

Deconstructing Myths Surrounding Veganism & People of Color

Sarambi

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Veganism is a white privileged consumer activity.

Aight, so I hear this and see this shit a lot. That vegans are inherently white, that veganism is about consumerism, and it also makes the (racist) assumption that ALL POC people have the same, monolithic culture around consuming and exploiting animals. Does the average Western vegan have access to expensive, fancy options? Yes, but so do all consumers, especially those who prefer “natural”, “happy”, “healthy”, and “organic” animal products. And when you don’t? Well, you’re getting by on what is affordable, calorie dense, nutritionally balanced as much as feasible, kinda like we all do when we are forced into poverty. It ain’t new that food and class go together – it literally has been like this since hierarchies and the foundation of many stratified societies that your “worth” is translated to diet. Anyway, there is also the wide array of class backgrounds within the vegan POC community, though most, as you can guess cuz society, are making far less than the Western white vegan trope. And they’re doing fine as they are acting in resistance to consumerism pushing the racist settler narrative that all POC eat a certain way and always have. No, we are and always have been has varied and different as the plant and animal nations*. Don’t be lazily keeping a narrative that white people gave you to separate our relationship to plants and animals.

Veganism is a form of colonialism because anti-speciesism is a Western concept.

Hang on, so Western Europeans roll up on all our lands, say its theirs cuz flags, enslave/“re-form”/kill us, and start desolating land which kills and hurts our relations for centuries and being against that destruction of other living nonhuman relations is theirs? It’s their concept insomuch as they have actively created speciesism we all know of today. The understanding my people have had about nonhuman animals is that they are no different than humans, they share the fact that they are protected by spirits as we are, or they themselves are important figures or representatives to things beyond our own perceptual world. The respect and realization of the fact we are no different than other animals, and we are related and should be treated as such has been a very indigenous understanding as we understand it for the land and waters too. Colonizers have mostly successfully broken these connections and understandings by force on purpose, and have turned all facets of the land, water, and living beings into property instead of honored and related dynamic lives. So actually your speciesism is colonial as fuck.

Animal liberation isn't revolutionary and has nothing to do with anarchy.

How is disrupting one of the largest exploitative, capitalist, racist, colonial systems not qualify as revolutionary? Please read the history and the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act in full and then talk to me how it’s a non issue to attack. Just like how reforms and social justice ain’t gonna get us total freedom, veganism alone as western green consumerism ain’t gonna do shit either. Which is why green anarchists, anti civ types, and generally very militant folk have been on some of the most destructive, economically and psychologically damaging attacks done. Where I primarily grew up here in the PNW a large, profitable luxury fur trade was shut down because

of attacks by folk on some anticapitalist, anticolonial, antispeciesist shit. This is the type of terror authoritarians, capital, and protectors of these institutions need if we as people known colloquially as anarchists are gonna be the most effective at razing everything this type of society stands for.

There is nothing wrong with hunting- indigenous people did it for years.

Are you indigenous? Like actually raised in, knowledgeable about your peoples, accepted by said peoples and not basing it off blood quantum alone? No? Please fall back then cuz no. If yes, mba'éichapa! Ha upei? We gotta talk, cool? Cool, so about hunting. Hunting made hella sense within a certain time. Now thanks to the colonization of our ancestral areas, the genocides between us as indigenous peoples and our ancestral land, water, and yes nonhuman animals are linked thanks to settler-colonial capitalism. We don't got time to be killing our relations now! Also, c'mon, look at how these traditions got polluted by settlers, wiping out bison and many now extinct species especially from the eastern areas, destroying orca, seal, salmon, eagle, coyote, wolf, etc, etc and that's just in colonially identified North America. Let's stop giving them ideas and start respecting life enough for it to balance and thrive once again.

Pre-colonial Native diets were primarily animal based.

Oh hey, more racist settler-colonial stereotypes homogenizing billions of people who have lived n peoples who survive. Ok so evidence and living indigenous people who carry on traditional living know that none of our diets were identical, it was based on what is available. So case in point, I don't expect the tribes in the northern Plains to have the same berries, citrus, and vegetation as my people do in the sub Amazon. However, it is also very telling that in many cultures and structures the meat eating was a rare thing saved for the elite primarily on special occasions. Dietary research has been being done for example with mummies and corpses in the mountains of the Andes and Patagonia showing that everyday people were eating primarily vegetables and starches and wearing plant based materials. This carries over to even North America, with Eastern tribes subsisting on the vast variety of gourds, nuts, fruits, and plant matter over game. Sure, this might not carry over to all tribes but like I said, we are not a monolithic peoples as the colonizers want us to believe we are.

Veganism is a classist movement because vegan food is expensive and unattainable in poor communities.

Remember what I was saying earlier about consumerism in all forms being classist at the beginning? And the connection to elites having the access to flesh in major aboriginal empires above here? So again, vegan food has been around and been affordable. Any vegetarian food from certain non Western traditions (looking at East, SE, South Asian, Middle Eastern, East African, and yeah Latin and indigenous foods) are based on only cheap ingredients like legumes, rice, a wide assortment of common and uncommon vegetables and starches, and things like tofu, hella

fruits, glutinous items, and fungi as well as things like flatbreads, noodles, cakes of glutinous and starchy goodness. Thing is, these things are cheap, filling (if you never have had to live off the staple arroz y frijoles cuz the paycheck ran dry, c'mon), and more nutritionally packed for the caloric intake than animal products. A healthier, plant based diet and decolonial diets have shown success at combating illnesses that are primarily affecting POC and poor communities in the West such as heart disease, diabetes type II, hypertension, and GI disorders as well as maintaining good health in chronic illnesses along with physical activity. Saving money on not needing to pay or be chased by medical bills sounds pretty good. WE don't need fancy ass shit to be vegan, cuz we have had these things and the knowledge all along! This society has tried to rip us apart or make us do that work for it, so fight in any way by any means.

Hunting and gathering is a form of anti-colonial resistance, therefore veganism can not be a form of anti-colonization.

Hunting was still not a focal point of the vast majority of indigenous ppl unless there was no other options (eg Artic/far north, pacific island folx, some desert dwellers). The great hunter gatherer ideas are colonially based usually around the time where romanticism of indigenous ppl was the hip thing. Part of decolonization and rebalancing of our relation to the animal nations will need to involve us adjusting as we are at an ecological breaking point where many of us can't hunt or even grow food cuz of destruction. It's unfortunate but our ancestors did not have an environment of 523 yrs of misuse, poisoning, senseless hunting/mass extinction (particularly for my lands as the Amazon n sub Amazon forest have been gutted from how it was thriving), insert most other things colonizers are still doing. My peoples have an understanding of protectorates and spirits for everything, and I personally have taken to respecting the survival and existence of the lives and their spirits as a defiance to the evil spirits of the foreign occupiers. We all have refused to die so far. Many folx still also do hunt like outsiders, as I've seen here related to fishing which is precarious due to over fishing (thx whites), damming, and water degradation from leisure and outsiders as I've seen here related to fishing which is precarious due to over fishing (thx whites), damming, and water degradation from leisure and agricultural sources. Some folx arent fishing out here anymore cuz of the need to restore and defend. Its a complicated balance that we as people of this continental land need to be on the forefront of because of how dramatically it has affected us. And to defend, preserve, and protect right now as means doing the same for our nonhuman relations. Tldr: blame white ppl for killing the planet cuz they ruined errything n now we gotta fix things or we're all doomed.

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