move communities forward towards a future that acknowledges the realities of a colonial past while removing the hierarchal systems that are necessary to allow colonialism to survive. Decolonizing spaces involves not just a decolonization of the colonized but also of the colonizer. Kortright describes the psychology and morality of the colonizer as a specific culture of domination. This is the dominant culture that vegan anarchism fights against. We seek to replace the immanence of hierarchal systems of control and subjugation with a transcendent harmony of collective progress. As we eliminate the barriers that confine animals to subjugation, we also must replace the framework of speciesism that allowed this subjugation to begin—we must eliminate the colonizer ideology and belief in false-individualism on which ecological domination is based.

Within the framework of colonialist liberal society, identity is a tactic of cultural warfare embedded in the minds of settler and colonized communities. Mohamed Abdou wrote under the name Mohamed Jean about the power of this colonial identity politics to drive everyday fascism. To fight this identity we have to actively decolonize and re-indigenize our societies and identities. Speciesism as a framework for identity into species-based classes requires this same sense of settler identity. When we let go of the trappings of this false identity we can transcend the barriers of hierarchy. The spirituality that lead Rodney Coronado in his direct action efforts is a powerful enactment of this re-indigenization. As we open ourselves up to non-settler identities we re-birth the world that can exist unencumbered by the failings of empire ruined.

Unraveling the culture of carnism is a first step in understanding our own speciesism. We decolonize the relations of animals and humans by reaching for deep ecological solutions to our crises of climate destruction through animal liberation. The philosophies within the vegan anarchist umbrella re-frame our view of the world so that our movement can be centered on healthy ecologies instead of just the benefits to humanity or other liberal identities. Our practical actions derived from these philosophies color how we interact with the world around us and further our movement.

## Part 2

# Against Consumerism

The vegan movement has often been criticized by the left and by anarchists for being a boycott—a protest that acts wholly within the consumerist ethics of the twenty-first century without attempting to dismantle the power structures that make industry exploitative. As vegan anarchists we strive to move far beyond this surface critique. The lifestyle of diet and consumption that considers the exploitative nature of products in the marketplace is only incidental, not central, to the praxis and philosophy of vegan anarchism. While it is true that there is no such thing as ethical consumption under capitalism, it may be said that even under capitalism some forms of consumption are more unethical than others.

A veganarchist critique of veganism as a consumer movement requires an understanding of how consumer movements inherently disempower individuals within our communities by treating them first and foremost as consumers within a capitalist economy. This framework preordains the root of the problem—capital. Within the capitalism paradigm, a person is only valuable for their contributions to consumption. A person with less ability to or will to continue the cycle of consumption is less favored by the system, and corporations with large-scale operations for consumption are more favored than people themselves. In the capitalist system, a corporation gains all the benefits attributed to personhood because it is a consumer, and as a large consumer, it is considered more of a person than many humans. Upending the capital system is necessary to make the world vegan as well as to make it anarchist. Veganism without a critique of the commodity fetishism of carnism is only a surface critique—a choice of flavors, tastes, and cultural norms, instead of a critical analysis. With its rich history of union activism and community driven force, consumer boycott can be an effective means of targeted attack against capitalism (especially localized capitalism), its ultimate failing is in turning the worker into the consumer and the activist into the (non-)shopper, in doing so, glossing over the core means of attacking capital for the most periphery.

What do we mean when we say there is no such thing as ethical capitalism? We mean that forms of resistance that act within the system of capitalism, such as boycotts, counter investment, or electoral politics are controlled by the constraints of capitalism and as such are defeated before they even start. To go beyond these constraints we must act up outside this system. We must create the networks and infrastructure of anti-capitalism and in doing so show the capital system to be obsolete and unneeded. When we make capitalism non-profitable and when we re-liberate the lives and properties that capitalists claim we directly attack the capital system at its roots. Capitalism is

predicated on these property claims and when we prevent the violence that justifies these claims we work towards a world without capitalism. Each time we free an animal from a farm or save an animal from slaughter we fight against these capitalists' claims on their bodies and reaffirm the individual dignity of these beings.

The practice of making capitalist systems non-profitable is a cornerstone of effective anti-capitalist action. It is the logic behind "throwing a wrench in the system" embodied in the physical act of strikers making factory machinery inoperable prior to going on strike so as to prevent possible continued production without them. So called, "monkey-wrenching" has become a mainstay of anti-capitalist action and has become a staple of environmentalist groups like Earth First! and the animal liberation front. Ted Kaczynski described his early actions as monkey-wrenching and the prevailing community methods of preventing logging in the Pacific Northwest has been through similarly rendering capitalism inoperable. When liberation activists attack the systems of domination in laboratories, farms, and slaughterhouses they work as a countermeasure against the systematic control that the capital system requires.

While as anarchists and anti-capitalists we believe that there is no ethical consumption under capitalism, as veganarchists we might expand that saying to "there is no ethical consumption, but some consumption is worse than others." By this we mean that even amongst unethical choices, there may sometimes be a clearer choice about which consumption is the less or more ethical while still understanding that making choices constrained by a capitalist framework has global impacts that negatively affect workers, ecosystems, and production processes worldwide, and no possible choice exists within capitalism that is devoid of unethical outcomes. Further, in our increasingly interconnected world, it is many times impossible to define the true impact of our choices. It often seems that exploring every ramification of our choices reveals miniscule contributions to the global machine that feeds our supply chains by destroying our environments and dehumanizing our fellow workers.

It is out of this thinking that the necessity for vegan choices rises. When we acknowledge that making vegan choices to eat food and use products which are not produced by the subordination of animal bodies and lives is a conscious choice against the industries and structures which profit off this subordination and the continued oppression against animals that prevents total liberation, we understand that we are not, ultimately, making a choice that fights against capitalism. We are making a consumptive choice that is non-radical in that it exists as a choice within capitalism, and we see every day that capitalism further coopts these choices by catering towards the lifestyle choices of vegans around the world. It is not in alliance with these capitalist forces that vegan anarchists make the choices that they do, rather they oppose the forces which further attempt to extract surplus value from the backs and bodies of animals with no consideration for their existence outside the framework of the system of production. To believe that a lifestyle choice will destroy capitalism is to be blind to the power that capital wields. Capitalism does not provide choices which include its own destruction, but rather choices which seek to further cover up its own contradictions. While it is

important to be honest about the power that capitalism wields, individuals do have power as well. If we choose not to fight the system, we provide the support that keeps it going. Just as we acknowledge the power of the capitalist system, we must accept that we have the ability to change this system. If we do not take up the fight against this system, then it will exploit our non-decision as tacit support of its own existence. Anti-capitalism as a larger movement works to unmask these contradictions and end the system of capital before it destroys itself and takes us with it.

# Farming for All of Us

The prevailing capitalist structure encourages a complete alienation of the self wherein even the desires of a person are reduced to simplistic questions of this or that form of consumption. If we want to exist outside of, and in opposition to, this framework then we must look beyond the constraints that capitalism places on our possibilities. We must view our interaction with the world beyond the limits of propertied relations and instead understand our one-ness with nature. When we interact with the world as a willing participant in its beauty we appreciate and are appreciated in turn for our contribution. The ways in which we can act in community with our natural world include nurturing our local ecologies, reducing the negative impact of capitalism within our localities, and opposing the larger structures which continue the degradation of our ecosystems.

We aim to upend the framework that perpetuates the destruction of the ecological world, and that requires going far beyond placing individual blame on people for their decisions within the capitalist framework. While the capital system leaves little room for choice, it neither absolves us of any responsibility for allowing it to remain as such. In the fight against capitalism, speciesism, and other hierarchies there are no lukewarm allies—anyone who does not actively oppose these hierarchies wittingly or otherwise lends credence to its continued existence. The Stoics are lauded for their philosophies of self-development and the aligning of personal action with inner values. While the Stoic philosophies have largely been coopted by ultra-right wing movements as a means to prey upon disillusioned peoples searching for larger meaning, the philosophy provides a useful basis for self-criticism that can benefit our movement. Self-criticism and self-improvement are necessary to an actionable anarchism that exists in the real world and seeks to bring about anarchism through its every interaction. When we accept responsibility for our choices we realize that we must be aware of not just why we make the decisions we make, but how these decisions affect the larger systems of power around us. Aiming to destroy these systems of power through deliberate action is the only way to continue the anarchist struggle. We must never stop pondering the question of how these choices exist within the various frameworks of struggles against unjust hierarchies if we are to be effective in our work.

Harry Browne, in his book *How I found freedom in an unfree world: a handbook for personal liberty*, discusses the profound sense of disempowerment that one can feel when attempting to devote all of one's resources to bringing about a free world, and instead encourages personal choices that allow one to live a life unencumbered by this immense task. While Browne's method is useful in preventing the despair that

can accompany any seemingly futile movement such as achieving total liberation, for those who cannot be at peace letting the injustices of our world continue, integrating liberation movements into our daily lives is a necessary part of living a free life. We seek not to be free from the responsibility to do good or to avoid the reality of our current environment. Rather, we accept that even if we cannot change everything on our own, we ought to change that which we can, and we hold that bringing about this change is a meaningful part of living as a free individual. Not free from reality, but freed by it and our own place within the liberation struggle. Participation within the liberation movement can be a defining choice both personally and politically, and politics in being personal demands that we also seek within this participation spaces which allow us our own happiness, joy, and fun. Activism is a collective effort. Self-care is an important part of being an effective member of the collective team. Sarah Z, in a video essay, has spoken about participation in social activism as being a member within a choir singing an impossibly long note: individual members taking breaks as needed helps create a much longer and more steady note than the performers could sing individually. In the same way, when we take breaks or even temporarily remove ourselves from activism, as necessary to take care of our own healing, we create a stronger and more resilient collective force. Strategies for effective social activism do not come at the expense of individual health or satisfaction, but work to provide for individual as well as collective goals.

To find personal happiness that is properly self-centered but not selfish we have to synthesize our personal happiness and our personal politics. adrienne brown (intentionally not capitalized) in her book *Pleasure Activism* shares the joys of living a life driven by and fully enjoying the pleasures of life. Being able and willing to do the self-care necessary to keep ourselves healthy and ready to do good in the world is a necessary pre-condition to our praxis. If we are not in a position that keeps us safe and healthy and, most importantly, happy, then we will not be in a strong position to help out others. adrienne brown speaks to the power of caring for ourselves as well as seeing our own pleasure as a form of praxis. Our world actively fights against our personal pleasures through taboo, shame, and oppression. It is radical to enjoy oneself fully and to live a life of joy. Revolution can be a lot of work, but it ought to also be play. As Emma Goldberg wrote in *Living my Life*, “I want freedom, the right to self-expression, everybody’s right to beautiful, radiant things.”

We do not want an anarchism defined solely by what we are against, but rather a living philosophy of life propelled forward by our desire to create the world we fight to implement. The danger presented by the commodification of labor, of our bodies, and of our lives is that when we are isolated, tokenized, and commercialized we lose our individuality and supplant it with the façade of creativity that is consumerism.

Marx’s description of a capitalism on the verge of revolution seems comical given the centuries of dominant liberalism and neoliberalism of recent history. Marx clearly underestimated the flexibility of the bourgeoisie to accept and even embrace welfare capitalism, coopt union structures, game-ify work and use technology to absolutely in-

trude into private and public life. While a surface-level critique might see these changes as resetting the clock on revolution, and bringing us back to the era of feudal control, it is clear that the cracks in the system have only grown wider. The unsustainability of the boom-and-bust cycle which Engels continuously pointed out is clear. The ecological nightmare that capitalism wreaks on our shared environment cannot be ignored. As workers face bleaker futures and the world “outside of capitalism” shrinks, the system becomes increasingly cannibalistic. The time to act is now; there is no future with the status quo. If we wish to survive, we must destroy the system that stands and build our world in its ruins.

There is a folk story shared in the United States about a person referred to as Johnny Appleseed, who supposedly travelled across the United States planting the seeds of apples that sprouted into numerous trees, whose fruit became the filling of American apple pies. Making a modern day version of the tale would be nonsensical, as no land exists upon which the character could freely plant or grow these gifts. Rather, if he wanted to even partake in the beauty of growing apple trees, he might be forced to sell his labor to the industry that destroyed this land piece by piece, robbing from the common people as it continues to do today. There may not be any place for the folk hero Johnny Appleseed in a world dominated by capital, but it is the common folk he represents who can take the world back. When we choose to disregard the outrageous claims of capitalists who seek to privatize the world, we make their claims impossible to enforce and unprofitable to support. We strangle the roots of capital through the strengthened bonds of our own mycelia and grow the world that we need in the one that they try to take from us.

Anna Tsing, in *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins*, explores the very edges of capitalism to understand the effects of industrial logging in the Pacific Northwest as the curious catalyst of a vibrant market in rare mushrooms which grow in only unique, uncultivated ecological ruins. She explores the world of possibilities that capitalist ruin can provide. By destroying the forest, industrial logging creates the environment that allows the matsutake mushroom to spring forth. Tsing’s work presents a wonderful contrast to the doom and gloom of most works attempting to understand the climate impacts of human societies. She forces us to consider our own insignificance within an ecology that will find ways to survive and thrive even in the face of our concerted efforts to destroy it. If we end this world we will likely destroy it for human habitation and cause tragedies for many of the species that depend on the current environmental status quo, but there was life before us and there will likely continue to be life after us.



# Food Not Bombs

The autonomous affiliates of Food Not Bombs form a loose network of community-oriented activists that work to meet local food safety needs by making vegan food often repurposed or re-appropriated which otherwise would have been trashed. By providing dependable food service to local communities Food Not Bombs groups grow strong connections to the people who use their services. While all Food Not Bombs groups are anarchist and the organization is political in nature, some groups focus almost entirely on food distribution while others distribute literature and propagandize in addition to this service or as their primary purpose.

The political nature of food is clear in Food Not Bombs groups' work on the street and at political events, making sure that activists receive adequate, free, and vegan food. This kind of activism which was a hallmark of the Occupy Wall Street protests and has roots in the Black Panther movement and earlier worker solidarity adds resiliency and autonomy to any protest as the organizers do not have to constantly leave the area to regroup and get food.

Food Not Bombs groups do not accept cash donations and instead act completely outside of the capitalist system of production and consumption. By subverting this system Food Not Bombs groups cause a double pain to the capitalist system. They prevent capitalists from extracting wealth from these people for the delivery of food as well as for its production. Food Not Bombs activism acts directly to counteract the decisions by cities to claims to "combat homelessness" by actually combatting homeless people through enacting measures that are anti-poor and harmful to transient people. Food Not Bombs activism keeps these people fed while also denying capitalists the pleasure of profiting from their disadvantage.

A discussion of Food Not Bombs from an anarchist perspective must always consider both its effectiveness and its ability to be truly radical. Food Not Bombs does do what many of its activists aim to do, that is to say it provides food safety to many local communities and strengthens the inner logistics of the protest movements it supports on the ground. But all action lacks power without organization, and in terms of effecting large-scale change or grinding anti-homelessness policies to a halt, Food Not Bombs groups have been largely powerless. The question at hand is not whether or not Food Not Bombs is a worthy organization, as it undoubtedly is, but rather what means we have at hand to multiply the effect of Food Not Bombs groups and radicalize the change which they can affect.

It is possible that a Food Not Bombs group which sought to be truly innovative might consider supporting illegal community farming efforts for those who have no land

and no food to grow food on so called “public” property. We might imagine a group which purposely targeted the profit making centers of retail food and grocery stores by setting up distribution stands and passing out literature on their front steps. A more radical group might consider infiltrating the employment rosters of supermarket chains and refusing to charge customers who came to get basic necessities like food. These tactics would each place the group and its members in progressively more dangerous situations with regards to law enforcement and the state-capitalist system as they act to more directly challenge the laws which deprive people of food.

A longer term method might seek to avoid the types of confrontation that would tend towards an escalation of law enforcement interaction and instead create a world completely separate from the capitalist one alongside it. To render the capitalist obsolete and capitalist forms unprofitable, this is absolutely necessary. While these solutions will be unique to each community’s needs it is likely it will involve some mode which removes the need for property or territory even as an act of rebellion.

The Food Not Bombs movement has become a staple of the anarchist movement and will likely continue to evolve to meet new challenges. Activists have faced arrests for their work serving and liberating their communities. In certain areas the Food Not Bombs schedules are so well known and relied on that it would be devastating to the local community if they were disrupted. While this situation is the far from an ideal of autonomous communities without food shortages, it is still a vital part of the solution, or at the least maintaining the survival of those discarded by the system. To build those communities we must go beyond feeding people while also continuing to do so. The politics of food is a dominant part of our lives because food is such a dominant part of life, and it is absolutely necessary to develop this politics of food.

# Building Vegan Structures in the Ruins of Capital

As we prefigure the world that shall arise from the ruins of capital and exploitation it is necessary to be aware of the world we aim to create. This necessity is in part to maintain our struggle towards these goals, as well as to be self-critical in our analysis of our own struggle to better understand tactics as well as goals. The revolution is not an endgame or conclusion to struggle, but a constant movement towards this new world. Being resilient to the counterinsurgent movements of capital structures requires strong systems of solidarity that exist outside of and independent of the capital system. Building those networks is something that we must do today so that they are ready and in place for when they are needed.

To maintain the mobility required for strong anarchist and vegan structures we must employ a variety of tactics including building coalitions of support, increasing continued capacity of autonomous self-supporting movements, and preparing ourselves to be ready for struggle by meeting the basic needs of our activists and providing support for them when the need arises. We must be honest and aware of the extreme power and salience of the state and its agencies. In one sense it can be said that Marx's predictions were false in that the capital system is not set to fail and only seems to have increased in its ability to dominate and destroy since his time. On the other hand, it is entirely true that the contradictions of capital are more prevalent today than they were even then, and that the lessons of Marx's analysis are as relevant as the tools and ideologies the capital system has devised to defend itself against possible revolution.

Some of the vegan and anarchist structures that exist today include food banks and pantries to provide support for communities often in the event of a job loss or sudden financial emergency (all too common amongst the largely working poor that make up the ranks of even so-called "developed" economies), community or cooperative food gardens which reduce reliance on state-controlled infrastructure and increase to knowledge, skills, and self-reliance of local communities, and groups such as the Food Not Bombs network which provide aid and relief during protests, in times of need, and at regular intervals to build community relations.

The Food Not Bombs network uses its community actions as an opportunity to also pass out literature regarding both its movement and that of similar movements that impact the community within which it exists. Because the Food Not Bombs network is a series of autonomous nodes, each group has the ability to choose how much to focus on propaganda and how much to focus on the straightforward act of providing

necessary food to members of its community which may not have had a meal otherwise. Each community has unique needs and these needs can be met by our own structures when we put in the work to build them. Meeting these needs and continuing to provide them reliably builds resilient communities that can withstand the changing currents of government programs which have the potential to disappear with each change of bureaucrat, politician, or news story.

The advantages of building and sustaining these networks is immense. When politicians or heads of state raise tariffs, incite trade wars, or sanction peoples these vegan and anarchist structures can provide the community the ability to remain independent of these manipulations. This gives the community more freedom to fight back against the tyranny of the state and oppose its vested interests when they do not align with their own. Further, when community members interact with these vegan and anarchist movements they see the real benefits of non-state power and the ability of movements outside the status quo to meet needs that are not being met and will not be met (often deliberately) by the state. The propaganda is in the deed and the deed is the propaganda.

Having strong, diverse autonomous structures independent of state power ensure that we are not beholden to the interests of capitalists. We can choose to define our goals and manage our resources without caring for economic profit or operating within state legal structures. While the advantages of these systems are obvious as states degrade and during times of overt conflict between populations and their governments, it has concrete benefits for our communities even in times of relative calm. While capitalism attempts to value each of our bodies and lives on its own terms, we can subvert this framework by ensuring that we are able to take care of our community outside these bounds. By providing medicine, food, clothing for people without exploiting or giving up dignity and respect for our ecology, we weaken the grasp of capitalism on our physical reality.

# Decentralizing our Food Networks

We must create today the world that arises from the ashes of capitalism to permanently replace the current system. Capitalist and state infrastructure tends towards its own monopolization at the expense of the communities that could best be served by the distribution and production capabilities of these infrastructures. Following a 2019 ‘government shutdown’ in the US that resulted in the temporary suspension of so-called ‘non-essential’ services such as food aid and tribal health services, I wrote in a piece for Center for a Stateless Society, “It is absolutely necessary as a tactic for anarchists to take over these structures and provide support for their communities separate from and in opposition to the governments which attempt to hold these people’s safety and welfare hostage over a manufactured crisis.”

If we allow these structures to be the only pathways for our communities to take care of themselves, we strengthen the state and make ourselves reliant on its benevolence which will always come at the expense of labor and to the benefit of the capital system. When we build independent and autonomous systems that exist and work in opposition to the capital system, we provide the proof of work to all who see the reality of what non-hierarchical spaces can provide them. Whenever we allow these systems to be the only avenue for working people to obtain their needs, we leave them vulnerable to the whims of the capitalist system that preys upon them. As we liberate ourselves and our communities by creating autonomous food spaces, we render the state obsolete and provide a clear pathway towards a world without governments and without hierarchies.

We cannot rely on capitalist structures to provide for us because to do so would be to put each of our communities at risk of being victim to the siege warfare that the international capitalist system has often relied upon during the set up towards an escalation of political and military pressures in the new total war strategy that starts with placing economic sanctions on countries like North Korea and Venezuela. When we allow the proletariat in these nations to become victim to the international systems which capitalists have built but we have not, we see before us the glaring truth that whether or not the world is “ready for anarchism”, we may not yet be anarchist enough for the world.

Building these international and local structures is a necessary part of our struggle towards fully autonomous structures that supplant capitalism and render it non-profitable in a world where profit systems are no longer the normal and only option. As we build these structures through open dialogue with the communities with which we interact and of which we become a part, we move towards a system of food and life that is holistically anarchist. This congruence of food and life as anarchist praxis, is

the critical framework that we move towards when we consider anti-hierarchal futures that purposefully act in opposition to speciesism, classism, racism, sexism, and all other -isms that we struggle against. As we strive towards larger and more inclusive circles of 'we' we find new ways to conceptualize the world we are creating and we realize through our becoming-liberated what it is that liberation means. In this way there is no line between philosophy, praxis and self-criticism—as we envision no line between anarchism and veganism; they are parts of the whole that is liberation and we aim to understand it through its creation.

Becoming food autonomous grows communities that are resilient and self-sufficient with the knowledge to propagate the lessons that come from the practice of growing food and solving the questions of distribution, logistics, and inclusivity that arise from a community willing and able to do the work to solve problems that it faces. These are the questions that capitalist systems refuse to ask and purposefully work against. By solving these problems, we remove the niches within which capitalism today operates and self-propagates. When we provide alternatives to capitalism that are workable and reliable, there will no longer be any need to destroy capitalism as it will decay from sheer lack of victims to prey upon.

# Free-ganism and De-Wasting

“Freegans” employ strategies to radically acquire food, clothing, housing and other necessities through deliberate choices to minimize participation in the conventional economy. By doing so, they minimize the impact of consumer choices on animals, the environment, and the workers of the world. Freegans utilize tactics such as “de-wasting” including dumpster diving and repurposing objects and food which would otherwise become waste products. By salvaging these items, freegans both reduce the harm caused by their waste, as well as maximize the benefit of their reuse.

These radical choices to support one another and to avoid buying anything to the greatest degree possible are powerful choices to attack and subvert conventional economies and the capitalist desire to overproduce and over-consume. Warren Oakes, in the zine *Why Freegan?*, popularized freeganism as a critique and expansion of the vegan movement. Oakes extends the critiques that veganism draws about ethics and consumption into its final conclusion by asking why we should consume at all. He ends the zine, “There are two options for existence: 1) waste your life working to get money to buy things that you don’t need and help destroy the environment or 2) live a full satisfying life, occasionally scavenging or working your self-sufficiency skills to get the food and stuff you need to be content, while treading lightly on the earth, eliminating waste, and boycotting everything. Go!”

The choice to live a deliberately anti-consumption life and to work consciously against the consumer economy and the capitalists who profit from it is a radical choice that proves through practice, that it is the economy that needs us, and not the other way around. Capitalist propaganda boasts that it provides a host of luxuries and consumables that improve all of our lives, but the freegan ethic brings this contradiction into the forefront. If we do not need to consume, why do we need to produce? And if we do not need to produce, why work? Why cooperate with a state and framework that disregards human, animal, and earthly life? Why comply with the legal structures that prop up these economic parasites?

Freegans let these questions hang dead in the air so that they can be viewed naked in the light. There is no reason to produce and work, or to consume and waste. We eliminate the head of capital by removing the tail. The response to the coming collapse inherent to the contradictions in capital is to stand back and let it fall. We are the ones that prop up capitalism and allow it to survive, and if we allow ourselves to be drawn in by the temptations of the pseudo-luxuries of consumer capitalism, then we will prolong the eventual decline and death of capitalism. The system is already in its death throes and it cannot survive without us. Realizing the toxic relationship of

capital to labor and capitalism to consumerism, we only need to stand back and let capital fall under its own weight.



# Animal Liberation Front

The Animal Liberation Front (ALF) has drawn more ire and law enforcement backlash than any other animal activist group, no doubt due to its enormously successful campaigns to unapologetically fight against the tyranny of the propertied classes and the unjust hierarchy imposed by supremacists who hold that animals are property to be used and abused for the benefit of bourgeoisie class.

The ALF's success provides a framework for direct action and effective propaganda as we move forward in building the free world we envision, and the tactics utilized by state and capitalist forces to take them down are worthy of further consideration and analysis as well. The ALF is generally categorized into two independent and non-communicative wings consisting primarily of one public-facing, propaganda oriented, press office and legal defense organization and another wing that is generally thought of as containing all the disparate, autonomous, direct action groups of activists working on the ground to sabotage, subvert, or neutralize state and capitalist operations that prevent the liberation of animals. The advantage of this two winged pseudo-structure is to shield the ALF's public facing members, that is press officers, attorneys, and other administrative positions which spearhead propaganda, public relations, and legal protection from being charged on racketeering or other conspiracy charges for aiding or supporting the direct action of its autonomous activist comrades on the ground.

The book *Life During Wartime: Resisting Counterinsurgency* is a definitive text analyzing the transfer of wartime models of policing back into domestic policing within the United States and the use of General David Petraeus's counterinsurgency doctrine by local, state, and federal law enforcement to subvert and neutralize the threats to the status quo posed by activist groups within the United States. In it Jenny Esquivel writes the essay "Building Conspiracy: Informants in the Case of Eric McDavid" chronicling the continuation of COINTELPRO strategies in infiltrating, provoking, and coercing green movement and animal activists into risky situations that resulted in their eventual capture and silencing these activists (in exchange for dropping or reducing overblown charges) through legal action while sowing the seeds of discord that would later be reaped by the law enforcement personnel by getting some activists to turn on each other in the confusion of their arrests and assist the prosecution. The ALF Press Office maintains a short list of some of these and other agents, infiltrators, and informants on their website. ,

Law enforcement personnel have consistently ramped up efforts to infiltrate and take down anarchist movements, and have put particular focus on animal rights groups. Government and police think tanks have posited that animal rights groups and con-

servation groups form a critical starting point towards anarchist philosophies. If anything, their own literature shows that anarchism as an idea and direct action as a tactic are immense problems for the state. Leaderless movements are difficult to take down and affinity groups often take years of work to infiltrate. Strong defensive tactics can help prevent or detect infiltration, but the truth is that any group has vulnerabilities. Maintaining autonomous wholly separate cells is an important part of maintaining the anonymity of larger movements and resiliency to agent provocateurs and informants. Law enforcement personnel have specifically cited anarchists' tendency towards a strong basis in anarchist theory and defensive posturing against infiltration to be strong barriers for intelligence gathering. The most effective tactics of law enforcement tend to exacerbating divisions along lines of liberal identity politics or methods of praxis and exploiting existing vulnerabilities through targeting activists using drugs or strengthening hyper-masculine misogynist leaders. Ultimately, anarchism as a practice is the greatest defense against police infiltration and state power. By working as anarchists and strengthening our bonds of community we can prevent these vulnerabilities and create more resilient communities.

As we organize in our diverse affinities being ready to oppose and call-out instances or people when they do harm is central to maintaining the integrity of our movements. Left-unity without a definitive understanding of what radical movements or leftism are is uninformed identity politics. Courtney Morris covers in her essay *Why Misogynists Make Great Informants* how a leader in multiple radical movements, Brandon Darby, had been revealed as an FBI informant and testified on behalf of the government in the February 2009 trial of two protestors of the Republican National Convention. Morris points out how many members of these movements had attempted to speak out against Darby's blatant misogyny and aggressive, domineering style but were silenced and ultimately alienated. Tactically, being cautious about member-activists and ensuring that vetting is a continuous process of understanding and furthering radical thought allows our networks to remain resistant to infiltration by low-effort subversion from law-enforcement teams. When we allow members to be above criticism, their ego's become the primary drive of their politics and the movement becomes beholden to this egomania. These same choices to sustain charismatic leaders instead of further the needs of its members divided the Black Panther Party and various other movements. Morris argues that these actors, government provocateurs or otherwise, further the work of the state by perpetuating oppression within supposedly radical movements. Defending or excusing hate or authority within movement activists and leaders weakens our radicalism and supports the oppressions we aim to oppose.

In a testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee delivered on May 18, 2004, John E. Lewis, Deputy Assistant Director to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), claimed "[i]n recent years, the Animal Liberation Front and the Earth Liberation Front have become the most active criminal extremist elements in the United States." These words echo the earlier declaration on February 6, 2002 by Dale L. Watson the Executive Assistant Director of the Counterterrorism and Counterintelligence Division of the

FBI testifying before the Senate Select Committee that “[i]n recent years, the Animal Liberation Front (ALF)—an extremist animal rights movement—has become one of the most active extremist elements in the United States.” The seriousness of the threat that the ALF poses to the status quo is being met by the full force of the state’s law enforcement agencies in an attempt to continue to control the lives of non-human animals and the humans who live beside them. We must stand in solidarity with the direct action of these animal activists if we wish to see a future where their liberation strategies are not farcically portrayed as terror activities.

# Who are You, Really?

Clearly, the dominance of life within the capitalist system pressures people to avoid an anarchist or veganarchist life. If one accepts that using products made from animals is unethical and should be avoided, but fears the social ramifications of making these changes visible and working towards a world without speciesism, is it enough to be vegan in private only? Can one be a private anarchist?

There is a joke Salvo Zizek recalls in *The Plague of Fantasies* regarding the imperative for all schoolchildren to emulate Lenin's personal directive to "Learn, learn, learn" and constantly be reading, that goes "Marx, Engels, and Lenin were each asked which they preferred, a wife or a mistress. Marx, whose attitude in intimate matters is well known to have been rather conservative, answered, 'A wife'; Engels, who knew how to enjoy life, answered, of course, 'A mistress'; the surprise comes with Lenin, who answered 'Both, wife and mistress!' Is he dedicated to a hidden pursuit of excessive sexual pleasures? No, since he quickly explains: 'This way you can tell your mistress that you're with your wife, and your wife that you're about to visit your mistress...' 'And what do you actually do?' 'Learn, learn, learn!' " While the joke pokes fun at Lenin's singular drive, it is presented in this context to poke fun at a variation of the earlier question: Can one be a private veganarchist? Unequivocally, we say no! To accept that animals deserve ethical consideration and sit by while they are treated as objects and traded as commodities would be the utmost vulgarity. We cannot just say in private that we will support animals but only do so when it is socially, professionally, or logistically convenient.

If we were to be vegan only where it is convenient and inoffensive, or to privately hope for animal liberation but do nothing to further that struggle, then we would self-impose the prison of prescribed choices that the state and capitalism aim to impose. There is an old anarchist saying that the final authoritarian to remove is the one in one's own mind. When we internalize authoritarian thinking to the point of self-policing, we become the "last mile" of the arm of the state. To fight against the hierarchy imposed by the state involves accepting the personal rebellion against this authoritarian mindset. Lorenzo Komboa Ervin warned about the danger of complacency from white leftists whose support came through words but not action in the article *Authoritarian Leftists: Kill the Cop in Your Head!* Ervin argued that these authoritarians were betraying the struggle against fascism by displaying the same tendencies that they spoke out against. When we offer vain sympathies about the plight of animals under the agricultural machine but do nothing to support their struggle, we act in support of the same machine. By our inaction we assent to the destruction

of our ecology and the slaughtering of our animal counterparts for private profit. Further, Ervin discusses the nation-state as a vehicle for white supremacy that allows each member to profit off the poverty of oppressed nations. In the same way, if we claim to desire animal liberation but continue to profit off the bodies of animals used for labor, experimentation, and consumption, we support the supremacist model that depends on subjugating animals as a class.

There is no separation between the private and the public. In a public lecture at the European Graduate School in Malta, Žižek argued that in actuality the public persona is the more “real” person than the private morals or justifications that people discuss with their close confidantes. At the end of the day, the public persona is the one that interacts with the outside world and makes an actual impact and everything else is just a fantasy. We cannot justify upholding the status quo by hiding within a self-constructed fantasy version of ourselves that acts in accordance with our ethics. Our ethics are reflected in our choices and the rationalizations we make after the fact are circumstantial of those choices. The practical reality of vegan anarchism is that we must further the struggle for animal liberation through our actions. We must fight on every front to ensure that animals have the liberty to play and live within the healthy ecologies they deserve.

# Activist Cooking

Vegan cooking heals souls, makes communities whole, and brings people together by radicalizing our kitchens, tables, and gastronomies through the holistic, fully intentional practice that utilizes every piece of anarchist critique. To live as an anarchist fully we must function within the real world, making real change, and eating real food. By crafting meals that are intentionally anti-speciesist and which seek to include varieties of cultures, backgrounds, and food sources we can bring together diverse communities and strengthen the bonds of our affinity groups.

By taking part in our communities and strengthening our bonds through intentionally inclusive and vegan meals we provide meeting places for the discussions, activist circles, and action groups that are necessary to take our movement to the next level. By engaging ourselves and each other in this open dialogue and practicing the art of self-care and community-care we grow healthy and tight communities which become the safety net necessary to upend the capital system.

Capital seeks to alienate workers from their labor and commodities from their production. When we choose to create communal spaces for interaction and growth that are anti-capitalist we strengthen the networks that protect our communities from the attacks of the capital class. The meeting places and eating places where we choose to gather are constantly vulnerable to the encroachments of the state.

The capital system is so integrated with the state that it is impossible, in commercial eateries and social establishments, to avoid the power of the state. Every commercial establishment is subject to the constraints of operating within the capital system. The insurance policies, regulatory compliance, and control of the state is visible in every part of a commercial establishment. When we choose to communally gather in non-commercial spaces, like our homes, yards, streets, garages, parks, and picnic areas, we fight against the dependence that the state hopes to engender.

During the time I write this, many states around the globe are reacting to the pandemic of COVID-19 through measures that include restricting travel, closing commercial eateries to dining, and banning gatherings of groups of people. At this time, the luxuries of cooking become one of the basic necessities for survival as grocery stores face closures and shortages and many face partial or enforced quarantine. By making these basic necessities into luxuries, capitalism forces us to become dependent on it for survival, and we are at its whim to discard as we become unnecessary. During these times, the strength our communities can bring through mutual aid programs and self and community-care are unrivaled and in many cases essential for survival in a situation where the state has proven both unable and unwilling to help.

Eating and cooking together builds bonds that strengthen communities and bolster our networks. Cooking and eating together is a powerful tool for activist groups to show solidarity with and build affinity for adjacent communities. By sharing in our strengths and enjoying the company and pleasure of others, we free up labor to be used in other circumstances and we reduce our reliance on capitalist and state systems. A strong kitchen and communal eating space can bring to a community a place that provides a respite from the capitalist forces outside. By creating spaces that allow people to exist without consideration for their place in the production cycles of the capitalist machine, we attack the foundations of the labor relation.

In her book *Food Politics*, nutritionist Marion Nestle discusses how the social subjugation of women as a class of homemakers allowed for the bourgeois and lumpen-proletariat nuclear families to maintain healthy diets because there was someone to cook meals at home and take on the responsibilities of planning for and preparing these meals. Further, as neoliberal policies eroded the ability of working families to thrive on single incomes (a luxury that relied in large part on the subjugation of global labor and resources in the post-war years), these families would find themselves with less time to devote to meal-making and gravitated towards the processed foods and prepared snacks that industry was more than willing to provide. Moving away from the liberal dream of suburban domesticity allows us to radicalize the process of feeding ourselves. We can work in community to provide for ourselves and participate in the power of independence that sharing meals provides.

Food and cooking labor is often devalued by the capital system and used to exploit workers paid little or in many cases in the home, nothing, in return for invaluable work. For communities that value all their members and all labor, using food and cooking as a way to help strengthen the community by partaking in kind in these shared experiences and offsetting the contributions of our cooks, growers, suppliers, and transporters is our chance to show these people how much we value them. By elevating these roles, we participate in the equality and shared ideals of a progressive culture. By returning their value through the social obligations that exist outside the capital system we exercise our own independence and autonomy.

These vegan communal groups naturally yield to discussions about the origins of the food at the table and can become strong networks for finding local solutions to sourcing foodstuffs that would be hard to locate without the combined effort of multiple, focused eaters. By creating a strong, supportive hub for information and a community ready to respond to the needs of its members, we strengthen our bonds of comradeship in the fight against the capital system.

# Food You Can't Stomach—Why Capitalist Food Kills

Hippocrates, considered the founder of western medicine as a profession, considered lifestyle and diet to be central to good health. While the saying “let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food” is often misattributed to Hippocrates to support this conclusion, there is no doubt that healthful food is a vital component to a healthy life. As food scarcity remains a manufactured crisis of allocation, areas where food choice are relatively plentiful often become the victims of their own success. The high fat and sugar content of highly processed foods tend to appear to be cheap alternatives to the costly and time-intensive process of cooking at home. In fact, a simple comparison of calorie per unit cost will generally yield lead one away from fresh foods and towards the processed aisles of a supermarket. Our late-capitalist system of retail food production fundamentally focuses on driving brand loyalty through the funneling of cheap, addictive food additives and enhancers to stretch every dollar of production input through outright fraudulent practices.

Upton Sinclair wrote in his exposé novel about the Chicago meat-packing industry describing the horrors of the machine that grinds both animal and worker under its weight in the pursuit of profit, writing that the meat-packers “use every part of the pig except the squeal.” Sinclair further writes about the various methods the food industry used to inflate their profits by selling adulterated products under false pretenses. By using replacers and fillers the food industry lines their pockets, often at the risk of their customers’ health and safety. A 2014 Congressional Research Service report on economically motivated food fraud points to a variety of foods including honey, meat, fruit juices, organic foods, and coffee as common targets. Further, the report claims that most economically motivated food fraud is not detected unless it alerts public health authorities, and that the most common food-fraud is in substituting a high-value product for a less expensive or lower quality alternative. Aside from the directly fraudulent behaviors noted in the report, even more prevalent is the use of listed fillers, derivatives and cheap alternatives to lower production costs. More insidious is the science of deceit employed in labeling food products to comply with government regulated terms such as labeling a “fruit-flavored-juice” as opposed to a “fruit-juice” or a “syrup” with an adjacent maple leaf as opposed to the more heavily regulated term “maple syrup” (and consequently reducing or even eliminating the legal requirement for real “fruit juice” or “maple syrup” to be in the product). As language redefines language and these heavily marketed symbolic identifiers reduce meaning to nothingness, our



food becomes increasingly alienated from the experience to which it pays marketing homage. The logical end of this ridiculous path may be every food product being the same potato starch and high fructose corn syrup mix with a different marketing image to evoke the memory of what that product used to be.

While US legislative action against economically motivated food fraud seems sluggish, one area that food fraud has drawn some attention is in the role of a transparent and secure food supply as a national security issue. Of course, where the transparency is called for is only between the government-intelligence state and the corporate-state, not transparency for the public to see the extent of this corporate deception. Securing the food supply as a defense objective has long been used to justify US Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs providing corporate welfare to farming communities. These subsidies, which are of course consumed almost entirely by the well-connected and capital-endowed corporate farmers, claim to conserve the food production capabilities of the land by providing the capital supports to keep them from being removed from the agricultural industry. Sarah Milov's book *The Cigarette: A Political History* describes how the reality of these USDA supports largely cement social structures of control and privilege by becoming economic commodities in themselves as the beneficiaries capture both the economic and regulatory markets and use them to impoverish poor and subsistence farmers trapped in debt peonage.

The founder of the Decolonial Cooking Club, Luz Calvo, describes her approach to healthful eating as a radical means of embracing foods that rarely get attention in a world oriented towards profit-driven production. By exploring traditional foods and reclaiming ancestral knowledge, we can explore the bounds of what food can mean to communities and the power of having deep historically rooted cultural experiences. Further, food production and preparation provide a practical and complex medium for challenging gender roles and class expectations. Capitalist food production is highly dependent on the labor of oppressed peoples and the destruction of healthy ecologies. Cash crops replace diverse, balanced ecosystems and land becomes another waste product of the mega-machine. Calvo describes a Latino/a health paradox whereby Latino/a immigrants are healthier than their counterparts of equivalent socioeconomic status, but over time, as their diets evolve to meet the expectations and limitations of the American urban food desert, these health advantages erode and they become victim to the same public health issues that plague the non-immigrant working poor.

In her book *Unsavory Truth*, nutritionist Marion Nestle discusses the confluence of factors, including the economic perversion of science, overwhelming influence of marketing on food choices, perverse government-corporate partnerships, and profit seeking endeavor to create the most addictive products for the cheapest price with no concern for the consequences, coming together to destroy the nutritional health of people today. She describes how social scientists starting from the 1980s onwards have been able to predict through a "funding effect" the results of a study simply by knowing the identity of the study's sponsor. Further, she explains the USDA's checkoff programs, a series of industry-specific boards (funded in common by funds

paid into by food producers per weight of food product), with the explicit purpose of increasing demand for agricultural commodities. Checkoff-funded research as well as industry-funded research provides a counterbalance to the research showing the “unsavory truths” of industry that might otherwise stand unchallenged. By introducing confusion and drawing disproportionate attention to small segments of research, these industry-funded studies are used to create the illusion of contested science.

Just as this superstructure of private-public partnerships concentrates wealth and power in the hands of wealthy elites in rural communities, urban areas transform poor communities into the modern colonies of wealthy urban oligarchs. While farmer’s commute into urban areas to promote their products in wealthy communities that have the resources to draw farmer’s markets into their already vast variety of choices, the urban poor share the burden of few and inconveniently located food supplies connected by a dreadfully lacking logistical system. The phenomenon of the food desert, where both rural and urban communities can find the only available food sources to be unsatisfying and unhealthy fast-food or small snacks that are cost-per-calorie efficient but cost-for-nutrition inefficient, is all too common in a logistical system that does not aim to serve all communities.

While general lack of access to food in food deserts is the characteristic that leads to unhealthy convenience stores as the only option for many residents, simply adding a supermarket or grocery store to a food desert does not seem to produce the intended result of growing strong food networks. Fundamentally, adding a new supermarket did very little to change the healthy food options available to individual households, and had a noticeable impact only in driving down the prices of competitors. This downward pressure on prices in some cases had the deleterious effect of leading to store closures and increasing consolidation into the new centralized supermarket. The phenomenon of the food desert results from a combination of food prices, transportation and urban logistics, and the concentration of fast-food locations in areas of economic despair. If the issue is on the one hand, an economic issue regarding the choices available to disadvantaged populations, and on the other hand, a public health issue regarding the supply of healthy fresh foods, the social politics of food deserts remains another face of the class hierarchy of capitalism. These same communities are most often the last to receive state support and the ones left scrounging to find ways to meet their needs in a system that conspires to rob them to further enrich the “nice parts of town”. The urban ghetto becomes the colony of the urban elite, where the laborers, servants, and workers go to spend the night after working all day so the wealthy can rest in spoiled luxury.

This subjugation of rich and poor and exploitation through deliberate impoverishment and deception within geographic communities is mirrored by a similar relation between industry and the consuming public. Industry as a class acts solely for its own benefit, ignoring the harm it causes even to the individual members that work on its behalf. The madness of capitalist dogma is that it requires a person to act against their own interest, and work to create a world that is harmful to them, doing so by providing

only other more terrible pseudo-choices as alternatives. Capitalism as an ideology is all-consuming; it requires that people work to enrich it, and then impoverishes them in exchange for their continued labors. The rewards for work within capitalism is more work and a smaller relative piece of the pie.

Scientific groups, universities, and associations find the allure of capital investment impossible to ignore as it provides the only means to support their other endeavors. The World Health Organization has had problems with its own commitments to neutrality from the influence of private industry, and Marion Nestle notes that when asked by an obesity-research group at Harvard University how to deal with support from food companies, they were unwilling to entertain the notion of rejecting the funding, and only hoped that transparency could maintain the prestige of their position, even as they acknowledged that it would bias their science.

Further, within an agricultural matrix surrounded by price supports, government quotas, tariffs and import limits, state power plays an important role in guiding agricultural power, and the powerful hand of the agriculture industry cannot often be separated from that of the state agriculture regulators. Food lobbies play powerful political games and use myriad state strategies to affect their bottom line. By controlling regulatory access to benefits in every stage of the production, distribution, and financing of their operations, agriculture giants are able to increasingly dominate their less politically-savvy (or powerful) competitors. Because margins for individual farmers are so thin, conglomerates with extremely efficient accounting and legal teams are able to structure themselves to take maximum advantage of these governmental supports and further entrench their own power while their small farm neighbors sell their future expected product (at a steep discount) in exchange for the money to service their debts for farm equipment and supplies. The victors of last season draw the lots for this season, and so on. Further, on an international scale, industry lobbies play a powerful role in swaying state actors to pressure international bodies such as the World Health Organization. Sugar lobby groups within countries further argue to their legislators that removing price supports within country would be economically perilous while other countries hold strong behind their own producers. Thus the industry uses its last corruption to justify its next corruption, while its poor competitors fall deeper into debt and the larger public bears the brunt of its ecological and public health decisions. Fundamentally, corporations that manufacture food do not value your existence as a living being, but only your existence as a consumer. If selling you their addictive, supremely marketed foods as a child will condemn you to an early death so be it, as long as you remain a customer for the remainder of your short life.

# Mutual Aid, a Biological Necessity

Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* laid out, in easily digestible terms, the basic ideas of his evolutionary theory of natural selection. Darwin defined the competition for existence in "a large and metaphorical sense, including dependence of one on another." Potential for evolutionary survival is assessed on a collective basis and is dependent upon a group's ability to meet the requirements of available ecological niches. Darwin recognized the ecological benefit of a population's mutual relations for its own evolutionary survival and the evolutionary success that comes with being best the best fit for available ecological niches. The decision to work in communion with our ecological partners is one of mutual aid and survival. We support our environments and other animals in solidarity for our collective benefit.

The picture of mutual survival Darwin presents has been twisted many times to promote ideas of racial superiority, social domination, and ecologically destructive mandates often grouped under the umbrella of Social Darwinism. Social Darwinists have used the words and ideas of biology to support existing structures of hierarchy and lend a falsely scientific edge to solidify the existing biases of their supporters. Jordan Peterson wrote in *12 Rules for Life* about his belief that lobsters displayed social relations based on extreme hierarchies as a result of their various degrees of conflict resolution. Peterson's example is not uniquely disingenuous for a social Darwinist but it presents a useful case study for the way in which science can be weaponized for unscientific means. Peterson's book is clearly meant to provide psychological healing for its readers and is not necessarily poised to make any judgments on how animals interact with each other, but it is still necessary to push back on this notion to keep it from being misconstrued further. Using distinctly human value systems and social judgments to understand animal interactions blinds us to the full breadth of knowledge we can gain from observing and learning from animals.

Because the purpose of a measure is to differentiate between results, objective measures can be hard to devise, but our goal should be to gain meaningful information from the scale and variance of differences. Elaine and Harry Mensh conducted an exhaustive examination of the issues with intelligence testing in humans and the difficulty of developing culture-fair tests. If it is so difficult to develop an understanding within our species, developing that understanding across species will likely be difficult as well. The same problems plague both issues: How do we assess difference while making sure that our own difference is not reflected in the measurement? Once we have meaningfully determined a difference, how do we take this data and use it to further develop our understanding and transform our methods of measurement? Often

the problem we face is that we create tests which assess our bias instead of assessing the user's ability. In trying to determine intelligence in animals, scientists have often started by utilizing similar tests that showed success in humans, but these relied on human-centered abilities. Our bodies are equipped to process the world through sight and to manipulate the world through our hands. Many animals exhibit these same functions but use quite different means to interact with and understand the world. Through careful research that is self-aware about its own shortcomings, we are sure to gain a better understanding of the ecologies around us, but we ought to be aware of the impact of incorrect assumptions, and guard against them. A robust readiness to start from scratch will provide useful in this endeavor.

Peter Kropotkin, an anarchist philosopher and naturalist, extensively studied the mutual relations of animals in their evolutionary struggle published in his 1902 essay collection, *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution*. Kropotkin observed a multitude of interactions between and within species as factors that helped improve their own survival and the survival of their own species. Kropotkin's work provides the proof of work of anarchist communism and promotes an alternative to Marx's historical materialism through his scientific study of mutual aid in animals. Kropotkin showed that the state's failing was in imposing structures of private property which prevented people from fully engaging in mutual aid, as many successful animals had. Kropotkin's work supported the study of cooperation in animals and showed the success of cooperation in biological systems. Through studying animals, we can find an appreciation for the social nature of success and the power of mutual aid to benefit our communities and ourselves.

By exploring the wealth of knowledge that animals provide and taking an unbiased look into the ways in which they can teach us, we can learn to appreciate the possibilities for organizing society and understanding our own species without subjugating animals for this end. Through mutual respect and mutual aid, we can provide for each other and advance our collective scientific knowledge within a liberation framework. Kropotkin's and Darwin's work show the ways that mutual aid allow social groups to function more effectively when they work together for their collective benefit. Achieving total liberation and reversing the impending ecological disaster will require developing and utilizing systems of mutual aid.

## Part 3

# The Agricultural Machine

Agriculture ushered in feudalism and feudalism eventually gave way to capitalism which, socialists argue, must give way to socialism. Following this materialist lineage, it may have been necessary to go through the stage of feudalism that the agricultural age brought forth to arrive at some future stage of socialism. Some “return-to-nature” activists argue, however, that agriculture itself was a mistake and that we ought to collectively move back to a gathering society and leave behind the long work-days which they attribute to a culture that arose from agricultural life. Leftists of this tradition suggest that an inclusive society which valued each member and moved gradually, suddenly, or even possibly involuntarily towards ideal prosperity would provide for all members communally and possibly use technologies of varying degrees to meet individual needs when needed. The intricacies of maintaining knowledge hubs or utilizing available resources for advanced technology in a far less technologically integrated world is beyond the scope of this book and will not be addressed here, but it is clear that arriving at that future would require a radically different framework and thinking than that which dominates today’s landscape.

David Graeber, in *Debt: The First 5000 Years*, describes the introduction and proliferation of violence as a means to solidify wealth as the central change in moving from social debts to physical stores of value to measure wealth during the rise of early states. Graeber’s macro-analysis of history presents the case for debt, absent of state-sponsored violence, as a means for exchange that relies heavily on the social relations between people and largely reliant in trust within these social structures. Currencies of exchange, Graeber argues, become useful in low-trust environments or between people who cannot be assured that future interactions will act as a counterbalance against any bad-faith activity today. Graeber describes the social state prior to the introduction of money and state-backed currencies as “everyday communism” predicated on an expectation of a return, but not necessarily the assurance of a return. The social debt and social investment that we accumulate remains, even today, a powerful indicator of our own place in the world.

When radical ecologists and anticapitalists describe the machine of capital, the driving force that Marx argued turns the laborer into a commodity, they describe the superstructure that appears in every facet of modern life and is the apotheosis of Graeber’s description of “everyday communism”. The machine of capital reduces every relation to the transactional parasitism of exploitation in the low-trust world it creates. What Foucault calls the biopower of states to use diverse webs of regulation and control to maintain power over the physical world and control people and things is inescapable

under capitalism. Every relation reveals a new and more vulgar layer of the commodity form. Every discovery becomes usurped by capitalism as another mechanism of control and power over its subjects.

We might even describe as twin pillars of this mega-machine that pushes the person towards becoming-commodity as on the one hand the Marxian analysis of labor with no place to go, forced to sell itself into wage-slavery as a commodity, and on the other hand the ego-driven “power process” described by Theodore Kaczynski whereby capital and technology provide the false choice between success through subservience or despair through defiance. Capital dually entices the person to tie their personal identity to success within the capital system, and transforms them into the machine that subjugates the rest of the world. The myopia of modern life is that no escape exists within the system. Attempting to change the system from within results in being changed by it, and ultimately becoming it. Errico Malatesta fervently argued that a person who accepts the requirement for revolutionary change as dire and immediate cannot in good faith support incremental change through working within the system. We cannot continue with the status quo, because to do so would mean accepting the death of our ecologies and supporting the destruction of our world. Anything short of revolutionary change would do a disservice to the animals who find themselves as the subjects of human domination.

Accepting the onus of animal liberation and deep ecological movements as our own struggle does little to change the material reality of our situation. Today, by merely existing as humans, we profit off the privileged existence we hold within the system of domination that exists. Actively fighting against this structure is the starting point of our movement. Agriculture as a technological form is an arm of the superstructure through which humanity dominates our existing ecologies. Symbiotic relationships in the natural world are not rare, and we are not the only animals to engage in active cultivation. Leaf cutter ants grow intricate fungus gardens for food, termites manufacture habitats for fungus cultivation, and damselfish grow algae and tend to coral colonies. So what is so bad about agriculture, anyway? What is the difference between mutual symbiosis and the relationship of humanity to this planet?

Mutualism requires a dual benefit, an acceptance of the responsibility inherent to coexistence or the stewardship encompassed by dominion. The break from symbiosis to subjugation is the commodity form. When we cease to respect and understand our ecologies for the life-sharing mutual benefits we can afford each other and instead view them as so many resources to be exploited, domination becomes the norm. Buying into the hierarchy of capital over all predetermines the complete exploitation of our world. We enslave the living world to the unliving. Life itself is owned and controlled by the dead. As capital continually expands its growth engorging itself on the fruits of labor, its demands only increase. Today’s labor bears the weight of both today’s capital and yesterday’s capital. Capital feasts on the bodies of today’s labor and yesterday’s labor. Domination within the capitalist form is the continued treachery of today by



yesterday and of tomorrow by today. If we do not today remove the yoke of capital, labor tomorrow bears the weight of our continued failure.

The images that the animal agriculture industry hopes to evoke in its advertising and branding eschew the values associated with family farms and subsistence farming. The techniques of small farming communities and nomadic herders are more similar to the rearing of aphids by garden ants than they are to the methods utilized in intensive agriculture corporations. Large-scale farming operations rely on intense specialization to utilize economies of scale but the scalability of farming is rarely sustainable. As farms become larger, and ecosystems more homogenous, the ability of that local environment to dispose of waste products and provide adequate nutrients diminishes rapidly.

Just like wage-slavery entraps the worker in the snare of debt peonage, agriculture as a technological form drafts existent ecology into its servitude. To supply a useable crop in vast enough quantities to be profitable under capitalism, nutrients that represent several times the final product must be depleted from the raw material resources used, and the waste products become so concentrated and misallocated that they cannot be reintegrated into the land for future use.

# Primitivism and the Critique of Civilization

The organization of society is fundamentally opposed to our ecological survival or social cohesion. While alternative forms of organization exist, some point to civilization as a primary cause of our problems. Similarly or not so similarly, primitivists hold that technology solidifies these existing hierarchies and perpetuates the alienation of our practical reality. In opposition to the materialist vision of Marxists, early anarchist-primitivist John Zerzan described the inability of technology to further revolution. Technology, he and other primitivists argue, has been the tool of the capitalist state to further oppress and subjugate the masses. Capitalism has not been a stepping stone on the path towards socialism, but a departure from the harmony of sustainable ecological relations.

In an article, “The Practical Marx”, Zerzan questions Marx’s life in contrast to his mythic position in leftist dialogue. Zerzan describes Marx’s choices to side with reformists and callously support state wars as a means to hasten revolution regardless of the pain it would cause its proletariat pawns. Zerzan places Marx’s lived reality as fundamentally opposed to the ideals that his supporters hope to engender. While Zerzan does not continue with an analysis of the reflection of this Practical Marx in the spirit of Marxist thought, the parallels are not to be missed. Materialism as dogma expects the sacrifice of today’s proletariat as necessary to bring about the material conditions of revolution. The peasant classes and slave labor of the past become equally necessary sacrifices. The party and its politics become the ideals for which the proletariat ought to suffer in struggle. Capitalist neoliberalism is replaced with jingoist vanguardism and the state is replaced by the committee. Fundamentally, what Zerzan’s analysis of Marx asks us is “How can our lived experience be separated from our philosophical lives?” It is by doing anarchist work that we become anarchists, and it is impossible to be one without doing that work by our lives. Primitivism as a question asks us the same. If we use the technologies that perpetuate capitalist hierarchy, or demand global supply chains, or presuppose the next ecological disaster, then how can we pretend we are not complicit? When collapse happens it is true that it will not be one personal car or destructively mined material or exotic imported food that pushes the climate over the edge, but when we normalize these choices we cement the reality that we are willing to subjugate the planet and seal our ecological fate. There are no ethical choices within capitalism, so we must work and act outside of capitalism.

Zerzan argues that domestication is the defining error that lead towards civilization and that civilization arises from a tendency towards divisions of labor. As divisions of labor tend towards increasing specialization, hierarchies of labor give way to the power structures and social control necessary to control these greater class differences. Fundamentally, by subjugating the ecological landscape for pure production, as an end in itself, we set ourselves on the path towards utter destruction. There seems to be no coming off this path, but staying the course will be disastrous. As ecological disasters further entrench class differences and environmentally racist policies keep disadvantaged communities in areas prone to the first effects of volatile natural phenomena, the privileges of the bourgeois class further insulate them from the negative consequences of civilization.

This primitivism tends to point to agricultural cultivation as the turning point in global civilization that sparked the end of our ecological world. This viewpoint is further extended to hold both in esteem and naïve disregard the lives and cultures of pre-agricultural communities; however, the vast differences in ecological outcomes between these communities can generally be traced almost entirely to community size and not the onset of agricultural cultivation. Further, pre-agricultural communities that relied on intense hierarchy, slavery, and subjugation were not uncommon. Even forms of empire have existed in the pre-agricultural world. While it may be possible to live both inefficiently and efficiently interacting with our environments in modern and pre-modern communities, the larger our communities grow the more complex the logistical problems of waste, food production, and sanitation become. While agricultural cultivation allowed for the type of predictable and specialized crop growth that tended to support communities growing in size, it is possible to conceptualize a non-primitivist society that is specifically anti-civilization.

In a pointed attack on primitivism as non-anarchist, the anti-civilizationist Wolfi Landstreicher argued that primitivists exhibit their own commodity fetishism in their reification of pre-modern societies and performance of primitive survival skills as a program for the future instead of a critique of capitalism and civilization. Landstreicher argued fighting against civilization through concrete actions to free ourselves from the confines of civilization opens up new pathways for realizing our capacities and desires. An anarchist critique, Landstreicher continued, requires a critique of capitalism that can be explored through an active existence in opposition to civilization as it exists. By dismantling the existing societal architecture, we free up the endless possibilities for future growth free from the reified identities of the “primitive” symbol as well as the restrictive infrastructure of civilization. Some anti-civilizationists view technology and civilization as a complex that hinders human progress, while others feel that certain technological advancements offer possibilities for humanity to move beyond civilization and its trappings.

The critique of civilization provides a potential for advancement beyond the simple escapism of temporary enjoyment within the more ecologically rich world of forests, mountains, and deserts removed from urbanization. Certain technological advances

likely have the potential to promote liberation, if only their control remains decentralized and the barriers to access such as cost and technological infrastructure become delimited through movements outside of and against capitalism. As the technological framework for living and accessing resources that previously concentrated urban growth and sprawl lends itself to potentials for increased remote-ness of labor it may be possible to envision technological pathways beyond the prevailing structures of civilization. As these movements advance, ensuring that technologies, if we use them, are tools of liberation and not oppression, will be a vital part of a liberation philosophy for social organization.

# Avoiding Lifestyle as an Escape

Murray Bookchin warned about the danger of anarchists devolving into anarchist lifestyle promoting the aesthetic elements of anarchism through an individualist lens without the radical elements necessary to a social anarchism. Bookchin argued that these lifestyle anarchists only performed anarchism as a choice of branding, but not one of meaning. They have no interest in the social movement or the work of organizing and restructuring society. Lifestyle anarchists take up the style of anarchy to escape the boredom of bourgeois luxury with no interest in class analysis or social revolution.

Further, Bookchin specifically warns against the anti-technology bent of primitivists like Zerzan as a reactionary performance of anarchist aesthetic, as opposed to an act of social anarchist revolution. He warns that the anarchy that primitivists or individualists and propertarians seek is simply a cozy style for bourgeois actors to escape to from the monotony of their lives of luxury. While seeking the aesthetic of anarchy, these actors feel no desire to attack or even give up the privileges of hierarchy that they enjoy.

Bookchin specifically found the counterpoint to this pseudo-anarchist performance within the neoliberal landscape to be municipal social anarchism. He believed that through locally focused and studied movements, we could wrest power from capitalists by acting on a scale (the small scale) where they were not competitive. When people seem to be increasingly self-isolated and capitalism increasingly all-present, this confidence in the local power of small communities may seem from a bygone era but local power remains the fundamental building block of all power within social systems. The escapism of lifestyle anarchism is the end-goal of neoliberal policies. By taking away the focus on anarchist social labor and redirecting it towards consumerist branding, the look of anarchism becomes the gateway towards a life of bourgeois mediocrity. While Bookchin's lament of former anarchists settling down to cozy elite jobs and clinging to republican principles they once rebelled against is as old as time, the subversion of anarchy is ultimately dangerous because it removes from sight the visible and tangible effects of a radical leftist practical force. A young newcomer can easily see through the veneer of these play-socialists and understands that there is nothing to be gained through that work except escapism. Thus the newcomer either chooses escapism that evolves into joining the bourgeoisie or apathy that eventually becomes self-destruction. Neither of these outcomes lead to liberation or anarchy. They are dead ends for our ecology and social future.

Growing social environments that are conducive to our collective social growth is necessary for vibrant social ecologies. Our environments can have a profound effect on

our our behavior and by understanding these effects we can build community infrastructure that helps prevent violence and strengthen social ties. Building on a strategic vision for the world that allows people to exist in harmony instead of in opposition to their environment we can create the environments that are, by their existence, self sustaining. Growing social ecology frameworks as a medium for our healthy social and ecological existence affirms the active role that we play in shaping our environment as it shapes us. The biological world provides a series of inspirations for our own social growth. Individuals and communities adapt to their environments to be able to fit best into their ecologies. Interdependencies of organic collectives form the web of life and leveraging these dependencies for collective benefit provides opportunities for sustainable growth.

Strong social ecologies provide the space within which one can find and experience the ecological self. When we connect our experience with nature meaningfully to our own actions as an agent and beneficiary, of our environment, we are able to act congruently with our ecological consciousness. What deep ecologists refer to as the ecological self, is an identity moving beyond the ecological consciousness required for casual environmentalism into a profound identity with our ecologies. When we see ourselves within the struggle for existence that animals undergo in the process of living and dying for the agricultural machine or as the dying forests that are razed to grow feed plants, we experience these various ecologies as ourselves. Further, in constructing our sense of the self on these ecological identities we are better positioned to make the decisions necessary to preserve our ecological health and welfare.

# Response to The Vegetarian Myth

Lierre Keith's *The Vegetarian Myth* chronicles her own journey through discovering the origins and consequences of her own lifestyle and food choices. As she learns more about the production of food and takes control of making as much food as possible on her own, she finds that her early assumptions and decisions are in some cases unrealistic or even counter-productive to her overall goal of living in harmony with nature.

In cultivating her own plants, she is unable to provide nutrients to fertilize her soil without turning to petroleum-based fertilizers, and finds the most environmentally-friendly way to manage insects eating her produce is to introduce chickens into her garden. While the chickens eat these bugs and preserve the produce she seeks to grow for herself, and the petroleum-derived fertilizers help create healthy soil to feed this growth, she feels that utilizing petroleum products goes against her assumptions of proper environmentalism. She chronicles the great pain that she confronts when deciding how to keep the produce she wishes to grow free from insects that would eat them. In introducing chickens that prey on them, she feels that she has betrayed her own attempts at being anti-speciesist, and claims this causes her great psychological turmoil.

If we take Keith's work as an honest appraisal of her own good-faith effort to create an environmentally conscious mode of agriculture, her efforts should be applauded. She claims that these revelations derived from her own work show that the "vegetarian myth" is false. By this she means that any claims of vegetarian lifestyles as benefiting the environment, being anti-speciesist, or supporting one's own health are false.

Critiques of Keith's work abound. Ginny Messina, a nutritionist, attacked Keith's work and Carolyn Zaikowski dedicated a whole website to a chapter by chapter refutation of Keith's points. The danger of *The Vegetarian Myth* is not just that it presents false information or a personal story that attempts to justify the speciesist and climate-damaging choices of many people, but that it acts to prop up the myths that lead to a lifestyle of anti-science and unethical positions. The beauty of Keith's book is that it chooses an audience primed to listen to its hastily drawn conclusions and provides them with a cover to avoid confronting the underlying issues by presenting her own personal story as a cautionary tale towards those who might consider looking deeper into these issues of sustainability and ethics.

Keith does bring up issues that all people should consider. Knowing how to grow one's own food and provide for our own communities is an important step to being independent of the global industries that threaten to hold our planet hostage. Examining the effects of this production and finding effective strategies to feed ourselves while

existing in harmony with our larger ecosystem is central. It is extremely important that we acknowledge the dangers of continuing with business as usual that intensive agriculture presents, but there is no idyllic past which existed or to which we can return. At its core, *The Vegetarian Myth* functions as an advertisement for “paleo” and anti-carb fad diets that focus almost entirely on eating animals.

While the lifestyles that Kieth’s book supports are dangerous and harmful to the environment, the danger that we hope to focus on here is the ethical harm of using this to argue for the subjugation of animals. As anarchists we do not believe that personal choice can ever be a reason to harm another or prop up hierarchal structures of domination. Deciding to subjugate another person or animal for our personal preference is a violence based entirely on the assumptions of hierarchy. If someone is unable to live or function without the secretions or body parts of another, that requires an assessment of how to ethically provide for that need, but does not remove the obligation to provide for all justly. Social anarchism requires us to provide for each other as a community, but to do so through instituting hierarchies would be self-defeating.



# Building Locales

Moving away from destructive fossil fuels, cultivating diverse and resistant local food networks, and maintaining strong local affinity networks are all benefits of locally sourced food production. Global supply chains decimate these community ties by obsessively focusing on the immediate extraction of profit and displacement of cost. Investing our time and resources into building strong community efforts to be independent of the global capitalist empire provides individual benefits and maintains a focus on the needs and priorities of our individual communities.

The defeatism of globalism is a dead end. In an age where neoliberal policies have given way to numerous far-right populist movements and an increasingly unsustainable gap between capital and labor, the post-ideological world described in Francis Fukuyama's book *The End of History and the Last Man* is glaringly delusional. What does globalism's relentless push to continue sacrificing people, animals, and the planet in the pursuit of perilous economic concentration ask anyone looking for a way out? It presents the view that there is no alternative. Capitalism's greatest (or foulest) trick is to deprave working people of even the minutest joys of cooperation and self-actualization so that they can no longer comprehend an alternative. It criminalizes organization, punishes creativity, and places service to capital as the sole pathway to success. The pseudo-liberation of Xi Jinping's "Chinese Dream" offers a success through subservience to the global capitalist enterprise, the nation-state, the party, and the mainland. Capitalism tells you to either "put up or shut up". If you are not willing to work on behalf of the patriotic vision of a unified state actor within capitalism, then your only other option is being a free agent for capitalist actors within the state's systems. But choosing to serve at the behest of globalism does not actually offer any respite from the crushing exploitation by capital. There is a life beyond capitalism. There is something outside the system. It is also beside the system and around the system and everywhere within it. The holes in the biopower of the state become more real the more we participate in mutual aid and cooperation. When we work against the capitalist paradigm and refuse the false choices that the system offers, we become the proof of work that grows our networks of resistance. When we build community ties and grow affinities against the state, its powers wither away. The global power of the state may be very real, but it becomes less real when we defend ourselves against its insidious anomie. By actively resisting capitalism's expectation of subservience we make the power of the state less defined and less omnipresent.

In *Suicide: A Study in Sociology*, Emile Durkheim wrote extensively about the social and psychological factors that lead individuals and communities to self-destruction.

The decimation of community, overtly through the police-state and covertly through the alienation of capitalism, leads to individual apathy and societal self-mutilation. Chris Hedges described in his speech “American Anomie” how this tendency towards apathy and self-destruction in the face of a capitalist system would be, if it prevails, the end of society and the ecocide of our world. But there is life beyond the confines of nihilism or ennui. We can create the world that ought to exist by participating in the success of movements outside of and in contrast to capitalism. Instead of the escapism of consumerism and performance politics we can support the networks of power that render the state meaningless and capitalism unprofitable. When we build these networks within the shell of the capitalist world, and feed these networks through strong communities of labor and power, the state withers away and its grip on working people and our ecology loosens. We offer meaningful alternatives to people so that they have a choice outside of the dependence the state engenders. We make real the vision of anticapitalism by creating it through our work.

Using food to reconnect with our local community and understand the origins of our foods as sustenance instead of as commodities provides a radical pathway to centering ecology in our food experience. In areas facing food insecurity due to conflict or political instability, growing strong networks of alternative food sources and locally-focused supply chains provides a needed safety net that prioritizes the local community over the interests of global capital. This type of local-specialization can be a powerful break from the onslaught of globalism that attempts to completely alienate interactions with food into questions of brand identity or chemical satiation. Localized farmers’ markets provide a unique place to de-couple markets from capitalism in that they create inefficiencies which make large-scale suppliers unprofitable and provide an opportunity for smaller local farmers to be economically successful. Further, as spaces for the cooperation between various growers to market their produce, they are areas where anti-capitalism and outside-capitalism have the opportunity to be explored. Providing these smaller growers with the skills and knowledge to succeed in the marketplace from producer to end-user and removing the aggregators that make up the parasitic middlemen of capitalism allows these local farmers to grow their skills and their importance in the community, further weakening the grasp of global capital.

Local food systems within urban sprawl pose special problems regarding availability and equitable allocation. Growing food knowledge and collective understanding about the limitations and best practices for locally sourcing food is a necessary prerequisite to de-globalizing our food infrastructure. By growing a more informed public and cultivating interest in the varieties and seasonal rotations that are possible for the local ecology to support, we create a knowledgeable and able social ecology ready to meaningfully participate in these local growth models. This type of knowledge is further grows the investment of the individual in the community and vice versa. Our local networks grow stronger through these interdependencies and our webs of food infrastructure become more resilient in the face of ecological crises. Envisioning locales that provide

the physical connections to sustain our communities provides new opportunities for strengthening our networks against and outside of capitalism.

# The Global Dominance of Food Transportation

Because fruits and vegetables generally have a lower carbon footprint involved with their production than foods like meat and dairy, the portion of their carbon footprint represented by transportation costs can be significant. Organizing to make conscious decisions to prevent the decisions of global supply chains to represent the majority of available food in our local areas can help prevent this added burden on our environment. When the supply logistics industry attempts to meet the desires of a consumer base that wants food on short notice or “just-in-time” while maintaining long distances between supplier and end-user, the industry will attempt to meet this demand through increased use of air-travel and other emissions-inefficient modes of transport. These systems are not set up to value our collective ecological survival and will sacrifice our global health for short term profit. Packaging and repackaging, storage and warehousing, transportation logistics and retail practices all play parts in raising the environmental costs of bringing goods to market. Our system hides these costs from the end-user in myriad ways and our increasingly complex supply chains make it difficult to track the lifecycle of a single item from creation to consumption to waste. Logistical techniques and models for adequate refrigeration during transportation are necessary to control microbial growth during transport, but moving to a framework that deprioritizes the availability of all goods to those with the most resources allows us to focus these efforts on the needs of our communities as well as those of our global ecology.

To be able to provide all fruits and vegetables all the time requires transport from distant growing climates (least energy intensive), maintaining cold storage facilities locally (medium energy usage, but also high potential for loss due to the length of storage-time needed to maintain yearly consumption), or growing produce in indoor facilities (most energy intensive). Attempting to meet this demand is already destroying our planet and continuing on this path will never sustain our rapidly growing population. Shifting our food culture towards valuing the foods that are in season and able to grow locally can help dramatically restructure our industry of food supply. Today, our food system has coalesced around the idea that what people want is to have access to all the same food all year round, but by reconnecting with our local climates and understanding the greater consequences of our collective decisions regarding food, we can have a powerful impact on our world.

Deciding not to make this change is also a profound choice to maintain the status quo of domination and exploitation of land, water, and food from disadvantaged areas as

cash crops for the sustainment of luxuries in the Global North. Vandana Shiva discusses the specific implementation of the “Green Revolution” in the state of Punjab in India to bolster the prices of wheat in India in exchange for allowing the United States and the chemical industry to push chemical farming on India. This transformation to a “Green Revolution” was imposed by the World Bank and the United States to change the wheat varieties used into ones that were more water intensive and chemically intensive as well as taking away the cooperative decision making power of farmers to decide which crops to grow by requiring industry-favored crops. She specifically points towards the poison cartel of Monsanto-Bayer introducing the American industrial farming structure of debt peonage of farmer to food distributor. This is the ecocide of farmers through pushing farmers into debt slavery that leads to suicide and chemical poisoning known to cause cancers. Shiva specifically calls out Bill Gates for using his philanthropies to roll out a “chain of slavery” in India through control of digital commerce, in Africa through its own “Green Revolution”, and through intellectual law in genetic patenting and control. On the global stage, industry seems to have such a strong impact as to have more weight than many countries, and often the countries with the greatest international influence act wholly on the part of industry. The synthesis of capitalist and nation-state empire is in this prioritization of coherence between industry desires and international policy. Understanding these global processes of domination is an necessary part of resisting the onslaught of eco-fascism in our world.

# Can Veganarchism Produce as much as Capitalism?

One might ask how we can maintain our current level of production and feed humanity without continuing the methods of intensive agriculture and concentrated production operations that are the norm today. Really, the answer is that we cannot. The issue that we face as a global biome is not a failure to produce, but an unwillingness to allocate resources effectively. It is not only that food is produced to be consumed elsewhere, but that food is produced to commoditize the public resources that form its inputs, so that value can be extracted from its place of origin, removed from collective environmental resources and concentrated in private hands. Fundamentally, transitioning to a sustainable model of global food production will require a restructuring of the current agricultural landscape. Overwhelmingly, land, capital, and bodies in disadvantaged nations are appropriated in the service of producing goods and food for consumption in advantaged nations. The logistical structures are primed towards the concentration of ownership towards high-income areas and the depletion of resources and wealth in low-income areas.

The tentacles of empire stretch deep into the soil and rivers of every corner of the world and work incessantly to the increasing biotic bankruptcy of the Earth for the economic empowerment of the few. What we ask as vegan anarchists is to question the foundational relations upon which this transfer of wealth and continued domination is based. Fundamentally, vegan anarchism is not a consumer choice, but an act of rebellion against the cultural norms of exploitation. How can we rebel against the economic system that subjugates whole biomes of our world to others? Is it possible to envision a world that provides all the food we need while simultaneously strengthening our bonds of collective culture to build resilient ecologies? Sustainability as a global phenomenon requires an active collective force towards building resilient communities, improving rural livelihoods, and actively conserving and protecting natural resources. 30.7% of the world's workers are employed in the agricultural sector, and agriculture remains an extremely effective method for reducing poverty. How do we acknowledge the economic impetus driving disadvantaged rural communities to deplete their natural resources for the enrichment of global capital and provide space within our global community to support shifts towards mutual aid? The answer is not simple or easy, but it is obvious. We cannot continue down the path of production for its own sake on which we are currently. Global wealth concentration is not sustainable. Inequity is both the cause and effect of our production problem.

Because our system is so focused on incessant concentration of wealth, our depleted areas and peoples continue to have little choice but to serve under the system of capital that exists. Labor remains forever trapped in the Sisyphean tasks of the C-M-C treadmill of wage slavery (described in Marx's *Das Kapital*) inadvertently widening the power differential between labor and capital. Foucault argued in his speech "The Mesh of Power" that superstructures of governance that exist in the police-state, the military industrial complex, the global corporation, and incestuous financial industries are secondary to that original technology of power that exists in primitive relations of control. The technology of power that creates divisions of labor and turns the worker into a commodity was only possible within the discipline of the large-scale workshop. This discipline, Foucault argues, is necessary to move from the monarchial power (a loose mesh with large spaces lacking control) to the capitalist power (a tighter mesh). So as the mesh of power grows tighter and cultural, economic, and social hierarchies push us ever forward towards the cliff of climate catastrophe and ecological disaster, where is the escape? By attacking the technologies of power that form the basis of the superstructures, that is, by attacking cultural norms, rebelling against neoliberal revisionism, and supplanting defeatist complacency with effective organization, we can widen the liberties that escape the mesh of power. By weakening the hold of these threads, we render the mesh of power functionally useless. Without these technologies of individual control and self-discipline, the superstructures become powerless.

# Inconvenience

As vegan anarchists a question we must resolve is whether it is necessary in every instance to avoid the exploitation of animals. Is there some level at which there becomes a tradeoff between the benefits that this movement provides to our relations and the harm that it could present to humans individually or as a group? We charge that this is a patently false dialectic; the exploitation of one group or individual does not justify and will not be used to justify the exploitation of another. We oppose exploitation and struggle against it in every action, and all struggles fight for the same revolution. When we accept the notion that we must sacrifice one struggle or accept one form of exploitation to save ourselves or another we doom anarchism to failure. We hold that we have the ability to provide for all and to give to all the dignity that they are due. Anarchism does not hold that revolution is something that comes at some future date when technologies or sensibilities will catch up to the realities of class conflict. As anarchists it is necessary for us to analyze more completely the effects of such a charge.

Most often this criticism claims that a vegan lifestyle is a modern luxury afforded only in so-called “developed” western countries and not available to the majority of the world or the majority of people. This is patently false. The availability of plant-based foods and grocery markets remains stronger in non-western countries and less economically dominant countries closer to the root of agricultural supply chains. This is partly because the expense involved with supporting large-scale animal production industries is only economical on farming land with higher real estate prices that exist closer to these high disposable-income areas that are concentrated in western established economies. In recent decades the land resources used to house animal agriculture has grown to encompass many eastern states as well, with animal feed generally sourced from the poorest of countries with the cheapest per-acre real estate. The foods that feed the animals produced on these farms is largely grown and imported from the less established economies as they vie for contracts to trade their wealth to the animal production farms and the countries that house them.

A more insulting criticism is that people who are not obsessed with the luxury of a strictly tailored diet will not have the time, knowledge, or ability to make deliberate decisions regarding their interaction with these economies. We do not hold that it takes any particularly privileged skill or knowledge to understand how to acquire plant based foods, but acknowledge that in certain localities, primarily ultra-urbanized areas or isolated environments with harsh growing conditions, plants can be hard to find. While it is true that there is no ethical form of consumption within capitalism, it is also



true that there are more unethical forms of consumption than others. To deliberately choose not to aid the struggle for animal liberation or to avoid confronting the available knowledge about these industries is a failure on our part as anarchists and as vegans. We must employ a variety of tactics to ensure that education about this struggle is easily available and that we are well-informed against the propaganda of the capitalist industries we attempt to dismantle. We are determined to make sustainable sources of food available, even in the “last-mile” of urban food supply that is the modern food-desert. There are situations in which a person may require the product of some exploitative process to survive or dramatically improve their quality of life, and we must be aware of these individual realities. Where these situations arise it is necessary that we work to pressure the producers of these products to explore and provide alternative non-exploitative sources for these same remedies and ensure that capital is not able to exploit peoples disadvantages and force them to choose between self-sacrifice or going against their ethics. The fact that exploitation exists as the norm is a symptom of the malaise of powerlessness that capitalism hopes to impart, and we must utilize our organizing to combat these challenges. We hold that all people have the intelligence, grace, and ability to live a life free of exploitation while also acknowledging that what that means may be unique to each person and each situation.

# Freedom to Eat (and be Eaten)

For some, it is possible to accept the charge that living a lifestyle which respects the autonomy and individual subjectivity of animals is the only logical way forward, but for others this supposedly weighty understanding is brushed away like nothing with an appeal to something such as taste, familiarity, or a simple personal choice to cause harm. This point remains philosophically difficult to dispute because it starts from a position of subjective morality that regards animal lives as inconsequential to the person who cannot be bothered to curb their own preferential desire for exploitative products.

This strain of thinking often flows from some type of casual belief in libertarian values, a delusional idea that values can be and ought to be formed around the lives we choose to live and not vice versa, or an even more depraved notion which makes the stylistic choice to destroy the world out of a belief that this show of animosity is an act of personal power.

Regarding this strain of pseudo-libertarianism which claims that we exercise our liberty by knowingly causing harm Jeffrey Tucker wrote for *Fee.org*, a largely right wing publication, an article titled *Against Libertarian Brutalism* which argues against the turn towards a darker liberty in which a free person who finds the world disagreeable takes on the privilege of being the one causing the disagreeableness. Tucker argued that libertarians have the choice between a brutalist worldview that would destroy the whole world for the most miniscule personal comforts, or a humanist libertarianism that supports others in their own quests for personal freedom.

Ultimately, if we believe in the power of direct action, and the vitality of our own institutions over those of the state, capitalism, or other oppressive hierarchies then we confirm that power every time we act in a way that deliberately brings about the world within which we wish to live. By accepting that the world becomes the way it is because of our own actions we accept both the power and the responsibility that comes with making deliberate choices. Because of this, the deliberate anarchist and the liberated vegan will always choose to forgo the illusion that presents itself as the allure of pleasure from exploitative foods.

A common reaction to fully grasping the enormity of brutality involved in animal agriculture is to attempt to argue away the reality and attempt to reason one's way into justifying the complicity of past years. This reaction comes from the desire to maintain the comfort of the lifestyle one thinks one has chosen. Chris Hedges in his book *I Don't Believe in Atheists* discusses the rise of a new age of pseudo-intellectuals who argue against conviction of thought, personal responsibility for the strength of our own

actions (or lack thereof), and even the deliberate denunciation of values as a meaningful way to determine our philosophy and praxis. Hedges warns against succumbing to the allure of these easy excuses to be less than fully critical of ourselves and our own actions. If we have meaningful expectations of the world around us, then we must create that world through our choices and our work. Even inaction is a choice that cannot be made lightly. To put off action after determining that it is right and in alignment with the desires of each class and every individual affected is to doom ourselves to a sub-par world. It is because we are anarchists that we demand more than the privilege of a world with this minimal level of non-interference.

The vainest of those who oppose the vegan movement as anarchist practice argue that it is necessary to maintain the relics of carnist food production to preserve its aesthetic. They claim that the inconvenience of providing consideration for those classes created to maintain human supremacy is an affront to the delicacies of a culture that requires the subjugation of these non-human beings for the sake of a more refined taste. They cling to hierarchal modes of domination through an appeal to cultural significance. Of course, this kind of masturbatory bourgeoisie delusion is not one that warrants serious engagement. An aesthetic that is predicated on depravity is just a veneer of culture—a vulgarity. A more prescient argument follows the belief that a vegan lifestyle is a privileged, new-age lifestyle that is more of a marker of class distinction than a matter of legitimate praxis of liberation.

The belief that animals are property is of course only as new as capitalism, and anti-capitalist philosophies could not predate capitalism; however, the notion that animal liberation is a western phenomenon is a claim that discredits the work of whole cultures towards developing both philosophies and foods that provide for the vast richness of vegan cuisine and historiographies. While there exists currents within the vegan movement that wholly fall within the norms of mainstream commercial culture and promote excessive consumerism, continued exploitation of workers, and the extraction of surplus value by shareholders of multinational economies of scale (which in maximizing for efficiency of production and capital growth, inadvertently maximize for the destruction of communities, ecologies, and peoples); the movements that we support are, of necessity, both vegan and anarchist. To be anything less than fully committed to these goals would be a travesty, and to be sacrifice one struggle for another would be to claim (falsely) that the world we live in is not ready for the world we work to bring into being.

As anarchists we charge the others to take what they need, and in doing so create the world that one and all desire. As vegans we charge the world to throw off the yoke of claims to human supremacy in exchange for the strength of a deliberate life. We aim not just to be the arms from which our work flows, but also to act in solidarity with the bodies which we work to free. For as long as we enslave, we remain enslaved, and until every cage, prison, and collar are broken we will not be free.

# Direct Action at Home

Experiments in community gardens and urban farming can provide alternatives to the failing infrastructure of capitalism to provide adequate fresh food in certain locales. Widespread urban farming can sometimes lead to negative effects if the inefficiencies of individual crop yields cause problems with waste disposal, water runoff, and issues with chemical fertilizers or pesticides. Being knowledgeable and growing interconnected communities of support for urban farmers is essential for ensuring a community-oriented growth model that does not jeopardize our collective health for the individual sense of liberty that comes with controlling a plot of land. To be radical about these ecological models we must focus on the effects and benefits it can provide to our local community, as well as the potential for damage from our own errors. Some urban farming models allow for no-acreage farming. By dedicating no specific land for farming, we can dramatically reduce the commitments of soil and land infrastructure necessary to grow our food, and further, by eliminating the transportation of food to and from the garden, it becomes especially autonomous. These experiments, however, often require voluntary labor to remain economically viable in a system that rewards centralization and specialization, but they provide an important ability for communities to remain resilient against food scarcity if their large-scale food production models face issues. Further, some urban areas contain substantial amounts of open land that is able to be transformed for cultivation. These tracts of land can be utilized, with community support, for the increased food stability of these regions to create more complex webs of food production that allow urban dwellers to take part in the creation of their own food instead of consuming purely as a function of their existence within capitalism and biological necessity.

Fruit and vegetable scraps can be composted with leaves and other organic matter to create healthy soil for growing plants and feeding our biomes. By collecting the cuttings of gardens and scraps from our food supply we can repurpose these by sending them back into our micro-ecologies to further separate ourselves from dependence on capitalist structures. Further, removing these products from our community waste systems and funneling them into our ecologies natural waste handling systems can reduce the burden of waste products created by concentrated civilization. Thus we reduce the amount of waste in landfills, nurture healthy soil growth, and reduce the effects of transportation necessary to move these pieces back and forth into and out of our local ecology.

The effects of making lifestyle changes are not as straightforward as simple consumer boycotts. Taking an active role in doing the work of small changes to one's own

everyday impact grants an empirical window into the global issues of sustainability, waste disposal, resource distribution. When we see the limits of our own ability to change on an individual basis, as well as the ease with which other changes are made, we have the practical knowledge from which to hold corporations and systems accountable. While we do not hold that these personal changes are necessary prerequisites to taking a strong stance on industry practices regarding the environment, personal decisions and personal values are not wholly exclusive either. Making ecologically conscious decisions involves actively questioning the routine of consumerism that capital attempts to normalize. Yet, capitalism seems specifically positioned to protect itself from this sort of introspection. Even as individuals, taking stock of the impacts of our own choices and making informed decisions in an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world can make it difficult to disentangle our liberties from the narrow options that capitalism puts forward.

In a world increasingly dominated by large corporations with the means and economies of scale to demand competitive financing and claim the majority of corporate welfare, supporting local communities and strengthening the ecosystems and economies that provide value back to our communities is essential for fighting against capitalism. Driving growth within our communities need not be limited to acting within the expectations of capital. It is entirely possible to support our local economies while actively attacking capital structures and building the roots of a world ready and able to defeat capitalism and hierarchy. Resisting the commodity fetishism and consumer identities that capitalism instills is necessary to advance a radical conception of the power our individual actions have within the larger social-economic fabric.

# The World without Animal Agriculture

Looking at the world as it exists today it might seem impossible to envision a world that does not exploit animal bodies and lives. One might believe that while sustaining human populations without agriculture was possible in the past, population growth necessitates the continued exploitation of the world's natural resources for growth. This thinking neglects to consider the harm caused by a drive for constant growth and disregards any alternatives that become clear as we shift away from a perspective that is human supremacist and capital-oriented. More importantly, scarcity in the modern world is a matter of allocation, not production. Capitalism profits on the artificial scarcity that results from concentrated production machines and specialized work.

Imagining a world without animal agriculture does not involve any 'sacrifices' on the part of humans but rather requires prioritizing a culture that does not support privilege amongst the human species. If we value the world that we live in and take into consideration all the stakeholders that coexist with us on this planet, then we must consider the effects not just of animal agriculture but of agriculture as a whole. We have the resources and ability to provide for everyone on the planet. We do not need to choose between depressing population growth and maintaining our environment. Private capital is the problem and eliminating it is the solution.

Agriculture as a process can be incredibly taxing on land resources present in healthy soil. Often, sustainable farming choices require rotating crops or maintaining mixed fields as opposed to mono-crop acreage. Industrial agriculture relies on specialized production that tends towards mono-crop farming and away from sustainable practices. While industrial agriculture can be incredibly useful at producing large yields with little obvious expense, the social cost is enormous. When we ruin the health of our land through intensive farming practices, we reap a short term benefit while destroying the generational wealth and health of our Earth.

Tilling soil is the process of turning over soil so as to mechanically break up weeds, aerate soil, and break up soil so as to make it easier to plant desirable plants. Tilling as a process, however, has many drawbacks which, over the course of many years and generations, can be catastrophic. Tilled soil loses much of its top soil rich in organic matter to wind and erosion, releases more carbon and nitrogen necessary for healthy growth of plant matter, and contains less healthy distributions of carbohydrates necessary for robust plant development. A study on the effects of till vs. no-till practices on the quality of soil concluded: "from the standpoint of soil fertility, the no-till sys-

tem not only improves the quality of [organic matter] but also increases its quantity.” The tillage system is still common however in many agricultural settings in “advanced” economies. Thus, this practice means the fertile lifespan of any plot of soil is shorter than had more ecologically conscious decision-making been employed. The tillage system requires the continual cannibalizing of small farms—the “family-run” enterprises that pepper all agricultural propaganda—by the large mega corporations that pioneer concentrated animal feeding operations and rentier ownership practices over farmland that preys on farm workers and destroys the viability of the land. These large scale operations destroy the economic diversity of farming communities and leave behind a wasteful path of unusable land that can take generations to be arable again. This framework of intensive agriculture will continue to destroy the common wealth of land amongst us in the pursuit of private profit.

Ultimately the reason why industrial agriculture will never be sustainable is the same reason that capitalism will never be sustainable. The incentive systems of privatized short term gain at large social expense are the direct result of property relations that make profitable value-extraction practices instead of value-adding practices. When a farmer looks at the bottom line in a world where their own financial future is insecure, and increasingly inviable, they will find that it is impossible to support their farm in a way that will compete in the current market system while also maintaining the integrity of the soil quality so that future generations can also use this land as source for growing food or other resources. Further, under the system of debt peonage that small farmers commonly live, where they must sell the expected harvest of their next crop simply to service the debt on their farm equipment and inputs, being an ecologically conscious farmer seems not just a luxury but an economic impossibility. Unless we incentivize sustainable farming practices through an upending of the capital and property systems we will never be able to liberate the earth and its animals from the grave we are digging for ourselves.

Industrial farming “treats the farm like a factory, with inputs and outputs, and considers field and animals to be production units.” The speciesist framework is a necessary prerequisite to the conceptualization of farms and animal residents as the means of production upon which the farm owner leverages his or her ownership to extract surplus value until the last drop of life is removed from the land, the animals, and the ecosystem of what was once a prosperous arable region. Animals as a class will always be exploited in this system. Small farmers, rural communities, and ecological systems bare the long term losses that private capital externalizes through the profit system. The tendency of capitalism towards centralization, of processes, of property, and of capital leads, in industrial agriculture, to the proliferation of single-crop farm lands. These mono-crop growing trends leave ecosystems that were once protected by the biodiversity inherent to their climate and bioregion susceptible to instant decimation by “pest pressures” or diseases that might affect that crop and which will find mono-crop acreages to be fertile development grounds. “Sustainability is determined by the system, considered as a whole, not by its individual components.” Strength in systems

relies on the diversity of its many parts. Creating diverse ecologies provides the power to withstand a multitude of changes to individual viability. Mono-crop systems do not have the strength of this diversity and their proliferation leaves our world vulnerable to a host of dangers.

Kenneth Dalhberg asks in a 1991 article questioning the sustainability trends within agriculture, “Will these societies seek to maintain current lifestyles, privileges, and consumption patterns—ironically using the label sustainability in the attempt—or will they seek to restructure into genuinely sustainable, equitable patterns?” As so-called “capitalism with a nice face” has become the norm more than the seemingly straightforward evils of times past, it seems that the work of those purist sustainability models may be small compared to the big names of bourgeoisie “sustainability,” but actual sustainable agriculture is a necessity and continues to grow. The technologies and understanding that have proliferated in industrial agriculture have evolved since Dalhberg’s 1991 article, but the lessons of a time before industrialized or intensive agricultural practices are valuable nonetheless.

Writing under the name Lewis Herber, Murray Bookchin extolled the power of workers to produce a liberating technology that vastly improves the world. Ecologically-minded technologists were able to actually improve environments through human interaction and strengthen otherwise weak biomes. As farmers and laymen have come to understand the dangers of tilling, intensive farming practices, and industrialized methods of farming, familiarity with sustainable practices has grown and yielded some fascinating results. These sustainable practices are not just quaint oddities and interesting experiments, they lay the groundwork that will be the future of food and land stewardship as we move forward. Urban communities have combatted the problem of food-deserts by creating urban garden communities to introduce fresh produce in areas that are disregarded by the capitalist allocation system. Rural communities understand that surviving just to feed the capitalist farm-debt system and destroying the long-term viability of their land only cheapens the generational wealth that their farms represent. While the ultimate betrayal of family sacrifice in these communities might be selling the farm, what difference does it make to maintain the deed only to continually risk an unserviceable lien on it in a bad year. By coming together behind a common cause, urbanites have disrupted the expectations of the profit system. By being ready to support each other as a collective community, small farmers have shown the flexibility and innovation necessary to maintain the long-term health and viability of their farms against the whims of the wealthy and powerful. When these people work outside of the system they fight against it by showing that it is the system that needs them and not vice-versa.

Community supported agriculture (CSA) systems are models for food production and growth that attempt to combine a community stake in localized food production with the needs of local farming communities and ecosystems. As it exists in the western world CSA systems coopt the terms of economic production originating within capitalism to describe communal ownership schemes regarding farmland. Various types of



community supported agriculture systems exist with some requiring only monetary subscriptions from shareholders who receive in compensation food that the CSA harvests. Other CSAs require members to provide some level of work to gain from the fruits of the land. The larger benefit of CSAs is not just to provide an innovative way to make farming sustainable for groups that otherwise would be priced out of the agricultural market by structural and economic barriers to entry. In addition to that, CSAs support the connective relationships between land and farmer and table that are necessary to strengthen communities with holistic investment into farming and their environments. CSAs help end the alienation of urbanized capitalist structures that try to put people in boxes such as “consumer” or “producer” or “worker,” and instead to allow each person to exist in their individual self as an interdependent part of their community and environment. CSAs localize supply chains in an increasingly globalized world. Cone and Myhre found that “[the] more shareholders participate in their farms the more likely they are to express their commitment in broader ideological terms.” In an increasingly alienated society of humans on isolated islands starving for community, CSAs can be a link back to the social culture that we require for healthy and full lives. Community ownership in land is an important part of ending the capitalist structure of industrial agriculture but it only forms part of the solution.

Experimental universal basic incomes have been gaining traction as a policy goal within certain groups. A slightly similar concept Evan Pierce discusses is Universal Ecological Infrastructure. Pierce points out that capitalism has incentivized structures and styles of living that are absurdly disharmonious to our environments. Our world has the ability to provide everything that we need, and if we structure the world around us it would make sense to structure it in ways that are positively oriented towards long-term sustainability. Using building methods or landscaping techniques that are not fit for the local climate is doomed to be a short-lived exercise in vanity. Instead, for example, by utilizing architectural forms that tend towards dissipating heat in hot climates, and capturing it in warm climates, we can reduce the need for artificial climate controlled rooms that require constant energy inputs. By structuring our society through innovative, localized architectural techniques and utilizing the tendencies already existing within our environments, we can build an ecological infrastructure that provides for us. Living in harmony with our natural environment can sustain the life of leisure that our planet is capable of providing long-term.

While forming a perfect permaculture infrastructure that would allow for complete post-scarcity luxury may be difficult to conceptualize currently, developing with that sort of goal in mind promotes the possibilities that capitalism will never bring about. Radically developing our ideas about our existence within the larger global ecology can help to prevent the tendency towards exploitation that begins through domination of other species and continues through into notions of empire. By building spaces that allow for us to exist in harmony with the other animals around us we can synergize our efforts towards mutual aid instead of the collective destruction that lies at the end of the path on which we currently stand.

# A World without Agriculture at all?

If agriculture is so harmful to our ecologies, can we imagine a world that is post-agricultural? Likely, a future that involves no agriculture at all would require moving away from the desire to keep many of the luxuries that are granted in terms of predictable food sources and scalable food supplies. Theodore Kaczynski's criticism of technological slavery and the effects of oppressive civilization still largely hold true today, but the reality of an anti-agriculture movement may be hard to stomach, even if waves of the anti-civilization movement might support it. Then, if post-agriculture is improbable, what about post-"intensive-agriculture"?

Largely, issues from agriculture are a matter of scale. As the desire to produce food products consumes increasing amounts of land and requires larger and more complex bureaucracies of transportation and logistics, monoculture farming and unhealthy biologic processes become the norm, compounding otherwise manageable agricultural issues. But if we are to be truly radical in our building a future, what is it that fundamentally separates "agriculture" from "intensive-agriculture"? Put more plainly, what separates ideals of the family farm and community ranch or urban zero-acre garden from the large-scale agricultural giants that tend to be universally despised?

Mark Devries is an attorney and filmmaker who filmed the world's first aerial drone footage of factory farms in his series *Factory Farm Drone Footage*. Devries' work puts into visible terms the destruction and waste inherent to intensive agriculture. To house more animals in less space requires large-scale technologies to remove and traffic waste and resources into cesspools that hold this waste, just like in human urban centers. As the amount of waste is impossible for the land to naturally degrade, it accumulates and creates a toxic dump that is dangerous to animals and humans, as well as the environment. As these farms become larger, so do the environmental hazards they pose. In the United States, the largest farms meet the Environmental Protection Agency's criteria to be defined as Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO).

CAFOs represent a profound risk to the ecology of the surrounding area. More generally, the implementation of CAFOs and large-scale animal agriculture as the point of production for most products derived from animals creates an enormous danger for the global environment. The dangers present and clear in CAFOs reflect the contradictions inherent to the capitalism of intensive agriculture. As these farms become increasingly bloated, concentrated, and intense, the environmental hazards they pose become unmanageable. These farms remain in existence as economically profitable for

the capitalists that profit from them because they are able to socialize the damage their production processes cause. While they privatize the profits from animal enslavement, they relinquish all liability for the environmental degradation they cause through waste production, land mismanagement, and mechanized slaughter. Capital extracts profit from the land and leaves in its wake environmental destruction that, where reversible, can take generations to undo. CAFOs present dangerous hazards to the surrounding community that have been noted in unpleasant smells, unsightly centers of death and destruction, and hazardous public health concerns. They are hotbeds for disease and require large toxic waste dumps that render areas totally unusable. CAFOs are concentrated in areas that disproportionately target racial minorities and historically disadvantaged groups and the emissions from CAFOs cause lung ailments, irritation, and overall lower quality of life. The solutions that industry provides for the environmental destruction that CAFOs cause to local communities and to the larger global climate is through green tax credits. These tax credits act as offsets for carbon emissions that can be bought or sold by polluters to avoid paying for the damage they cause to our shared environment. Instead, the polluters are able to buy their absolution from the damage they cause, and continue their harmful practices in perpetuity with the sanction of the moderate environmentalist movement effectively walking us arm-in-arm towards ecocide.

The difficulties of dealing with CAFOs abound. They tend to be located in isolated communities that have little regulatory recourse and no political power to prevent the damage these operations cause. The industry is large and well-funded as well as politically connected, especially in the administrative corners that have jurisdiction to regulate them. Animal agriculture's ill effects are most prevalent in the rural communities nearby the operation, but the beneficiaries of these concentrated enterprises are generally the populations of large cities closer to the centers of power and financial institutions with no stake in these remote communities. Further, the specific damages that CAFOs cause can be hard to pinpoint and quantify so it can be difficult to wrap public sentiment (from the larger out-of-view public that would be necessary to bring political pressure) around the possibility of removing and eliminating this industry. While all that remains true, locals directly affected by the existence of CAFOs are in the most effective position to fight against them. Resisting the animal agriculture industry's onslaught is necessary for the preservation of our fragile ecology.

While preventing the efforts of the animal agriculture industry's enterprises is important to maintaining the ground that we have now, creating the blueprints for a world without CAFOs is necessary for making that world a reality. The carnist asks: But without CAFOs how will we produce enough meat and dairy to fill our needs? And of course our response should always be that this is the wrong question. There is no human need for meat or dairy. Rearing animals and then killing them for meat and dairy are not efficient means of allocating resources or deriving calories and nutrients from the land, water, and solar inputs necessary to produce them. Animals do not exist for you, they just exist. But those are all answers which carnism requires a person to

know and yet simply ignore. The reality of which the carnist schema requires a person to be ignorant when confronted with our demands is that No, we will not produce meat and dairy. It would be impossible to do so and ignorant to choose to do so. Animal bodies and their secretions are not for you to consume, they are part of an animal's corporeal existence and they exist for that animal. The reality is that the pockets of luxury that capitalism creates are not sustainable. They are not sustainable because they are falsehoods created by allocating resources inefficiently to inflate the relative wealth of certain actors. The veneer of neoliberalism is that its false creed of mutual profit is necessary to cover the glaring contradictions inherent to capital. This planet has more than enough ability to sustain us, just not like this.

Clearly, intensive farming will never be sustainable. We have to move away from the model that sees output-per-acre as the sole driver of land-value. When we destroy the integrity of our land systems, and rob the soil of nutrients that take years to replenish, we are left with land that has become simply the waste-product of capitalist enterprise. If we continue to allow privatized wealth to extract value from our land, we will be left with an Earth that is uninhabitable. By protecting our world, we ensure the continued survival of ourselves and those who come after us.

The solutions to climate change and ecological destruction will not come from capitalism. All attempts to create "clean" energies derived from the façade of "sustainable capitalism" simply transform the mode of destruction without addressing the root issue. When we sacrifice the resources available to us collectively for the private gains of capitalism, we sell the foundation from under our own feet. If we want to live in this world, we have to move beyond capitalism and beyond speciesist arguments to subjugate the non-human world.

There is no future except one in harmony with the ecosystems around us. There is no future in a world that aims to continue the capitalist destruction that continues to rob us of clean air, water, and food sources. Sustainable practices will not create the large surpluses that the capitalist mode of production claims as its *raison d'être*, but what good are these surpluses when they only exist to be hoarded by the few at the expense of the rest? The cruel joke of capitalism is that it is effective in its mode of production, but purely dysfunctional in its philosophy of production. It produces for the one and destroys for all the rest. So that the bourgeoisie may rest, the whole world must work.

Organizing for the protection of the planet and the empowerment of animals can be a challenge because the task seems so enormous and the danger so removed. Conceptualizing the power of individual and community action to prevent global catastrophe is psychologically challenging. Cultural inertia slows movements to recognize the agency and autonomy of animals. The evolutionary capacity of human psychology is not primed to quickly grasp the existential threat of not acting in the face of climate change. The distance in causal relationships and difficulty in emotional processing of global anthropogenic environmental issues makes acting against climate change difficult, even when we are able to assess the rational basis for doing so. Some anti-natalists

have used these barriers to make the jump to the anti-humanist stance that the existence of humans as a species is the cause that requires the destruction of this planet. While it may not be possible to be speciesist against humans, anarchism could hardly be compatible with the idea of extinction as a matter of recourse. Justice for the planet and justice for the animals are our goals and on those goals we will not compromise.

Without CAFOs and intensive agriculture, how do we provide food for everyone? Finding a solution to global food stability is not only a question of ecological necessity (if that were not enough). The nexus of food-energy-water is critical to the stability of both internal political climates and global political stability. Instability in one leg of the nexus of food, water, and energy has had a profound destabilizing effect in Yemen, Syria, and numerous other areas, as local farmers race to the bottom of a local economy unable to survive under the extractive demands of global capital. Energy prices fell, drilling for groundwater increased unsustainably to pump water into cash crops, food independence collapsed and water became a scarce commodity. Compliance with capital requires complicity in our own annihilation. The empire of capital extracts its profit, dumps its waste, and moves on to another region to victimize and exploit. So how do we maintain these critical ecological balances while providing food for everyone?

Radically revising our acceptance of capitalism is a necessary step to pausing, let alone reversing the ongoing catastrophe. While halting the extraction of profit from our ecosystem we must also end the system of dominating the world's animals, natural resources, and disadvantaged communities. Seeking environmental justice requires repairing ecosystems damaged by capitalism and reorienting our society towards long-term continuity. Ending the slavery of animals and the rape of the Earth is necessary to begin the path towards a sustainable future.

The variety of species in a farm decreases as the size of the farm increases, suggesting that larger farms tend to focus on few production models, while smaller farms maintain more diverse but less profitable ecological systems. Likely, transitioning to a system without intensive farming would require a substantial decrease in the variety or amount of foods available for consumption. The global food supply is not a luxury that can simply be cut down, it has real world implications for the lives and deaths of our global population. Our current system overwhelmingly devotes resources inefficiently for the production of animal agriculture. By refocusing our efforts away from the accumulation of food-as-commodity for sale on the international market and instead towards a framework of food to be eaten to sustain life on Earth, we find that the land necessary to feed us all exists and is available already and that we do not need to continue destroying our natural forests to provide more land to use in the production of feed crops.

A radical understanding of intensive animal agriculture as an process for extracting commodity-wealth from the land, water, and energy inputs used to produce food is necessary for an anarchist critique of animal agriculture. Further, the requirement for large-scale feed production generally sourced from the international markets from the lowest bidder results in a subjugation of the land-inexpensive areas of the world

to the land-expensive areas of the world as the extraction of capital from natural resources undergoes a further transformation from one intensive mono-crop feed farm, to an intensive animal agriculture farm, to a concentrated slaughterhouse operation, to the animal product supplier and distributors. These successive transformations create web of exploitative and ecologically disastrous enterprises which cannot sustain life on Earth, or at least not for long. We must end the systems of intensive agriculture and animal agriculture for the animals and for our global ecology.

# Animal Companions—Are Fish Friends?

Animal companionship is a touchy subject for many. We attempt here to bridge the gap and between animal liberation and love for animal companionship. We attempt to be fully aware of the intimacy of individual relationships as well as the all encompassing framework of the systems of domination and capital in our world. For the modern urbanite or suburban dweller, their most intimate interactions with the animal world might come from an animal companion in the home. For people in rural households and communities, interactions with animals companions may bear strong divisions between which animals can be kept as pets and which are to be used solely for an economic purpose. We want to acknowledge here the variety of interactions and experiences that people and animals can undergo in their relationships and offer an appreciation for the multitude of opportunities for learning that animals can provide, specifically in children and the young but also in later stages of life. Finally, we also want to bring attention to the possibility for animals to also gain enjoyment from companion relationships with humans, and the vast mutual benefit that these relationships can support.

Animals play and fight and live and rest. They do many of the things we do with our lives and taking the time to know and understand animals provides a valuable and radical way to experience ourselves. When we first see a new animal and watch them move around or eat or drink, we learn about the vast possibilities for survival and existence in our world. We see that there can be drastically different ways to accomplish the same fundamental tasks and that organs that look and function completely differently can produce the same effect. Studying the evolutionary lineages of animals reveals that similar functions can arise from wholly different physiologies and also that similar physiologies can arise from wholly different lineages. We are forced to come to terms with our own uniqueness and lack of uniqueness. We see that there are so many different things to be good at and so many different ways to be good. By understanding the complexity of animal life and the beauty of its many intricacies we expand our understanding of the possibilities for life as the human animal.

In therapy, service, and emotional support, animals have provided enormous leaps of autonomy and ability for people dealing with a variety of conditions and issues. Showing full community support for the possibilities of mutual support and benefit in these relations is part of a radical framework of animal companionship. Ensuring that these animals are not being abused for their labor and that they are able to enjoy the fruits of their work as liberated workers in companionship with a human that they help is

necessary to center the respect, autonomy, and dignity of both animals providing these services and the people receiving this care. Animals have provided various benefits for people in therapeutic relationships at home and in clinical settings to make progress in living with or developing healthy tactics for dealing with mental health issues. Further, building a community environment that cherishes these relationships and understands the co-dependencies inherent to them requires being willing to ask, accommodate, and understand the needs of both animals and humans when they are working together in companionship. Animals experience various co-dependencies of mutual aid, commensalism, and companionship in the wild that resemble our personal and intimate relationships with animals as emotional and social equals. The capitalist form is the fundamental difference that endangers these relationships from coexisting on equal footing. Within the trappings of state-capitalist civilization, the property-relation of humans to animals becomes immediately apparent and codified in the regulations that control our mutual interactions. Vegan anarchists resist this transformation of animal companionship into a bourgeois connection between the owner and the owned and work to build communities of mutual respect and aid.



# Vegan Exoticism and Environmental Racism

Some Medieval writers have described people who followed a Pythagorean diet where they abstained from meat, beans or fish for ethical reasons. Pythagoreans “believed that any being that experienced pain or suffering should not have pain inflicted on it unnecessarily.” This is the same ethical floor that seventeenth century philosopher Jeremy Bentham sets in pondering the question of whether or not animals deserve moral consideration by stating “The question is not Can they reason? or Can they talk? but Can they suffer?” Seventh Day Adventists, a Protestant Church denomination, have emphasized health and wellbeing since the church’s beginnings and generally are vegetarian with many following a vegan lifestyle. Jains and Buddhists as well as many groups of people and cultures have found connections to their ecological world to be important to their values.

Extinction Rebellion’s discussion on the Global Black Experience of Ecocide explored decolonization, anti-imperialism and ecocide with a particular focus on understanding the history of dispossession in the Pan-Afrikan homeland and the onslaught of capital on our global ecology. We can acknowledge that there is no probable return to nature. There is no closing the Pandora’s box of technology or industrialization or capitalist ecological domination, but by being aware of the history of these developments we can better create the replacements that can allow us to thrive in a sustainable relation to the climate and a respect for animals. The continued struggle for liberation in the Afrikan continent and for indigenous and colonized peoples has had a strong connection to ecological sustainability because these people do not have the luxury to choose to be ecologically conscious. The intersecting oppressions of life at the forefront of ecological disaster in the Global South ensure that the same people dispossessed through the capitalist-industrial empire’s continued concentration of wealth and power in the Global North, must be leaders in the ecological movement because they have the lived experience of being affected by climate injustice.

There is no middle road to avert climate disaster. The end has not just begun; it is well underway. While ecologically catastrophic events have yet remained only at the fringes of impacting the lives of insulated luxury in the Global North, the tension between blind ignorance of capitalists and capitalism’s beneficiaries and the clear existential threat of ecocide has reached a breaking point.

In 1979 a group of Houston residents represented by attorney Linda McKeever Bullard sued Southwester Waste Management, Inc. over a plan to locate a landfill near

their community. Robert Bullard (Linda's husband) testified as an expert in this case and conducted a study documenting a clear and sordid history of institutional racism wrought through environmental harms on communities of color by white decision makers who would not allow these dissident voices into the discussion. The study pointed out how sites of environmental waste like landfills, incinerators, and solid waste disposal sites were concentrated almost exclusively in communities of color. Further, the study pointed out how Houston's unique dynamics of lax regulation allowed for these communities to constantly encounter new industrial developments in their neighborhoods with little access to the political control necessary to stop them. These encroachments into their neighborhoods further obstruct the organizing and sustained power of these communities to fight back as they are broken up by the ever-expansionary interests of capital in such a large city. The study and lawsuit make a decisive case for the systematic way in which disadvantaged communities are exploited by the cities and political structures that claim to exist to protect them. Further, the impacts that this environmental exploitation has on the health and sustained prosperity of these communities results in a distinct form of ecological apartheid that has parallels across the globe.

Harriet Washington describes the second and third order effects of environmentally racist structures on the development and status of disadvantaged communities. She argues that the waste products of capitalism are dumped on the poorest and least powerful people, making them susceptible to long term health problems, generational poverty, and causing substantial cognitive impairment. Environmental racism is an active process by which the supremacist heterodoxy further entrenches the divisions between classes. The short-sighted benefits of ecological destruction are concentrated in the hands of those few who dominate society and the least able to defend themselves receive the vast waste products of landfills and toxic dumps that are the unsightly consequences of capitalist luxury.

Radical notions of environmental justice involve conceptualizing not just questions of who or what is causing the problem and how to prevent it, but how to formulate a system of ideas around interdependence with the environment that distributes power to the places needed to protect the environment, and prevents the accumulation of power in the areas that damage the environment. We must act now to prevent the collapse of our global ecosystem. Defending our world from ecocide is an immediate concern, and it is something that we are able to do right now. Beyond the environmental imperative to prevent injustices against our biome, we have an ethical requirement to liberate animals from the trappings of carnism and state capitalist power. We must end the oppressions of capitalism, carnism, and environmental racism. Ending the hierarchies of power starts with a critical analysis of our own thinking but must immediately move to collective action to end the system of global capital. There is no time to waste, the time to act is now and we are approaching the point of no return. We require total liberation today, for animals and for the earth, completely and with no compromises.

# The Way Forward

Forging the path to a fully liberated world is not a simple task. The forces of capital are ready and willing to continue our death march towards complete ecocide. Today, there is no longer a serious question of when we should act or what needs to be done. The complete and immediate end to animal subjugation and the elimination of capitalism are necessary first steps to preventing our collective annihilation.

Justice for the Earth requires not just a restructuring of our global society, but a complete dedication to the revival of our complex ecologies. This involves both a cultural shift in the philosophy of our relation to the world around us, and a movement to repair these damaged ecosystems through coordinated and organized efforts to re-green our Earth and re-populate our seas. We will need to shift our focus towards sustaining and building strong ecological networks at all costs, instead of paying any ecological cost for the sake of production. Make no mistake, if we choose to continue in our self-destruction, our world will be drastically changed and our extinction will become a footnote in the cosmic lifespan of our Pale Blue Dot. Rebelling against this extinction is necessary if we believe that we deserve to live. Rebelling against ecocide is the only way to prevent our own extinction. The only way to prevent ecocide is to end the twin systems of property and culture that are capitalism and carnism.

The crises of global environmental catastrophe and the hegemony of global carnist culture can seem so daunting as to be incomprehensible. The hysteria of consumerism is a reflexive response to this herculean task, but it is only a delusional escapist diversion from the reality of the crisis. The real actions that destroy the earth and its animals can be reversed. The culture of domination and subjugation that perpetuates ecological destruction must end now. The cracks in capitalism are more present and glaring than ever before. While the system contorts itself in myriad ways to hide these contradictions behind the carnist ecological schema, it is clear that there is no farther to go without falling over the edge. If we want to save the human species, if we want to save our fellow animals, if we want to save our ecological home, then we must act now to end capital and end ecocide. Capitalism has doomed us to a path of death and destruction, and the only way forward is total and immediate animal liberation and earth liberation.

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