"If biting into a turkey drumstick on Thanksgiving isn't covered by 'life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness,' then what is?"

Richard Berman
Director, Center for Consumer Freedom

Here's one possible answer:
biting into food that doesn't require another creature to forfeit life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

"Myopic Thought for the Day"
AnimalWritings.com May 16, 2005
Gary Loewenthal (1955-)
American founder, Worldwide Vegan Bake Sale

.................
In an experiment, monkeys had to shock the monkey in the next cage in order to receive food. The monkeys showed great restraint and empathy, depriving themselves of food to avoid hurting another monkey. One monkey starved himself for over a week. In a subsequent experiment, rats performed exactly the same. The obvious question: where's our empathy?

("Only One Species Failed This Experiment" animalwritings.com April 7, 2005)

If a tree fell in the forest... and there was no one around, would there be a sound? Yes, many animals would hear it. Animals below and above the ground, and in the air; from tiny ants to giant bears.

("If a Tree Fell in the Forest" animalwritings.com July 19, 2007)

We said "they can't feel pain" until we found out they could. Still we beat them and killed them. We said "they are irrational" until we found out they were not. Still we beat them and killed them. We said "they cannot speak" until we found out that gorillas can learn sign language and parrots can construct meaningful verb and object sentences. Still we beat them and killed them. We said "they don't know how to use tools" until we found out that some do. Still we beat them and killed them. We said "they have no culture" until we found out they did. Still we beat them and killed them. We said "they have no art" until we learned that some elephants play drums or paint—on their own, and wolves harmonize. Still we beat them and killed them. We said "they can't play" until we found out they invented play. Still we beat them and killed them.
We said "they are inferior"
until Darwin said "different, not inferior."
Still we beat them and killed them.
We said "they cannot love"
until we found out that pigs saved their humans' lives,
and dogs braved gunfire to be with their human family,
and rabbits grieve themselves to death,
and elephants after an absence embrace,
and that the sighted cat guided his blind brother
by intertwining their two tails,
and that two hens living in a filthy cage with nothing
offer comfort to each other.
Still we beat them and killed them.
We said "we have to eat meat"
until we found out we didn't.
Still we beat them and killed them.
We said "they have no soul"
until we read the original Hebrew bible.
We said "God put them here for our use"
until we read "A righteous man regards the life of his beast"
and "Blessed are the merciful."
Still we beat them and killed them.
We say "they have no rights."
And we will go on beating them and killing them
until we find out they do.
All attempts to justify cruelty
have been vain attempts to maintain power.
Only when we release our grip on power
and stand humbly as servants to Creation
will we truly find our power.
("There is No Reason for Cruelty"
animalwritings.com September 11, 2005)
<>
My friend Rhonda Cunningham has a wonderful word
that she uses to describe non-humans.
She calls them "Godlings."
She points out that "animal"
is so often used as a term of contempt,
which is unfitting for brethren
with whom we share the same Source.
She describes Godlings as
"God's wondrous art forms..."
[and says that this term]
"elevates their status to where it truly belongs!"
I think the term is beautiful and charming
and I couldn't agree more.
* * *

[A]nimals' innocent faces reflect a perfect, Edenic time in which all creatures lived in harmony. The unfallen, sinless animals are a physical manifestation of a world that was long ago destroyed by evil impulses and abandonment of our spiritual selves. The animals are also a reminder of what can be, of a redemptive "peaceful kingdom" in which not only the lion and ox, but the Jew, Christian, and Muslim live together in peace. The face of God—past, present, and future—is in the Godlings. The prophet Isaiah's glorious vision is realized one good deed at a time.

We have that power.

But we're not all-powerful or omniscient. We cannot create a better world if we remain disconnected to the rest of Creation. Let the Godlings in our midst, God's humble messengers, be the bridge to the pigs caged in factory farms,

the once-swift foxes languishing in a wire box, and the soft matronly hen living a shattered half-life in a small dark crate.

Let the Godlings we know show us the potential of all the other species that make up the song of the earth, so that our hearts can resonate as one.

When that day arrives...animals—all animals—will feel only warmth and never dread at the sight of a human. Even the tiny mosquito will be whisked humanely away, and the fearsome rattlesnake will be treated mercifully and gently, and with respect.
Giant confinement farms and mechanized animal killing fields will be a distant, sorrowful memory. But the resplendent "today" will be one of boundless communion with Creation. At long last, we will experience the divine beauty of an intelligently evolved world, for we will have found that our true destiny is service, fellowship, and compassionate stewardship, not self-centered dominance. Our islands of estrangement will meld into a universe of friendship. Our vision will not be blocked by unplacatable greed, so we will see clearly the goodness inherent in the Earth and all its creatures. Our relationship with animals will no longer be hampered by the ever-present awareness that we are unwanted and feared as a tormenter. Instead it will be open and honest. We will be able to look animals in the eye, feel their hearts beating, and hear the contented purrs, snorts, barks, and trills of uncountable furred, feathered, finned, and other wondrous Godlings. Our original friends. ("Godlings" animalwritings.com August 14, 2005)

Gary Loewenthal (1955- )
American writer, musician, computer analyst
Founder, Worldwide Vegan Bake Sale
Co-founder, Compassion for Animals

From looking back on my life and my contribution to animal protection, I developed my personal creed of what I believe are the core values of animal advocacy: Truth, Compassion, Nonviolence (Ahimsa), Inter-being (the interrelatedness of all). These core values are the foundation of how I think, feel, speak and act for a peaceful and compassionate world. They are the foundation to my understanding of animal protection. ■ Truth ■ Inasmuch that I know from my own experience [that] humans have the capacity to think, experience emotions and feel pain and suffer, I logically conclude that animals must be also equally capable, because fundamentally there is no difference physiologically and behaviorally between us.
I believe human rights and animal protection are absolute truths and reject the argument that there is a competition between them with the former trumping the latter.
I believe human rights and animal protection are moral truths that are inextricably interwoven.
One cannot be achieved without the other.

- **Compassion**
  I believe our ability to fully understand and share another's feelings is our single greatest attribute.
  Compassion empowers us to connect with others.
  When we feel compassion for others, we are empowered to see into their world and inspired to act on their behalf.

- **Nonviolence**
  I believe violence is immoral whomever or whatever the target.
  Violence results in more violence.
  In order to stop violence to people, animals and the earth, we must be first at peace with ourselves.
  The power to build a peaceful and compassionate world starts with our ability to be at peace with ourselves.
  This starts with an understanding of *Ahimsa*, which Mahatma Gandhi describes as the "only true force in life."

- **Inter-Being**
  I believe everything is interrelated.
  It is therefore important to understand to the best of our ability [that] our actions have consequences often beyond our knowledge and comprehension.
  Consequently, I believe my thoughts, speech, writings and actions must be based on my life-long quest for an understanding of truth, an uncompromising commitment to nonviolence and a compassionate heart.
  Questions about our frequently cruel behavior toward animals go to the heart of our humanity (or the lack of it).
  No one is completely innocent of animal cruelty and exploitation.
  Our relationship with animals is contradictory and complex.
  We call some animals "pets" and others "dinner."
  This confusion is reflected in our inability to coexist compassionately with others irrespective of species.
  Human history is replete with violence, rape, murder, war, cruelty and environmental devastation—and our often instrumental use of animals to commit these acts.
  But we can be equally capable of great acts of humanity toward others, including animals.
  I believe acts of humanity happen when we intuitively know the truth,
when we are grounded in nonviolence,
motivated by compassion and connected to the world
by a strong sense of inter-being.
* * *

It is important that all of us
who want to make a difference for animals
understand how we live impacts the lives of others.
Our only alternative is to view the world through the prism
of...the opposite of the four core values of animal protection:
lies, hatred, violence and alienation.
Indeed, these are the values
of the pro-animal-use-economic-interest groups [though they]
claim that this is the message of the animal protection movement.
Their mission is to convince the public
that our actions for animals are motivated by lies, hate, and violence
and that we are alienated from society.
Ultimately, we are answerable to no one but ourselves.
"Be the change you want to see in the world," said Gandhi.
We may not be able to save the world.
But we can save our own individual worlds
when we lead by example, when we speak the truth,
act peacefully and with compassion.
("My Four Core Values in Animal Advocacy"
grumpyvegan.com June 19, 2006)
Kim W. Stallwood (1955- )
American author and consultant
Co-founder and European director, Animals & Society Institute
.................

[on some of the "101 Reasons" to be a vegetarian]
■ #4 ■
The U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization estimates
that 70 percent of the world’s commercial fish stocks
are fully exploited, overfished, or collapsed.
To supply surging world demand, fishers use rapacious techniques,
such as sonar, driftnets, longlines, dredgers,
and leviathan fish-packing vessels.
In the case of longlining, 4.5 million hooks are launched daily.
Now, 90 percent of the coveted top predator fish are gone.
[F]ishers have moved down the food web
to species once considered "trash."
These species...are the food source
of the fish that were initially overfished.
Amazingly, a third of the world's harvested fish
go to feed livestock or farmed fish.
The ocean's interconnected ecosystem simply cannot keep pace.
In 2006, a report published in the journal *Science* estimated that by 2048 all wild commercial fish stocks would be wiped out.

- **#5**
  The Humane Slaughter Act requires that mammals be rendered insensible to pain before being slaughtered. A *Washington Post* series some years ago, however, exposed a packing industry hard pressed to follow this law. Animals were found regularly butchered alive on speeded-up conveyor lines. A $5 million appropriation was consequently enacted to hire more humane inspectors for kill floors across the nation, but the funds ended up being diverted to food-safety inspectors already employed. [The law] does not even apply to 99 percent of animals slaughtered, because poultry birds and fish are not covered by it.

- **#20**
  Of all the animals in America who suffer cruelty, 95 percent of them are farmed animals. Designated as economic units, they have conveniently been stripped of nearly all protections against abuse. At the federal level, the Animal Welfare Act simply does not apply to farmed animals. At the state level, where laws might pick up the slack, anti-cruelty statutes are either not enforced or have, in recent decades, been re-written to exclude farmed animals. Re-wording has been key. If a farming practice is established as "accepted," "common," "customary," or "normal"—no matter how inhumane—anti-cruelty protections are overridden.

- **#22**
  Several of the world’s mightiest rivers no longer reach the sea, and aquifer levels around the world are dropping by dozens, and even hundreds, of feet. Largely responsible is the fivefold increase in worldwide (water-guzzling) meat production that's taken place over the last half-century. Producing a pound of animal protein requires about 100 times the water needed to produce a pound of vegetable protein. It takes about 1,300 gallons of water to produce a single hamburger. Seventy percent of the fresh water that is taken from the world's rivers, lakes, and underground wells goes to agriculture, and 43 percent of the world’s grain goes to feed animals for meat.

- **#39**
  Officially, Wildlife Services, a program of the USDA, prevents "damage to agriculture."
Never mind that agriculture is hugely damaging to wildlife. This multi-million-dollar perk for cattle ranchers exists primarily to eradicate predators and to cull species thought to spread disease. Non-target wildlife is often caught in the cross-hairs. Wildlife Services agents shoot, poison, gas, electrocute, and lethally trap millions of mammals and birds on public land where only 3.8% of the nation’s beef is even derived. The methods are cruel and excessive and even ineffective. The program has decimated populations of grizzly bears, mountain lions, moose, elk, buffaloes, and coyotes. An intriguing global study in 2005 actually found that predators inflict negligible damage to ranching operations.

When faced with a flock of spent hens, an egg producer may choose to induce production again by way of a forced molt, accomplished with starvation and water deprivation for periods of up to two weeks. No U.S. law prevents this heinous practice. Some major U.S. producers have phased it out but then need to bring twice the number of hens into production for the same number of eggs.

Fish make vibratory sounds with various "calls" that researchers have identified as communicating alarm and aggravation. They possess fully formed nervous systems as well as complex social behaviors. They are also capable of learning complicated tasks. A 2009 Purdue University study found that fish not only feel pain—a finding that corroborates a number of other studies—but react to pain in much the same way as humans.
The 18th century philosopher Jeremy Bentham challenged the world about animals with his famous quandary: "The question is not, Can they reason? nor, Can they talk? but, Can they suffer?"
Curiously, science is every day discovering that in fact animals do all three: reason, communicate, and suffer. The differences between animals and humans are being blurred with every revelation.
Man's closest relatives share over 98 percent of our DNA, and all animals, including man, are related by a common ancestor. Today's question must now be—can we humans use our known capacity for logic, communication, and empathy to take animals off our plates?

Animal agriculture routinely mutilates farmed animals for its own convenience and often simply out of tradition. Debeaking, branding, castration, ear notching, wing and comb removal, dehorning, teeth clipping, and tail and toe docking are ever-present tasks on today's farm and ranch. Laborers, not veterinarians, perform the surgeries, employing restraint, not anesthesia.

Male chicks are a bothersome expense to the egg producer. Sexers must be hired to pick them out for diversion to expedient deaths. No law protects the baby birds as they are dumped in trash bins to die by crushing, suffocation, starvation, and exposure.

Fish and shellfish farming, or aquaculture, is no less disruptive to the environment than taking fish from the wild. Shoreline pens replace mangroves, the habitats where wild fish would otherwise regenerate. Some farmed species will not breed in captivity, so fish farmers must steal juveniles, who never get a chance to reproduce, from the wild. There are numerous cases where farmed fish have escaped into the wild, corrupting the genetic purity of native species and spreading disease. Large-scale biomass fishing for fishmeal threatens vast ecosystems. Feed-to-flesh ratios soar in some farmed species to 25-to-1. Nitrogenous waste poisons the seabed floor below cages that hold fish in unnatural densities.

Genetic manipulation has created monsters as well as monstrous suffering for farmed animals. Cloning threatens to jack up the misery yet another notch.
Its general use is probably a ways off, provided it becomes commercially viable at all. Meanwhile, as the scientists tinker, their cloned creations will suffer from premature deaths and deformities, and the resultant meat and milk are sure to enter the human food supply.

The population explosion should not be thought of exclusively in terms of people—not when one considers the ecological footprint represented by the world’s 3.2 billion cattle, sheep, and goats across the globe. About 20 percent of the world’s pastures and rangeland—and 73 percent of rangeland in dry areas—have been degraded to some extent, mostly through overgrazing, compaction, and erosion caused by livestock.

To satisfy people’s ravenous appetite for frogs’ legs, a billion frogs are taken from the wild each year, according to a study in 2009. The collective pillage is helping to make amphibians as a whole the most threatened animal group on Earth.

[An estimated] 30 percent of the world’s fish catch is..."bycatch." Fishers—typically in the cruelest, most expedient ways—separate out the discards, only to dump them overboard, dead and mutilated. Bycatch from driftnetting is estimated at 85 percent of catch. Despite a U.N. moratorium, Italy, France, and Morocco continue this hugely destructive practice. Shrimp fishing alone is responsible for over 27 percent of the world’s bycatch, despite producing less than 2 percent of global seafood.
Every year, 24,000 fishers die on the job, making fishing the most dangerous occupation in the world, according to the FAO/UN. Meatpacking has the highest serious injury rate by far of any occupation. Repetitive stress disorders and knife cuts are rampant in meat plants. Poultry processing workers earn wages that are below the poverty level. Full-time contract poultry growers clear incomes of only about $21,000 annually.

Agriculture science tirelessly works to eke out every last bit of commodity wealth from farmed animals via genetic selection. Wild jungle fowl lay 2 dozen eggs per year; their maligned descendants produce an egg nearly every day. Wild sows give birth to 5 piglets; factory-born litters yield 12 young. A century ago a steer took 4 to 5 years to grow to market weight; today the process takes only 14 months. Just 50 years ago cows gave 645 gallons of milk per year; dairies today take over three times this amount from the animals.

When you fork over that $2.99 for that 7.10 ounces of Banquet Chicken Fingers Meal, it's really quite a bargain, or so you may think. But such purchases—collectively trillions of them across the globe—are subject to a steep ecological price. Future generations will be the ones remitting its payments with global warming, aquifer depletion, topsoil erosion, deforestation and lost ecosystem services. Isn't it time to start eating lower on the food chain?

Get Hip. Go Veg!

(101 Reasons Why I'm a Vegetarian Eighth Edition Pamphlet Version © 2009 vivavegie.org)

<> [I]t's important to go about life with as much informed consent as possible. In reality the world is not a consequences-free wonderland of bright-colored packages and fried nuggets just right for dipping. We all need to ask ourselves: Who wins and who loses when people believe the fairy tales of the meat purveyors? In the end, aren't all of them just leading us down a primrose path of ill health, animal cruelty and a degraded planet?

(interview with Lantern Books)

Pamela Rice (1955- )
American author
Organizer, New York City Veggie Pride Parade
It is impossible to achieve world peace
either by vegetarianism [or] Christianity, in my view.
* * *
Some vegetarians are convinced
that everything can be solved
by not eating meat and killing animals.
I don’t agree with that.
I think that meat is not the right food for man,
but more importantly, what we think and do
and how we treat our fellow man and all of nature
is the key rather than what we eat.
* * *
"You are a very religious man!"
I answer that I was, but now I am just faithful to God.
A man who truly believes in God and himself
and is becoming aware of his mission on this planet
does not need anyone anymore.
He needs no vegetarians, no butchers, no priests, no politicians
to become good, not to hate, not to kill animals or people,....
The problem of famine would not be solved by vegetarianism,
but through love.
* * *
The earth we live on is capable of nourishing
a lot more of us than it has done till now.
But it needs our love and respect.
* * *
Greed itself will be the cause
of even bigger catastrophes, earthquakes and storms.
Sooner or later we will have to admit
that we are responsible for all that, because we cause it ourselves.
If we change our relations to each other, to living beings,
plants and nature, it would give us fruits and crops by itself.
We won’t kill animals to satisfy our hunger.
If I hadn't experienced it myself,
I would still be killing animals, eating their meat
and feeding other people with their corpses.
Thank God, I was shown a different way.
We are all sent from God to live in peace and wealth.
When this is realized there'll be no more hunger or poor people
in this wonderful world.
("Confessions of an Ex-Slaughterman" interview
with Claudette Vaughan abolitionist-online.com)
Peter Razpet (1955- )
Slovenian former slaughterhouse worker
Co-founder, Union of the Heart
...................
The eyes of the future are looking back at us and they are praying for us to see beyond our own time.

I do not think we can look for leadership beyond ourselves. I do not think we can wait for someone or something to save us from our global predicaments and obligations. I need to look in the mirror and ask this of myself: If I am committed to seeing the direction of our country change, how must I change myself?

(From "The Open Space of Democracy © 2004"
Terry Tempest Williams (1955- )
American naturalist, environmentalist, writer

Lately more people have begun to express an interest in where the meat they eat comes from and how it was raised. Were the animals humanely treated?

* * *

Others focus on the question of how eating the animals in question will affect the consumer's health and well-being. (Was it given hormones and antibiotics?) None of these questions, however, make any consideration of whether it is wrong to kill animals for human consumption. And even when people ask this question, they almost always find a variety of resourceful answers that purport to justify the killing and consumption of animals in the name of human welfare.

* * *

How can people continue to eat meat when they become aware that nearly 53 billion land animals are slaughtered every year for human consumption?
The simple answer is that most people just don't care about the lives or fortunes of animals. If they did care, they would learn as much as possible about the ways in which our society systematically abuses animals, and they would make what is at once a very simple and a very difficult choice: to forswear the consumption of animal products of all kinds. The easy part of this consists in seeing clearly what ethics requires and then just plain doing it. The difficult part: You just haven't lived until you've tried to function as a strict vegan in a meat-crazed society.

* * *

You might think that it's as simple as just removing meat, eggs and dairy products from your diet, but it goes a lot deeper than that. To be a really strict vegan is to strive to avoid all animal products, and this includes materials like leather, silk and wool, as well as a panoply of cosmetics and medications. The more you dig, the more you learn about products you would never stop to think might contain or involve animal products in their production—like...refined sugar (bone char is sometimes used to bleach it) or Band-Aids (animal products in the adhesive). Just last week I was told that those little comfort strips on most razor blades contain animal fat. To go down this road is to stare headlong into an abyss that, to paraphrase Nietzsche, will ultimately stare back at you.

* * *

One lapidary conclusion to be drawn here is that people take deadly seriously the prerogative to use animals as sources of satisfaction. Not only for food, but as beasts of burden, as raw materials and as sources of captive entertainment.

* * *

These uses of animals are so institutionalized, so normalized, in our society that it is difficult to find the critical distance needed to see them as the horrors that they are: so many forms of subjection, servitude and—in the case of killing animals for human consumption and other purposes—outright murder.

* * *

We have been trained by a history of thinking of which we are scarcely aware to view non-human animals as resources we are entitled to employ in whatever ways we see fit
in order to satisfy our needs and desires.
Yes, there are animal welfare laws.
But these laws have been formulated by, and are enforced by, people who proceed from the proposition that animals are fundamentally inferior to human beings.
At best, these laws make living conditions for animals marginally better than they would be otherwise—right up to the point when we send them to the slaughterhouse.

Gary Steiner, Ph.D. (1956-)
American professor of philosophy and author

I was born on an independent family cattle farm in south central Michigan, and I have spent over half of my life in agriculture. I started out as any farm kid does who has grown up around animals. There was an indoctrination involved as to how I should relate to farm animals. My indoctrination started with my parents, then family, then community, our church, 4-H, FFA, a land-grant college, and finally, the reinforcement of advertising on TV and elsewhere that portrayed meat, dairy, and eggs as essential to human wants and nutrition. With these influences, I hardly thought twice about the things I had to do on the farm: driving cattle, castrations, dehorning, and I did my fair share of butchering too. I also worked in the dairy industry for three years.

* * *
Eventually I realized that all animals, including humans, exist for their own reasons, with their own interests. This was a profound revelation for me because that nagging little voice in the back of my mind had always, since childhood, told me that I wasn't living to my full, authentic potential, that there was something inherently wrong. All my life I had observed the community that existed in a cow herd, how they grieved for a dead calf or herd mate who had been shot by a deer hunter. I had witnessed the joy a cow experiences when she is let out into a fresh new pasture or calves running and kicking up their heels with each other in the field.
I now knew for certain that regardless of the rationalizations I had created, when I killed an animal and saw that light leave their eyes, by extinguishing that divine spark, I had broken a sacred trust. Nowadays I ask myself from both the perspective of the old me and the new me, what does "humane" mean in the way it is being used? The old me said, "[Humane] is an odd word to associate with meat, dairy, and eggs, but hey, if it sells more products, why not?" The new me asks, "Back in the day, I could, and did, raise animals with kindness and tenderness, but how did I show them mercy?"

Mercy—a unique human trait of refraining from doing harm. I generally think of mercy as a blessing, too. Animals who are destined for an abbreviated life that ends in a violent death now called to my conscience and required me to show...mercy.

Since I have made this conscious decision to show mercy, my life has been blessed a million, million times over and I have found a deep peace. ("Farmed Animal Experts Speak Out" humanemyth.org)

Through a Guernsey steer named Snickers I realized how I had developed coping mechanisms
that allowed me to view animals as objects of utility.
I had an immediate image in my head
of a light switch over my heart that I could turn on or off
depending on who or what I was dealing with.
I also realized that the cue for that coping mechanism
was the phrase "I don't care."
I now understood that when I made a choice
that was not in alignment with my authentic self,
out of tune with my heart, I would say "I don't care"
and uttering it would put me in a place
where I was disconnected emotionally, psychologically,
and even spiritually from the "other."
At that moment I knew
that I could no longer be part of anything that took a life
and that I could never use that phrase again.
What I learned then was that if I choose not to say "I don't care"
then I was in a place where I had no alternative but say "I care."
I will call it unconditional caring,
but [it] might be better understood as unconditional compassion,
[which] has profoundly changed my life.
It has required a tremendous amount of hard work
to practice emotional honesty.

* * *

How we live our lives and the things that we do or don't do
have everything to do with the reality we create.
Since I was a kid I had observed that farm animals
sought comfort, pleasure, good food, shelter, and community.
But I never allowed those observations
to trump the dominant culture that I lived in.
When I allowed myself the moral imagination
to include these animals into my moral universe
it became clear that the most simple observations we make
about animals we call pets are no different for farm animals.
When I made the choice to live a conscious life,
it demanded of me that I question long-held assumptions.
It also demanded that I think critically
about what I had observed earlier in my life
and [ask] how was I to integrate the two opposing ideas.
Beyond these more or less intellectual pursuits
was the harder task of coming to terms with how I truly felt.
Emotional honesty.

* * *

Not only is emotional honesty counter-intuitive to males in our culture
but [it] is usually [perceived as] a sign of weakness.
But in my heart of hearts I knew that this was where I needed to be,
how I needed to show up in the world.
And if I was to make any sort of difference for a better world
I had to live this truth.
Animal rights, to me, is quite simply respecting animals
as the sentient beings that they are.
This means that they are on this Earth
for their own reasons, not ours.
That they have their own self interests just as humans do
and insomuch as they do,
they should be respected for that and left alone.
But this is also the proverbial uphill battle animals face.
They are the legal property of humans
and this dynamic puts them at a grave disadvantage,
particularly in a free-market capitalist system
where animals are owned and traded openly
as commodities, as economic units.
Until we question this entangled relationship,
which has existed for some 10,000 years,
we will have some difficulty seeing animals with new eyes.
("Animal Rights" farmkind.org)
Harold Brown (1956- )
American former beef-and-dairy farmer
Founder, FarmKind.org

As children our lives were filled with
fresh fruit from the trees on our property,
runs through the sprinklers,
hikes to the local creek to play with pollywogs,
risking horses in the mountains around our home
and playing with the neighbor kids.
The best part I recall was making friends with the farm animals.
I had names for them all and we adored one another.
My father warned us not to get attached,
but we were young children.
We were naturally drawn to the animals.
We had pigs, chickens, cows and horses.
Coming home from school one particular day,
I remember vividly walking up to the house
and seeing my little piglet friend
hanging from the tree in our backyard.
Was this the little friend I had taught
to come, sit and follow me on a leash?
It shocked me so badly that it has affected
my choices and my dreams from that time forward.
This was when I realized it wasn’t ok to eat my friends.
When I became conscious that "Thou Shall Not Kill"
extended to animals too. I was seven years old.

My true awakening came when I stumbled into the world of factory farming. This discovery touched down into my heart and soul and tugged as hard as possible. The research I began to do was haunting me, and so disturbing that I couldn't eat or sleep for months at a time. I began reading, watching videos, and even visited a factory farm at one point. I woke nearly every night in the wee hours hearing baby cows crying for their mothers, chickens screaming and trying to find a little space to call their own.

Baby pigs came to me too. I cried with them, blessed them, prayed for them, sent them love and promised to do everything in my power to help them.

How on God's earth could people actually think that this is acceptable treatment to fellow loving, breathing, sentient creatures who share our world?

I had to do something and I was desperate. I woke up at 3 a.m. knowing that I had to write a book.... I wrote *The Fast Food Craze* in just over six months. I cried nearly every day I was writing and researching.

I wanted to scream loudly, to run out to every slaughterhouse and factory farm and free them all, to somehow liberate them from their pain, and from the precious suffering eyes looking up at me, the innocent question that still haunts me today, "Why are you doing this to me?"
My major transformation came from one author in particular: Andrew Linzey, who is an author of several books, but one in particular reached me, titled *Animal Gospel*. It was in reading this book that I realized something very profound. I learned that rage and frustration are negative energies. That the only way to truly help other living beings was with the most powerful energy there is available to us. Love.

After many struggles I finally learned that in loving everything and everyone, and mostly the ones who did harm, I could actually effect change. That loving them out of their darkness was the only way to show them the way to the light.


**Tina Volpe (1956- )**
American author
Host, *Wake Up America*

Animals are God's creatures and we need to be respectful of God's handiwork by bestowing kindness unto them as we would upon our fellow human beings and ourselves. Indeed the world needs kindness now more than ever.

* * *

War, hunger, pestilence and disease are now afflicting so many. We may feel helpless because we believe we are not able to do anything about it. But even the smallest acts of kindness contribute to the goodness of the world, and so many times the impact of our kindness goes so far beyond our expectations. As long as there is kindness there can be hope.

Below is a true story about one such act that speaks of the power that we all have within us to be kind and hence make this world a more loving and gentler place for all of its inhabitants.

**New York City, September 13, 2007**

I had just stepped outside my office to put quarters in the parking meter when I encountered the janitor of the building hosing down a little mouse attempting to flee up a wall
to a crevice located about a foot from the ground. With a laugh the janitor rained water down on the frightened and helpless critter struggling to escape the man-made storm. The little mouse frantically climbed the wall only to be repeatedly plunged to the ground by the powerful rush of water. Though he valiantly persevered, his strength was no match for the janitorial tsunami. Time after time the mouse kept trying to scale the wall toward the safety of the crevice but to no avail.

* * *

At this point he was thoroughly drenched, and his body was weakening with every setback. The ferocity of his efforts to save himself was quickly diminishing to a scant whimper. He was barely able to move and appeared destined to die by drowning or trauma. It seemed that his fate was sealed. It was at that moment that I yelled out at the janitor to stop the hosing.

* * *

As soon as the water was turned off, I rushed over and picked up the mouse and put his almost lifeless body in my hand. I carried him into my office where I gently placed him in a deep wastebasket that was under my desk.
Outside my office I could hear the laughter of the janitor and his friends.
* * *
At first he did not move but gradually I began to see signs of life emerging from his waterlogged body. Soon with some warmth and a bit of food the lil' guy started acting like a mouse, scurrying back and forth at the bottom of the basket looking for a way out. After a while, I said a prayer and set him free in hope that the silent cries of the critters will be heard by many more than me. ("Fall 2007 Message" Oasis Sanctuary)

<>
As a culture, we're taught to accept things the way they're presented. And who wants to be a pariah, who wants to be different? If you set yourself aside, you're open to ridicule. Everybody follows. As long as we have our creature comforts, our MTV, our Fourth of July barbecue, and our turkey dinner Thanksgiving, don't tell [us] too much. [G]ood people sometimes say exactly that, "I don't want to know." It's a difficult thing. But, like Howard Lyman says, plant a seed and walk away. That's all you can do really. You can't change anybody but yourself.

(interview with animalvoices.ca May 1, 2002)

**Eddie Lama (1956- )**
American founder, Oasis Sanctuary and Fauna Vision Star of The Witness, a Tribe of Heart documentary

************

The world today has become so cruel. Humans eat almost all animals, both domestic and wild. Animals are killed for their leather, fur, bone, antler and more. Those who live in water are even called seafood, while in reality they are sentient beings like us, not vegetables. All of them experience the same pain and suffering as we would if we were brutally slaughtered.

(universalcompassion.org)

**Venerable Geshe Thupten Phelgye, Ph.D. (1956- )**
Tibetan founder, Universal Compassion Movement Member, Tibetan Parliament in Exile

************
What is it about this country,  
that a man can’t run for president  
if he is insufficiently cruel to animals?  
Bill Maher (1956- )  
American stand-up comedian, television host, actor  
………………

Taking our responsibility to the creation seriously  
means we all need to make substantive changes in how we live,  
particularly those of us in the U.S.  
And we simply don’t want to.  
We like how we live. We don’t want to change.  
Limiting our individual activities and lifestyles for the greater good  
is not something we have been encouraged to do.  
And of course there is the issue of our short national attention span.  
I think our lack of concern and our lack of commitment  
have some deep and seldom examined theological roots.  
Historically, Christians have not spent much time  
thinking about our relationship to the creation  
and what thinking we have done has not been very good.  
Much of our thinking about the earth and animals  
and our relationships with them  
centers on how special we are and,  
at its worst, serves to legitimate the idea  
that we are allowed to do whatever we want to do.  
We were after all given "dominion."  
The seldom challenged underlying theological assumption  
is that humans are the whole point of the cosmos.  
It all exists for us.  
It is all supposed to serve our needs and make us happy.  
How many times have you heard someone  
wonder why God created mosquitoes?  
They just spread disease and annoy us.  
What was God thinking?  
This is a trivial example but do you see our default assumption?  
There is no reason for mosquitoes if they don’t serve or please us.  
The thought that there could be a good reason for mosquitoes,  
that doesn’t involve us and our comfort, is simply absent.  
And the Spotted Owl and the Snail Darter?  
We can live just fine without them we think, so who cares?  
I think God cares.  
I’m here to suggest that it’s not all about us.  
It’s all about God. God didn’t create the world for us.  
God creates the world for God’s own self.  
We are part of that world, and an important part.
We are called to a particular task—caring for the world God creates. Why should we care about the Spotted Owl and the Polar Bear and butterflies and migratory birds, and on and on and on? Because obedience to God requires that we care. As long as we think the primary reason to care about animals and the environment has to do with us and our comfort, happiness and pocket book, we'll lose interest. If it's all about us, then whatever grabs our fancy at the moment is what we focus on. If it's all about us, sacrifice and real change don't matter as much as comfort and pleasure. If it's all about God, that moves us in a different direction. If it's about lived obedience to the responsibilities given to us in Genesis, then we are able to make real substantive changes. And we will make them gladly. Because it's not for our glory. It's for God's glory. ("Why Don't We Care?" conversationinfaith.wordpress.com)

American campus ministry coordinator, former veterinarian

I understand the plight of animals and recognize that they are persons in a furry or feathery suit; therefore I am compelled by moral duty to be a voice for our fellow mortals of nonverbal communication.
* * *
Even if we don't exploit nonhumans,
we still have some part of us that thinks they were made for us.
They were made for bringing us joy, calming us,
entertaining us with the tricks we had them learn,
or having them as a play toy for our children,
and having them do what we want them to do, basically.
People have a human supremacy stance
that carries them through life.
We call ourselves "owners" of our dog.
This is to be expected because we grew up in a world that teaches
and even legally states that animals are "our possessions."
Often, people will pay money for an animal, which I find unthinkable.
Commodifying another breathing, conscious being is immoral.
We were taught by society
that we have dominion over nonhuman animals;
that they were put here for our use.
This is but one more example of erroneous indoctrination.
Society is selling an assortment of lies and people are buying them.
TV commercials are some of the worst forms of lying...in the world.
When I see how people listen to the TV commercials
that entice them to eat sizzling muscle
of a butchered gentle animal and think it is a "delicacy,"
or accept as true the commercials that lead you to believe
that an enslaved nonhuman animal is HAPPY to give you
its bodily secretions or dismembered body parts,
I can see how Nazism was ABLE to "come to be."
Apparently, it's easy to sell lies to people.
Society programs us with illogical lies about animals
just as Nazism has regarding races of man.
The oppressive conduct of society towards animals
can be compared to the oppressive nature of Nazism.
What if we could awaken ourselves
to filtering everything through our own reasoning mind,
and through our own conscience,
rather than just following societal norms?
In our discovering of Truth (with a capital T),
we must evaluate what we've been taught
through reasoning and through our own sense of right and wrong.
We can know what is really true because it is written in our hearts.
When I realized (at age twelve)
that animals were not food, but sentient friends,
and that everyone else thought differently,
I knew right then and there not to necessarily trust
what mainstream perception is handing me;
to take people's words with a grain of sea salt!
If they couldn't see this obvious Truth
that animals are beings not that different to us
(two eyes, a brain, a heart, a nervous system,
emotions, families, loveable, communicative)
and should not be killed and eaten,
what else were they not seeing that they think they do see?
Humans prize their intelligence
and use it as rationale as to why they have the right
to dominate/own/enslave nonhuman animals.
But to me, this seems like a fundamental lack of intelligence,
like they really are not seeing very basic simple truths of life;
truths that are easy enough for a child to comprehend (and they do).
All species and the natural environment are interconnected.
By living a vegan lifestyle, we liberate ourselves from the guilt
(however hidden) of imposing suffering on other beings,
and thus we free our high-minded and spirited nature to emerge.
I believe that this evolution of the human consciousness
(which is not passive, but takes effort)
is the way out of the critically threatening
planetary problems we are facing.
It is the nonviolent approach to gaining rights for animals
that will lead to their emancipation, and ours.
("Rising Above Speciesism" thevegantruth.blogspot.com October 19, 2009)
<>[on protecting a deer family from hunters in the woods]
It is a triumphant feeling for my soul that,
even after being wounded by a hunter
and perhaps losing Little Buck,
Prince Charming could still sense the difference
between those who would hurt him and us,
and continue to appear at our campsite.
* * *
The deer felt our veganism!
(I guess it takes one to know one!)
It is a privilege to be judged by these animals
as worthy of their trust.
I have realized from many loving experiences (with animals)
that when we stop eating them (and their bodily fluids)
and stop wearing their skins or exploiting them in any way,
our reward is their friendship!
From my point of view, the animals' friendship is, by far,
the greatest of the many rewards of the vegan diet and lifestyle.
It is one of the purest and sweetest feelings we humans can know.
("A True Story: The Bucks Stop Here"
thevegantruth.blogspot.com October 9, 2009)
<>
Driving along a country road, I see a turkey—the kind people eat.
Its magnificence gladdens me.
Lying on the hills, I see gentle-natured cows
and wonder how anyone could want to eat them.
Nonhuman animals have been friends
whom I can count on; angels.
My heart leaps with joy that I live
so harmoniously with other species.
I continue on down the country road.
I see plastic numbered tags tacked to each cow's ear,
and I think to myself,
"Am I the same species to those
who would do this to a cow?"
I'm continuing down the country road
in Northern New Zealand where cows are still free-ranged
(luckier than their factory-farmed brethren),
but certainly NOT free. They are slaves.
I'm distraught by humans enslaving others.
My heart is jolted when I see that man
would set a dog on a herd of docile creatures to round them up;
aggressively herding those who are peaceful
—making the slaves do what the master wants.
Next I see a horse tied by a fairly short rope,
struggling, pulling the rope and eating grass.
Being tied there, what else was the horse going to do, but eat grass?
That was the human's purpose;
for the horse to eat the grass in that spot.
I think of what a miracle that a great strong horse
builds mass by eating grass.
I envision what a horse's life should be;
running free in the fields and meadows of open wilderness.
Man sure does break the horse's spirit.
What an awful thing to have on your dossier;
caging up and enslaving creatures
that were meant to live in the wild.
Eating animals is insane.
They are not food. We are herbivores.
* * *
There was a time when everyone thought the world was flat.
They were wrong.
The majority thinks and believes
that animals and their bodily fluids are food.
They are as wrong about that
as they were about the Earth being flat.
It's an error in judgment of that magnitude.
That we can own, enslave, exploit and eat nonhuman animals
has been the indoctrination for ages,
passed on from generation to generation,
so it is deeply imbedded.
However, it is also easily broken free of
once you awaken to the Vegan Truth.
I'm absolutely positive that an animal is not food;
in fact, I'm more certain of that
than the world being round, which is only hearsay evidence.
I've looked into the eyes of many nonhuman animals
and I know for certain that animals are NOT food.
("The World Is Not Flat; Animals Are Not Food." thevegantruth.blogspot.com November 17, 2009)

Upon seeing them, a smile lights up my face.
They have endearing qualities we should embrace.
Their ecological footprint is hardly a trace...
in comparison to that of the human race.
For their rights, a mounting movement makes a case.

They have eyes and a face akin to you and me.
Animals feel and breathe, they hear and they see,
They, too, want to know life's sweet ecstasy.
Our conscience knows they deserve to be free.
Truth compels us to make it come to be.

They are not commodities for human use.
They were not put here for exploitive abuse.
Their lives have been shockingly put to misuse.
Our oppression of them has no just excuse.
Set the innocent captive animals loose.

Animal abuse lives on every distant shore;
all kinds of horror that our souls would deplore.
We treat these love objects and friends to adore
like enemies; on which we have declared a war.
For their rights, a world's heroes will rise to the fore.
("For Their Rights" Metamorphosis: Poems
to Inspire Transformation veganpoet.com)

Regulating animal exploitation through welfare reform
is like regulating rape, torture and murder.
If the conduct is wrong,
we should unite and work for the end of this behavior,
rather than work for inflicting harm in a more "humane" way.
There is nothing humane in enslaving and commodifying
the lives of sentient beings.
* * *
I'm amazed at how many (educated) people still think that "vegan" is a diet. I'm offering my three-decade vegan-point-of-view with my 2009-up-to-date-definition of a vegan:

Veganism is an ethical stance that rejects and protests the present structure that views animals as a commodity rather than the feeling, conscious beings they truly are. Vegans strive to rise above their speciesist mindsets. Hence, vegans avoid animal ingredients in food, clothing, products, and don't support businesses that exploit animals. Vegans exclude dairy, milk, cheese, eggs, honey, gelatin, meat, whey, silk, wool, leather, animal-derived substances [used in all products, such as] toiletries...and food. Vegans don't buy products that are tested on animals. They don't vote with their dollars to have animals perform for them, race for them, fight for them, entertain them, or die for them. Vegans don't support slavery.

* * *

It is our obligation to evolve humanity by striving to reach our higher nature of compassion. We can do this by seeking the counsel of our conscience and following what it says.

* * *
The mainstream has not yet broken free of their misguided conditioning that thinks humans are superior to nonhuman animals and therefore we can do whatever the hell we want to them; use them for our purposes, at our will. This mindset is the conformist's way of thinking, but one that must be done away with and replaced because it is not truthful.

* * *

Humans are the scariest animal of all. Humans are the only species that enslaves other species, and his own. Humans are the only species that employs a large number of assassins to carry out a mission on others of his own species and take their life simply because someone told them to. Humans are the only animal that takes pleasure in imposing misery on other sentient creatures.

* * *

Remaining ignorant of the atrocities that humans inflict on animals (that it is within our control to stop with our purchasing power), is not justifiable. Ignorance is not bliss. Your ignorance is the opposite of bliss for billions of suffering animals, who so deserve the right to their little portion of light and bliss. ("And You Can Quote Me On That!")

thevegantruth.blogspot.com November 18, 2009

<> [on envisioning interspecies peace just over the horizon] There's a vegan world within reach where animals of all species, both human and nonhuman, are friends and live harmoniously. Humanity has risen above "The Food Chain" at long last. Predator species have evolved to live a more civilized existence. ("A Gentle Vegan World") thevegantruth.blogspot.com April 10, 2010

<> Once we stop exploiting animals, our guilt is removed, which opens the doorway to a wonderful world of REALLY KNOWING AND LOVING ANIMALS.

("Vegan Voices" veganpoet.com)

M. Butterflies Katz (1957- )
American-New Zealand writer
Columnist, Vegan Voice

.................
If you agree that a dog or cat
(or a chimpanzee or lion or gorilla)
is significantly different than a book or a car or your shoes,
then the notion that they should be treated differently
in the eyes of the law is common sense.
That animals see, hear, breathe and feel is undisputed
—books, cars and shoes do not.
The idea of guardianship versus ownership
flows naturally from the distinction
and simply recognizes it as a legal principle.
(Animal Law © 1999)
<>
(on practicing animal law)
It's based on a moral imperative.
That's why I do what I do.
I can't fathom not doing what I do
—I feel like there's no higher calling than to try to save
or reduce the suffering of all these innocent beings
our society has decided are disposable.
(“Four-legged law comes to Berkeley”
UC Berkeley News February 16, 2005)
Bruce A. Wagman, J.D. (1957- )
American attorney and law professor
Chief outside litigator, Animal Legal Defense Fund

Vegetarians include animals in their circle of compassion.
Animals are sentient creatures;
they suffer fear, anxieties, and pain
just as they experience love, contentment, and joy.
The vegetarian philosophy regarding animals
is both profound and simple:
It is wrong to make animals suffer
and to kill them inhumanely.
* * *
Most people go through life passively observing the world
and feeling helpless to effect change and make the world better.
Not so vegetarians!
We actively participate in shaping the world every day,
and this participation is both positive and powerful.
Each day becomes an affirmation
of the preciousness of life—all of life.
(Please Don't Eat the Animals: All the Reasons You Need
to Be a Vegetarian © 2007 co-authored by Jaime Flowers)
Jennifer Horsman (1957- )
American author of novels and screenplays

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I used to be a carnivore.
* * *
Well, I've now gone four and half years
without consuming any meat or fish
(my policy is, if it has parents and
could bear offspring, I won't eat it).
This wasn't easy for me, especially at first.
But I've never regretted my decision.
I often get asked why I became and remain a vegetarian,
so in the next couple of blogs I'm going to explain myself.
My goal is not to convert anyone to vegetarianism.
In the New Testament this is considered a personal decision
that cannot be made into a doctrine [Romans 14:6].
At the same time, I hope my reflections are a catalyst for thought
on our call as Kingdom people and our responsibility to animals.

1. God Told Me To

It's not that the Bible forbids it. It doesn't.
It's just that God forbids it for me.
In fact, I felt very strongly the Lord wanted me
to enter into a covenant of complete nonviolence with him.
I am never to harm anything if I don't have to—not even a bug.
And I'm never to harm humans even if it seems
(by normal standards) that I "have to."

2. Increasing The Capacity To Love

Almost immediately after making this pledge
I began to understand why the Lord had wanted me to make it.
Scripture says a little yeast leavens all the dough [1 Corinthians 5:6].
Well, I discovered that the little yeast
of my willingness to engage in violence towards animals...
for self-serving reasons (appetite, convenience)
was polluting my heart and to some degree
compromising my capacity to love.
It felt like—and still feels like—
my commitment to total nonviolence has had,
and is yet having, a purifying effect on my heart.
Along the same lines, my commitment
to purge violence completely from my life
has increased my sensitivity to the ugliness of violence,
both in my own heart and in the world.
Jesus taught that harboring hostile thoughts towards others
and speaking hostile words towards others is a form of violence.
In fact, he says it's equivalent to murder [Matthew 5:1-26]!
Numerous other passages in the New Testament
instruct Kingdom people
to purge all hatred, bitterness, anger, unforgiveness,
judgment and malice from our minds as well as our speech.
All these things are forms of violence and are antithetical to love.
I have found that my commitment to nonviolence
has helped me wake up to all of the violence
I have in my thoughts and speech,
which in turn has helped me get free from this ugly violence.
And this, in turn, has deepened my capacity for love.

Five years ago I never dreamed there was a connection
between eating meat, anger in the heart and my ability to love.
But for me at least, there definitely was.
A little yeast leavens all the dough.

3. Seeing Sacred Beauty In All Living Things

My pledge not to harm creatures raised their value in my mind
and this in turn allowed me to see their intrinsic value.
Animals are not just food,
and insects are not just inconveniences.
They are works of art by the eternal Creator
and they have their own intrinsic, sacred worth.

But I couldn’t see this worth very clearly
when I thought of them primarily as food and inconveniences.

Becoming a vegetarian and committing to complete nonviolence
has significantly deepened my capacity
to experience the sacred beauty of God’s creation.

This experience brings with it a new dimension
of delight and joy over creation.

* * *

There’s a connection between violence towards animals
and violence towards people,
and a connection between violence in general
and our capacity for love and joy.
("Why I’m a Vegetarian" Part One of a Three-Part Series
gregboyd.blogspot.com February 10, 2008)

I now want share a theological reason
that I feel supports my pledge
to refrain from all unnecessary violence.

4. The First Fruits Of The Coming Non-Violent
(And, Thus, Non-Carnivorous) Creation

Scripture teaches that God originally gave vegetation and fruit
to "everything that has the breath of life in it"
—including humans, "the beasts of the earth,"
the "birds in the sky and all the creatures
that move on the ground” [Genesis 1:29-30].
People often fail to notice that the only food
God originally intended humans
and all other creatures to eat was vegetation.
The fact that humans now eat animals
and many animals eat each other
was not part of God’s original plan for creation.
It’s rather the result of the fall.
This is confirmed when we compare
God’s post-flood covenant with Noah
with the Genesis 1 creation account.
To Noah and his sons the Lord says:
"Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth.

The fear and dread of you will fall on all the beasts of the earth
and all the birds in the sky, on every creature that moves
along the ground, and on all the fish in the sea;
they are given into your hands.
Everything that lives and moves will be food for you.
Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything.
But you must not eat meat
that has its lifeblood still in it” [Genesis 9:1-4].
The command to Noah is very close to the command
given to Adam and Eve in Genesis.
But now the animal kingdom has "fear and dread" towards humans
and humans are for the first time allowed to eat animals
instead of "green plants" alone.
This implies that the fear, dread and violence that presently
permeates creation was not part of the original creation
that God pronounced "good" [Genesis 1:31]. What also confirms this perspective is that when the Kingdom comes in fullness at the end of the age, God's original vision for a non-violent creation will be restored. In that day, Isaiah says, "The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them.

The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. Infants will play near the hole of the cobra; young children will put their hands into the viper's nest. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea" [Isaiah 11:6-9].

Along the same lines, Hosea paints a picture of a future era when God will make a covenant of non-violence that includes the animal Kingdom: "In that day I will make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, the birds in the sky and the creatures that move along the ground. Bow and sword and battle I will abolish from the land, so that all may lie down in safety" [Hosea 2:18]. There was no violence in the beginning and there will be no violence in the end. There is violence now only because humans, the landlords of the earth, rebelled against God
and allowed the Powers of evil to corrupt the creation. Now, the most fundamental job of followers of Jesus is to manifest the reign of God. I take this to mean that we're called to put on display now what the world will look like when God fully reigns over it in the future.

* * *

One way the New Testament expresses this truth is by referring to Kingdom people as the "first fruits" of a coming harvest [II Thessalonians 2:13; James 1:18; Revelation 14:4]. The "first fruits" referred to fruit that ripened and was picked before others. In the Old Testament, first fruits were consecrated to God and were a sign that God will faithfully bring the remainder of the harvest to fruition. In the same way, Kingdom people are consecrated to God as a sign that God will faithfully bring his Kingdom to complete fruition. As the "first fruits" of the Kingdom, our call is to be in the present what the entire world will be in the future, when the Kingdom is fully manifested. In a world that is yet under bondage to the rebel powers, we're to display what it looks like to live in the reign of God. Our lives are to reflect God's will being done "on earth as it is in heaven" [Matthew 6:10]. We're to be, as much as possible, heaven on earth and thus a window through which people can see the future into which God is leading the world. If God's original ideal of a creation free of violence will be achieved in the future, it seems to me that the job of Kingdom people is to manifest this ideal now, as much as possible. Which to me suggests that since humans won't be killing animals and eating them in heaven, we shouldn't be killing them and eating them now.

("The First Fruit of the Coming Non-Violent Creation" Part Two of a Three-Part Series gregboyd.blogspot.com February 13, 2008)

<>

In the previous two blogs I've offered four reasons I became and remain a vegetarian. I now want to share my fifth and final reason.... It concerns the fact that we're called to reflect God's love and mercy by how we exercise dominion over the animal kingdom.

5. Compassionate Dominion And The Factory Farm Industry
Because we've been conditioned
to see them as products for consumption,
few western Christians seem to appreciate
just how much dignity and value God ascribes to animals.
It was to animals, not humans, that God gave the first command
recorded in the Bible [Genesis 1:22].
Every animal was created by him, belongs to him,
and is sustained and cared for by him [Psalms 50:10-11; Job 12:10].
The Lord is often depicted as a compassionate care-giver
affectionately tending to the needs of his pets.
"All creatures look to you," the Psalmist says,
"to give them their food at the proper time"
[Psalms 104:27 and 11; 147:9].
Jesus depicts his Father as personally attending
to the needs of sparrows [Matthew 6:26 and 10:29; Luke 12:6].
The Lord's heart is to preserve "both people and animals"
[Psalms 36:6], and he shows compassion
on every living thing...made [Psalms 145:9].
For example, one of the reasons he gave to Jonah
for wanting to have mercy on Nineveh
was that it was home to so many animals [Jonah 4:11].
Clearly, God has a tender heart toward animals.
One of the clearest signs of the dignity and value God ascribes to animals
is that he sometimes makes covenants with them.
When God forged a new covenant with Noah
after the flood...he included animals.
The Lord said the rainbow was "the sign of the covenant
I am making between me and you
and every living creature with you..." [Genesis 9:10-17].
So too, as we saw in the last blog, the covenant of non-violence
God says he'll make in the coming Kingdom epoch
includes the animal kingdom [Hosea 2:18].
Now, the final act of creation, according to the Genesis narrative,
was the creation of humans who were created to be
God's co-workers [I Corinthians 3:9; II Corinthians 6:1]
and co-rulers [II Timothy 2:12; Revelation 5:10]
carrying out his will "on earth as it is in heaven" [Matthew 6:10].
Our original mandate in the Bible centered on carrying out
God's loving dominion over the earth and the animal kingdom
[Genesis 1:26-28; Psalms 8:4-8].
We are entrusted and commissioned to reflect God's care
for animals by how we ourselves care for them.
This original commission was never retracted by God.
Caring for animals is still one of our most fundamental benchmarks
for how we're doing as a species.
And by that benchmark, I think it's obvious
that we're failing pretty miserably.
Over the last century we have reduced farm animals to commercialized commodities whose only value is found in how efficiently we can produce and slaughter them for profit. Consequently, we now have a situation where more than 26 billion animals each year are forced to live in miserable, over-crowded warehouses where there is absolutely nothing natural about their existence and where they are subjected to barbaric, painful, industrial procedures. (I encourage readers to view the film Farm to Fridge... and read Matthew Scully's marvelous book Dominion to be informed on these matters.)

Here are just a few examples of the typical treatment animals receive in our factory farms to satisfy our appetite for meat.

- Up to a dozen chickens are squeezed into sixteen-inch cages, stacked four or five high, in which they cannot so much as spread a wing. This is how they spend their entire miserable lives.
- These over-crowded, over-stressed conditions produce hostile behavior. To prevent chickens from plucking each other to death and thus lose profits for the factory farm industry, these poor creatures are "debeaked" (as are turkeys and sometimes ducks). This involves using a searing hot blade to cut through the bone, cartilage, soft tissue and nerves of the beaks of these abused birds.
- Cattle are routinely castrated, have their horns cut off and are branded with a searing hot iron, all without the use of pain killers. During auction and shipping their movement is controlled by electric prods (called "hotshots") that send painful, high-voltage shocks through the cow's body.
- Because of the speed with which it must be carried out, the slaughtering of cattle is not always efficient. Some are consequently still conscious when they're dismembered.
- Dairy cows spend the bulk of their existence in cramped quarters, hooked up to a milk machine. They are impregnated each year to keep milk production going and have their young taken from them almost immediately after birth, an act that is unnatural and traumatizing to both the calf and its mother.
- Once taken from their mothers, calves are frequently kept in tiny crates in which they cannot turn around or even lay down comfortably. To produce veal, male calves are fed an unnatural diet to keep them borderline anemic. This keeps their meat white and tender.
When they’re just several months old, they’re slaughtered.

■ The worst victims of the factory farm industry, in my estimation, are pigs.

Gene research has recently revealed that pigs are one of our closest cousins in the animal kingdom. These poor beasts are routinely castrated, have their ears and tails cut and have their teeth yanked out all without the use of any anesthesia. The shrieks of pain heard throughout these ordeals are gut-wrenching (see the film Farm to Fridge).

■ Pigs are customarily kept in narrow stalls that allow them to do nothing more than stare ahead their entire lives.

Because pigs are extremely intelligent creatures—more so than most breeds of dogs—they often go insane in this confinement, sometimes gnawing at their own limbs (which is why many factory farms yank out their teeth).
They are pumped full of hormones to stimulate unnatural growth, and many get to the point where their legs won't support their body weight any longer. These must then be dragged to slaughter.

Pigs are commonly packed so tightly into transportation trucks that many are crushed to death in the process. As with cattle, the slaughtering process is far from perfect, and some are yet conscious when they are scalded in boiling water to have their hair removed.

If you saw your neighbor torturing their dog the way factory farms torture pigs and other animals, you'd immediately call the police and the man would be prosecuted for cruelty to animals. If your neighbor did this to numerous animals over time, he'd eventually be locked up (despite how pathetic our laws against animal cruelty are).

Yet when billions of animals are treated in this barbaric way on factory farms, we not only look the other way, we actually support it and fund it—if, in fact, we consume the beasts these farms torture! And the only reason we do this is because we like the way they taste.

There's no question that this calloused treatment of animals... is an efficient way of processing meat that helps keep its price down. But there's also no question that this represents the antithesis of the loving and compassionate dominion God intended humans to exercise over animals. We're called to reflect God's loving and compassionate character in the way we treat animals. There's nothing—nothing—loving and compassionate about the way animals are treated on factory farms. Their lives on these farms are a living hell.

As a follower of Jesus Christ, I am called to manifest the reign of God in every area of my life. Since torturing animals is not consistent with the reign of God, I feel I cannot help fund an institution that does this. Undoubtedly, someone will respond: "What practical difference will it make for one individual to refuse to benefit from the butchery of the slaughter houses? They're going to continue to operate regardless of what you or any other individual does."

The same argument was used to justify Northern Americans reaping benefits from slavery before the civil war. For all their protesting, few Northerners boycotted the South's slave-driven cotton industry. This argument is simply a poor, morally vacuous argument.
But even if we grant that refusing to benefit from animal torture on factory farms doesn't make any practical difference, this shouldn't affect the behavior of followers of Jesus in the least. We are called to do what we do not because its practically expedient, but simply because we are called to do it. **Faithfulness**, not pragmatism, is our motivation. Our call is not to pragmatically fix the world, but to simply be the Kingdom. At the same time, we have to remember that every Kingdom act we engage in, including our refusal to participate in unnecessary violence toward animals, is an act of resistance against the Principalities and Powers and helps weaken their stronghold on the earth. While we may not be able to empirically measure the impact our revolt against violence has on the world, we can trust that our loving revolt is, in fact, making a significant difference.  

("Compassionate Dominion and Factory Farms" Part Three of a Three-Part series gregboyd.blogspot.com February 16, 2008)  
**Gregory A. Boyd, Ph.D. (1957- )**  
American Christian author, former professor of theology  
Senior pastor of an evangelical megachurch  
.................

[on the U.S. government’s livestock-lobby-led removal of wild horses from public lands in defiance of the 1971 Free-Roaming Wild Horse & Burro Act]  
**[T]he wild horse removal is a tragically grim and deadly tale of systematic elimination. Those entrusted with the power to enforce the people's law have been using it to the detriment of the horses—and doing so behind the people's backs. In fact, the BLM refers to roundups as "gathers," making them more palatable to public opinion. * * *  
It can be said that no other animal in human history has had the impact on our lives as much as the horse. Millions have lost their lives in human wars. They have been used to transport us and our belongings across continents, to deliver our mail and network our civilizations, and they have plowed the fields that feed us. In these modern times, the horse is an entertainer, an athlete, an icon, and a friend—with more than 6 million of them in the care of American horse "lovers." We have long celebrated the horse, in art and mythology (the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse,
the winged Pegasus, the Centaur) and in literature and symbolism (we still measure power in horses). But we have abandoned this animal of the plains. Though we owe them civilization as we know it, we no longer hear the wind in their wild ears; we cannot see the fire in their eyes. In return for the sacrifices of their ancestors, we have done little else but annihilate and degrade them.

* * *

Instead of demanding that Congress enforce the existing law that protects these animals in their homeland—a law brought about by the people, mind you—we sit idly by and accept the government's figures and its biased portrayal of what is happening in the West. We prefer the taste of hamburger over the image of wild and free-running horses. [Cattle ranchers lease—at taxpayer-subsidized bargain-basement rates—ever-more of the public land once inhabited by mustangs.] And we line up at auction yards to adopt what are now fireless, broken-spirited wild ponies. (Investigative Report: "Mestengo. Mustang. America's Disappearing Wild Horses" animalsvoice.com) <>
There has been no rest for the incredibly, terribly weary. They arrive utterly exhausted, frantically falling over themselves as they dangerously slip on the feces- and urine-slicked floors of the two-tier cattle truck that has brought them here. They are pushed forward with electric prods into the temporary holding pens outside the killing plant. From California to Texas, they arrive bearing the scars of their strenuous 30-hour trek across state lines—from other states, the journey has been nearly 2,000 miles.

They arrive injured, emaciated, pregnant. And they have come a long way; all of them: registered thoroughbreds, purebred Arabians, former wild ponies, speckled appaloosas, draft horses, donkeys, old-timers and newly born foals. Not a horse is safe from the Texas massacres.

A number of the horses in the 45-head-packed truck arrive too injured to walk from the transport themselves; like any downed animal arriving at slaughter, they are dragged by their legs to the killing floor. Dead horses are trashed—fallen and trampled victims of transport in a truck designed for animals half their size.

They arrive hungry. Thirsty. Terrified. But it matters not. In just a few hours' time, they will be forced through kill chutes, shot in their heads with captive-bolt pistols, butchered, packaged, refrigerated and shipped abroad by air and by sea to countries where dining on horse flesh has become a reborn fashion.

These images circle through my mind as I climb to the top rail and survey horses mulling about in the manure and fly-infested confines of the kill pen—their last stop here in California before the long and torturous journey to Texas.

These hapless creatures—a mere unwanted hundred or two of the more than 300,000 butchered in the United States—have become statistics in the yearly export trade in horse flesh: the little Arabian, back from her lease to the U.S.-based Mexican "Charro" rodeo, badly banged and bruised; the big white blind mare who circles nervously in her so-called protective enclosure; a rose-grey Arabian with swollen, runny eyes whose "owner" fell from her and then branded her wild, dooming her to the kill pen; the seal-bay thoroughbred filly who walks with an unacceptable twist of her right rear pastern; the cancer-affected Welsh pony;
the unmanageable pinto stallion who relentlessly expresses his dissatisfaction over this unusual confinement; they’re all here: the emaciated backyard abuse cases, the "excess" racing stock, the lame, the injured, and the ill. Alone, by herself, an appaloosa mare lies colic-stricken beneath the rain-threatening sky. She was unloaded here due to an intestinal stone too painful to pass; if the condition doesn't kill her, the slaughterman will. But these unfortunate animals are only the exception, not the rule. Fully trained, young, sound, well-groomed horses pack the dusty, stench-wreaking pens, competing with one another for impoverished food and muddy-colored water. I spy a young dapple-grey Arabian gelding. A long black forelock falls across his face; the wind picks up his thick mane and tosses it over an arched neck. He dances, paws the ground for a moment and then stares across the roadway to where the mountains meet the sky. A friend climbs onto the fence beside me. "Nice horse," she whispers, and I agree. He epitomizes the spirit of one of the most noble animals on Earth.

* * *
The dapple-grey Arabian steps forward. He is curious about me and nuzzles my foot. I'm told he's perfectly trained and has been in the kill pen but a day so he is still healthy and strong, his spirit unbroken. In Texas, he'll fetch about $800 in horse steaks. For $50 more, to encourage the kill buyer to relinquish him to me instead, I can take him home.

* * *
[Methods for obtaining slaughter-bound horses vary. There are the auctions where most horse sellers are assuming they're selling animals to horse lovers—not horse killers. Unlike other livestock auctions, not many suspect that the pound on the hoof is the target. There are kill buyers...who promise a family's backyard horse a life of leisure on non-existent farms and coax below-market sales, turning profits by herding the animals onto double-decked cattle trucks bound for...foreign-owned killing plants [at the time of this writing, there were 11 such plants in the U.S.; now they are all closed, and U.S. horses are transported across the borders to slaughterhouses in Canada and Mexico]. Why the secrecy? "It's an industry that involves killing pets," explains Jim Weems, [former] Administrative Vice President of Great Western Meat Co. in Morton, Texas]
"Of course, horsemeat companies are publicity shy.
Our buyers go to these auctions to bid against people
who are interested in buying a pony for their child."
Great Western Meat Co. sends a special chill along my spine.
* * *
I stroke the dapple-grey Arabian's dished face and his ears
and look into his liquid brown eyes as he shoves his head
against me to ask for a scratch.
Great Western Meat Co.... That's exactly where he's headed.
* * *
Day is turning to dusk and an almost cold wind picks up.
I leave the kill pen for the car,
hoping to find a sweater or jacket into which I'll crawl.
Along the way, I pass the kill buyer.
He's leaning in the barn's breezeway, on a payphone,
and he smiles a little at me as I walk by.
* * *
He's merely the middleman. He is not the enemy.
The enemy is the bigger picture: the breeders of horses,
the people who acquire them and then abandon them to any fate.
I pull the collar around me, lean onto the fence again
to watch the dapple-grey Arabian.
He sees me and shifts his weight;
I know he's going to turn in my direction now,
to approach and stand by me,
perhaps in his horsey way, to ask me to free him.
I scratch his neck and he loves it,
but in the middle of our momentary liberation
from the doom around us,
headlights shatter the encroaching darkness.
I turn my head and watch the truck make its slow journey
across the pot-holed dirt driveway.
It is coming for him.
There are tiny lights along every edge of the trailer,
and it is lit up like a Christmas tree.
It is empty now, too, but it is a different kind of truck.
There is ample room for horses in it,
partitioned stalls that separate the animals
from each other to prevent injury;
there are padded walls and rubber mats on the floors;
there is hay and sweet grain in the feed troughs.
The truck stops and Linda Moss gets out.
"Is he ready?" she asks.
I scratch the dapple-grey Arabian one more time
and feel my heart warm.
"He's come to the gate," I said. "I think he's ready."
So was the big, white blind mare.
And two of the Charros' "toys."
Then we squeezed in an Arabian filly just for good measure.
It was nightfall when we arrived at the temporary sanctuary
(we're looking for something permanent).
Barn lights shattered the darkness, horses whinnied a welcome,
and a volunteer crew emerged to help unload our cargo.
It is a wonderful feeling, a feeling beyond words,
to actually remove other living beings from the jaws of death,
and—in this case—to prepare them a room of their own
with fresh water and alfalfa hay, wood shavings for bedding,
and a bucket of sweet grain.
It is a wonderful feeling for the horses, too.
The dapple-grey Arabian called to me
when I left the barn to observe the outside activities.
He knew so soon that I had come to save him.
He KNEW it—even before I did, I think.
I named him "Shilo" after Neil Diamond's song,
the one he wrote about his only dependable friend.

* * *
I thought about my brand new friendship with Shilo
—that rare kind of bonding you have only with an animal—
as I leaned in the barn's doorway and watched him
grab a bite of alfalfa and molasses
then check to see if I was still there.

* * *
I do not understand the human race...
and for now that would have to suffice;
inside the barn, bedded and fed and groomed,
a dozen horses prepare for a long and enriched life
that only a few hours earlier had been doomed to the slaughterhouse.
For a few, it would be a good night.
(Investigative Report: "The Texas Massacres:
Horse Slaughter in America" animalsvoice.com)

[a follow-up to the above article]
It turned out that Shilo would become in his lifetime
a First-Place First-Level Dressage horse
and serve as an Ambassador for other horses destined for slaughter;
over the course of a few years, Shilo was directly responsible,
by his flashy presence in the show ring,
for the rescue of more than 60 equines
from the same kill pen he'd been salvaged from.
When onlookers learned of his story,
they became determined to save a horse themselves.
Over the years, both Mexican-style rodeos and horse slaughter have become illegal in California. Appearing on television, Shilo showed voters just why it was wrong to turn equines into hamburger and to slam them onto their faces for the fun of it. His gentle soul reminded the human race of the beauty and grace of horses everywhere. (*Shilo's Story* animalvoices.com)
<>
"He's beautiful."

And by "he" they mean Shilo, the horse I rescued from the killers several years ago. I paid the horse trader $50 more than the slaughterhouse would have paid him to keep him from putting that little gray Arabian onto the livestock truck bound for Texas. I liken it to the way Oskar Schindler bought freedom for 1,100 Jews. I don't know how to respond to "He's beautiful." "Thank you"? For what? I didn't make him. I didn't create him. I can't take credit for his grace, his spirit, his fire. Such questions leave me feeling awkward and speechless. There's a fine line among us. We recognize that animals have interests in their own lives,
that they feel, think, reason, sleep, eat, drink, 
play, mate, dream, and die.
But to whom do they belong?
They belong to no one, just as you and I belong to no one.
But under the law, animals "belong" to those
who have bred, raised, possessed, or purchased them.
They are, legally speaking, our property.
And we, legally speaking, are their owners.
Except in rare cases, injuring or killing a dog or a cat
is a violation not of the rights of the victims
but of the animals' "owners."
In other words, the wrong wasn't committed to the animal involved,
but to the property of the human being who owned that animal.
Damages are paid by the violator to the owner,
and the value is determined as to the monetary "cost"
of the injured or killed animal.
So I find myself, in those moments when visitors
are admiring Shilo, unable to respond accordingly.
I feel foolish thinking what they would think
if they knew I didn't consider Shilo mine,
even though I paid to rescue him,
pay to feed and house him, to train and groom him,
to transport and medically care for him,
and even though I have the receipt in my hand from the kill buyer
proving that Shilo, under the law, belongs to me.
It is difficult in those moments
because I recognize that the law of the land
is speaking a completely different language than I am.
At the risk of appearing the fool, on occasion,
I've found myself appealing to the sensitivities of others.
"He's beautiful." "Thank you," I say.
On second thought, however, our community
has risen quite well above the semantics of language.
Animal shelters don't encourage the general public
to come in and "buy" a dog or cat;
they encourage them to "adopt" an animal.
It isn't until the cash is exchanged and the documents are drawn
that the word "owner" appears in the dialogue.
For as long as we regard other creatures
as property to be bought and sold, to be owned or mastered,
we humans will forever distance ourselves
from the essence of our species:
our ability to hold sacred the natural world,
to view the other lives around us
as gifts given to us by a great spirit,
and in so doing, regain our empathy.
If we cannot relinquish our rights to animal ownership, animals will continue to suffer immeasurably—as did African slaves in the grip of human bondage—because their suffering will never be weighed for what it is, but only for what it costs their legal "owners" in terms of "property" damages. But until we liberate our language, we will never liberate animals. It begins by removing the words "owner" and "property" (and any variation of those words) from our vocabulary, no matter the social consequences. Until we take that step, the court systems cannot follow. Shilo paws the ground and dances in place, arching his neck, as if he knows he's being admired. And then the inevitable remark: "He's beautiful." I have found a new answer. "Yes," I say, "he is." (Editorial: "The Ties That Bind" animalsvoice.com)

<> We have lost our bond with nature, with the animals who once captivated and inspired us. Today, they are Whoppers and suede, garment trim and gelatin. And if the dismemberments we have created are so named, we never actually hear them: pigskin, calves' liver, lamb. That's how lost we are. Dismembered animals can safely hide in plain sight. We never see them, never know them, never feel for them. No apology. I see it clearest when human beings defensively defend the eating of animals. * * *

Though it is changing in more recent times, most Americans with whom I converse are still convinced that animal flesh and fodder is a necessary evil in the human diet. But they are so far removed from the process by which meat adorns their tables that they are almost incapable of having any idea about how that process occurs. Most believe humane slaughter to be standard American fare. Few would admit that it is a contradiction in terms. But would it matter? Would they care? If they could see what I have seen, hear what I have heard, feel the pain I have felt in others, would it change their perspective? Would there be, at least, an apology for the cruelties and the unnecessary-ness of it all? After all, one can't be connected and disconnected at the same time. Still, the dichotomy astounds me.
If animals are so important to human survival, why do we degrade them so? Why do we animate plucked, decapitated chickens and set their antics to silly music? Why do we find humor in the widespread massacre of millions of birds for Thanksgiving meals? "Don't eat a turkey. You are what you eat." Funny. Never mind the deprived, debeaked, crammed, violent lives and deaths of so many animals for a completely unappreciated holiday—and I dare say, a tragically sad historical celebration not worth the honor. Why, I wonder, do we paint happy-faced cows on hamburger wrappers? If we need them so—if we insist that our very lives depend on their deaths—why are we so humiliating and belittling toward them and their plight?

* * *

The more we have learned about animals, about their intelligence and vulnerability, the less we have respected them.

* * *

[W]e have dethroned them from what they are: living, breathing, feeling, needing, wanting, thinking, dreaming, reasoning, deserving-of-respect, entitled-to-life beings. Animals have fallen from grace. Their lives, their suffering, their rights, are minimized. Ignored. Violated. We have a warped sense of values.

* * *

[W]e have no soul.

* * *

No, on second thought, there must be some remnant of a soul in there, for most people are too easily defensive. I say it comes from the guilt triggered by the underlying, subconscious remorse they feel over the sufferings they realize they're causing. Shame on me, I guess, for forcing them to face that soul within them. Well, hey, I'm just trying to change the world and to make it as peaceful a place as it should be. For that, no, I won't apologize. (Editorial: "No Apology" animalsvoice.com)

Laura Moretti (1958–)
American founder, editor, publisher, The Animals Voice

……………. 
I used to love zoos, but now I despise them. I know that the human brain is a unique product of evolution (or creation, if you're of that camp) and other animals are not as complex as we, but in emotional ways, other species are far more similar to us than they are dissimilar. It's easy to miss, but if you get to know a non-human animal it becomes apparent quickly. Anyone who has made friends with a dog knows in their gut that there are emotions behind that slobbering muzzle. Other species are no different. I no longer think that imprisoning any animals for purposes of entertainment is morally defensible. If I were dictator of the world, I would ban zoos, SeaWorld, circuses with animals, etc. There are always ways to entertain oneself without victimizing someone else. Some argue that zoos give the public face-to-face appreciation for animals that help them to protect them in the wild.
Personally, I think that is a cop-out. I don't need to visit an Indonesian orphan behind bars in a zoo to know I shouldn't buy products made by ones being enslaved in Jakarta. If a person has a conscience, they don't need the personal experience to understand an injustice; if they do not, the visit to the zoo doesn't help anyway. Modern, "nice" zoos are not much better than archaic ones. No matter how nice your house is, if you're not allowed to leave it for the rest of your life, you go nuts. All this is just my radical opinion, take it for what it is worth. I like to think that other animals are here with us, not for us. Accordingly, I won't do (or subsidize being done) anything to a non-human animal that I wouldn't do to a human child. Surprisingly, I don't find that I'm missing a lot. ("Prison Fun for the Whole Family" bizarrocomic.blogspot.com November 10, 2009)

Dan Piraro (1958- ) American painter and illustrator Creator of the syndicated panel cartoon "Bizarro" 

Stuffed deer heads on walls are bad enough, but it's worse when they are wearing dark glasses and have streamers in their antlers because then you know they were enjoying themselves at a party when they were shot. <>
You ask people why they have deer heads on their walls. They always say, "Because it's such a beautiful animal." There you go. I think my mother is attractive, but I have photographs of her. Ellen DeGeneres (1958- ) American comedian and TV talk show host 

If one is using the word "obligation" seriously,... then there is no practical difference between an obligation on our end not to mistreat animals and an entitlement on their end not to be mistreated by us. Either way, we are required to do and not do the same things. And either way, somewhere down the logical line, the entitlement would have to arise from a recognition of the inherent dignity of a living creature. The moral standing of our fellow creatures may be humble, but it is absolute and not something
within our power to confer or withhold. All creatures sing their Creator's praises, as this truth is variously expressed in the Bible, and are dear to Him for their own sakes. A certain moral relativism runs through the arguments of those hostile or indifferent to animal welfare as if animals can be of value only for our sake, as utility or preference decrees. In practice, this outlook leaves each person to decide for himself when animals rate moral concern. It even allows us to accept or reject such knowable facts about animals as their cognitive and emotional capacities, their conscious experience of pain and happiness.

* * *

A kindly attitude toward animals is not a subjective sentiment; it is the correct moral response to the objective value of a fellow creature. Here, too, rational and virtuous conduct consists in giving things their due and in doing so consistently.

If one animal's pain—say, that of one's pet—is real and deserving of sympathy, then the pain of essentially identical animals is also meaningful, no matter what conventional distinctions we have made to narrow the scope of our sympathy. If it is wrong to whip a dog or starve a horse or bait bears for sport or grossly abuse farm animals, it is wrong for all people in every place.
The problem with moral relativism is that it leads to capriciousness and the despotic use of power. And the critical distinction here is not between human obligations and animal rights, but rather between obligations of charity and obligations of justice. Active kindness to animals falls into the former category. If you take in strays or help injured wildlife or donate to animal charities, those are fine things to do, but no one says you should be compelled to do them. Refraining from cruelty to animals is a different matter, an obligation of justice not for us each to weigh for ourselves. It is not simply unkind behavior, it is unjust behavior, and the prohibition against it is non-negotiable.

* * *

[I]t is a terrible thing that religious people today can be so indifferent to the cruelty of the farms, shrugging it off as so much secular, animal rights foolishness. They above all should hear the call to mercy. They above all should have some kindness to spare. They above all should be mindful of the little things, seeing, in the suffering of these creatures, the same hand that has chosen all the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things to confound the things which are strong. "Who so poor," asked Anna Kingsford more than a century ago, "so oppressed, so helpless, so mute and uncared for, as the dumb creatures who serve us —they who, but for us, must starve, and who have no friend on earth if man be their enemy?"

* * *

The human mind, especially when there is money to be had, can manufacture grand excuses for the exploitation of other human beings. How much easier it is for people to excuse the wrongs done to lowly animals. Where animals are concerned, there is no practice or industry so low that someone, somewhere, cannot produce a high-sounding reason for it. The sorriest little miscreant who shoots an elephant, lying in wait by the water hole in some canned-hunting operation, is just "harvesting resources," doing his bit for "conservation." The swarms of government-subsidized Canadian seal hunters slaughtering tens of thousands of newborn pups —hacking to death these unoffending creatures, even in sight of their mothers— offer themselves as the brave and independent bearers of tradition.
Actually, all of factory farming proceeds by a massive denial of reality—
the reality that pigs and other animals are not just production units to be endlessly exploited but living creatures with natures and needs. The very modesty of those needs—
their humble desires for straw, soil, sunshine—is the gravest indictment of the men who deny them.

No one who does not profit from them can look at our modern factory farms or frenzied slaughter plants or agricultural laboratories with their featherless chickens and fear-free pigs and think, "Yes, this is humanity at our finest—exactly as things should be." Devils charged with designing a farm could hardly have made it more severe. Least of all should we look for sanction in Judeo-Christian morality, whose whole logic is one of gracious condescension, of the proud learning to be humble, the higher serving the lower, and the strong protecting the weak.

Lofty talk about humanity’s special status among creatures only invites such questions as: what would the Good Shepherd make of our factory farms? Where does the creature of conscience get off lording it over these poor creatures so mercilessly?

When people say that they like their pork chops, veal, or foie gras just too much ever to give them up, reason hears in that the voice of gluttony, willfulness, or at best moral complaisance. What makes a human being human is precisely the ability to understand that the suffering of an animal is more important than the taste of a treat. ("Fear Factories: The Case for Compassionate Conservatism—for Animals" The American Conservative May 23, 2005)

Animals are more than ever a test of our character, of mankind’s capacity for empathy and for decent, honorable conduct and faithful stewardship.

"Calves are adorable," as columnist David Plotz expressed it in Slate magazine, "but veal is delicious. God gave man dominion over the beasts of the Earth (and) if any animal has economic utility, we should farm it."
Actually, if we are going to get pious about it, God gave us lots of things, and one of them is conscience. Veal, no matter what seasonings cover it, or what sanctimony defends it, does not carry the "taste of elegance."
Veal carries, as Alice Walker observes, "the taste of a bitter life."

* * *
Having granted some protections to some animals, we are constantly confronted with the logic of our own laws, troubled by perfectly rational connections between the random or "wanton" acts of cruelty the law forbids and the systematic, institutional cruelties it still permits. If this animal is to be protected, why not this identical one, too? * * *

I know a "crime against nature" when I see one. It is usually a sign of crimes against nature that we cannot bear to see them at all, that we recoil and hide our eyes, and no one has cringed at the sight of a soybean factory.

* * *
In protecting animals, it is always just one step from the mainstream to the fringe. To condemn the wrong is obvious, to suggest its abolition radical.

* * *
The factory farm is an economic necessity, cuts costs for the consumer, unavoidable in the global economy, a fact of life, a way of life, a livelihood, blah blah blah. All this so we can have our accustomed veal or lamb or fried chicken or pork chop or hot dog at the ballpark.

* * *
[T]hat the average person eats meat, and yet could not bear to see how it was produced, actually speaks well for the average person. Imagine a world in which most people enjoyed hearing and seeing the details.

* * *
If moral seriousness is the standard, I for one would rather be standing between duck and knife than going to the mat in angry defense of a table treat.

* * *
When a man's love of finery clouds his moral judgment, that is vanity. When he lets a demanding palate make his moral choices, that is gluttony.
When he ascribes the divine will to his own whims, that is pride. 
And when he gets angry at being reminded of animal suffering that his own daily choices might help avoid, that is moral cowardice.
* * *
The truth is that realism doesn't come any harder to swallow, literally, than this. 
Go into the largest livestock operation, search out the darkest and tiniest stall or pen, single out the filthiest, most forlorn little lamb or pig or calf,

![Image of lamb and dog]

and that is one of God's creatures you're looking at, morally indistinguishable from your beloved Fluffy or Frisky.
* * *
If you could walk all of humanity through one of these places, 90 percent would never touch meat again. We would leave the place retching and gasping for air. We cringe at the thought of it, and that cringe is to our credit.
* * *
Not important, we keep telling ourselves. No, it is only important enough to hide, lock away, bar from filming, forget about, laugh off, deride, belittle, and at all costs avoid discussing in detail.
* * *
It is true that there will always be enough injustice and human suffering in the world to make wrongs done to animals seem small and secondary. The answer is that justice is not a finite commodity, nor are kindness and love. When we find wrongs done to animals, it is no excuse to say that more important wrongs
are done to human beings, and let us concentrate on those.
A wrong is a wrong, and often the little ones,
when they are shrugged off as nothing,
spread and do the gravest harm to ourselves and others.
* * *
It is as if the whole natural world existed for no other reason
than to please the appetites of man,
however ignoble, irrational, and reckless.
Anything that is there is there to be taken.
If it's in the way, level it.
If it dares distract or inconvenience, run it off.
If it adds to costs, kill it.
It is a vision that looks upon our fellow creatures
to find only an infinite array of pests, threats, resources, obstacles,
targets, livestock, roadkill, racks, and "wall hangers."
Nowhere in this vision is there any room for animals
with their own purpose in the world apart from the designs of man.
* * *
Cruelty is not only a denial of the animal's nature
but a betrayal of our own.
If we are defined by reason and morality,
then reason and morality must define our choices,
even where animals are concerned.
* * *
How we treat our fellow creatures is only one more way
in which each of us, every day, writes our own epitaph,
bearing into the world a message of light and life
or just more darkness and death,
adding to the world's joy or its despair.
*(Dominion: The Power of Man, the Suffering
of Animals, and the Call to Mercy © 2002)*
Matthew O. Scully (1959- )
American journalist and author
Speechwriter for U.S. President George W. Bush
..................

Instinct is defined as patterns of behavior or specific skills
in an animal exhibited in response to environmental stimuli,
that are innate, largely unalterable,
and not involving reason or conscious thinking.
While the basic concept of instinct may have validity,
its arbitrary application is clearly speciesist.
Very few behavior patterns and virtually no skills
exhibited by humans are attributed to instinct.
In stark contrast, much of the behavior and skill sets
exhibited by nonhumans are assumed to be instinctual.
For example, nobody would think that there is no reasoning or thought process involved when humans build houses. We don’t consider this to be merely instinctual behavior. But dictionary definitions of "instinct" frequently cite examples of birds building nests. Nest building represents a relatively complex behavior. We don’t really know what’s going on inside the mind of a bird constructing a nest. While it’s possible that instinct is the initiating force behind her behavior, I highly doubt that there’s no active thinking or reasoning processes going on. When we arbitrarily choose to explain complex animal behavior as instinct, only when nonhumans are involved, we are being speciesist.

Attributing the behavior of nonhumans to instinct has the effect of minimizing their capabilities and accomplishments, reducing them to unthinking machines, denying their sentience and personhood, and justifying our own feelings of superiority and our continued exploitation of them. To the extent that instinct is something that in fact exists, as opposed to a social construct that serves to advance an "us versus them" mindset, it should be impartially studied and rationally discussed. But it should never be used as a tool to justify oppression, discrimination, and violence towards other animals.

(“How the Concept of Instinct Shapes Our Attitudes about Nonhumans” brockwayhall.blogspot.com October 29, 2009)

<> Animal advocates pursue two distinctly different approaches. Animal welfare (or welfarism) seeks to improve the treatment of animals through the regulation of institutional suppliers. Abolition, on the other hand, seeks to end the use of animals by reducing demand. This is achieved by educating people about veganism.

* * *

Among other things, I'll explain here why abolition cannot be achieved through the animal welfare approach, why animal welfare and abolition are fundamentally incompatible, and why I believe the idea...that we should support all forms of animal advocacy, is wrong.
Animal Welfare Doesn't Target
The Property Status of Animals

Nonhuman animals are property, both legally and in terms of how most humans perceive them. Our cultural conditioning has imposed arbitrary boundaries along which we recognize or deny personhood to other species. Generally, companion animals such as dogs or cats benefit from this, while the vast majority of animal species, including most obviously the ones that we eat and wear, are its casualties.

But even the nonhumans who we grant the status of personhood, are still considered property in the eyes of the law. Property rights—strongly valued by our economic and political traditions—severely limit animal welfare reforms to those measures that don't impose significant and enduring costs to producers and ultimate consumers. It is for this reason that genuine welfare reform cannot take place while animals are still considered property. As property, animals will always be valued more for how useful they are to us as commodities, than for their intrinsic worth as sentient individuals. Animal welfare, with its focus on how animals are treated, and its disregard of the idea that animals should not be exploited in the first place, does nothing to steer people away from viewing nonhumans as property.

Further regulation of treatment ends up strengthening the property status of animals in the same way that Jim Crow laws in the southern US a half-century ago had the effect of legitimizing and strengthening existing racist attitudes. These laws mandated "separate but equal" public facilities such as drinking fountains, swimming pools, and schools, for black Americans. But in reality, those separate facilities were inferior. Regulating racism ends up strengthening racism, just like regulating speciesism ends up strengthening speciesism. The abolitionist approach would instead focus on eliminating the root of the problem, be it racism or speciesism.

Supply Versus Demand

Animal welfare focuses on supply rather than demand. As experience with the never ending "war on drugs" has shown, attacking sources of supply is ineffective at curtailing the use of illegal substances. It stands to reason that such an approach
would be even more ineffective at reducing the use of products such as animal flesh, secretions, or skin, for which there are no legal consequences for sale or possession. Not until there are fundamental changes in attitudes on the part of a sizable number of individuals, will there be sufficient political will to impose major legislative bans or restrictions on suppliers. When a strong and sustained demand exists for something, someone will inevitably supply it. On the other hand, suppliers won't produce things that are no longer in demand. Abolition, through thoughtful, non-violent, vegan education, directly reduces demand. Abolition recognizes that change begins with the individual.

Animal Welfare Makes People Feel More Comfortable About Exploiting Animals

Perhaps the most significant problem with animal welfare campaigns from a practical standpoint is that they make people feel more comfortable about continuing to exploit animals. Ballot measures such as last year’s Proposition 2 in California that set minimum space requirements for egg-laying chickens and a few other animals raised for food, were marketed as major steps forward for animals. The big animal protection organizations that sponsor these measures spend large sums of money to get them on the ballot and to ensure their passage; money that could have been better spent doing vegan education. In fact Proposition 2 affords relatively little benefit to animals. The measure is riddled with loopholes, and includes a very long lead-time during which producers can continue operations as usual. It’s very likely that producers would have eventually adopted the new standards anyway due to cost savings from improved long-term efficiencies. Generally, the standards imposed by these kinds of welfare reform measures are economically beneficial to producers once initial capital expenditures have been paid for. As long as animals remain property, any improvements to their treatment beyond what can be achieved at minimal or no cost to producers and consumers, is largely illusionary. If you fail to educate people about why it's wrong to enslave and kill or otherwise exploit animals
(however well they may be treated in the process) for reasons that are not only unnecessary but downright trivial, while you simultaneously expose them to marketing hype for "certified improved" animal products from "happy" animals, it's not likely that many of them will decide to reduce their use of animals, let alone become vegans.

Animal Welfare Promotes Moral Inconsistency and Confusion

Animal welfare is morally problematic in a number ways. For one thing, the approach suggests that it's morally acceptable to exploit animals as long as we treat them well. This is a very disturbing and confusing concept that elevates the importance of treatment, while trivializing the act of killing. Some animal welfare adherents believe that we should focus on welfare instead of abolition because realistically animal exploitation will never be eliminated. Therefore we should push for more "humane" ways of exploiting them, they contend. But no rationally thinking person would agree that it would be acceptable to murder a human as long as the perpetrator treated him well beforehand. If you believe that murder is morally wrong, common sense and logic would have you spending your time and effort on reducing the incidence of murder, even if you believe that murder will never be completely eliminated from society, rather than focusing on persuading murderers to treat their victims better prior to killing them. If you believe that killing and eating animals is morally wrong, common sense and logic would have you spending your time and effort on persuading others to become vegans, even if you believe that animal exploitation will never be completely eradicated, rather than focusing on getting producers to torture animals in new, "better" ways that may or may not make any meaningful difference in levels of suffering. Simply put, regulating something that is fundamentally wrong to begin with, is a fundamentally wrong approach.

The Problem of Single-Issue Campaigns

The big animal welfare groups are largely centered around single-issue campaigns that either
focus on reforming the exploitive practices of a specific industry such as chicken egg or pig flesh production, or eliminating an exploitive industry such as dog racing or rodeos. Because these campaigns are carefully selected to appeal to the largest number of potential donors, they often focus on the plight of animal species such as dolphins, dogs, or seals that we perceive as cute or adorable due to our cultural biases. By narrowly focusing on a particular species or a particular use, the idea is conveyed that harm to some kinds of animals (the "cute" ones) represents a greater wrong than harm to other kinds of animals (those that we find less attractive and/or perceive less commonality with).

* * *
Single-issue campaigns focus lots of resources on peripheral aspects of animal exploitation while failing to address the root of the problem, which is speciesism. They fail to explain why all forms of animal exploitation are wrong. They fail to focus on what is by far the largest aspect of animal exploitation: 56 billion animals (not including countless fish and other marine animals) killed worldwide every year for food. And they fail to call for veganism as the solution.

Welfare Supporters Frequently Call Abolitionists "Divisive" Or "Elitist"

I've encountered many animal advocates who shy away from constructive debate of welfare versus abolition, mix up and confuse the terms "animal rights" and "animal welfare," insist that we should support all types of animal advocacy efforts, and that we should remain united. People who disagree with these opinions are often called "divisive" and even "elitist."

But just as liberals and conservatives have distinctly different views on many issues, so do welfarists and abolitionists. We see these issues very differently, believe in different things, and are headed in different directions. We cannot remain united because we have never been united in the first place. With limited time and resources, it doesn't make sense to support approaches to animal protection that don't work, let alone those that are counterproductive.
* * * 
It also doesn't make sense to avoid intellectual debate about philosophy and methodology. Sharing and debating ideas is crucial to identifying the most effective approach to the furthering of animal rights and other social justice issues. * * *

**Conclusion**

Animal welfare is a deeply flawed approach that leads people down a morally muddled and circuitous path. In contrast, the very simple and straightforward abolitionist approach deals directly with the root of the problem through vegan education. Those who understand abolition and veganism, see animal exploitation, speciesism, and other forms of discrimination as interconnected parts of the overall problem of violence in society. Veganism is not a set of rules or restrictions. Nor is it just a diet or lifestyle. It is a basic prerequisite for anyone who wishes to start caring seriously about animals, including humans. It is a moral and political commitment to non-violence. Furthermore, veganism is easy, both in its understandability and its day-to-day implementation. ("Many Problems with Animal Welfare" brockwayhall.blogspot.com September 1, 2009)

Ken Hopes (1959- )
American personal trainer and rock-climbing-wall instructor

One's pleasure at the expense of another is a poor equation for life. <>
I recently saw the new film *The Great Debaters,*... based on the true story of the debating team at Wiley College, an unheralded black school in Texas, which went undefeated and eventually gained the attention of the nation. Set in 1935, racial inequality was a central theme. The film included the aftermath of a horrible lynching. Whenever I see such depictions I can't help but draw the powerful parallels between such injustices toward humans and today's ongoing injustices toward animals. It is so politically incorrect to show the slightest hint of racism today, and I thank goodness for humanity's capacity for moral progress that we've made such huge strides in the past century
with the emancipation of women and of "people of color."
Against this backdrop,
the quest for animal rights is both exciting and frustrating.
Exciting because there is such a movement afoot.
Frustrating because so few embrace it,
and frustrating that good, decent people
have absolutely no clue to its moral legitimacy or urgency.
So profound is this moral blind-spot
that it sometimes feels to me that I live in a world of zombies.
* * *
That decent, law-abiding and intelligent people
are still buying fur, shooting animals and eating babies
says much about humankind's moral fickleness.
The majority still finds it acceptable to treat animals
as if they were so many blocks of wood.
Or, to be more precise, they don't find
abject animal suffering acceptable,
because they are either too ignorant or too complacent
to do anything personal about it.
("Racism by Any Other Name"
jonathanbalcombe.blogspot.com January 2, 2008)
<>
I view deliberately harming animals in experiments
as a failure of empathy, fueled by profit,
and perpetuated by arrogance.
Jonathan Balcombe, Ph.D. (1959- )
British-American biologist, ethologist, author
Senior research scientist, PCRM
Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine
.................

In a world of massive violence and suffering,
why not take whatever steps we can
to become more compassionate, more nonviolent,
more faithful to the peacemaking Christ?
Why not become a vegetarian,
for the love of God and all God's creatures?
Your health will benefit.
The environment will be better off.
Animals will suffer less.
And your spirituality will deepen and mature.
The only reasons to keep eating meat
are selfishness and gluttony,
which are not exactly Christian ideals.
We can all do better than that.
<>
Nonviolence begins with the insight that all life is sacred, that all human beings are children of the God of peace, and that as God’s children we should never hurt or kill another human being.

* * *

Nonviolence invites us, also, to reevaluate the way we treat animals in our society. While we resist violence, injustice and war, and while we practice nonviolence, seek peace, and struggle for justice for the poor, we are also invited to break down the species barrier, extending our belief in Christian compassion to the animal kingdom by, among other things, adopting a vegetarian diet.

* * *

I am convinced that society will look back on human arrogance and cruelty toward other animals with the same horror and disbelief that we presently reserve for atrocities committed against human beings.

(Christianity and Vegetarianism: Pursuing the Nonviolence of Jesus jesusveg.com)

Father John Dear, S.J. (1959- )
American Jesuit priest, writer, lecturer, peace activist

**********
I had been very troubled by callousness towards animals in a Cleveland lab where, as a young pre-med, I volunteered in high school. Believing the research was "necessary," I had considered it morally acceptable. Then, on January 17, 1979, I read an article on animal rights in the New York Times Magazine by Patricia Curtis. She quoted Tom Regan, who asked, "If humans were dominated by aliens who were superior to us in any attribute that we considered morally relevant, such as intelligence, communication ability, and capacity for altruism, would they not be as justified in eating and experimenting on us as we believe we are justified in doing these things to animals?" And I said to myself, "Of course." We don't do these things because they are right; we do them because we can get away with it. (letter to the editor, Satya, June/July 2007)

Because most forms of animal abuse have become institutionalized and mechanized, and because wealthy societies can afford more luxuries like meat and furs, it is likely that no society has ever caused more animal suffering and death than the United States does today. (Christianity and Violence: Animal Issues: Part 2 of 3, May 13, 2007)

I cannot imagine that a God of love approves of humankind's massive abuse of God's creatures. (Christianity and Violence: Animal Issues: Part 3 of 3, May 20, 2007)

It appears that many Christians utilize dubious, self-serving interpretations of the Bible to justify their actions. These interpretations may help account for widespread Christian endorsement of institutions that abuse innocent individuals, such as human enslavement in the past and factory farming today. (Good News for All Creation: Vegetarianism as Christian Stewardship co-authored by Nathan Braun © 2004)

The Hebrew Scriptures describe peaceful, harmonious coexistence throughout God's Creation as an ideal. There was no violence in the Garden of Eden, and Isaiah 11:6-9 prophesied a return to this harmonious state. Isaiah foresaw a time in which "they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation,

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neither shall they learn war any more" (Isaiah 2:4).
As Christianity evolved from a movement to reform Judaism into a distinct religion, it developed a hierarchical establishment that has sometimes lost sight of Jesus' ministry. Those with power have been tempted to defend their own privileged positions and other interests rather than to dedicate themselves to participate with Christ in healing a broken world.
Churches serve important religious and social functions, but there is always the danger that churches, like all institutions, can participate in scapegoating violence. * * *
Ironically, many Christian communities have yielded to the temptation to use scapegoating as the glue that holds them together. With the rise of humanism, it has become increasingly difficult to scapegoat people, but churches continue to scapegoat animals. Many churches have emphasized humankind's importance, not by pointing out that we are part of a grand Creation that God loves, but by contrasting humans with animals. I think this is one reason that, in general, the churches have not been animal-friendly. Christian Vegetarian Association members have found that churches generally resist Christian education programs that aim to expose the massive suffering of billions of animals annually on factory farms; many churches celebrate killing animals with social events like "pig-roasts"; and some churches even sponsor "Christian hunting clubs."
As Christians, we are called to witness for Christ, and this includes speaking up on behalf of voiceless victims, human and animal.
A fundamental component of being a witness is recognizing when individuals are being victimized. The next task is to challenge the powers and principalities, and this can be dangerous.
("Peacemaking: Violence and the Churches" #131 of Christianity and the Problem of Human Violence series on christianveg.com)
Stephen R. Kaufman, M.D., Ph.D. (1959- )
American author
Professor of research in ophthalmology
Chairman, Christian Vegetarian Association
Advisor, Oxford Centre for Animal Ethics

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Nobody can come up with a good argument for eating animals—nobody can. People as some kind of a joke say, "Well, it's tasty," but it's only tasty once you garnish it and you put salt and pepper, and you cook it, and you have to do 300 things to it to disguise its true taste. If you put garnishes on a chair or fabric, it would probably taste quite nice.

Morrissey (1959- )
Irish songwriter and singer

END OF CHAPTER 19. 1955-1959 BIRTHDATES
Photo Credits for Chapter 19. 1955-1959 Birthdates

P 1 WILD TURKEYS IN THE BACKYARD (*Meleagris gallopavo*)
Location: Ottawa County, Michigan, U.S.A.
Photo by John Dykstra/Flickr and © John Dykstra Photography
Photo seen here: www.flickr.com/photos/23630570@N03/2362236010
Photostream: www.flickr.com/photos/23630570@N03
Photographer's website: www.johndykstraphotography.com

P 1 WILD TURKEY FEATHER FOUND IN BACKYARD (*Meleagris gallopavo*)
Photo by Belinda Recio

P 4 "THIS LITTLE PIGGY" (*Sus scrofa domesticus*)
Location: Gold Country Fair, Auburn, Placer County, California, U.S.A.
Mixed Media on ArtBoard: ink/watercolor/pencil on cold-pressed watercolor panel
Illustration by Ann Ranlett/© Art by Ann Ranlett
Artwork seen here: http://annran.blogspot.com/2010/03/this-little-piggy.html
and here: www.annran.com/pages/other/tp.html
Artist's website: www.annran.com

P 9 GREEN MORAY EEL (*Gymnothorax prasinus*)
Location: Statis Rock, Forster, New South Wales, Australia
Photo © 2007 by Richard Ling/Flickr (Creative Commons 2.0 license)
Photo seen here: www.flickr.com/photos/rling/1971384308
Photostream: www.flickr.com/photos/rling
Photographer's website: www.rling.com

P 11 RARE, PROTECTED NEW ENGLAND TREE FROG (*Litoria subglandulosa*)
Location: Ebor, New South Wales, Australia
Photo by Evan — LiquidGhoul/Wikipedia User (Creative Commons 3.0 license)
Photo seen here: en.wikipedia/New_England_Tree_Frog

P 14 HOLSTEIN HEARTS: TENDER! (*Bos taurus*)
Location: Ballinakill, Ireland
Photo by Ilja Klutman — Ilja/Flickr (Creative Commons License 2.0)
Photo seen here: www.flickr.com/photos/ilja/537825412
Photostream: www.flickr.com/photos/ilja

P 17 "TIME FOR SUPPER?"—CHAROLAIS STEER (*Bos taurus*)
Location: Trelleborg, Sweden
Photo by Christel — Escape_to_Christel/Flickr (Creative Commons 2.0 license)
Photo seen here: www.flickr.com/photos/78208664@N00/218596680
Photostream: www.flickr.com/photos/78208664@N00

P 20 PIGLETS BURROW IN STRAW (*Sus scrofa domesticus*)
Location: Sherwood Forest Farm Park, Nottinghamshire, England, U.K.
Photo by Dave — DaveKav/Flickr (Creative Commons 2.0 license)
Photo seen here: www.flickr.com/photos/d-kav/3481844519
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(Photo Credits continued on page 72)
(PHOTO CREDITS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 71)

P 22 WOOD MOUSE DINES ON BERRIES (*Apodemus sylvaticus*)
Location: Wicklow, Ireland
Photo by sam2cents/Flickr
Photo seen here: www.flickr.com/photos/sam2cents/3926265520
Photostream: www.flickr.com/photos/sam2cents

P 25 "UNDERESTIMATED THE POWER OF THE HAIR DRYER HIGH SETTING"
TANZANIA'S AFRICAN PYGMY FALCON (*Polihierax semitorquatus*)
Location: National Zoo, Washington, District of Columbia, U.S.A.
Photo by Steve Hersey — stevehdc/Flickr (Creative Commons 2.0 license)
Photo seen here: www.flickr.com/photos/sherseydc/3208103436
Photostream: www.flickr.com/photos/sherseydc

P 30 HONEYBEE EXTRACTS NECTAR FROM ASTER (*Apis mellifera*)
Location: Nebraska, U.S.A.
Photo by John Severns — Severnjc/Wikipedia User (Public Domain photo)
Photo seen here: en.wikipedia.org/European_honey_bee_extracts_nectar

P 35 THE ENTRY OF THE ANIMALS INTO NOAH'S ARK (1613)
Oil painting by Jan Brueghel the Elder (1568-1625) of Brussels, Belgium
(Public Domain photo)
Photo seen here: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jan_Brueghel_the_Elder

P 36 THE PEACEABLE KINGDOM WITH QUAKERS BEARING BANNERS (c. 1835)
Oil Painting by Edward Hicks (1780-1849) of Bucks County, Pennsylvania
Artwork seen here: http://store.encore-editions.com/artist/edwardhicks.html
Image used with permission of www.encore-editions.com

P 40 THE STORY OF THE THREE LITTLE PIGS (*Sus scrofa domesticus*)
Produced by Project Gutenberg EBook (Public Domain text and images)
Author: Unknown / Illustrator: L. Leslie Brooke / Publisher: Frederick Warne & Co.
Artwork seen here: http://www.gutenberg.org/files/18155/18155-h/18155-h.htm

P 43 FOUR WILD ONES (*Equus ferus caballus*)
Location: Sand Wash Basin HMA, Colorado, U.S.A.
Photo by Bob Schillereff/© Bob Schillereff Photography, Washington, U.S.A.
Photo seen here: www.bobschillereff.com/p797930665/h34fb0f91#h34fb0f91
Photographer's website: www.bobschillereff.com

P 48 SHILO, A RESCUED ARABIAN HORSE (*Equus caballus*)
Photo by Laura Moretti (used with permission)
Photographer's website: www.animalsvoice.com

P 52 ASIAN ELEPHANT INMATE (*Elephas maximus*)
Location: A penitentiary (a.k.a. zoo) anywhere in the world
Illustration by cartoonist Dan Piraro
Used with the permission of Dan Piraro, whose comic strip "Bizarro" is syndicated by King Features in 350 markets worldwide
Photo of cartoon here: bizarrocomic.blogspot.com
Cartoonist's website: www.bizarro.com

( PHOTO CREDITS CONTINUED ON PAGE 73)
(PHOTO CREDITS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 72)

P 54 "ANDY"—ADOPTED IN 2003 AS A PUPPY (*Canis lupus familiaris*)
Location: Greensboro, North Carolina, U.S.A.
Photo by Valerie Abbott — ucumari/Flickr (Creative Commons 2.0 license)
Photo seen here: [www.flickr.com/photos/ucumari/3184927050](http://www.flickr.com/photos/ucumari/3184927050)
Photostream: [www.flickr.com/photos/ucumari](http://www.flickr.com/photos/ucumari)

P 58 "HAIR GETS IN YOUR EYES"—SCOTTISH HIGHLAND STEER (*Bos taurus*)
Photo by Vertigogen/Flickr (Creative Commons 2.0 license)
Photo seen here: [www.flickr.com/photos/vertigogen/1526905976](http://www.flickr.com/photos/vertigogen/1526905976)
Photographer's website: [www.wpjf.org.uk](http://www.wpjf.org.uk)

P 58 "AT THE CANAL"—GRADUS, AN AIRDALE DOG (*Canis lupus familiaris*)
Location: Grand Canal, County Laois, Ireland, U.K.
Photo by Ilja Klutman — Ilja/Flickr (Creative Commons 2.0 license)
Photo seen here: [www.flickr.com/photos/ilja/526785958](http://www.flickr.com/photos/ilja/526785958)
Photostream: [www.flickr.com/photos/ilja](http://www.flickr.com/photos/ilja)
Photographer's website: [www.klutman.com](http://www.klutman.com)

P 67 ICELANDIC HORSE—COZY IN FRIGID TEMPS & SNOW (*Equus caballus*)
Location: near Krýsuvík, Iceland
Photo by Andreas Tille — Tillea/Wikimedia User (Creative Commons 3.0 license)
Photo seen here: [commons.wikimedia.org/IcelandicHorseInWinter](http://commons.wikimedia.org/IcelandicHorseInWinter)

P 70 ROCKY MOUNTAIN ELK COW & CALF EXCHANGE LOVE (*Cervus canadensis nelsoni*)
Location: Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming, U.S.A.
Photos by Bob Schillereff/© Bob Schillereff Photography, Washington, U.S.A.
Photo (top) seen here: [www.bobschillereff.com/p979878790/h10ce6900#h10ce6900](http://www.bobschillereff.com/p979878790/h10ce6900#h10ce6900)
Photo (bottom) seen here: [www.bobschillereff.com/p979878790/hdceec48#hdceec48](http://www.bobschillereff.com/p979878790/hdceec48#hdceec48)
Photographer's website: [www.bobschillereff.com](http://www.bobschillereff.com)

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