

**'BE A VEGAN OR JUST DRESS LIKE ONE': ANIMAL LIBERATION IN POPULAR
FEMINIST MEDIA**

by

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B.A., The University of Nevada Las Vegas, 2008

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE COLLEGE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

(Interdisciplinary Studies)

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

(Okanagan)

August 2016

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Abstract

Contemporary feminist media, such as *Bust Magazine*, participate in spreading the messages of progressive social movements at the street level by packaging easily digestible articles with glossy photos and celebrity covers. The inclusion of vegan and animal activist messages represents a long history of feminist media including animal activist topics throughout feminist history. Further, alternative media have the potential to foster counterpublics and play a role in the development of social movements. This textual analysis examines the way discourses of veganism and animal activism are represented in *Bust's* online media content and how *Bust* links veganism and animal activism to feminism. This analysis found that *Bust* represents animal activism in three ways: (1) By linking veganism to ethical consumerism; (2) By linking veganism and animal activism to celebrity and style; (3) By commenting on current events related to veganism or animal activism. Applying ecofeminist and critical animal studies theories, this research explores the potential and limitations of *Bust's* subcultural appeal and commodity activism approach to animal advocacy. *Bust's* subcultural "hipster" appeal and feminist politics make it an interesting site to explore the potential of feminist media to spread intersectional social justice messages that include nonhuman animals to an audience already primed for political protest by way of their feminist identities. This analysis finds, however, that *Bust's* exclusion of diverse vegan perspective and ambivalent stance on animal activism compromises their feminist politics.

Acknowledgements

I offer my immense appreciation to the faculty, staff (especially Shauna Oddleifson), and students in Creative and Critical Studies who generously supported me and my work in myriad ways throughout the course of this research. I owe particular thanks to my supervisor Dr. Jodey Castricano for welcoming me into the program, inspiring bravery in my writing, and always reminding me that I was in the right place when I let doubt creep in. I also extend enormous thank yous to my committee members: Dr. Constance Crompton and Dr. Ilya Parkins. Dr. Crompton's generosity and enthusiasm for my project directly resulted in the skills and texts I needed to see it through. The knowledge Dr. Parkins has shared with me has led me in a new direction in research--without which I may have just have stalled out at this point. I would also like extend my gratitude to Dr. Ruthann Lee whose conversation and support during the past two years has been invaluable.

A loud and obnoxious thanks to the many friends I made in Kelowna. Without the warmth I received from them, I would surely have frozen to death by now. Thanks also to all those who loved and encouraged me before I arrived here for without them I would have never thought to try at all. A final thanks to my four-legged sister and roommate, Sitka. She's heard it all.

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	III
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	IV
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS.....	5
CHAPTER 2 ECOFEMINISM, CRITICAL ANIMAL AND VEGAN STUDIES	7
CHAPTER 3 ECOFEMINIST CONNECTIONS IN FEMINIST MEDIA: A BRIEF SURVEY	14
BRITISH ANTIVIVISECTIONISTS AND VEGETARIAN SUFFRAGETTES	15
A DIFFERENT TACTIC: AMERICAN ANTIVIVISECTION AND FEMINISM	18
THE SECOND WAVE: REPRESENTATIONS OF THE FEMINIST VEGETARIAN CONNECTION	21
THIRD WAVE: CONNECTIONS THROUGH CONSUMPTION	25
CHAPTER 4 VEGANISM IN THE WEB PAGES OF <i>BUST</i>	31
<i>BUST</i> 's FEMINISM.....	35
HIPSTER FEMINISM	38
METHOD	42
'GET HIP TO ANIMALS AND GET HIP DOING IT': VEGANISM AS SUBCULTURAL IDENTITY PRAXIS.....	45
<i>Vegan as Ethical</i>	46
<i>Vegan as Hip</i>	51
<i>Vegan as Feminist</i>	53
CHAPTER 5 PROGRESS AND PITFALLS.....	58
COMMODITY ACTIVISM AND THE IMPORTANCE OF SUBCULTURAL COUNTERPUBLICS FOR SOCIAL MOVEMENTS ...	61
VEGAN COMMODITY ACTIVISM IN <i>BUST</i> : INTENTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS	64
<i>BUST</i> FEMINISM AND THE HUMANE MYTH.....	70
CHAPTER 6 RADICAL FEMINIST MEDIA, MOVING FROM SYMPATHY TO EMPATHY, AND AN EPISTEMOLOGICAL REVOLUTION.....	74
REFERENCES	83

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

One of the strengths of feminist thought is that it is never 'just' about women: it is a critical discourse that tends to ask uncomfortable questions about everything.

–Lynda Birke, “Exploring Boundaries: Feminism, Animals, and Science”

The blind spot of both Rudy and Friend’s thought is extending core issues of feminism, gay, and queer rights (such as control of one’s own reproductive life and sexual choices) to only human animals. However, as Carol Adams has taken great pains to point out, feminism should not simply end at the species divide. Nor, for that matter, should gay, lesbian, or queer rights.

--Vasile Stanescu, “Why ‘Loving’ Animals is Not Enough: A Response to Kathy Rudy, Locavorism, and the Marketing of ‘Humane’ Meat”

Feminist media, such as *Bust* magazine, participate in spreading the messages of progressive social movements at the street level by packaging easily digestible articles with glossy photos and celebrity covers. Suzy D’Enbeau found that *Bust* “link[s] feminism with other social change movements and reinforce[s] a feminist political agenda”¹ through the use of paid advertisements (which fund the magazine). Barbara Marshall has noted that alternative media with a social change agenda plays a role in facilitating a revitalized public sphere.² By analyzing a popular feminist media outlet like *Bust*, this project seeks to explore how contemporary popular feminist media fosters a new politics of consumption as a way to link feminism with animal activism. Focusing on how this link is currently situated between a subcultural counterpublic and rising in mainstream popular culture with the trope of the “hipster,” I engage in an analysis of the representation of veganism

¹ Suzy D’Enbeau, “Sex, feminism, and advertising: The Politics of Advertising Feminism in A Competitive Marketplace,” *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 35.1 (2011): 61.

² Barbara L. Marshall, “Communication as Politics: Feminist Print Media in English Canada,” *Women’s Studies International Forum* 18.4 (1995): 463.

and animal activist topics, within contemporary popular feminism, using *Bust's* online media content as a case study. Using a popular feminist media organization as a case study allows for a discussion of where animal activism is currently situated in popular feminism and the implications of the discourses being made available in feminist media. As such, a discussion of the impact of consumer-capitalism on feminism, though significant in the context of *Bust*, is outside the scope of this project. Similarly, this thesis avoids declarations of whether *Bust's* politics are radical or conservative—instead examining the potential of *Bust's* impact on counterpublics in the current consumer-capitalist system. In *Bust*, animal activism is primarily linked to “ethical” consumerism resulting in animal activist discourse being presented as a form of commodity activism. Ultimately, the promotion of “ethical” consumerism in *Bust's* online content is representative of how subcultural groups attempt to navigate between capitalism and leftist politics in publics and counterpublics. For *Bust*, an explicitly feminist magazine, this led to problematic “race-neutral” representations of veganism and the conflation of animal activism with the humane meat movement, which undermines links between feminist and animal liberation politics at a deeper level.

This thesis seeks to contribute to bridge-building between feminist media studies and critical animal studies. While vegan ecofeminists have offered surveys of the history of inclusion of the nonhuman in feminist-made media³ and critical animal studies (CAS) scholars have begun to look at representations of vegans and of

³ See Leneman 1997; Gaardner 2011; and Adams and Gruen 2014, for examples.

nonhuman animals in various media,⁴ there remains a gap when it comes to researching where the nonhuman signifies in contemporary feminism and feminist media. Further, with contemporary feminist media gaining ground in popular culture, it is key to consider the relationship between alternative media and social movements as they relate to discourses of both feminism and veganism rising in popular culture. This section offers an introduction to the theories that inform my intentions with this research, including the feminist-vegan connection and, specifically, my underlying interest in the question, as critical animal studies scholar Vasile Stanescu provocatively asks, Can you be feminist without being vegan?⁵

First, I would like to address my understanding of feminism as a movement towards justice for all oppressed groups, predicated originally on the notion of gender inequality, but that now, largely in response to criticism from within the feminist movement, encompasses a wider range of struggles for justice, including oppression in regards to race, ability, colonialism, class, and the intersections of these elements with gender and each other. The underlying theories that inform my understanding and my research are sensitive to the ways gender oppression is interconnected with and born of the same logics of domination as racialized, classed, and other oppressions. The feminist media that I analyze primarily refer to feminism and gendered oppression while incorporating content on other issues from feminist perspectives, as well. I offer this point not as an excuse for a lack of

⁴ See Cole and Morgan 2011; Packwood Freeman 2014; Packwood Freeman and Tulloch 2013, for examples.

⁵ Vasile Stanescu, "Why 'Loving' Animals Is Not Enough: A Response to Kathy Rudy, Locavorism, and The Marketing of "Humane" Meat," *The Journal of American Culture* 36.2 (2013).

intersectionality, but to preface this work as an analysis of feminism and speciesism, rather than merely an analysis of gender and species—thus, this work seeks to employ a feminism that aims to interrogate and dismantle, not only gendered but all forms of oppression, including speciesism. To be clear, speciesism is a concept coined by psychologist Richard Ryder in 1970 and later picked up by philosopher Peter Singer and the animal rights movement.⁶ The term refers to humans' assumption of their own importance over nonhuman animals as well as to the arbitrary hierarchy assigned to different species of nonhumans (e.g. considering dogs companions and chickens food) in a culture of what Melanie Joy calls “carnism.”⁷ Ryder's main argument purports that species membership has no moral significance and should not be employed to justify human claims to supremacy over and exploitation of animals from animal agriculture to vivisection and animal testing. This research is informed by and aligns with Ryder's notion. More narrowly, the theoretical grounding for my interest in the connection between feminism and animal liberation is built on the work of vegan ecofeminists such as Lori Gruen and patrice jones, and CAS scholars such as Claire Jean Kim and Maneesha Deckha. As such, the theoretical underpinning of my analysis of feminist media is one of an anti-racist, vegan feminist perspective. Further, the issues teased out here (discourses of vegan feminist identities, interlocked oppressions, and the commodification of social justice movements) are directly tied to histories of colonialism and capitalism—an

⁶ Richard Ryder, “Speciesism,” in *Encyclopedia of Animal Rights and Animal Welfare*, ed. Marc Bekoff and Carron A. Meaney (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1998), 320.; Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation*, 2nd ed. (New York, N.Y: New York Review of Books, 1990).

⁷ Melanie Joy, *Why We Love Dogs, Eat Pigs, and Wear Cows: An Introduction to Carnism*, (San Francisco: Conari Press, 2010).

understanding that also informs my analysis from ecofeminist and CAS perspectives.

Outline of Chapters

My next chapter, “Ecofeminism, Critical Animal and Vegan Studies” offers a review of the literature in the three fields in which my underlying questions arise. This chapter serves to lay out explicitly the connections between feminism and animal liberation and situates my approach within these fields. In chapter three, “Ecofeminist Connections in Feminist Media: A Brief Survey,” I explore examples of feminist media that include animal activist topics through three periods of feminist history. Here, I present examples from the history of feminist media in brief exploration of the different ways feminist and animal liberation movements have intersected and have been represented in media from the nineteenth century through to the present. This survey is meant to illustrate a thread through feminist media that represents the significant and continual inclusion of nonhuman animals—indicative of a longstanding relationship between feminist and animal activist movements. That survey leads to contemporary feminist media and chapter four, “Veganism in the Pages of *Bust*”, offers the results of a rhetorical analysis of *Bust*’s online media content (i.e. blog posts) and examines exactly how *Bust* includes veganism and animal activism in its online content. Further, in this chapter I explore how veganism and animal activism are tied to *Bust*’s third-wave feminist and subcultural (hipster) aesthetic and provide examples of my observations. The following chapter, “Progress and Pitfalls,” discusses the findings of my rhetorical analysis and situates them in the context of feminist media, commodity activism, and

ecofeminist and critical animal studies theories. First, I situate *Bust's* representation of veganism and animal activism within the greater context of popular feminism and alternative media's role in fostering political protest in the public sphere. I then critically analyze the observations revealed through my close reading of *Bust's* online content and discuss the positives and negatives of *Bust's* commodity activism for the vegan feminist movement. Following that, I apply ecofeminist and critical animal studies theories to interrogate *Bust's* inconsistencies with regards to animal activism and the implications for feminism. The final chapter and conclusion to this thesis invokes vegan feminist media and argues the importance of intersectional representations of feminism that includes nonhuman animals for the social justice project as a whole.

CHAPTER 2 ECOFEMINISM, CRITICAL ANIMAL AND VEGAN STUDIES

The underlying theories guiding this thesis are drawn from ecofeminism, critical animal and vegan studies. Though rooted in early historical feminist thought, vegan ecofeminism gained momentum in the nineties with the scholarship of Carol J. Adams, Josephine Donovan, Greta Gaard, Marti Kheel, and others.⁸ Following ecofeminism's lead on making explicit the connections between the oppression of women and nature, these scholars began publishing on the connections between the oppression of women and nonhuman animals. Developing a vegetarian-feminist critical theory,⁹ Adams makes explicit the links between masculinity, eating meat, and the objectification of women in her foundational text *The Sexual Politics of Meat*. Further, she introduces the concept of the "absent referent" to explain how nonhuman animal bodies, like women's bodies in patriarchal culture, are materially and linguistically objectified and fragmented to the point, in the case of animals, of being unrecognizable by the time they are on the dinner table.¹⁰ Adams details the ways that the reproductive capabilities of female animals are exploited by animal agriculture and links this to a feminist agenda. Eventually, Adams and other vegan ecofeminists moved from making connections between objects of oppression to

⁸ Greta Gaard, "Vegetarian Ecofeminism: A Review Essay," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 23.3 (2002): 118.

⁹ Language has evolved overtime from "vegetarian" to "vegan," but as explained in Adams' 20th Anniversary Edition of *The Sexual Politics of Meat*, "vegetarian" in animal liberation texts written in the nineties is meant to signify the rejection of consuming any animal products, including eggs and dairy. Further, this thesis does not consider vegetarian diets as ethical choices in line with the vegan feminist ideas. Vegetarian diets are still deeply complicit in exploitation; eggs and dairy require the gendered exploitation of the reproductive capabilities of female animals.

¹⁰ Carol J. Adams, "Why feminist-vegan now?" *Feminism & Psychology* 20.3 (2010): 304.

structures that oppress.¹¹ Ecofeminist thought offers critiques of Cartesian dualism, which is largely credited for the ingrained dichotomies between nature/culture, mind/body, and human/nonhuman in Western thought. With their feminist critiques of Cartesian dualism, ecofeminists were calling for feminism as a whole to consider the plight of nonhuman animals as *a feminist issue* arguing that the human/nonhuman binary in Western thought is what anchors women to subhuman status by virtue of being aligned with animals who lack reason.¹² This argument insists that in order to get at the root of oppression, feminists must consider species in their analyses.

Early ecofeminism was largely marginalized from feminist thought due to charges of essentialism (detailed further in the following chapter), but is experiencing a recent renaissance.¹³ Alongside this renewal in ecofeminist scholarship has been the rise of critical animal studies. Critical animal studies strives to build a radical and intersectional movement towards animal liberation from theory to direct action.¹⁴ Many scholars who theorize in the area of critical animal studies explore the animal connection with other axes of oppression calling for deeper intersectional thought

¹¹ Gaard, "Vegetarian Ecofeminism: A Review Essay," 118.

¹² See Gaard 1993; Plumwood 1993; Adams 1994; Adams and Donovan 1995, to start.

¹³ Carol J. Adams and Lori Gruen, "Groundwork," in *Ecofeminism: Feminist Intersections with Other Animals and The Earth*, ed. Carol J. Adams and Lori Gruen (New York: Bloomsbury, 2014), 7.

¹⁴ Anthony Nocella et al., introduction to *Defining Critical Animal Studies*, ed. Anthony Nocella et al., (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2014), x.

with regards to race,¹⁵ culture/colonialism,¹⁶ ability,¹⁷ and class.¹⁸ Additionally, critical animal studies scholars have called to other disciplines to consider the nonhuman animal in their work.¹⁹ Many ecofeminists did historically include intersections of other axes of oppression in their analyses, but the vast majority centered upon gender.²⁰ Ecofeminists have responded and continue to respond to these criticisms as reflected in contemporary ecofeminist research.²¹ Postcolonial critical animal studies scholars such as A. Breeze Harper, Maneesha Deckha and activists Aph and Syl Ko theorize the nonhuman in ways that deconstruct and decolonize Eurocentric logics of white, anthropocentric supremacy. Their scholarship reveals how legacies of colonialism are also deeply invested in the construction of the human/nonhuman binary in ways that provide the anchor for racism and white supremacy—a binary that works to aligns racialized groups with animals in an effort to justify their oppression by virtue of their subhuman status.²² Marjorie Spiegel in *The Dreaded Comparison* illustrates how the technologies of chattel slavery in pre-civil war era United States resemble and are born of the same logics of oppression

¹⁵ See Harper 2011.

¹⁶ See Deckha 2012.

¹⁷ See Taylor 2011.

¹⁸ See Theirman 2010.

¹⁹ See Castricano 2008 and Castricano and Corman 2016 (forthcoming), for examples—these books specifically call to cultural studies' exclusion of what Derrida calls "the question of the animal."

²⁰ Maneesha Deckha, "Toward a Postcolonial, Posthumanist Feminist Theory: Centralizing Race and Culture in Feminist Work on Nonhuman Animals," *Hypatia* 27.3 (2012): 529.

²¹ See Adams and Gruen 2014.

²² See Deckha 2006 and 2008; Ko 2016, Castricano and Corman 2016 (forthcoming), for examples.

that nonhuman animals continue to face today.²³ Scholars such as Margaret Robinson and Billy-Ray Belcourt explore the human/nonhuman relationship and make calls to decolonial activists to consider the nonhuman and to ecofeminist and CAS scholars to consider indigeneity and colonialism in their work on animal activism.²⁴

Interest in veganism has grown recently in both academic thought and in popular culture. Harper takes a critical race approach to veganism with research on neoliberal whiteness and vegan consumption. Her theories are particularly useful for my research on representations of veganism in feminist media. Harper writes of a post-racial animal liberation movement:

My critique is that there are those (white and non-white) who believe "race is a feeble matter" in animal rights activism. Such people are producing and practicing their own "post-racial" epistemologies and praxis of AR/VEG "cruelty free ethics." Simultaneously, such "post-racial" approaches ignore dependence on the exploited labor of non-white racialized minorities living outside of the USA, who are producing materials for vegan products.²⁵

Harper interrogates the notion that there is only one 'ethical' way to be vegan and explores the ways in which the vegan praxis of black women is tied first to "decolonizing their bodies from the legacies of racialized colonialism, such as

²³ Marjorie Spiegel, *The Dreaded Comparison: Human and Animal Slavery*, rev. & expand ed. (New York: Mirror Books, 1996).

²⁴ Margaret Robinson, "Animal Personhood in Mi'kmaq Perspective," *Societies* 4.4 (2014); Billy-Ray Belcourt, "Animal Bodies, Colonial Subjects": (Re)locating Animality in Decolonial Thought," *Societies* 5.1 (2015).

²⁵ Breeze Harper, "Race as a 'Feeble Matter' in Veganism: Interrogating Whiteness, Geopolitical Privilege, and Consumption Philosophy of 'Cruelty-Free' Products," *Journal for Critical Animal Studies*, Volume VIII.3, 2010, 18.

institutional and structural racism”²⁶ rather than animal liberation. With the *Sistah Vegan Project*, Harper counters mainstream vegan epistemologies and narratives of post-racial consumption and argues that because, collectively, black people are still “dealing with human rights to health and food security,”²⁷ black vegans prioritize a race-conscious health motive rather than an animal liberation motive. She writes: “This is not to say that there are no black people who are convinced to go vegan after reading about animal rights; for those who do, many still have a race-conscious and African American health-oriented approach to how they engage in animal rights.”²⁸

Laura Wright brings Harper’s theories into conversation with ecofeminism in her recent book, *Vegan Studies*.²⁹ Wright is proposing to establish the field of vegan studies as a discipline that is “a product of the discourse of vegan representation as situated within and outside of extant conceptions of animal studies, animal welfare/rights/liberation, and ecofeminism.”³⁰ In an effort to tease out the myriad manifestations of vegan identity and explicate the complex histories and trajectories

²⁶ Breeze Harper, “Going Beyond the Normative White ‘Post-Racial’ Vegan Epistemology,” in *Taking Food Public: Redefining Foodways in a Changing World*, ed. Psyche A. Williams-Forsson and Carole Counihan (New York: Routledge, 2012), 163.

²⁷ Harper, “Going Beyond,” 163.

²⁸ Harper, “Going Beyond,” 163.

²⁹ Forthcoming publication *Critical Perspectives on Veganism* (Palgrave Macmillan 2016), edited by CAS scholars Castricano and Simonsen, contributes further to the field of vegan studies. Concerned with the recent rise of veganism in mainstream discourse, this book “asks whether the normalization of veganism strengthens or detracts from the radical impetus of its politics” in a collection of essays (as quoted on the Palgrave site). This thesis asks questions that align with the rise of vegan studies in academic thought.

³⁰ Laura Wright, *The Vegan Studies Project: Food, Animals, and Gender in the Age of Terror*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2015), 2.

of both the concept and practice, Wright puts Harper's research on Black women's vegan identities into conversation with Greta Gaard's queer ecofeminism.³¹ This, she concludes, helps to reconcile the decolonial politics of vegans of color and animal liberation politics. She writes:

If I push Gaard's queer ecofeminism into the space of Harper's explication of black female vegan identity, it becomes impossible not to see decolonization and animal liberation as necessarily linked. Queering vegan studies, therefore, might allow us to make a space for veganism to exist at once as multiple things: as an orientation, as a socially conscious choice, and as a decision based on a politics of health-based racial decolonization.³²

By looking forward to an ecofeminist and vegan praxis that rejects binaries, fixed boundaries, and sees the multivalent potential in veganism, Wright, following Harper and Gaard, finds potential for veganism to be meaningful and still revolutionary, for both humans and non, in its various and interlocked forms of political praxis.

Another theory that informs this work is psychologist and public speaker Melanie Joy's concept of carnism. Carnism, she poses, refers to the invisible belief system that enables humans to consume animals the way that we do (i.e. upholding some species as companions and others as objects to be violently exploited). Like Adams' process of the absent referent, Joy explains that it is a gap in consciousness that allows for us to have inconsistent relationships with nonhuman animals, i.e. loving some and eating others. Joy explains how this gap in consciousness becomes internalized to the point of psychic numbing and invisibility.³³ Similarly,

³¹ Greta Gaard, "Toward A Queer Ecofeminism," *Hypatia* 12.1 (1997): 114-37.

³² Wright, *The Vegan Studies Project*, 10.

³³ Joy, *Why We Love Dogs, Eat Pigs, and Wear Cows*, 18.

media scholar, Carrie Packwood Freeman, builds on Joy's theory and coins the term "carnonormativity" to identify how speciesism and, thus, carnism, is the assumed norm. She points out that across media, and similar to heterosexuality, humans are assumed always already to be carnists unless identified otherwise.³⁴ These key terms and theories help to identify and analyze representations of veganism as they play out in the publics that popular feminist media occupies.

Following vegan ecofeminists and critical animal studies scholars, my intentions with this research are to consider where and how veganism and animal activism signify in contemporary feminism via popular feminist magazine, *Bust*, as a case study. Second, I wish to consider what the implications of this representation are for both the feminist and animal liberation movements, as well as the social justice project as a whole. By taking a look at the history of feminist media, we can see how some feminists have long considered humans' fraught relationship with nonhumans as a crucial component of feminism and the social justice project. By using *Bust* as a case study, I hope to uncover how popular feminist media, for better or for worse, is currently contributing to these conversations in the public sphere.

³⁴ Carrie Packwood Freeman, "Lisa and Phoebe, Lone Vegetarian Icons: At Odds with Television's Carnonormativity," in *How Television Shapes Our Worldview: Media Representations of Social Trends and Change*, ed. Macey, Deborah A., Kathleen M. Ryan, and Noah J. Springer (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2014), 197.

CHAPTER 3 ECOFEMINIST CONNECTIONS IN FEMINIST MEDIA: A BRIEF SURVEY

The links between animal liberation and feminist movements have long developed side by side, often intersecting at various points in movement history. Perhaps the strongest connection between them is the long history of women holding the majority space in both movements. Many scholars have noted the connection between the antivivisection movements of the 19th century and suffrage³⁵ and the connection between early feminist activists and vegetarianism.³⁶ As these scholars have documented, women have challenged notions of the treatment of animals as early as the seventeenth century—most noted when Margaret Cavendish challenged Descartes' defense of vivisection which claimed that nonhuman animals lacked sentience.³⁷ Women have led movements in an effort to build a better world for both human and nonhuman animals throughout history. Animal welfare movements, including vegetarianism, and human social justice movements have evolved alongside one another, often crossing paths and building meaningful connections between structures of injustice across species.

In this chapter, I first offer a summary of these connections as seen in the British and American antivivisection movements of the nineteenth century. Second, I examine some media from the American civil rights era which is linked to second wave feminism and the contemporary animal rights movement. Here we see the

³⁵ See Lansbury 1985; Keane 1995; Buettinger 1997; Gaard 2011; Adams and Gruen 2014.

³⁶ See Adams 1990 and Leneman 2006

³⁷ See *Philosophical Letters and Poems and Fancies* for Cavendish's writing on the treatment of animals.

birth of ecofeminism, which made explicit the connection between gender and animal oppression. Ecofeminism is generally considered to occupy an overlapping space between the second and third-wave feminist movements. Animal ecofeminism gained traction in 1990 with the publication of Adams' *The Sexual Politics of Meat*. The 1990s are also widely known for the rise of third wave feminism (as youth culture began to define liberation for itself) and critical race theory (women of color feminism and Kimberlé Crenshaw's theory of intersectionality gained prominence).³⁸ This chapter briefly surveys examples of feminist media at three points in western feminist history in an effort to glimpse intersections between feminist and animal activist movements leading to my main corpus, *Bust*.

British Antivivisectionists and Vegetarian Suffragettes

In 1892, the English feminist periodical *Shafts* was founded by Margaret Sibthorp and covered a range of progressive topics of the time such as dress reform, women's sexuality, socialism, and animal activism, including the consistent promotion of vegetarianism. *Shafts* serves as a nexus of feminist media history wherein concerns of injustice to women are explicitly linked with injustice to animals. *Shafts'* intended audience was working class women—an important distinction to note as another axis on its intersectional framework. *Shafts* is perhaps a unique example of feminist media with its consistent inclusion of animal welfare topics while

³⁸ The use of the “wave metaphor” has been widely critiqued by feminist scholars for erasing the histories of nonwestern, nonwhite feminism by assuming the feminist work of nonwestern women suddenly emerged during the third wave after European women had laid the groundwork. I concede that this essay reproduces that narrative in its effort to trace ecofeminist thought in media. More scholarship needs to be done on the origins of vegetarian ecofeminist thought from a postcolonial theoretical perspective. To start see: Ghandi 2006; Deckha 2008; and Harper 2010.

popular feminist media in later movements framed the animal question as a special topic or individual choices rather than as an essential component of feminist discourse. Leah Leneman, British scholar of feminist and vegetarian history, notes about the magazine:

Two early articles (February and May 1893), entitled 'To Beginners', provided advice on how to go about adopting a vegetarian diet. There was no attempt to put forward any rationale for doing so; it was clearly felt to be self-evident.³⁹

Shafts often made connections between injustices explicit in its content: Edith Ward, in penning a review of Henry Salt's *Animal Rights* (1892), wrote: "the case of the animal is the case of the woman."⁴⁰ Perhaps most salient for the trajectory of ecofeminist philosophy is Ward's argument that:

Similitude of position between women and the lower animals, although vastly different in degree, should insure from the former the most unflinching and powerful support to all movement for the amelioration of the conditions of animal existence. What, for example, could be more calculated to produce brutal wife beaters than long practice of savage cruelty towards the other animals? And what, on the other hand, more likely to impress mankind with the necessity of justice for women than the awakening of the idea that justice was the right of even an ox or a sheep.⁴¹

The points made here are analogous to ecofeminist scholarship, which reveals the way speciesism works to reinforce and support gender-based oppression. Ward's claim, making connections between domestic violence and cruelty to animals, is explored in depth by ecofeminist scholars such as Carol Adams and Joan Dunayer⁴²—the link having been empirically proven in the social sciences.

³⁹ Leah Leneman, "The Awakened Instinct: Vegetarianism and The Women's Suffrage Movement in Britain," *Women's History Review* 6.2 (1997), 276.

⁴⁰ Qtd. in Adams and Gruen, *Ecofeminist Connections*, 8.

⁴¹ Leneman, "The Awakened Instinct," 277.

⁴² See Adams and Donovan 1995.

Shafts continued to produce varied articles including nonhuman animals in its socialist feminist mission, keeping their readers abreast of issues within the vegetarian and antivivisection movements. Indeed, *Shafts* was a journal committed to multiple justice movements, declaring in January 1897: “*Shafts* hopes to begin a still more vigorous crusade against injustice, oppression and cruelty in all of its many forms.”⁴³ *Shafts* was explicitly dedicated to linking feminism and working class politics with the plight of animals, but it was not the only journal of the time that took up nonhuman animal issues.

Leneman aptly illustrates through diary excerpts and other suffrage movement media the strong connection between women’s movements and animal welfare. Vegetarian or not, British activists against vivisection were also majority female. Often leaders of the movement were connected with suffrage and socialist movements. Prominent voices of the antivivisection movement such as Frances Power Cobbe, Louise Lind af Hageby, Charlotte Despard, and Anna Kingsford are all noted leaders in women’s, socialist, and animal welfare movements. Frances Power Cobbe founded the Victoria Street Society and the British Union Against Vivisection and, as Coral Lansbury points out, united the “connections between vivisection, pornography, and the condition of women.”⁴⁴ Charlotte Despard was an active feminist, socialist, and animal advocate. Despard personified “a familiar clustering in the suffragist world of feminism, pacifism, vegetarianism and a working-

⁴³ Hilda Kean, “The Feminist and Socialist Response to Vivisection.” *History Workshop Journal* 40 (1995), 18.

⁴⁴ Coral Lansbury, *The Old Brown Dog: Women, Workers, And Vivisection in Edwardian England*, (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 129.

class base.”⁴⁵ Indeed, Despard articulated the intersections of oppression clearly when she spoke of the Theosophical⁴⁶ societies that were popular among feminists at the time:

Related with Theosophy, the Women’s Movement is related also with the other great movements of the world. . . The awakened instinct which feels the call of the sub-human, which says: – ‘I am the voice of the voiceless. Through me the dumb shall speak,’ is a modern phenomenon that cannot be denied. It works itself out as food reform on the one hand, and on the other, in strong protest against the cruel methods of experimental research. Both of these are in close unison with the demands being made by women.⁴⁷

These women were all involved in the antivivisection movement, but as it is with feminists today, there were differences of opinion among them. We can see through the pamphlets and other media, like *Shafts*, produced by these women that connections between feminism, animal activism, and socialism were prominent in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

A Different Tactic: American Antivivisection and Feminism

The antivivisection movement in Britain directly influenced its American parallel. The American antivivisection movement does not seem to be as explicitly feminist as its British counterpart, but it still continued to make explicit the connections between the treatment of women and animals. The women leading the American antivivisection movement were not as involved in the suffrage movement

⁴⁵ Lewis qtd. in Leneman, “The Awakened Instinct,” 281.

⁴⁶ Theosophy refers to an esoteric spiritual movement in the nineteenth century that appropriated and promoted concepts of spiritual enlightenment from Eastern religions. Leneman explains that Theosophy attracted women due to its many opportunities for leadership and philosophical notions of equality denied women in other religions. Further, Leneman claims Theosophy’s connection with Hinduism makes for a natural promotion of vegetarianism (277).

⁴⁷ Quoted in Leneman, “The Awakened Instinct,” 280.

as activists in Britain, but they were still making connections between the lives of women and nonhuman animals, and making their own media. American antivivisection activists were engaging in feminist praxis regardless of their public involvement with the suffrage movement, by virtue of their leadership roles and organizing tactics.

British antivivisectionists believed that suffrage would also extend its reach to the abolition of vivisection. The American antivivisection movement took a different tactic by which they focused on “developing a sentiment that would culminate in antivivisection laws” without directly organizing for women’s suffrage.⁴⁸ Though movement leaders were not as closely tied to suffrage, they were directly inspired by Francis Power Cobbe. Prominent movement leaders Mary E. Lovell and Caroline Earle White founded the American Anti-Vivisection Society (AAVS) after Cobbe encouraged them to expand their ongoing animal advocacy work to include a dedicated antivivisection organization connected to the already established women’s branch of the Philadelphia Society to Protect Animals (PSPCA). At first, AAVS sought men for leadership positions, but women quickly took over and in 1885, Lovell beseeched the attendees at the National Council of Women to consider joining the movement against vivisection:

O sister women, I appeal to you. Will you, with the chivalry which belongs to good and true womanhood, side with the suffering?⁴⁹

This appeal was also printed in Lovell and Wright’s accompanying *Journal of*

⁴⁸ Craig Buettinger, “Women and Antivivisection in Late Nineteenth-Century America,” *Journal of Social History* 30.4 (1997), 860-61.

⁴⁹ Qtd. in Buettinger, “Women and Antivivisection,” 857.

Zoophilia, a periodical covering “the different ways in which men are cruel to animals and the different institutions intended to correct such cruelty.”⁵⁰ The American antivivisection movement was “grounded in the Victorian era’s strong sense of female responsibility for the advance of Christianity and the molding of the young.”⁵¹ The rhetoric of Lovell’s speech to the National Council of Women is aligned with the temperance movement, which purports that femininity is inherently moral, corroborating Lovell’s claim that “antivivisection was a cause for good and true women” and calling for women to be “morally accountable for what transpired in the labs.”⁵² Indeed, much of the rhetoric of antivivisection movements made appeals to women’s supposed innate morality—a claim that, when made in later feminist movements, has been charged with essentialism.

The American antivivisection movement may have had closer ties to Christian Temperance than suffrage, but like British antivivisection activists, American animal activist movements were made up, in the majority, of women. These activists made appeals by presenting connections between the plight of women and the treatment of animals. White addressed the National Council for Women making an appeal for the inclusion of animal activism which was, again, published in the *Journal for Zoophilia*: “Experiments upon the tender maternal instinct of dogs have been made over and over again, suggested, as we can only think, by stony hearts and depraved

⁵⁰ C. S. Carr, *The Journal of Zoophily* 60.6 (1910), 132.

⁵¹ Buettinger, “Women and Antivivisection,” 868.

⁵² Buettinger, “Women and Antivivisection,” 868.

imaginations.”⁵³ Calling forth the maternal to appeal to women in the audience makes explicit the shared emotion of motherhood between women and female mammals. Like the British movement before, and ecofeminism following, affect and connection are threads which reach across movements.

American animal activists may not have identified as suffragists or feminists, but surely their organizing skills and leadership roles—and dedication to justice for the disenfranchised—paint a picture of an embodied feminist praxis regardless of political labels. Later generations of feminists may consider suffragists as the movement foremothers, but the women in the American antivivisection movement can certainly be added to the list of those who helped break ground for the future of women’s justice movements in the public sphere. Both the British and American antivivisection movements articulated the connections between nineteenth-century society’s treatment of women and animals. Their media was radical and explicitly political—though, particularly in the American movement, sometimes invoked essentialist notions of feminine morality to make appeals. The British publication *Shafts* was particularly radical in its inclusion of socialist perspectives along with animal advocacy and feminism. Ecofeminism today continues to have much in common with American and British antivivisection movements by making appeals to gender and other axes of oppression when discussing the plight of nonhuman animals.

The Second Wave: Representations of the Feminist Vegetarian Connection

⁵³ Qtd. in Buettinger, “Women and Antivivisection,” 862.

The nineteen sixties and seventies brought with it another connection between feminism and animal activism through the rising civil rights, peace, and ecological movements. Many feminists were involved in anti-war demonstrations and environmentalism. Rates of vegetarianism were high in these movements as a protest against violence towards humans, nonhumans, and the earth.⁵⁴ It was during this time the link between patriarchal domination of women and the earth emerged in western social movements. In the 1970s, many women opened businesses—from bookstores to sex-positive and woman-oriented sex shops—with explicitly feminist missions. Following in the tradition of the suffragists who often held meetings at, and were owners of, vegetarian establishments, many second-wavers opened vegetarian restaurants in the 70s and 80s. Radical lesbian feminists Selma Miriam and Noel Furie opened Bloodroot: A Feminist Vegetarian Restaurant in the mid-seventies in Bridgeport, Connecticut.⁵⁵ They expressed their straightforward feminist food politics in their first cookbook, *The Political Palate*, stating: “Feminism is not a part-time attitude for us; it is how we live all day, everyday [sic]. Our choices in furniture, pictures, the music we play, the books we sell, and the food we cook all reflect and express our feminism”⁵⁶ The radical lesbian feminist movement had a strong vegetarian presence as politicized women made connections between meat-

⁵⁴ Gaard, “Vegetarian Ecofeminism: A Review Essay,” 124.

⁵⁵ Later years saw the opening of black-owned vegan restaurants like Chocolate City in Washington, D.C. which pioneered free school breakfast programs and promoted healthier eating as an anti-racist, decolonial and liberatory practice (McQuirter 2013). The practice of abstaining from animal products gained prominence in various justice movements during the Civil Rights era resulting vegetarian restaurants and natural food stores serving as progressive organizing spaces.

⁵⁶ “History,” *Bloodroot Restaurant*, accessed April 4, 2015. <http://www.bloodroot.com/history/>

eating and male domination. Abstaining from meat-eating was an act of resistance to patriarchy and male violence. This led to “the connection between vegetarianism and lesbian feminism bec[oming] part of popular knowledge and manifest[ing] in lesbian culture through the omnipresent potluck social.”⁵⁷

Towards the end of the second wave, the relationship between lesbian feminism and vegetarianism was serialized in popular culture through the comic, *Dykes to Watch Out For* (DTWOF), by Allison Bechdel. Starting in 1983, Bechdel’s popular work depicted the lives of a group of lesbians with some ethical vegetarians among them, including the lead character, Mo. *DTWOF* ran until 2008 and historicized the role vegetarian politics played in queer feminist communities. The vegetarian politics in *DTWOF* are not proscribed, but are simply embedded in the lives of this group of politically active women. Not every character is vegetarian (or lesbian), a fact that comments on this issue as a source of contention in this community which is unapologetically political. A *New York Times* review of Bechdel’s work in 2008 describes *DTWOF* as “sexy, sometimes in an R-rated way — imagine ‘Doonesbury’ with regular references to sex toys — and it’s political, in a feisty, lefty, Greenpeace meets PETA meets MoveOn.org kind of way”.⁵⁸ This particular combination of nonprofits as an analogy for the politics in *DTWOF* draws to mind the politics of ecofeminism, as an intersectional combination of ecology, animal liberation, and organized leftist activism. Further, *Dykes to Watch Out For* was serialized in second-wave feminist journal *Off Our Backs*, embedding vegetarianism

⁵⁷ Gaard, “Vegetarian Ecofeminism: A Review Essay,” 126.

⁵⁸ Dwight Garner, “*The Days of Their Lives: Lesbians Star in Funny Pages*,” *New York Times*, December 2, 2008, accessed April 4, 2015. <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/03/books/03garner.html>

into the feminist cultural zeitgeist. *Off Our Backs* may not have taken an explicitly ecofeminist stance, but it did participate in representing vegetarianism as a choice *some* feminists do make—tying it to the feminist movement in the public sphere. *Off Our Backs* did include some unequivocal discussion of vegetarianism in feminist movements, including an article about and interview with Carol J. Adams in 1999.⁵⁹

In the nineties, discourse turned towards the inclusion of animals as an axis of gendered oppression with the publication of Carol J. Adams' now canonized work, *The Sexual Politics of Meat*. A radical lesbian feminist herself, Adams had long since made connections between feminism and vegetarianism, publishing an article on the subject in 1975 titled "The Oedipal Complex." Ecofeminism holds space in feminist history not accounted for by the "wave" metaphor. Ecofeminist Greta Gaard explains:

Like feminisms developed by women of color, ecological feminism is neither a second- nor a third-wave feminism; it has been present in various forms from the start of feminism in the nineteenth century, articulated through the work of women gardeners, botanists, illustrators, animal rights and animal welfare advocates, outdoorswomen scientists, and writers.⁶⁰

Gaard goes on to acknowledge that the erasure of ecofeminism is "evident in the majority of introductory Women's Studies, Gender Studies, and Queer Studies textbooks."⁶¹ Backlash against ecofeminist scholarship and animal liberation movements contributed to historical erasure, as well, since ecofeminism was largely

⁵⁹ This essay is moving towards media in an American media context, but there is strong evidence to support the connection between vegetarianism and feminism in 1970s Britain as well (see Leneman 1997; 1999).

⁶⁰ Greta Gaard, "New Directions for Ecofeminism: Toward a More Feminist Ecocriticism." *Isle: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* 17.4 (2010), 4.

⁶¹ Gaard, "New Directions for Ecofeminism," 4.

dismissed as “essentialist, ethnocentric, anti-intellectual goddess-worshippers who mistakenly portray the Earth as female or issue totalizing and ahistorical mandates for worldwide veganism.”⁶² Despite the marginalization of ecofeminist scholarship in the academy, it has had widespread influence across disciplines, and as we have seen with *Dykes to Watch Out For*, in the feminist cultural zeitgeist. Moreover, and as discussed in chapter two, contemporary ecofeminist scholars have responded to critiques of essentialism and eurocentrism leading to more robust intersectional discussions and are likely to influence contemporary feminist media as well (though, as my case study of the *Bust* blogs shows, maybe not very widely in mainstream feminism yet).

Third Wave: Connections through Consumption

Vegetarian ecofeminism gained traction in the nineties alongside another feminist movement that was gaining mainstream visibility—the riot grrrl movement. Riot grrrls emerged in response to sexism in their punk communities and, as a spectacular subculture with valuable cultural products, riot grrrls quickly gained mainstream media attention. Their subcultural aesthetic and feminist message were then coopted by the entertainment industry. As a feminist offshoot of the nineties hardcore punk scene, which is known for animal liberation and vegan politics,⁶³ riot grrrl quickly became associated with veganism. Like feminists before them, riot grrrls took to making their own media to express themselves, build community, and

⁶² Greta Gaard, "Ecofeminism Revisited: Rejecting Essentialism and Re-Placing Species in a Material Feminist Environmentalism," *Feminist Formations* 23.2 (2011), 32.

⁶³ See Clark 2004 and Kuhn 2010 to start.

document the movement. This media took the form of “grrrl zines” which were independently published and distributed most often without monetary exchange,⁶⁴ although one can now purchase zines at many independent book and record stores. Though sparsely documented, many grrrl zines regularly included vegan recipes along with writing on “self-defense, women’s health, Riot Grrrl, lesbian, queer and transgender issues, feminist parenting, music, and pop culture.”⁶⁵ One of the most popular and prolific riot grrrl zines, *Doris*, written by Cindy Crabb, features deeply personal writing on feminist issues such as sexual assault, abortion, and queer identities as well as topics like the romanticization of hunting and vegetarian cooking. Community-building and third space zine *Calico*, #5 warns about the beef industry and promotes a reduction in beef consumption, though it does not have an explicitly vegan message. Adela Licona explains the way *Calico*, #5 is designed (using borderlands rhetoric and code-switching, both theories associated with third-wave feminism):

The connections made in this zine are important in terms of identifying and building community. They also demonstrate an awareness of interlocking systems of oppression, which can maintain the invisibility of countercultural practices, which is part of zine culture.⁶⁶

Calico, #5 provides us an example of the way some feminist media is incorporating anti-factory farming and vegetarian messages into its content without taking on an

⁶⁴ Alison Piepmeier, *Girl Zines: Making Media, Doing Feminism*, (New York: New York University Press, 2009), 4.

⁶⁵ Kristen Schilt and Elke Zobl, "Connecting the Dots: Riot Grrls, Ladyfests, and the International Grrl Zine Network," *Next Wave Cultures: Feminism, Subcultures, Activism*, Ed. Anita Harris (New York City: Routledge, 2008), 172.

⁶⁶ Adela C. Licona, *Zines in Third Space: Radical Cooperation and Borderlands Rhetoric*, (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2012), 114.

animal liberation agenda in any explicit way. This is an example of the decolonial and race-conscious animal activism that Harper documents—activism that promotes vegan or vegetarian diets as a way to resist racism, colonialism, and capitalism, as well as one that considers the plight of the nonhuman. Scholarship on grrrl zine culture has documented many aspects of this practice and its roots in and influence on third wave feminism, but only in passing does scholarship mention the frequency of vegan ethics or animal activism in zines. For the purposes of this research, I've demonstrated that veganism shares links with third-wave feminism and grrrl zine cultures through their media, but further research is needed focusing specifically on the representation of animal liberation politics in third-wave media. Similarly, due to the erasure of the contributions of people of color as crucial agents of history in both feminist (as exemplified by critiques of the wave metaphor) and animal liberation movements, more research is needed to gain a robust picture that includes diverse voices in recounting the history of animal activism in feminist media.

One third-wave feminist media organization that started as a zine in the late nineties has risen to become a glossy, full-fledged magazine. *Bust Magazine* is not explicitly connected to riot grrrl, but arose out of the grrrl zine culture of the third wave. Now a popular feminist magazine and website, *Bust* connects tenets of feminism and veganism through consumerism and, like grrrl zines, through columns dedicated to vegan recipes written by vegan cookbook darlings Isa Chandra Moskowitz and Terry Hope Romero. Suzi D'Enbeau found in her textual analysis that *Bust* fosters feminist identity through the connection with other social change

movements.⁶⁷ She analyzed the advertisements over a 20-year span of *Bust's* publication and cites ads for PETA starring feminist post-riot grrrl band Le Tigre and ads for vegan pornography site, Vegporn.com as examples in which *Bust* “fosters political protest” on behalf of animal liberation movements using progressive sexual appeals,⁶⁸ a key tenet of the third wave. She notes, “[t]hese ads do not promote organized activism but rather playful, individual expression in socially responsible ways.”⁶⁹ Further, in 2012 *Bust* hosted a vegan craft fair (named *Bust* Craftacular) in New York City in conjunction with The Seed, A Vegan Experience, a plant-based lifestyle convention. *Bust's* Craftacular events foster their Do-It-Yourself (DIY) ethic and are congruent with their celebration of a new feminist domesticity. Described on the website, the Craftacular is

an award-winning celebration of DIY culture, featuring a wide array of eclectic handmade and vintage vendors from all over the United States, as well as amazing DJs, delicious food, creative cocktails, fantastic prizes, and DIY activities for all ages.⁷⁰

Though seemingly depoliticized and couched in consumerism, hosting an all-vegan crafting fair is yet another example of the long partnership between animal activism and feminist organizing. Moreover, and as discussed in the next chapter, DIY and

⁶⁷ D'Enbeau, “Sex, Feminism, and Advertising,” 53.

⁶⁸ It is salient to note that D'Enbeau defines *Bust's* use of sex appeals as feminist, progressive, and alternative to mainstream sex appeals in advertising which have been found by media scholars to objectify women. D'Enbeau frames *Bust's* discourses of sex represented in advertisements as positive expressions of sexuality aimed at one's own pleasure and the construction of alternative or queer identities—rare in mainstream representations in consumer culture (54).

⁶⁹ D'Enbeau, “Sex, Feminism, and Advertising,” 86.

⁷⁰ “Indie Craft Fairs for Maker | BUST Craftacular,” *BUST*, accessed 04/05/2015. <http://bust.com/craftacular/bust-craftacular-home.html>

veganism, as alternative ways to navigate a capitalist consumer culture, are also key tenets of modern subcultures.

This chapter has offered brief examples of the long history of feminist media's inclusion of animal activism that contain representations of animal activism ranging from the explicitly political to the consumer driven. Though these examples vary politically and each offers a unique representation of the relationship between feminism and animal activism, this brief survey of the history of anglo-vegan feminist media history illustrates a thread throughout the history of feminism that considers the ethical implications of humans' relationship with animals. The periodicals of the nineteenth century offer explicit political connections between the subjugation of women and the treatment of animals. *Dykes to Watch Out For* offers representations of the relationship between feminism and veganism, expressed as political activism in *DTWOF*, and in popular culture through serialization in both feminist and city periodicals/street papers. Riot Grrrl zines introduced subcultural feminist perspectives on a range of topics often including explorations and explicitly political manifestos on animal activist topics—perspective and aesthetics that continue to influence subcultural feminist movements of today. Throughout these three points in movement history, feminist media included vegetarian and vegan recipes sometimes whether explicitly glossed as a vegan feminist choice such as the case with Bloodroot restaurant's *The Political Palate*, or just quietly included as is the case with some feminist zines. Either way, these examples make it clear that animal activist topics have a place in feminist media—from radical manifestos to conscious consumption. Though not all feminist activists consider their relationship with

nonhuman animals, those who do make the connections offer moments of vegan feminist intervention in the social movements. In chapter four, I look more closely at *Bust* to analyze what representations and discourses about animal activism are being made available in popular feminist media.

CHAPTER 4 VEGANISM IN THE WEB PAGES OF *BUST*

Following the feminist media surveyed in the last chapter, *Bust* also includes the promotion of veganism and animal activism in both its print and online content. *Bust* is an ideal example for a case study of the representation of veganism and animal activism in contemporary feminist media. *Bust* began as a zine in 1993 and quickly became an award-winning magazine with a wide, but relatively small print circulation (about 93,500 versus *Vogue's* 1,000,000+),⁷¹ distribution in all major magazine outlets, and a strong online presence. Still, as I will explain later in this chapter, it remains distinctly alternative to mainstream media and rooted in a decidedly third-wave feminist politic. This chapter offers a rhetorical analysis of *Bust's* online content in an effort to uncover what discourses about veganism and animal activism are being offered to readers, as well as if and how those representations are being linked to a feminist agenda. Engaging in this research reveals how *Bust* employs tenets of third-wave feminism and subcultural identity practices to advance activism on behalf of nonhuman animals without explicitly tying them to an intersectional feminist politic. The following chapter considers the implications of those discourses for the animal liberation and feminist movements in the publics that *Bust* occupies.

The importance of alternative media, like *Bust*, for social justice movements is one motivation for this research. In a time when global information technology has collapsed the dichotomy between alternative and mainstream media, the theory of a

⁷¹ These numbers are widely cited online. A direct source was unable to be found, but these statistics are included here for comparison with the understanding that these figures fluctuate according to market demand.

continuum between alternative and mainstream media seems more prescient than ever. In her audience-based research on what alternative media means, Jennifer Rauch reports: “[e]mpirical research confirms that alternatives have a symbiotic relationship with mainstream media.”⁷² Some scholars have determined that both alternative and mainstream media tend to borrow tactics and information from each other.⁷³ Particular to social justice oriented media, Rauch cites a study that “found that alternative-media users were more likely to participate in political protests than people who used only mainstream sources.”⁷⁴ These findings signal the significance of alternative media and its role in fostering political protest in both mainstream and counterpublics. *Bust*, though sometimes criticized for being more fashion than feminism,⁷⁵ is situated on the continuum between mainstream and alternative media, and its inclusion of animal activist topics means promoting consumer-based boycotts of animal products to an audience already primed for political protest.

In addition to media studies, it is important to consider *Bust*'s position as a third-wave feminist publication. The complexity of the third wave makes it difficult to define. Third-wave feminism is often characterized by a commitment to interdisciplinary theory, the rise of “micro-movements” such as critical race theory and queer theory, and coalition-based activism. Leslie Haywood and Jennifer Drake write in their oft-cited text, *Third Wave Agenda: Being Feminist, Doing Feminism*,

⁷²Jennifer Rauch, “Exploring the Alternative-Mainstream Dialectic: What ‘Alternative Media’ Means to a Hybrid Audience,” *Communication, Culture & Critique* 8.1 (2015), 127.

⁷³ Chris Atton, *Alternative Media*, (Thousand Oaks; London: Sage, 2002).

⁷⁴ Rauch, “Exploring the Alternative-Mainstream Dialectic,” 128.

⁷⁵ See Groeneveld 2009.

“third-wave feminists often take cultural production and sexual politics as key sites of struggle.”⁷⁶ The text offers a complex, but accessible definition of third-wave

feminism and defines the third wave in opposition to the politics of the second-wave:

Rather, we define feminism’s third wave as a movement that contains elements of second wave critique of beauty culture, sexual abuse and power structures while it also makes use of the pleasure, danger, and defining power of those structures.⁷⁷

Bust’s centering of traditionally feminine cultural production and dedicated celebration of women’s sexuality aligns well with third-wave politics here. Scholars offer varied definitions and opinions about the effectiveness of the third wave. Budgeon suggests a “principle of inclusivity” embraced by third-wave feminism as a central component to the movement’s understanding of praxis and identity.⁷⁸ The third wave is often characterized by a multiplicity of identities and a celebration of diverse origins, experiences, and backgrounds. This multiplicity is said to come at the “expense of definitional consistency or reliability.”⁷⁹ In Carisa Showden’s 2009 article, “What’s Political about New Feminisms?” Showden asserts that the movement needs to articulate what is “feminist” about its politics because “the

⁷⁶ Leslie Heywood and Jennifer Drake, *Third Wave Agenda: Being Feminist, Doing Feminism*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 4.

⁷⁷ Heywood and Drake, “Third Wave Agenda,” 3.

⁷⁸ Shelley Budgeon, “The Contradictions of Successful Femininity: Third-Wave Feminism, Postfeminism and ‘New’ Femininities,” *New Femininities: Postfeminism, Neoliberalism, and Subjectivity*, ed. Rosalind Gill and Christina Scharff, (New York; Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 282.

⁷⁹ Budgeon, “The Contradictions of Successful Femininity,” 282.

ground is shifting under feminism”⁸⁰ meaning there is a distinct move away from patriarchy and gender as central political concerns.

The diversity of the movement, a strong engagement with popular culture, and cooption by consumer culture have led to multiple histories of the third wave—including sometimes being conflated with neoliberal postfeminist discourses.

McRobbie warns that the trouble with postfeminist rhetoric is that the call for women to become empowered consumers comes with an active discouragement of political engagement. This version of postfeminism operates then by an assertion that equality has been achieved and women are free to express themselves through lifestyle and consumption choices. This is in opposition to the third wave which still centers on feminism, but does so with an understanding that individuals should develop their own relationship to feminism based on their unique subjectivities.⁸¹

In the following sections, I situate *Bust* in the third wave and explore some of the ways *Bust* asserts itself as feminist media; I then situate *Bust* as subcultural media aligned with hipsterdom, explaining how subcultural consumer practices are significant to veganism and animal activism taking into consideration the neoliberalism pervasive throughout both *Bust*'s rhetoric and hipster consumption practices. David Harvey's definition of neoliberalism is most useful here: neoliberalism “proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework

⁸⁰ Carisa R. Showden, "What's Political about the New Feminisms?" *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 30.2 (2009), 186.

⁸¹ Budgeon, "The Contradictions of Successful Femininity," 281.

characterized by strong property rights, free markets, and free trade.”⁸² Keeping all of these positions in mind, I analyze *Bust’s* online content to ascertain the discourses being offered about veganism and animal activism and their relationship to feminism. My analysis reveals the three main ways *Bust* engages with vegan and animal activism content: (1) Through the promotion of commodities; (2) Through the connection with indie and mainstream celebrities; (3) Through general commentary in relation to current events. These findings reveal the extent to which *Bust* couples veganism with ethical and hipster consumer practices. These representations reflect and reinforce mainstream discourses on veganism rather than supporting a strong or historical link between animal activism and feminism.

Bust’s Feminism

Bust was created during the rise of the third wave (and inevitable cooption by the market under the guise of “girl power”). *Bust* centers gender and the lives of women in particular but balances third-wave feminist ideology with financial viability by negotiating how to package and sell feminism to a consumer culture. *Bust’s* website explains how humor and an unapologetic celebration of feminine practices remain at the center of *Bust’s* mission:

Founded in 1993, the *BUST* brand is the groundbreaking, original women’s lifestyle magazine and website that is unique in its ability to connect with bright, cutting-edge, influential young women. With an attitude that is fierce, funny, and proud to be female, *BUST* addresses a refreshing variety of young women’s interests, including celebrity interviews, music, fashion, art, crafting, sex, and news. Hip, humorous, and honest, *BUST* is a cheeky celebration of

⁸² David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, (New York: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2007), 2.

all things female and a trusted authority on up-and-coming trends among discerning, educated, and culturally aware women.⁸³

Bust's mission repeats feminine identity markers in a way that intends to empower with phrases like: "proud to be female," "influential young women," "celebration of all things female," and "educated, and culturally aware women." This repetition employs the language of empowerment and seems to allude to feminism without explicitly identifying as feminist. The magazine was created in celebration of feminine practices from a perspective that is alternative to mainstream women's magazines. *Bust* creators' Debbie Stoller and Laura Henzel lamented in a recent interview that one of their main challenges is not being seen as a feminist magazine. They explained how *Bust's* position differs from other feminist media:

When asked the differences between *Bust* and other feminist mags like *Ms. Magazine* and *Bitch*, Henzel applauded those mags. But those are about feminism. *Bust* is not. She said, "We're informed by feminism." Both Henzel and Stoller said that *Ms.* and *Bitch* write about all of the bad things happening to women and how men keep us down. Instead, they decided, "We're going to make our own media."⁸⁴

Bust's creators intended to make media that celebrates the experiences of women, centering popular culture and sexual freedom—both key components of third-wave feminist theory and practice.

Bust remains representative of third-wave politics in its centering of feminist and feminine content while still, perhaps as a way to navigate between feminist ideology and financial viability, relying heavily on the promotion of consumerism as a

⁸³ "About," *BUST*, accessed April 7, 2015. <http://bust.com/info/about-bust.html>

⁸⁴ Megan Kearns, "Fit To Print: Bust Magazine, The Feminist Press & Feminism in Media at Soapbox Feminist Winter Term – Day 2," *The Opinioness of the World*, January 28, 2011, accessed April 1, 2016. <https://opinionessoftheworld.com/2011/01/28/bust-mag-feminist-press-and-feminism-in-media-at-soapbox-feminist-winter-term-day-2/>

means to foster *Bust's* own brand of feminist identity. In this way, and like *Bust's* position between alternative and mainstream media, *Bust* also occupies space between third-wave and postfeminist praxis. Though, unlike postfeminist cultural production, there is no question of *Bust's* explicit relationship to feminism. Unlike McRobbie's definition of postfeminism as "sophisticated anti-feminism" which upholds the principles of gender equality, while denigrating the figure of the feminist,⁸⁵ *Bust* celebrates feminist identities while still promoting consumerism as a path to empowerment. This relationship with consumption and third-wave feminist politics makes the media organization an interesting case study in which to look at veganism and animal activism, which can also be both consumer ethic and political stance, and to consider where veganism and animal activism might fit into a more popular feminist landscape.

Some scholars who have analyzed *Bust* have found that *Bust* promotes a feminist agenda outside of commodity activism. D'Enbeau applied Mary Daly's theories of feminist rhetoric to *Bust* in an effort to examine how *Bust* participated in feminist and feminine interventions. She concluded from her research that *Bust* "employs a sarcastic sense of humor as a resistance strategy to foreground alienation and feminization while simultaneously enacting a form of feminist control."⁸⁶ Further, D'enbeau explains how the magazine "affirms the power of language as a means of retaliation against foreground social control."⁸⁷ Referring

⁸⁵ Angela McRobbie, "Beyond Post-Feminism," *Public Policy Research* 18.3 (2011), 182.

⁸⁶ Suzy D'Enbeau, "Feminine and Feminist Transformation in Popular Culture: An Application of Mary Daly's Radical Philosophies to *Bust* Magazine," *Feminist Media Studies* 9.1 (2009), 24.

⁸⁷ D'Enbeau, "Feminine and Feminist Transformation in Popular culture," 24.

here to Daly's theories that consider women alienated and relegated to Background through hegemonic uses of language, D'Enbeau seeks to extrapolate the ways *Bust* is a feminist intervention in the lives of "ordinary, everyday women."⁸⁸ However, D'Enbeau neglects to consider the ways *Bust's* intention to be on the "cutting edge" and use of irony and humor appeals more, aesthetically, to the subcultural realm of hipsters.⁸⁹

Hipster Feminism

Bust's aesthetic, rhetorical strategies, and content target a specific subcultural demographic identified as "hipsters" by both cultural critics and marketers. The *Encyclopedia of Popular Culture* defines contemporary hipsters, a term originally used to describe Beatniks of the 1940s jazz era, as "anything from a trendy youth subculture to a lucrative advertising demographic to privileged poseurs laying claim to a bohemian, counterculture identity."⁹⁰ Although hipsters are a neoliberal but broad-minded group as a whole, Schiermer's survey of lay literature on the hipster reveals some commonalities:

As to contemporary hipster culture, the handbooks all agree on the following characteristics: Hipsters are young, white and middle class, typically between 20 and 35 years old. They contribute to the 'gentrification' of former 'popular', working-class, ethnic or 'exotic' neighbourhoods in the big Western cities. The original hipster breeding ground is Williamsburg in New York from where hipster culture has spread to all major Western cities... Hipsters generally

⁸⁸ D'Enbeau, "Feminine and Feminist Transformation in Popular culture," 30.

⁸⁹ Yet, the distinction between mainstream and subcultural realms are becoming less distinguishable under neoliberal capitalism.

⁹⁰ Tina Gianoulis, "Hipsters," *St. James Encyclopedia of Popular Culture*, 2nd ed. vol. 2, ed. Thomas Riggs, (Detroit: St. James Press, 2013), 675.

vote to the left, typically study at the humanities or work in the 'creative industry' or in cafés or bars or music or fashion stores.⁹¹

Hipsters are postmodern consumers relying heavily on irony and nostalgia to construct their aesthetic.⁹² They are thought to construct their identities largely through cultural consumption antagonistic to mainstream popular culture, including being commonly associated with vegan diets (significant to this research). Hipsters are said to be "most closely associated with independent (indie) music."⁹³ In their article on hipster foodways, Cronin et al. offers some summaries of scholarship on what defines the hipster subculture: "'Hipster' is an etic term used to describe avant-garde, 20-something year olds who work hard to develop an idiosyncratic, alternative style and are considered to be a contemporary revival of bohemian culture."⁹⁴ In sum, hipsterdom encompasses a wide range of cultural consumption that, whether it succeeds or not, seeks to be defined against mainstream consumer practices, most notably, independent music, vintage or hand-crafted commodities, and alternative foodways. The content in *Bust* presents these in myriad ways.

As *Bust's* mission states (and examples from my analysis will show), *Bust* is committed to centering cultural production that sits alternative to the mainstream. With their promotion of indie music and films, their fashion-forward photo spreads,

⁹¹ Bjørn Schiermer, "Late-Modern Hipsters: New Tendencies in Popular Culture," *Acta Sociologica* 57.2 (2014), 170.

⁹² Scheirmer, "Late-Modern Hipsters," 170.

⁹³ Gianoulis, "Hipsters," 675.

⁹⁴ James M. Cronin, Mary B. McCarthy, and Alan M. Collins, "Covert Distinction: How Hipsters Practice Food-Based Resistance Strategies in the Production of Identity," *Consumption Markets & Culture* 17.1 (2014), 6.

and their relationship with independent businesses (best exemplified by their Craftacular events—introduced in the previous chapter), *Bust* is designed for women who are on the “cutting edge,” “hip,” and who are authorities on “up and coming trends.” This language makes their intentions clear: *Bust* is for alternative readers. *Bust* creates a counterpublic for hip women who resist the status quo, who appreciate independent art, and small business—key values of the hipster community. Moreover, *Bust* employs irony as a rhetorical device to appeal to these women and connect hipster aesthetics and consumption practices to feminism. *Bust*’s 2006 fashion issue came with the tagline “Be a feminist or just dress like one.” Groeneveld’s analysis of this particular issue of *Bust* concluded that the magazine employed ironic rhetoric in an effort to appeal to both feminist-identified and non-feminist-identified women since, as Groeneveld explains, “irony always carries both primary and secondary meanings.”⁹⁵ *Bust*’s rhetorical strategies also represent trends among hipsters, who, as mentioned before, are most known for relying heavily on irony and nostalgia to construct their aesthetic identities.

Bust’s significant inclusion of veganism and its symbolism in hipsterdom is worth elaborating on here. Aside from listening to indie rock and wearing ironic apparel, hipsters express their distinction through food choices that resist the mainstream. In a qualitative study on hipster foodways, Cronin et.al. explained how “the suggested fight against the market-led norm to eat meat was also found to be

⁹⁵ Elizabeth Groeneveld, “‘Be a Feminist or Just Dress Like One’: *BUST*, Fashion and Feminism as Lifestyle,” *Journal of Gender Studies* 18 (2009), 187.

partly a feminist practice for the male hipsters in the interview sample.” The authors go on to explain:

Not eating meat symbolises a weak or subordinated masculine identity and so meat rejection becomes an important identity enactment of metro-sexuality or androgyny within the hipster community. Vegetarianism alone is not enough to achieve a collective subordinated identity however and male hipsters tied it into larger symbolic consumption practices. For example, vegetarianism is sometimes coupled with a stance on music tastes, reaffirming that food is part of a wider consumption constellation, or style, for hipsters.⁹⁶

Despite linking the avoidance of meat to feminism, the article largely oversimplifies and depoliticizes the abstention from animal products as an aesthetic choice, rather than an ethico-political one, stating: “However the salient difference between hipsters’ food-based resistance and that of moralizing social movements...appears to be largely an issue of identity maintenance or status-seeking.”⁹⁷ The article goes on to add that not all hipsters are vegetarian or vegan, but all take some contrarian stance toward mainstream food practices, whether it be avoiding gluten or eating only raw foods. A certain level of expertise in one’s food choices is required to prove authenticity, but the actual choice a hipster makes matters less so long as it goes against the grain.⁹⁸ The authors gain their cynical analysis from interviews, but seem to neglect consideration of whether one might be *both* political and a hipster. Further, the authors do not take into account the extent to which subcultures are influenced by countercultural justice movements and vice-versa. Instead they conclude that dietary choices are identity-based rather than considering how

⁹⁶ Cronin, et al., “Covert Distinction,” 21-22.

⁹⁷ Cronin, et al., “Covert Distinction,” 23.

⁹⁸ Cronin, et al., “Covert Distinction,” 22.

consumption and identity move and influence each other with myriad other cultural influences. Considering hipster foodways as *both* a political and identity-based consumption practice, *Bust's* inclusion of vegan topics symbolizes a mutual entanglement between feminism, subculture, ethical consumption, and identity.

Method

Informed by critical animal and vegan studies, eco- and third-wave feminism, subculture, and public sphere theories, I have chosen to study the online content of *Bust Media*. *Bust's* engagement with popular culture, its popularity (determined by readership and being routinely referenced by other feminist media), and its position between alternative and mainstream media make *Bust* a compelling case study in exploration of the contemporary relationship between feminism and animal activism. *Bust* is considered one part of the North American feminist media triumvirate along with *Bitch* and *Ms.* magazines.⁹⁹ In addition to publishing in print bi-monthly, *Bust* has published a significant amount of online content most of which seems to be in promotion of commodities or recipes with many posts containing music and book reviews and celebrity and artist interviews. Some posts were reporting on other online media stories or promoting events in New York City, where *Bust's* headquarters are located. Most of the online content I analyze appears to be written by staff interns. Some of *Bust's* online content overlaps with the print magazine, though in my search results only a small number of posts explicitly stated so. *Bust's* blog is an ideal site of inquiry that stays rooted in the history of feminist self-made

⁹⁹ Zoe Williams, "Close Knit," *The Guardian*, January 8, 2005, accessed April 10, 2016. <http://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2005/jan/08/weekend.zoewilliams1>.

media while growing with the ever-changing technologies of contemporary feminist communications. *Bust* blogs have multiple contributors, providing space for community engagement, e.g. through enabled comments, though comments may be moderated. I elected not to include comments in my analysis because there are too many mitigating factors that make them unreliable, such as anonymity and moderation.

Bust was founded in the mid-nineties and has been publishing web content since then; my methods for analyzing representations of veganism and animal activism had to be narrow and strategic. I used key words to search both within the blog and via google as a preliminary method to find content about or related to vegans and veganism and animal activism. A preliminary search afforded me with a list of key terms and *Bust's* in-house tags for more extensive research. Bust.com's search algorithm and inconsistent use of tags resulted in many repeated results and a limited scope, i.e. not all articles containing my search terms would return. To overcome these challenges, I used two secondary search methods: google and webscraping. First, I searched using www.google.com within www.bust.com for my key words. Second, I used wget, a command line program, to scrape bust.com and download every webpage on the site. I then used a text-editing program, *Sublime Text*, and regular expressions to remove all html and save each post, content only, as a plain text document. Using wget allows for the analysis of a large corpus, such as this long-standing and popular blog. I was then able to search through every document for my key terms returning many more posts than my initial two search methods. I found posts related to veganism and animal activism by using search

operators and mining the scraped content for my key words: vegan, vegetarian, cruelty-free/cruelty free, humane, animal liberation, animal rights, and animal welfare. Further, I searched *Bust's* own tags on the site: vegans are awesome!, vegan, vegan stuff, animal cruelty, and animal rights. This method offered me a robust corpus. I analyzed 152 posts in total.

This method limits the extent of content read that might discuss these topics using other words or phrases. For example, an article might discuss an animal rights organization or a specific animal-related issue, such as PETA or captivity, without including veganism, animals, etc. in their text. Natural language processing might help overcome the challenge of working with key word searches. Natural language processing was outside of the scope of this project, but may offer a fruitful avenue for future research. The scraping and key-word search method led me to some articles that include these terms, but provide little useful content to analyze, including recipes. *Bust* has regular recipe columns by prominent vegan chefs Terry Hope Romero and Isa Chandra Moskowitz and many recipes showed up in my searches, but I opted not to include an extensive analysis of recipes here as so many vegan recipes are posted without explicitly labeling them as vegan and thus would not end up in my search results. Some articles used some of these words in passing or as identity markers rather than being a post *about* veganism, etc., in particular. By choosing to only analyze editorial content in blog posts, this method also omits the analysis of paid advertisements (which are embedded in images and are not returned in any searches). Advertisements might have contributed further to an understanding of the representation of veganism in *Bust*, but were outside of the

scope of this project. Analyzing editorial content only provides a representation of veganism, vegan identities, and animal activism from the perspective of both the content creators and a suggestion of readers' aesthetic and ethic. In what follows, I explore contemporary relationships between subculture, third-wave feminism, and animal activism using *Bust's* online content as a case study.

'Get hip to animals and get hip doing it': Veganism as Subcultural Identity Praxis

When I first started my research, I expected to find extensive commodification of veganism (and feminism) in the pages of *Bust*, and I did. What I did not expect was the extent to which *Bust* editors and writers would casually, using a colloquial writing style, link veganism to a vaguely depicted notion of ethical consumption. Some posts would mention the environment or animals specifically in the promotion of vegan commodities, but nearly every post I read that contained the word "vegan" also contained the word "ethical." This vague rhetorical approach to promoting veganism and animal activism connected the articles to *Bust's* feminist agenda in so far as it encouraged *Bust* readers to consider veganism as a means of commodity activism and, in fewer cases, urged readers to mobilize on behalf of animal welfare promoting nonprofits or animal-related projects. However, this left both unconnected to feminism at deeper levels.

Bust content represented veganism and animal activism in three ways: commodities, celebrity, and, in a few posts, general commentary in relation to current events. Almost all posts were promoting something, from beauty products to events. Overwhelmingly, that representation lay in product promotion and recipes. Though I opted not to include an extensive analysis of the vegan recipes that

populated my searches, many non-vegan recipes were returned because they included alternative and explicitly labeled vegan ingredients. This inclusion offered readers instructions for adapting the recipe for those who wish to consume a vegan version of the dish. This is one way *Bust* seamlessly folds veganism into its content without taking a stance on animal liberation, as if the two were not connected. Additionally, this inclusion represents veganism as a personal choice that *some* feminists do make; so many, in fact, that *Bust* consistently publishes content that caters to vegans. Second, *Bust* connects veganism to celebrity through features, reviews, and interviews with both mainstream and indie artists, actors, and musicians. It is in this way that *Bust* links veganism with both subcultural appeal and style. The third way *Bust* represents veganism and animal activism is through posts commenting generally on something related that was recently covered in mainstream media or in promotion of an upcoming event like an animal liberation documentary screening. These posts were by far the fewest of those returned in my searches. It is in these posts that *Bust* almost links feminism to veganism, or animal liberation more explicitly, but in a way that invites commenters to participate in the conversation, rather than in a way that proscribes *Bust's* brand of feminism as connected to animal liberation on a deeper level.

Vegan as Ethical

Overwhelmingly, posts analyzed including the word “vegan” were promoting products, books, or recipes. This is unsurprising, since that is the most common use of the term in general. My analysis is looking for what the rhetoric surrounding the term reveals about the meaning of veganism or, at least, consuming vegan

commodities, and how that relates to *Bust's* particular brand of feminism. The terms “ethical,” “cruelty-free,” and “eco-friendly” were most frequently found next to “vegan” in promotion of commodities. Additionally, these posts were often, but not consistently, marked with the tag “vegan stuff.”

In an article about “natural” beauty products, the writer introduces the list with: “it's the cheap and eco-friendly goods that grace my bathroom cabinets. With these vegan, cruelty-free babies, there's no such thing as ‘mystery ingredient.’”¹⁰⁰ The post is accompanied by a stock photo of an illustrated cosmetics bottle marked “the good stuff.” The writer assures readers that they can ethically participate in gendered beauty rituals and be a proud “product junkie” with products that are, vaguely, “natural” and “good,” i.e. earth-conscious. This is again exemplified in a post entitled: “8 Kick-Ass Subscription Boxes to Mail to Yourself.” Featured in the list is a vegan subscription box by the brand Vegan Cuts. The description again uses those key terms:

4) Vegan Cuts: Started by vegan couple Jill and John to help new and veteran vegans support and find ethical and clean products. Keep your values in tact [sic] without those endless hunts on the backs of all those labels at the store, with either a snack or beauty box subscription.¹⁰¹

Pairing “vegan” with terms like “ethical,” “clean,” and “values” suggests that vegan products are *de facto* without ethical compromise. The vegan subscription box is the only one listed that includes terms like these suggesting a comparison between

¹⁰⁰ Erina Davidson, "An Eco-Product Junkie's Favorite 'Beauty' Weapons," *BUST*, accessed February 7, 2016. <http://bust.com/general/6707-an-eco-product-junkies-favorite-beauty-weapons.html>.

¹⁰¹ "8 Kick-Ass Subscription Boxes to Mail Yourself," *BUST*, accessed February 7, 2016. <http://bust.com/diy/12935-8-kick-ass-subscription-boxes-to-mail-yourself.html>

“ethical vegan products” and the others which might also be ethically produced and even vegan, but they are not described as vegan and thus not paired with the term “ethical.”

Almost all posts mentioning vegan products used some kind of language associated with environmental ethics, but some also included an explicit connection to animal activism. A spotlight on vendors for one of *Bust’s* Craftacular events is titled “Beauty for the Vegan Soul.” The writer appeals to “all our vegan Bustie’s [sic] out there looking for non-toxic and cruelty-free cosmetic products.” The introduction to this post connects vegan products directly to animal testing:

Why is the struggle so very real? For women who like to get there [sic] nails done and moisturize their winter skin, without fearing their own or a fluffy being’s skin is going to flake off, the BUST Craftacular has the hookup.

The article goes on to describe vegan nail polish that is “non-toxic and dries in less than minute, your nails will stay fabulous and have that premium look without the guilt.”¹⁰² This rhetoric again assures the reader that she can have her feminine rituals and her ethics, too. In writing about the “guilt” and fear of animal testing, this post also links vegan commodities to activism on behalf of the environment and nonhuman animals. Throughout the post, variations of the terms “vegan” and “chemical-free” are used to describe each vendor, again, conflating vegan with “natural” in eco- and health-conscious rhetoric. Another vegan writer provides readers with a list of vegan-friendly Halloween candy. She opens the post with an ethical dilemma:

¹⁰² Amanda Esquilin, “Beauty For The Vegan Soul: BUST Craftacular Boston,” *BUST*, accessed January 7, 2016. <http://bust.com/diy/15064-beauty-for-the-vegan-soul-bust-craftacular-boston.html>.

While vegetarians and vegans find themselves with increasingly tailored and green-washy options for ethical pigging out, Halloween poses a particular problem for us Americans in the bunch: animal welfare or free candy?

Both are seriously possible.¹⁰³

Using humor (the stock photo is of a kitten licking a red lollipop), this writer connects vegan products to animals, but still opts for the term “ethical” even though the companies promoted in the list are not *Bust’s* usual independent, artesian, eco-friendly sort. Laffy Taffy, Skittles, and Sour Patch Kids are, indeed, vegan, but “ethical” is a stretch for these chemical-laden, corporate candies. The post also gives a brief how-to instructing readers on what to look for when avoiding animal ingredients in candy and links to websites vegnews.com and peta.org for further inquiry. All of *Bust’s* promotional posts are written in an upbeat, enthusiastic voice encouraging readers to try whatever product they are reviewing and, implicitly (and sometimes explicitly), to try veganism. Another consistent component of *Bust’s* promotion of vegan consumerism is assuring readers that vegan goods are stylish and hip. One writer plugs “one of [*Bust’s*] coolest advertisers, Dollhouse:”

A leather jacket goes with everything. A sweet, summer dress? Hells yeah. Badass jeans. Duh. Every girl needs at least one leather jacket. If you live in New York, you might need three.

BUT, if you're an animal rights activist, like me, it is important to find vegan friendly, faux leather jackets. If you are a writer, broke, and barely clinging onto your Williamsburg loft, like me, it is important to find an affordable jacket that actually keeps you warm.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ “Top Ten Vegan Halloween Candies,” *BUST*, accessed February 7, 2016. <http://bust.com/general/13246-top-10-vegan-halloween-candies.html>

¹⁰⁴ “Vegan Jackets and Dollhouse,” *BUST*, accessed February 7, 2016. <http://bust.com/general/4214-vegan-jackets-dollhouse.html>

Here, the writer is both directly associating veganism with animal activism, while also assuring readers that with Dollhouse's faux leather jackets, they can be stylish enough for the neighborhood most associated with hipsters, Williamsburg in Brooklyn, New York. Another post promoting an all vegan Craftacular event uses the same technique:

featuring tons of super cool, eco-friendly craftsmen selling everything from jewelry to screen printed T-shirts. Life with Tigers will be on hand offering handmade toys and gifts, including a delightfully strange catnip toy in the shape of a severed human leg (my cat already put in his order). The Fisher Cat Fiber Co. has hand-dyed yarns and fibers crafted into high-quality, earth-happy rugs and bags, so you can do your grocery shopping in vegan-friendly style.¹⁰⁵

Phrases like “super cool, eco-friendly craftsman” and “vegan-friendly style” work to shake the old association between veganism and Birkenstock-wearing hippies of the sixties and seventies—assuring readers that “[b]eing earth friendly doesn't mean you need to live in earth tones all day erry [sic] day.”¹⁰⁶ These posts, like most of the others, continue to use vegan in conjunction with “eco-friendly” and similar terms whether they directly address animal rights or not.

Bust writers are charged with cool-hunting and reporting their interests in a way that is “informed by feminism.”¹⁰⁷ That means promoting products in a way that link them to *Bust's* third-wave feminist agenda, whether that's celebrating sexuality

¹⁰⁵ Samantha, “Craftacular Vendor Spotlight: Farm Sanctuary featuring The Discerning Brute, Farm Sanctuary, and Vegan Treats,” *BUST*, accessed February 7, 2016. <http://bust.com/eat-me/6373-craftacular-vendor-spotlight-farm-sanctuary-featuring-the-discerning-brute-and-vegan-treats.html>

¹⁰⁶ Samantha, “Craftacular Vendor Spotlight.”

¹⁰⁷ Kearns, “Fit To Print: Bust Magazine.”

with “vegan-friendly and water-based lube infused with natural aphrodisiacs”¹⁰⁸ or expressing your identity with “Vegan Footwear for the Socially Responsible Lady.”¹⁰⁹ *Bust* uses commodities to celebrate femininity as empowerment and, in that way, links feminism with the rhetoric of other justice movements. This is perfectly exemplified in a post highlighting another of *Bust’s* Craftacular events. This post promotes partnerships with the nonprofit, Farm Sanctuary, and celebrity vegan, Joshua Katcher of *The Discerning Brute*: “At the BUST Magazine Craftacular and Food Fair, you can do more than just buy awesome clothes and accessories to make your friends jealous, you can also help save the world!”¹¹⁰

Vegan as Hip

Another way that *Bust* assures its readers that veganism is well within the realm of the hip and feminist is by attaching veganism to celebrity. This is exemplified in interviews with woman-identified indie/punk artists and musicians and through the promotion of vegan businesses owned by or books written by celebrities. Often this was just in opening descriptions of the artists being interviewed. For example, an interview with French-born indie rock musician Soko reports the singer is “openly bisexual, vegan, and straight edge” (Galvao). These three identity markers link veganism with queer and punk movements all under the hipster umbrella by way of indie celebrity. This alignment happens again in an interview with feminist punk

¹⁰⁸ Neisha, Sharay, “Let’s Talk About Sex Baby,” *BUST*, accessed February 7, 2016. <http://bust.com/sex/6673-lets-talk-about-sex-baby-hathor-aphrodisia-sensual-product-review.html>

¹⁰⁹ “Vegan Footwear for the Socially Responsible Lady,” *BUST*, accessed February 7, 2016. <http://bust.com/style/10329-vegan-footwear-for-the-socially-responsible-lady.html>

¹¹⁰ Samantha. “Craftacular Vendor Spotlight

singer, Meredith Graves of the punk band Perfect Pussy. The interview opens with a series of questions about Graves' interest in countercultural consumption like food and thrift stores. When asked about her favorite local restaurant, Graves responds:

There's an incredible new-ish restaurant called LoFo, and I would eat there twice a day if I could. Its focus is on local farming with a strong emphasis on health, and a menu that encompasses lots of raw, vegan and vegetarian, gluten-free and otherwise super wholesome food.¹¹¹

Here, neither the writer nor Graves identify her as vegan, but alternative foodways, primarily a rejection of meat, are well-accepted in both hipster and punk communities; one not need to commit to veganism full-time to incorporate it into one's identity. All interviews feature questions about the artist's feminism after establishing their subcultural identity, thereby linking feminism with veganism under the umbrella of hipster identity via consumer practices alternative to the mainstream.

A second way *Bust* links celebrity with animal rights and veganism is by publishing posts that feature the animal-oriented or vegan projects of celebrities like Ellen DeGeneres and Amy Sedaris. A post titled "Ellen wants YOU to go Vegan!" enthusiastically encourages readers to listen to Ellen (even after the author admits she herself is only just gradually "eas[ing] into vegetarianism"):

Now I'll listen to whatever advice Ellen has, because I think she's incredible and inspiring. But there are so many other reasons to add more vegetarian and vegan meals to your life. If you're considering going vegan, this new blog is excellent and filled with tips for getting started. Ellen's tips for easing into a vegan diet are so simple, it seems silly to me not to try them.¹¹²

¹¹¹ Tess Duncan, "Rock Dreams: Meredith of Perfect Pussy Sings about the Stuff That's Worth Hating," *BUST*, accessed February 21, 2016. <http://bust.com/music/11579-rock-dreams-meredith-of-perfect-pussy-sings-about-the-stuff-thats-worth-hating.html>

¹¹² Carry Krosser, "Ellen Wants You to go Vegan," *BUST*, accessed February 7, 2016. <http://bust.com/eat-me/6723-ellen-wants-you-to-go-vegan.html>

The upbeat cadence and casual tone of the post is characteristic of the *Bust* site overall providing readers with a sense that they are receiving advice from a friend. *Bust* keeps this colloquial tone when promoting indie singer-songwriter Neko Case's PSA for Best Friends Animal Society, an anti-euthanasia organization for companion animals. Neko Case is a musician, feminist and animal rights activist and was featured on the magazine cover for the September/October 2013 print issue. The post urges readers to join Case in her activism:

Case is a huge supporter of animal rights and so, accordingly, just released this PSA for Best Friends Animal Society, which aims to prevent the killing of dogs and cats in animal shelters. For every share of this PSA, Neko and her record label, Anti-, will donate \$5 to Best Friends.

My fellow *BUSTies*, let's help out our little furry friends and share this video as much as you can!¹¹³

In this post, *Bust* asks readers to engage in animal welfare activism by linking the cause to indie celebrity and feminism. Similar to the previous example, the casual and enthusiastic rhetoric that is pervasive in *Bust* acts as friendly encouragement. This post neglects to mention that Neko Case is also vegan, but explicitly identifies her as a “supporter of animal rights.” The call for “Busties” to share the PSA is representative of *Bust's* interest in fostering feminist action on behalf of other causes. Whether linked to hip consumerism or hip celebrities, *Bust* cultivates its brand of hipster feminism as one that engages in causes on behalf of animals.

Vegan as Feminist

¹¹³ Katharine Earnst, “Neko Case: BUST Cover Girl Helps Out Furry Friends with new PSA,” *BUST*, accessed February 7, 2016. <http://bust.com/music/10397-neko-case-bust-cover-girl-helps-out-furry-friends-with-new-psa.html>

The final way that *Bust* engages its readers in veganism and animal liberation is through explicit posts that inquire directly about ethics and animals. Many of these posts invite readers to debate about the issues rather than the author taking the usual enthusiastic and promotional tone common throughout the blog. There were three posts about animal rights nonprofit, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA)—two in celebration of the organization, and one feminist critique of a PETA ad perceived as sexist. Posts discussing veganism or animal liberation *without* selling a commodity of some sort were by far the fewest of my sample; only two make direct connections between gender and violence against animals, and one mentions speciesism directly.

The first is an inquiry to the readers about the topic of speciesism. The opening paragraph mentions feminism and other “isms” but stops short of connecting them explicitly:

Here at *BUST*, “isms” hold a prominent place in my daily mental landscape. Feminism is the reason I’ve shown up to work (relatively) bright-eyed and bushy-tailed for the last 12 years. And while I always put that particular ism at the forefront of everything I do, my opposition to other entrenched social isms, like racism, classism, and sizeism also plays a significant role in how I perceive and report on the world. It wasn’t until I went vegan four years ago, however, that my consciousness was raised about another ism—speciesism.¹¹⁴

First, this paragraph establishes *Bust* as a media organization explicitly concerned with injustice, primarily feminism, but interestingly, without explicitly defining feminism as an ideology that is inherently concerned with other axes of

¹¹⁴ Emily Rems, “Is Speciesism an Issue that Matters to You,” *BUST*, accessed February 21, 2016. <http://bust.com/movies/10585-is-speciesism-an-issue-that-matters-to-you.html>

oppression.¹¹⁵ Rather, she separates them by saying feminism comes first and other isms *also* play a significant role in her subjectivity. Like selling vegan products, this author proposes speciesism as an issue feminists should consider, but not as deeply intertwined with sexism and other oppressions in itself.

Another post explicitly discusses food and gender in celebration of vegan men. Entitled “Vegan Guys and Why They’re Awesome,” this post names prominent vegan men after National Public Radio ran a segment on “Heganism,” (a presumably more masculine term for veganism when men do not consume animals and animal products). The post pulls quotes from NPR’s interviews and opens by making connections between meat and masculinity:

It’s no secret that the western culture of masculinity puts pressure on guys to be over-the-top macho—an attitude which manifests itself in many ways, including cat-calling and a whole bunch of other unpleasant stuff.

Just think about the show *Man vs. Food*. The name says it all: Adam Richman, the star, doesn’t just have to eat every meal, he has to *conquer* it.

Masculine culture dictates that these guys are “real men” because they treat their food as something to be beaten. Even better if it’s an animal, especially if he shot and killed it himself. Uber-masculine!

Nevertheless, eating can often be viewed as an assertion of dominance over the (often) deep fried animal. Eating meat is also a rejection of “feminine” foods like salads, but let’s not get started on how problematic it is that women are expected to subsist on iceberg lettuce.¹¹⁶

The author offers the readers an indictment of violent masculinities and directly calls violence against animals into question. She points out that foods like meat and

¹¹⁵ Recall chapters 2 and 3 for an in depth discussion of the connection between speciesism and feminism.

¹¹⁶ Emma Tilden, “Vegan Guys and Why They’re Awesome,” *BUST*, accessed February 21, 2016. <http://bust.com/eat-me/12669-vegan-guys-and-why-theyre-awesome.html>

vegetables are problematically gendered, but interestingly does not go into why women might avoid eating meat. She begins to allude to problems with expecting women to subsist on “feminine foods” but stops short of making claims of what it means for women to avoid animal flesh. This is the only post I found that explicitly celebrates veganism for its connection to feminism—and it’s a celebration of men.

Another post is critical of the use of animal bodies in feminist art projects and invokes comparisons between women and animals, but stops short of linking to food practices:

While men have called us pigs and feminists decried our status as just meat for decades, Hatry has actually created that reality -- making housewives from hogs.

But I'm tired of the pig analogy. I'm tired of the meat analogy. Get over it. Move on. Using meat as material might have had shock value in '64, but with all the violence I see, we all see daily, I don't want to be desensitized anymore than I already am -- I want to be resensitized. Find a way to express yourself without treading on our greatest attribute, that women are supposed to have in spades -- compassion. Animals were slaughtered to provide the raw materials for this Art. These are not slaughterhouse leftovers; Hatry's website has photos of her skinning pigs. I'm willing to bet none of them died of old age. This is not about being or not being a vegetarian or an animal lover. It's no more okay to kill an animal and call it Art, than it is to hold a dog fight and call it Entertainment.¹¹⁷

While this post begins to make some connections between women and animals, and even goes so far as to make a claim for compassion, the author seems disinterested in critiquing the larger system at work here—even casually. Still, this post functions as yet another call to *Bust* readers to at least consider the well-being of nonhuman animals as a tenet of their feminism.

¹¹⁷ Debbie, “Lipstick on a Pig: Is Heidi Hatry’s Work Art or Animal Cruelty?” *BUST*, accessed February 21, 2016. <http://bust.com/arts/1918-lipstick-on-a-pig-is-heidi-hatrys-work-art-or-animal-cruelty.html>

The volume of posts promoting animal-related nonprofits and *Bust's* enthusiasm for vegan commodities seems to imply that *Bust* readers are, indeed, at the very least interested in animal welfare and, at most, that many *Bust* readers are vegan. But, with a majority of posts in my sample selling vegan commodities—as, implicitly, commodities that should interest *Bust* feminists—*Bust* reduces veganism and feminism so much that they are isolated from each other. Still, the intention is clear: animal rights and veganism are “ethical” and “cruelty-free” consumption practices that are of interest to “Busties.” As one post title put it, *Bust* wants its readers to “Get Hip to Animals and Get Hip Doing It.”¹¹⁸ The next chapter aims to discuss the implications of *Bust's* pro-capitalist and neoliberal commodity activism and this representation of feminism’s relationship to veganism and animal activism in the public sphere.

¹¹⁸ “Get Hip to Animals and Get Hip Doing It,” *BUST*, accessed February 21, 2016. <http://bust.com/general/3247-get-hip-to-animals-and-get-hip-doing-ithtml.html>

CHAPTER 5 PROGRESS AND PITFALLS

The hip, alternative aesthetic of *Bust* is gaining popularity in the mainstream as representations of hipster aesthetics rise in mainstream media. *Bust's* appeal to the mainstream is strategic and limited, which helps it to maintain its position as alternative media, but not so radical as to be underground. This can make *Bust's* alt aesthetic and social change rhetoric easily absorbed into popular culture, as the format is familiar with celebrities, recipes, fashion spreads, etc. *Bust's* position serves to support a multiplicity of social change oriented identities and in doing so fosters alternate readings of dominant ideologies (such as consumerism). However, *Bust* also tends to toe a somewhat conservative line that has the effect of reinforcing the very hegemonic ideologies it purports to critique. The subcultural representation in *Bust* serves to clarify how alternative media is important in the creation of social change-oriented counterpublics, but, couched in consumerism, makes for an ambivalent relationship between feminism and animal activism and carries less weight for the animal liberation movement overall. Any potential for disruptions in carnism and resistance to speciesism that are present in some of the historical examples provided in chapter three are watered down in the quasi-vegan and animal activist discourses *Bust* provides for its readers. That said, the packaging of veganism and animal activism as commodity activism does contribute to progressive politics in the construction of counterpublics which can have implications for feminist and animal liberation movements on a larger scale. This chapter offers an exploration of the results of my rhetorical analysis in the previous chapter, and a discussion of the implications for feminist movements overall. I section this

discussion into two parts: (1) The potential and pitfalls of *Bust's* commodity activism and (2) *Bust's* collusion with humane movement rhetoric and the implications for feminism.

As discussed in chapter four, *Bust* represents and reinforces subcultural trends in hipsterdom, including popularized associations with veganism and alternative consumption practices. There are many instances of how countercultural trends move in and out of mainstream favor over time. By way of illustration, we have seen countercultural trends gain momentum in popular culture through identification with the figure of the hipster, which has led to a recent uptick in scholarship on this popular phenomenon. That said, most scholarship concentrates on the aesthetic choices and consumption practices of hipsters. But what of their politics? Hipsters are assumed to be left-leaning, but what does it mean when mainstream cooptation of hipster aesthetics and consumption practices includes feminism and veganism? What I found in *Bust* seems, indeed, in conversation with mainstream representations of feminism and animal activism, but lacking in complexity and diversity. Instead, *Bust* offers readers ways to buy into feminist and hipster identities by way of vegan commodification, but separates feminism from animal activism, reinforcing speciesism in some instances by promoting a vague notion of the link between ethical consumption and “humane meat” discourses. As I argue in later sections of this chapter, ignoring speciesism compromises their feminist politics.

Following scholars of commodity activism, this chapter aims neither to wholly condemn nor endorse consumerism. Considering Mukherjee and Banet-Weiser's

claim that “[t]he proliferation of commodity activism serves as a trenchant reminder that there is no ‘outside’ of the logics of contemporary capitalism,”¹¹⁹ my intentions with this research are to explore potential as it exists within the current state of consumer-capitalism without reducing the impact of *Bust* to a dichotomy of good versus bad. In that way, this discussion focuses on *Bust’s* representation of the relationship between feminism and animal activism rather than the impact of consumer-capitalism on feminism—which undoubtedly is a significant and a worthy discussion in the context of *Bust*. Similarly, this thesis politically sits between readings of *Bust* as “‘radical’ or ‘not radical enough’ depending on its reading audience and reading context.”¹²⁰ As Groeneveld reminds us in her own research, “*Bust* is not a radical or socialist feminist publication, and to criticize the periodical for something that it does not set out to do in the first place would be a straw man argument.”¹²¹ Following Groeneveld, I understand that *Bust* is not a vegan feminist publication; my interest in *Bust* is regarding what discourses about the connection between feminist and animal activist movements are being made available in popular feminist media, and the implications of those representations—holding space for both the positives and negatives.

¹¹⁹ Roopali Mukherjee and Sarah Banet-Weiser, “Introduction: Commodity Activism in Neoliberal Times,” *Commodity Activism: Cultural Resistance in Neoliberal Times*, ed. Roopali Mukherjee, et al., (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 3.

¹²⁰ Groeneveld, “Be a Feminist or Just Dress Like One,” 186.

¹²¹ Groeneveld, “Be a Feminist or Just Dress Like One,” 188.

Commodity Activism and The Importance of Subcultural Counterpublics for Social Movements

The intersection between subcultural and public sphere theories provides a way to understand how discursive publics, like those created by alternative and subcultural media, contribute to the formation of collective identities and how those then foster social networks which reinforce lasting resistance in individuals. Sociologist Eiko Ikegami contends that “[a] book [or a magazine] has considerable potential to form a public” and adds that “[t]he involvement of human agency is critical for the creation of publics.”¹²² The kind of commodity activism marketed by *Bust* might be considered an attempt at directing the agency of readers in an effort to build a counterpublic and social network based on justice-oriented consumption. Commodity activism, like that which brings feminism and veganism together (though not intersectionally) in *Bust*, for example, can serve as a vehicle for mass education in a consumer-capitalist culture. As discussed later, though, this puts those using the strategy at risk of reducing social justice movements into neoliberal, identity-driven consumerism which sidesteps structural oppressions, often reinforcing racialized and classed movement identities and practices. In what follows, I review the ways that consumption practices can serve the formation of a consumer-based feminist counterpublic that includes animal activism, and then I return to the question posed by Vasile Stanescu regarding the relationship between veganism and feminism to

¹²² Eiko Ikegami, "A Sociological Theory of Publics: Identity and Culture as Emergent Properties in Networks," *Social Research* 67.4 (2000), 1002.

address the shortcomings of *Bust*'s representation of animal activism in that counterpublic.

Identity formation is a key component of social movements. Because of this, consumption practices, and their relationship to identity, assist in the formation of these publics. Ikegami brings consumption and public sphere theory together recognizing that “displays of personal consumption often stimulate the emergence of many micro unofficial publics.”¹²³ She employs a metaphor of interpersonal gossip as a way to explain how these discursive publics play out. For example, if a neighbor makes an expensive purchase and the community begins to discuss the meaning of the purchase: “In these micropublics, people will discuss, evaluate, and critique the tastes and spending habits of those who stand out.”¹²⁴ I extend this tenet of her theory to the sociocultural policing that occurs within subcultures. The visible and ideological markers that unite a collective identity are reinforced in these counterpublics and employed as consumer vehicles in alternative media, such as *Bust*, to foster a subcultural feminist community that not only *looks* alternative to the mainstream, but also enables those in that community to self-identify as “alternative.” For hipster feminism, this means promoting consumption practices alternative to the mainstream (like vegan commodities) through linkage with tenets of the third-wave. Ikegami’s public sphere theory is apt for an analysis of animal activism in popular feminist media because it assists in the creation of, as she puts it, a “multiplicity of publics.” It is crucial to “examine the dynamics of

¹²³ Ikegami, "A Sociological Theory of Publics," 1001.

¹²⁴ Ikegami, "A Sociological Theory of Publics," 1001.

interrelationships of publics in the social field to understand the dynamics of emerging cultural properties.”¹²⁵ *Bust*, by linking feminism with vegan and animal activism, provides a micropublic for vegan feminists to interact. Ikegami explains how “the changing structures of the relationships of multiple ‘publics’ affects the process of forming collective cultural identities.”¹²⁶ These dynamics affect the way counterpublics and consumerism work to create and reinforce the demographics of particular cultural groups and the perception of collective identities (i.e. the “face” of a movement). This is important to evaluate because as many social movement theorists have pointed out, social networks and collective identities are crucial to fostering sustained animal (and other) activism.

As discussed in chapter four, hipsterdom as a collective identity is commonly associated with veganism in both sub- and popular culture. Further, as hipsterdom is touted as “the culmination of all the counter-cultural, individualistic, artistic, competitive, apathetic, rage-filled rebellions’ that pre-date it,”¹²⁷ it is pertinent to look at the relationship between subculture and veganism to explore how subcultural identity promotes sustained resistance to carnism. Sociologist Elizabeth Cherry discovered in her qualitative study on veganism as a cultural movement that vegans who identified with the punk subculture were more likely to stay vegan and to be “strict vegans,” meaning they rarely strayed from the vegan framework in consumption compared to non punk-identified vegans who formed “idiosyncratic,

¹²⁵ Ikegami, “A Sociological Theory of Publics,” 1012.

¹²⁶ Ikegami, “A Sociological Theory of Publics,” 992.

¹²⁷ Cronin et al., “Covert Distinction,” 7.

personal definitions of veganism” and “[i]n doing so, they maintained their vegan identity, even while eating non-vegan food.”¹²⁸ This is attributed to the social networks formed within punk subculture in which one can find many peers supportive of veganism. Cherry rightly identifies that the intersection of vegan and punk social networks illustrates Ikegami’s theory of publics, wherein two previously separate publics come together to create an emerging cultural property—vegan punks.¹²⁹ Pushing this research into the realm of feminist media, it is useful to examine how effective *Bust* might be at not only creating feminist counterpublics, but also at fostering multiplicitous identities embedded in liberation politics. *Bust*’s significant subcultural (including punk and hipster) appeal, its explicitly feminist position, and its inclusion of veganism and animal activism has the potential to create a subcultural counterpublic that fosters a meaningful link between feminism and animal activism. Further, *Bust*’s inclusion of vegan and animal activism topics follow long intersecting histories of both feminists and politicized subcultures considering nonhuman animals in their politics, though these connections tend to be glossed over through their own commodification in the online content of *Bust*.

Vegan Commodity Activism in *Bust*: Intentions and Implications

As explained in the introduction to *Commodity Activism*, historically, mass consumer movements have significantly impacted collective politics. Consumption practices have the power to strengthen the subjectivities of oppressed groups and

¹²⁸ Elizabeth Cherry, "I was a Teenage Vegan: Motivation and Maintenance of Lifestyle Movements," *Sociological Inquiry* 85.1 (2015), 160.

¹²⁹ Cherry, "I was a Teenage Vegan," 162.

“facilitate broader activist impulses that were geared to political goals and aspirations larger than those limited to individual desires and subjectivities.”¹³⁰

Following Victoria de Grazia, Mukherjee and Banet-Weiser explain how mass consumption “‘liberated’ women from a stifling domesticity, encouraging new independent gendered subjectivities and, in some situations, subverting traditional relations in both public and private spheres.”¹³¹ This shift in capitalism and consumer practices provided space for women to engage in the public sphere (such as with the rise of the department store). With consumer movement history in mind during my research with *Bust*, I found moments of positive intervention for the feminist movement’s engagement with animal activism through commodity activism, but also became keenly aware of the limitations of this relationship.

Primarily, the drive for commodity activism, the close ties consumer practices have to the construction of identities, and the rise of commodity activism in mainstream and alternative media draw attention to a desire in consumers to know what is unethical about consumer culture and a desire to navigate it ethically.¹³² Like the recent rise in consumer demand for “humane meat” which I discuss further below, the focus in *Bust* on making ethical consumer decisions signifies a collective intention to learn about the production of commodities and make consumer choices based on perceptions of what is ethically produced. This focus can create a sense of

¹³⁰ Mukherjee and Banet-Weiser, “Introduction,” 7.

¹³¹ Mukherjee and Banet-Weiser, “Introduction,” 6-7.

¹³² This is not to say that identification with social movements comes only through participation in commodity activism, surely consciousness-raising occurs in all directions. Here, I only focus on this trajectory in alignment with *Bust*’s role in fostering vegan feminist counterpublics through commodity activism.

direction based on social justice and thus allow a critical reflection on consumption in relation to the greater good. *Bust's* role in promoting veganism and animal activism is significant in that way, as “[p]opular media retain significant power as crucial sites for the domestication and containment of cultural imaginaries as political protest.”¹³³ *Bust's* commitment to independent producers and makers of goods and art illustrates a desire to navigate capitalism in new ways that resonates with the subcultural values of hipsters. Further, commodity activism like that found in *Bust* provides a glimpse into “the troubling ironies of anti-capitalist resistance that is increasingly orchestrated and managed by capitalist media institutions.”¹³⁴

With more than just good intentions, *Bust*, as a feminist business, is in a position to navigate the space between social change and profitability, between feminism and consumerism. Lynn Comella, in her research on sex-positive feminist businesses, reports that feminist business owners are finding new ways as entrepreneurs to navigate consumer capitalism in an effort to spread feminist values (in this case, sex positivity) and educate the public about their mission. She writes about socially conscious businesses:

The fact that money talks as loudly as it does implies that consumer-capitalism is a language that many people—at least in the US—understand. This is perhaps one way to explain the recent explosion of socially conscious businesses that strategically combine not-for-profit sensibilities with the logic of the marketplace. Not only does it make good fiscal sense to approach social reform as a business, but social entrepreneurs are tapping into a way of organizing the world that most people are familiar with.¹³⁵

¹³³ Mukherjee and Banet-Weiser, “Introduction,” 4.

¹³⁴ Mukherjee and Banet-Weiser, “Introduction,” 4.

¹³⁵ Lynn Comella, “Changing the World One Orgasm at a Time: Sex Positive Retail Activism,” *Commodity Activism: Cultural Resistance in Neoliberal Times*, Ed. Roopali Mukherjee, et al., (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 149.

Comella's interviewees, feminist business owners, see the marketplace as "a set of norms and a system of exchange" that, in a consumer-culture, people understand and are comfortable with.¹³⁶ Thus, feminist-owned adult stores "may in fact be a highly effective means of providing sexual education and encouragement to people who might otherwise not have access to such things outside of the context of the marketplace."¹³⁷ *Bust*, too, provides feminist messages through consumerism by tying feminist ideals (including sex positivity) to commodities. Following Comella, I agree that in a neoliberal and consumer-capitalist context, this approach "challenges any simple bifurcation between sexual commerce and politics, profitability and social change, and feminism and postfeminism."¹³⁸ This is where I see the most potential with *Bust's* commodity activism; *Bust* provides information about veganism and encourages animal activism to an audience already primed for political protest through their feminist identities.

The trouble with *Bust's* commodity activism, however, is that despite the best of intentions, neoliberal consumer practices become less about collective movements for social change and more about individual responsibilities, identity, and "the reflexive project of the self,"¹³⁹ in other words, self-branding as feminist and hipster consumers. Though people might come to consciousness and participate in

¹³⁶For a contemporary critique of the commodification of feminist movements, see Ziesler 2016.

¹³⁷ Comella, "Changing the World One Orgasm at a Time", 250.

¹³⁸ Comella, "Changing the World One Orgasm at a Time", 251.

¹³⁹ Alison Hearne, "Brand Me Activist," *Commodity Activism: Cultural Resistance in Neoliberal Times*, ed. by Roopali Mukherjee et.al., (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 23.

activism from myriad avenues—from theory to organized protests—the rhetoric of commodity activism turns the practice of feminism and veganism onto the self rather than towards structural oppressions. This is not to say that one might *only* become politicized or engage in activism at the consumer level. Contemporary activists, and presumably some readers of *Bust*, certainly engage political organizing outside of consumerism that engages on a deeper level with structures of oppression.

However, *Bust's* promotion of vegan products seems to primarily act as a way to build and practice one's feminist hipster identity rather than as a consistent and integral component of feminist politics. It is in this way that veganism, and feminism, are reduced to the realm of countercultural identity praxis in the pages of *Bust*. This reduction not only erases actual animals and real environmental consequences of factory farming, but reinforces an idea that veganism and animal activism are mainly for the hip and privileged, and implicitly, the white and middle class. *Bust* corroborates this by excluding promotion of any vegan commodities made by vegans of color or any animal activism from racialized or decolonial perspectives. *Bust* includes the promotion of many vegan books by white, middle-class, celebrity authors like Alicia Silverstone and Mayim Bialik, but excludes authors like Catriona Rueda Esquibel who writes *Decolonize your Diet* or Queen Afua who writes *Sacred Woman: A Guide to Healing the Feminine Body, Mind, and Spirit*. These books explicitly include racialized and decolonial perspectives in their promotion of vegan diets. Harper explains how popular media centers a “white post-racial vegan epistemology” which, since race-neutral spaces do not exist, actually reflects a collective history of “white middle-class people's relationship to consumption, spaces

of power, and the production of what is ethical.”¹⁴⁰ Harper argues that race-neutral veganism, as found in *Bust*, perpetuates the notion that veganism is attainable only within the realm of this socio-economic and cultural class—specifically reinforcing the view that veganism is a white or middle-class practice.

Bust, overall, seems to lack an intersectional feminist perspective, but as illustrated above, that is certainly true of representations of animal activism. *Bust*'s use of third-wave discourses of choice and feminism-as-lifestyle presents animal activism as of interest to *Bust*'s brand of feminism, but not as intersectionally linked to feminism or social justice projects at the structural level. Rather, *Bust* positions animal activism as of concern to feminists through vague notions of what is “ethical” or “cruelty-free” with no explanation of what those terms mean. Moreover, *Bust* is silent on the fact that many vegan products are made at the expense of human workers (through egregious labor practices) or the environment, and these products may not, in reality, be cruelty-free or ethically produced. *Bust*'s inclusion of non-vegan products and recipes implies that *Bust* takes a *laissez-faire* stance on veganism overall, and implies that the “ethical” consumption of animal products is a practice of interest to feminists as well. This non-committal stance reproduces narratives associated with the humane meat movement. In the next section, I employ ecofeminist and critical animal studies theories to explore how *Bust* conflates veganism with humane meat discourses and how that conflation draws attention to inconsistencies in their feminism.

¹⁴⁰ Breeze Harper, “Going Beyond the Normative White ‘Post-Racial’ Vegan Epistemology,” in *Taking Food Public: Redefining Foodways in a Changing World*, ed. Psyche A. Williams-Forsson and Carole Counihan, (New York: Routledge, 2012), 159.

Bust Feminism and the Humane Myth

Several articles in my data set were promoting animal products, but specifically mentioned humane conditions, small farms, and even employed terms like “lovingly”¹⁴¹ and “harvest”¹⁴² when referencing the raising and slaughtering of farm animals respectively. This language makes excuses for and shrouds the violence inherent in farming animals in euphemisms—a function of carnism. Consistent throughout *Bust*, the authors are speaking in a colloquial and personal style about commodities rather than engaging in a discussion of factory farming directly. Still, they include recommendations for consuming animals ethically, while ignoring arguments, like those made in critical animal studies and elsewhere, in regards to animals having a right to their own lives. Another post enthusiastically promotes the Certified Humane App which informs users of particular animal products that are “certified humane,” meaning: “the full ethical treatment of animals from birth through slaughter.”¹⁴³ By including discussions on the egregious treatment of nonhuman animals in factory farms, alongside the promotion of vegan commodities as “ethical,” *Bust* acknowledges that the status quo production of animal products is both unethical and inhumane, yet maintains the stance that veganism is merely a personal choice—if one should indulge in animal products, one

¹⁴¹ Evelyn Chapman, “Raw Milk or No Raw Milk. That is the Questions, Here are some Answers,” *BUST*, accessed February 21, 2016. <http://bust.com/eat-me/14043-raw-milk-or-no-raw-milk-that-is-the-question-here-are-some-answers.html>

¹⁴² Sonia Edwards, “Pin-Up Girls And Chicken Farming? You Betcha!” *BUST*, accessed February 7, 2016. <http://bust.com/style/12827-pin-up-girls-and-chicken-farming-you-betcha.html>

¹⁴³ Kari Belshein, “Certified Humane Releases Cruelty-Free App,” *BUST*, accessed February 21, 2016. <http://bust.com/general/8980-certified-humane-releases-cruelty-free-app.html>

should make an effort to “go the humane route if you can.”¹⁴⁴ In this way, *Bust* invokes “humane” and “ethical” for both veganism and carnism—effectively collapsing the irreconcilable differences that exist between individuals who fundamentally believe that the exploitation of animals is never justified and those that do.

To reiterate, *Bust* vaguely links animal activism to feminism by adopting the rhetoric of the “humane meat” movement, conflating veganism and humane meat under an ethical umbrella. This presents animal welfare as something of concern to *Bust* feminists, but couches veganism in terms of individual conscientious choice rather than a feminist imperative tied to the liberation of women. This approach, both in *Bust* and in the humane movement, minimizes the innate violence involved in farming animals and instead substitutes a sort of superficial, guilt-absolving caring for liberation. *Bust* makes it clear in their posts that animal activism, and more generally, animal welfare, is of interest to their readers, but these are subsumed by *Bust*’s neoliberal and third-wave rhetoric of choice that evades any discussion regarding animals *themselves*. *Bust*’s lack of intersectional perspectives in their commodity activism, and vague, inconsistent use of terms like “ethical” and “cruelty-free” is more in line with mainstream media representations of animal activism—welfare-based and brand/commodity-focused—veganism as a compassionate *option* rather than an ethical *imperative*. Stanescu writes of the humane movement:

The emphasis is less on the reality of the animals’ actual lives (mutilations, castration, forced breeding, genetic breeding, etc.), as on

¹⁴⁴ Chef Rossi, “Where’s the Beef?” *BUST Magazine*, Jan/Feb 2012, 29

the “brand” name quality of the product, advertised as more “local” and more “compassionate.” This reason is why the emphasis is on the purchasing of “happy” meat instead of a firm boycott of factory farms: The ultimate goal is to increase the sales of these farmers rather than to decrease production or consumption of factory-farmed animals. As a business model, such a strategy has been remarkably successful. However, from the standpoint of concern for animals (or, for that matter, the environment), the benefit is significantly less clear.¹⁴⁵

Stanescu reminds feminists and other readers that regardless of how “humane” the farming of animals might be it all ends with someone unwillingly losing their life.

Moreover, it also means that prior to slaughter, animals must still undergo stressful events necessary for the farm to profit like transport, branding/docking, and, most poignant for feminism, forced breeding (decidedly out of step with tenets of feminism which uphold bodily autonomy and sexual freedom as core values). Stanescu counters the rhetoric of the humane meat movement, as is expressed in *Bust*, by unmasking the violence inherent in animal farming. *Bust*, like the humane movement, utilizes “expressions of care for animals [that] serve to mask the simple reality that for the entirety of their lives, these animals live as only buyable and sellable commodities, who exist wholly at the whim of their ‘owners.’”¹⁴⁶ Though *Bust* draws attention to issues of animal welfare through the promotion of vegan commodities and animal activism, their conflation with the humane movement further separates animal liberation from feminism by advocating a practice that is inherently inconsistent with feminist values. Ultimately, this reinforces hegemonic ideologies of

¹⁴⁵ Stanescu, “Why ‘Loving’ Animals Is Not Enough: A Response to Kathy Rudy, Locavorism, and The Marketing of ‘Humane’ Meat,” 107.

¹⁴⁶ Stanescu, “Why ‘Loving’ Animals Is Not Enough,” 108.

carnism, speciesism, and the erasure of actual lived experiences of nonhuman animals. *Bust's* significant inclusion of vegan and animal activism topics does, in one reading, continue the history of feminist media's inclusion of animal issues; however, their reduction of animal activism to one of personal choice and employment of humane movement rhetoric overshadows any resistance to carnism and instead maintains speciesism by shrouding the inherent violence necessary in farming animals in euphemisms of love, care, and sympathy.

CHAPTER 6 RADICAL FEMINIST MEDIA, MOVING FROM SYMPATHY TO EMPATHY, AND AN EPISTEMOLOGICAL REVOLUTION

Loving women is an improvement over hating them, kindness to animals is an improvement over cruelty, but neither has freed them nor recognizes their existence on their own terms.

--Catharine MacKinnon, *Women's Lives, Men's Laws*

With mainstream media trending both feminist and vegan identities, the potential for widespread crossover between mainstream and countercultural public spheres is a timely and salient issue. My intention to examine and draw out the potential of feminist media to spread awareness of the plight of animals, an oppression anchored to and deeply intertwined with all oppressions, was made with the aim of harnessing the power of popular feminist media to balance ideology and business in a consumer-capitalist culture. Feminist new media, in particular, has proven successful at consciousness-raising and reaching far outside the feminist blogosphere. Andi Zeisler, critic and founder of feminist magazine *Bitch*, notes: “[n]ew media have started memes that percolate in blogs and spread beyond them, seeping into mainstream discourse.”¹⁴⁷ This is where my research seeks to both find the potential of including animal activism in the rising power of new feminist media, while tracing the historical link between animal activism and feminism into the changing media landscapes of the 21st century. I started with *Bust* as a case study because of its popularity and its relationship with subcultures, also important for

¹⁴⁷ Andi Zeisler, “New Media, New Feminism: Evolving Feminist Analysis and Activism in Print, on the Web and Beyond,” in *Renewing Feminisms: Radical Narratives, Fantasies and Futures in Media Studies*, ed. Helen, Thornham and Elke Weissmann, (I.B. Tauris, 2013), 180.

social movements, and its significant amount of vegan content. What I found has implications for both the animal liberation and the feminist movements.

The vegan and animal activism discourses *Bust* offers readers appears to be depoliticized, though the discourses represent and seem intended as new ways to ethically navigate consumer capitalism via commodity activism. However, the language *Bust* uses leans more on the trendiness of veganism rather than the impact on the lives of individual animals. Additionally, *Bust* content only offers what Harper calls “post-racial veganism” in these discourses. Combined with trendy commodity activism, *Bust*’s vegan and animal activism content reflects and reinforces that notion that veganism is strictly the stomping ground of the privileged. This representation is aligned with mainstream media’s representation of middle-class white people as the sole face of the animal liberation movement.¹⁴⁸

With the promise of feminist new media’s impact on popular culture, and *Bust*’s inclusion of language that implies a feminist imperative to care for nonhuman animals, *Bust* reveals the potential of feminist media to raise consciousness about vegan feminist movements, but only scratches the surface of a long-standing feminist engagement with animal activism. By wrapping their inclusion of animal activism in language that implies caring for animals without taking a consistent stance on animal liberation, *Bust*’s feminism is tied to expressions of sympathy for animals, yet is distanced from political obligations to animal activism. Ecofeminist Lori Gruen calls for a move from sympathy to entangled empathy in our relationships with nonhumans. Gruen writes:

¹⁴⁸ It is assumed they do it, too, with the feminist movement, though it would take a different analysis to empirically determine this.

Sympathy involves maintaining one's own attitudes and adding to them a concern for another. Sympathy for another is felt from an outside perspective, the third person perspective. I can feel sympathy for another's plight, even pity, but remain rather removed from that plight.

Empathy, however, recognizes connection with and understanding of the circumstances of the other. This understanding may not be complete and often is in need of revisions. However, the goal is to try and take in as much about another's situation and perspective as possible.¹⁴⁹

By arguing that sympathy is not enough, Gruen attempts to move us from a more superficial expression of care to an attentive and deeply intertwined relationship with nonhuman animals that has implications for all intersectional justice movements. Gruen goes on to complicate the notion of empathy, being careful not to proscribe it as a universal panacea for social justice or a kind of magic that enables us to fully understand the experiences of others. Instead, she explores the potential of moving from a place of sympathy for some nonhuman animals and pushes for a deeper ethic that encompasses and recognizes that our lives are already entangled in complicated ways with the more than human world and, thus, all nonhuman animals. Gruen advocates for an intentional rejection of the psychological distancing required for expressing sympathy, and for pushing ourselves to blur the arbitrary dichotomy separating us from them. *Bust's* expression of sympathy for animals as illustrated by their inclusion of animal activist topics and humane meat rhetoric is reflective of mainstream feminism's removal from the plight of nonhuman animals. The result is a heavy ambivalence towards the political obligation of feminists to take up the

¹⁴⁹ Lori Gruen, *Entangled Empathy: An Alternative Ethic for Our Relationships with Animals*, (New York: Lantern Books, 2014), 44-45.

concerns of the animal liberation movement. This ambivalence compromises the effectiveness of feminist movements and challenges feminist epistemology.

Like the feminist media I surveyed in the third chapter, and following contemporary ecofeminists and critical animal studies scholars and activists, *Bust's*, and mainstream feminism's, ambivalence towards veganism and animal activism reveals speciesism and weakens the potential of liberation work. Following a long history of oppressed groups including women being aligned with and compared to animals as a tool of oppression, early feminist movements set out to assert that "women are intellects and have rational minds—*like* men and *unlike* animals."¹⁵⁰ Antiracist movements, too, have often invoked humanity in campaigning for equal rights.¹⁵¹ The resistance to lifting nonhuman animals into our social justice movements is in response to a deeply internalized and violently employed belief that nonhuman animals somehow deserve little moral consideration in comparison to the human. To reiterate, as discussed in chapter two, the human/nonhuman binary and the resulting speciesism provides the anchor to which all oppressions are tethered: racism, sexism, classism, etc. By including so much vegan content, *Bust* provides discourses to its readers that *caring* about animal activism *should* be of interest to feminists, but stops short of connecting it with feminism. As mentioned before, *Bust* is not a vegan magazine, and to argue it should be so would be flawed. However, in the interest of what discourses about feminism and animal activism are being made

¹⁵⁰ Adams and Donovan, *Animals and Women*, 2.

¹⁵¹ Aph Ko, "Addressing Racism Requires Addressing the Situation of Animals," *Aph-roism*, October 26, 2015, accessed November 3, 2016. <https://aphro-ism.com/2015/10/26/addressing-racism-requires-addressing-the-situation-of-animals/>

available in popular culture, *Bust's* relationship to animal activism, and its proximity to feminism are significant. For feminist media to be more effective at growing sustainable movements, we must consider what we might be missing, where our ideologies might be inconsistent. Referring back to those connections between human oppression and speciesism I outlined in chapter two, I argue that the inclusion of nonhuman animals in our feminism, and represented in our feminist media, will get us closer to reaching the liberatory goals of the feminist project.

Popular feminist media's relationship with animal activism is fraught with ambivalence towards nonhuman animals. In reference to a post on popular blog *Everyday Feminism* that ineptly attempted to address the question of whether feminists must be vegan, concluding that feminism was not connected to veganism and therefore feminists were not obliged to engage politically with animal liberation movements, activist Aph Ko writes:

There's almost something tragic and comical about activists failing to realize the blatant missing piece to the activist puzzle: that your own oppression is anchored to your citizenship as a "sub-human" or "animal" in contemporary society. This is what makes racism, sexism, and all other "isms" possible. These "isms" are expressions of being labeled "less-than-human." Therefore, this isn't just a race-based or gender-based issue, it's simultaneously one of species as well.¹⁵²

Ko's comment on the failure of social justice movements and movement media (both animal liberation and feminist) to make meaningful connections to the root of oppression is poignant and timely when both feminist and animal liberation movements are being given significant attention in mainstream media. Ko calls for

¹⁵² Aph Ko, "Why Animal Liberation Requires an Epistemological Revolution," *Aph-roism*. February 24, 2016, accessed May 1, 2016. <https://aphro-ism.com/2016/02/24/why-animal-liberation-requires-an-epistemological-revolution/>

an “epistemological revolution” and argues for both feminist and animal liberation movements to reject using Eurocentric logic to dismantle the structures of oppression that logic has created.¹⁵³

Bust’s inconsistent representation of animal activism as an “ethical” consumer choice, its exclusion of racialized perspectives on animal activism, and its perpetuation of speciesism through “humane meat” rhetoric maintains the Eurocentric logic Ko is rejecting. *Bust’s* content both reflects and reinforces mainstream feminism and mainstream representations of veganism. These discourses fail to recognize that the root of oppressive logics that exert violence over all bodies is the human/animal divide by way of speciesism.¹⁵⁴ I recommend that both mainstream feminist and animal liberation movements center more radical and complex perspectives that might not be as easily coopted by consumerism. In agreement with ecofeminists who have written extensively calling for the ethical consideration of nonhuman animals, I call for feminism to consider humans’ relationship with animals as an imperative in our movements. Emily Clark, in her article in the special “Animals” issue of *Hypatia* writes:

feminism is perhaps best positioned to take on questions of the animal. This is manifest in feminist theory’s commitment to the materiality of the body, to attending to those bodies most vulnerable to abuse, to exposing the logic of exclusion and the politics of abjection, and perhaps most important, in its commitment to thinking about, and critiquing its own participation in, the ethics of representation and “speaking for” others. In both theory and practice,

¹⁵³ For more perspectives on colonialism and animal activism see Robinson 2014, Tallbear 2015, Deckha 2008.

¹⁵⁴ Animal liberation movements do this in their movements, Ko argues, through the shallow and sometimes violent employment of racialized oppression by animal activist media.

feminism has the greatest capacity to take on what is one of the most ethically and intellectually challenging issues of our time.¹⁵⁵

As illustrated in chapter three, feminist media has a long history of including animal topics and offers diverse feminist perspectives on various tenets of animal activism. *Bust* continues that history but positions itself too close to the status quo. Recently, and alongside the rise of feminist and vegan discourses in mainstream media, more radical feminist thought has been holding space in feminist media landscapes. Relatively popular blogs like *Sistah Vegan*, *Aphro-ism*, *Opinioness of the World*, and popular podcasts like *Vegan Warrior Princess Attack* and *Citizen Radio*, while still decidedly not mainstream, are gaining traction within both feminist and animal liberation movements—signifying renewed energy at the intersection of both movements. Feminist movements must center the perspectives found in radical feminist new media and promote alternative perspectives of veganism and animal activism outside of the realm of so-called ethical consumption to build movements that understand all oppressions as “fused together and embedded within the soil of the terrain.” “Through this,” Ko writes, “animal liberation will be a byproduct of our epistemological revolution.”¹⁵⁶ Ko’s work speaks most often at the intersection of anti-racist and animal liberation movements calling for each to simultaneously consider how “the human-animal divide is the ideological bedrock underlying the framework of white supremacy,”¹⁵⁷ but her theories, following Deckha’s on the

¹⁵⁵ Emily Clark, “The Animal’ and ‘The Feminist,’” *Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy* 27.3 (2012): 517.

¹⁵⁶ Ko, “Why Animal Liberation Requires an Epistemological Revolution,” *Aph-roism*.

¹⁵⁷ Ko, “Addressing Racism Requires Addressing the Situation of Animals,” *Aph-roism*.

subhuman and informed by black feminist thought, offer a new map for feminist movements to use in organizing intersectional resistance to oppressive ideologies. By taking a closer look at the deeply embedded hierarchies that inform the logics of oppression against which feminist movements actively build resistance, I return to Stanescu's position that feminism must not collude with the marketing of the humane movement, as *Bust* does in its promotion of both veganism and animal products. Speciesism and animal exploitation are fundamentally in disagreement with the projects of liberation that feminist movements have historically organized. In light of that disagreement, feminist media, and the popular feminist movement as a whole, must take a more consistent stance on veganism and animal activism in order for their messages to be more effective for our movements.

When I began this research, I chose *Bust* as a preliminary case study because, though I was aware of the neoliberal politics pervasive throughout the magazine and blog, I was hopeful that *Bust's* inclusion of veganism would represent a historical link between feminism and animal liberation, and with its subcultural appeal, that link might then be taken up by mainstream media. After analyzing *Bust's* representation of veganism, however, I recognized the familiar flaws of both mainstream feminism and animal activism—reductionism, elitism, and white supremacy. Furthermore, I recognized a distinct alignment with the humane meat movement, despite the frequent inclusion of vegan products. So while it gives me hope that *Bust's* commodity activism signals continued genuine interest in animal activism as a tenet of feminism, and even an interest in new ways of navigating capitalism, without a truly intersectional analysis informing this praxis, *Bust's*

veganism is kept at a distance from fundamental tenets of feminism and simply reflects and reinforces already mainstream inconsistencies within the movements. With the contemporary potential of feminist new media to exchange with the mainstream, it is important to use media as a platform for intersectional feminist and animal liberation messages while being careful to include comprehensive perspectives that do not reinforce neoliberal whiteness and to amplify perspectives that center intersectional understandings of justice. In sum, in order for our feminism to be effective, we must include an understanding that our liberation is bound with the undoing of speciesism and build a feminist movement that seeks to dismantle systems of oppression for humans and nonhumans alike.

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