Systemic Change for Collective Liberation

A zine about building a world free of oppression for us and all sentient beings

Veganism and Collective Liberation

Veganism is an ethical commitment and way of living which emphasizes the rights of all sentient beings to live free from oppression, exploitation, and commodification. It is about doing no harm as much as possible and practicable.

The modern human/animal hierarchy is reinforced by Western philosophies that degrade non-human animals (making them "lesser") and colonial efforts that dehumanize Black and Brown bodies as those "lesser" beings. **The human/animal hierarchy is violence!**

We are all animals and are beautiful in our own ways. All living beings, including plants, cannot be reduced to mere resources for consumption.

Today, the word *vegan* is often used to refer to a diet and the consumption of certain foods or products. **But we cannot consume our way out of oppression.**

Veganism is an ethical framework and a political movement for animal liberation. It is also a social justice issue that intersects with other systems of oppression (e.g., colonialism and capitalism).

We can only achieve liberation from oppressive, hierarchical systems though **collective political action** to create systemic change.

Colonialism and the Colonization of Land

The modern food system begins with the **colonization** of land. Nature and lives become resources to be owned and dominated in order to extract profits.

Colonialism is the bedrock of so-called Canada's history and ongoing present. European colonizers decimated wild bison to starve Indigenous Nations.

They then built cattle farms, plantations, and other components of the animal agricultural systems, while normalizing dairy, eggs, and the consumption of non-native farmed animals. Those animals are effectively slaves who are bred for the sole purpose of profit-making. They too deserve to be free.

The destruction of wild habitats and the genocide and displacement of Indigenous communities foreclose the possibility for human and more-than-human animals to live freely.

A decolonial approach to animal liberation is about dismantling colonial systems which have led to the ongoing mass slaughter of animals. It is about Land Back and standing with Indigenous-led fights against deforestation, oil and gas pipelines, and other destructive industries and practices.

It is about doing our best to live in good relations with land, animals, and each other, free from exploitation and domination.

Capitalism and Other Intersections

Colonial exploitation has been intensified by **capitalism**, the economic system based on private ownership and the commodification of life and time to maximize profits.

Free people, lacking alternative means of survival, are turned into workers and dehumanized by capitalist logic as a labour supply.

Capitalism is built on racism and speciesism*. Farm workers, slaughterhouse workers, and farmed animals are all made disposable, replaceable, and cheaply exploitable by those who own the means of production.

Many slaughterhouse workers suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder from their horrific working conditions, while pigs, cows, chickens, and others are enslaved, physically and sexually abused, and ultimately murdered.

An anti-capitalist approach to animals liberation goes beyond changing personal consumption behaviours, and includes diverse strategies to unite with the working class, increase equitable access to healthy plant-based foods, and ultimately de-commodify all bodies (human and non-human animals).

What Next?

Check out this great resource from APEX Advocacy!

Mutual Aid & Other Support

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