



**Vol. 9, Issue 1**  
**June 2016**



**Vol. 9, Issue 1  
June 2016**

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**Editor:**

Dr. Erik Juergensmeyer  
Fort Lewis College

**Special Issue:**

**Transcripts of 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Engaging with Eco-ability Conference  
(December 5, 2015)**

[https://ecoability.wordpress.com/2015/11/02/  
dec-5-3rd-annual-eco-ability-conference-online-and-free/](https://ecoability.wordpress.com/2015/11/02/dec-5-3rd-annual-eco-ability-conference-online-and-free/)

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**Table of Contents**

**ARTICLES**

**Living at the Intersections: A Postcapitalist-Feminist Approach to Disability, Animality  
and Gender**

Sara Acevedo and Alka Arora.....3

**Neurodiverse Identity in the Animal Rights Movement**

Hannah Monroe.....9

**Anti-Vivisection and Anti-Psychiatry**

Mike Hyde.....16

<b>Imaginings of “Community”: Perceptions of (Dis)Ability, the Environment, and Inclusion</b> John Lupinacci.....	26
<b>The Environmental Vulnerability of People with Disabilities: Climate Change and Our Futures</b> Alex Ghenis.....	36
<b>The Dog Fancy</b> Scott Hurley.....	43
<b>Embracing Our Herstory of Animal Loving Madness</b> Archie Beeswax.....	49
<b>Walking on Two Legs: Where Ableism and Speciesism Meet</b> mary fantaske.....	62
<b>Anarchist Criminology against Racism and Ableism and for Animal Liberation</b> Anthony J. Nocella II.....	68



**Vol. 9, Issue 1**  
**June, 2016**

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**Living at the Intersections: A Postcapitalist-Feminist Approach to Disability, Animality and Gender**

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Keywords: Feminism, Disability, Animality, Gender

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**LIVING AT THE INTERSECTIONS: A POSTCAPITALIST-FEMINIST APPROACH TO DISABILITY, ANIMALITY AND GENDER\***

\*Special thanks to Meneka Thirukkumaran for providing the transcript

Hi everyone, I'm really excited to be presenting at this conference with my colleague Sara Acevedo, my name is Alka Arora, I'm a professor and department chair in a program called women's spirituality at the California Institute for Integral Studies; our program offers a Ph.D. in Philosophy and Religion with a concentration on Spirituality and an M.A. in Women's Gender and Spirituality and Social Justice and my own work is located at the intersection of feminism, specifically ecofeminism and women of colour feminism, with other issues of social justice, animal ethics, and very importantly, spirituality.

Hi everyone, thank you Alka, I'm super excited to be presenting with you here too; my name is Sara Acevedo, I am a neurodivergent mestiza educator, activist scholar, and disability justice advocate. I am also a Ph.D. student in the Anthropology and Social Change department at the California Institute of Integral Studies, where my focus is disability justice. So, we are here today to talk to you about our conversation around the intersection of disability, animality, and gender. These conversations started about a year ago when we started to realize our work in social justice was beginning to merge in very unexpected and interesting ways, so we decided to actually come together and write a little more extensively about this and share our ideas with you today. So our first point was we started talking about how disability justice issues have always been neglected or thought of in terms of a sub-category, or a last item in a checklist in justice debates. So we started thinking about ways to remedy this in a smaller scale within our own institution. We started thinking about ways in which this so called "oppression Olympics" where people find themselves competing for who is more oppressed than whom or what kind of oppression is more important—we wanted to address that in this conversation. One of the things that had us thinking about bodies and intersection was the ways that our bodies and our embodiment and our carnality exists as very complex and layered, and very multiple. So we wanted to address that in this conversation by saying that our bodies, more concretely than discursively, because as you know, disabled bodies, animal bodies, and human beings, and nonhuman animals are thought of as deviant and as marginal because when we think about these bodies along sociological categories, as opposed to thinking about these bodies in concrete situations, and very extreme living conditions...So our bodies cannot be disassembled as they are discursively in concrete ways, as if it were limb by limb, bone by bone.

So we want to start to address that and think about, well, we're not only women, and we're not only women of colour, and we're not only disabled, and we're not only transgender, we're not only gender non-conforming, we're not only black or brown, we're all these things, and at a certain time, all these identity markers merge within one body, sometimes. So how do we address those issues? How do we talk about these intersections in ways that are fruitful and lead us to these more engaged conversations around intersectionality? Thank you! Sure! I think one of the other ways that it's been really exciting to work with you is that we're both very grounded in our own sense of spirituality and as I mentioned earlier, that's a big part of my work. I want to clarify that a little bit. When I talk about spirituality, I'm not talking about religion per se, although my own spiritual practices have been informed largely by Eastern traditions—I grew up Hindu, and I've studied quite a bit of Buddhism, but I've also been a student of other sacred traditions around the globe, particularly to the extent that they honor the divine feminine, which is an important part of my work...But when I talk about spirituality, I'm talking specifically, in this context, about the sense of the sacred value of all life, and of every being. The inherent value and dignity of all beings, our interconnectedness, and the sense of being connected to and concerned about beings beyond their utility to us. And I would like to argue, as well, that all traditions, be they pre-patriarchal traditions, and even patriarchal religious traditions have historically had this idea of all of life having some inherent value, that's not reducible to profit and consumption. But in today's era of transnational capitalism, in which a lot of these older religious frameworks have been breaking down, and oftentimes it's been important for some of these frameworks to break down because they're patriarchal, but nonetheless they've been replaced by a form of rampant capitalism in which there's no sense of the sacred. There's no sense of life, or being, or the sacred, of value outside of their participation in the circulation of profit and consumption. Yeah, and in a sense, transnational

capitalism has become another religion that we abide by. So it's sort of like trying to re-evaluate the sacredness of the inherent value of life versus the value of life that's profitable and that it's apt for consumption and that it continues to circulate capital around the world. Absolutely, yeah. So one of the other points that we have been talking about concerns the idea of the abject. Yes, and we started talking about the idea of the abject in relation to consumption. And I started talking to Alka about the relationship between how animals have been used for profit not only in the sense of animals that are apt for physical consumption but also animals that have been used for spectacle and for their visibility. Thinking about the circus, thinking about the rodeo, even the hunting of Cecil the lion, which was so controversial, and it was not long ago that we were talking about these issues...And so I mentioned to Alka about how there's a lot of parallels between the idea of the spectacle for nonhuman animals and for the disabled body and the idea of the spectacle in relation to the consumption of, and the visibility and spectacle of difference and human difference and the roots in cultural spectacle such as the freak show, right....where disabled bodies, and different bodies were paraded for consumption. That was not long ago, we're talking nineteenth century, end of the eighteenth century...So we're finding a lot of connections, and I think it's really important to think of the abject as linguist Julia Kristeva describes it, as a projection of our own undesirability onto others and onto sort of made-deviant subjectivities, which circulate in popular narratives, literature, and in pop culture, right? Absolutely, and I would add too that the body as spectacle has also been true of women's bodies, and every single day in advertising, with black bodies, with brown bodies...there's a horrific history of African American bodies being in zoos and on displays...we all know about that and that's been extremely problematic. As well as transgendered bodies, and gender deviant bodies, you know I recall growing up the only representation of trans bodies I saw was on "modern freak-shows" like Jerry Springer and those sorts of shows, so these are all ways in which the concept of the body as sacred has been replaced by the concept of the body as a spectacle to be consumed. Particularly marginalized bodies. Yes, and the whole fetishization of bodies for consumption within hetero-normative relationships of domination...that's a whole other conversation that we can't get into right now, but just for you to see the many connections that we are making with each other's work. Absolutely, the other connection that we've made could be about this concept of vulnerability and how both within the oppression of disabled bodies and of nonhuman animal bodies has been the denial of the one in power, of their own vulnerability, so we see this again in transnational capitalism in Western society particularly, but all over the globe, this concept of the hypermasculine, autonomous subject, who lacks vulnerability and not only lacks vulnerability, he is able to conquer his own vulnerability, so we see this for instance in the rodeo, or bullfighting shows, where powerful creatures that remind us of our own vulnerability, because we are vulnerable...Yeah we forgot about our reptile brain right, we've created this illusion, this division between animality and rationality, along a Kantian line that propels these ideas of the tameable, and those who tame and are able to overcome their own vulnerability. Absolutely. So you see both the material and the symbolic conquering of vulnerability. On a more mundane level we see this often in heterosexual relationships, where the man projects his own vulnerability onto the woman. I would argue that this comes up in all sorts of relationships, it comes up in our relationship to the earth, and nonhuman animals, and denying our own dependence and vulnerability on the earth, and this absolute invisibilization. And I really like the way you put it the other day, you said something like "we are not on the earth, we are of the earth." So this position, this binary, is such a fiction, but we've forgotten about it, and sort of created a whole paradigm of thought based on this fictional division. You were just talking about how the spectacle, again with animals, and the tamable, so

there's a parallel there that we can talk about, sort of the conquering of the mad man, the release of the prisoner at sea, how the "mad man" was chained to walls, and naked, and then liberated to then be institutionalized...and put under observation by the psychiatric professionals, right? And the same with the wild woman, we were talking about this and we started thinking about the witch hunt and how "wild women" who were independent and interdependent among matriarchal groups, but how their independence was forged through their own interdependence with the earth; making their own contraceptives from the earth, using nature, and engaging in all kinds of liberatory actions like extramarital relationships and a sort of sisterhood and community around the earth. So honoring the sacredness of the earth while honoring the sacredness of the liberated woman. Yes, absolutely, yeah. And I think I want to speak here too, not just to the problematic things that we're seeing in our culture but also the power of vulnerability. I can speak from a personal perspective, for just the extent that I've been able to get in touch with feeling through and honoring my vulnerability, to the extent that I become more in relationships to others, and more resilient as well. And I think it's by recognizing our shared vulnerability with all beings...So for instance with the able bodied person, to recognize themselves as in many ways temporarily able bodied and to recognize that the casting off or the othering of the disabled body has a lot to do with our own fear of our own vulnerability to illness and disease and to challenges of life. By recognizing and truly honoring and not just fearing our vulnerability can bring us into more of a sense of compassion and a sacred relationship with the other. And I think it is that sense of care and compassion and love that's really truly going to help us shift these paradigms from domination and conflict into sacred interdependence. Yes, and along those lines, the very creation of the woman or the self identified woman's body as a danger figure that's threatening the idea of independence and high individuation and the "good consumer" which is inscribed within the late liberal or neoliberal paradigm of consumption. Where the liberation of women is threatening this construction and the very foundations of hetero patriarchal formula. Being in and knowing the world, and the same goes for disabled bodies, right, so the self-liberation of disabled bodies, and the creation of disability culture that honors vulnerability and that honors interdependence that's really threatening to the status quo. So it's a big issue right? Absolutely. And I think one of the other major connections that we found between our work on disability and animal ethics and animal studies is around the issue of language and communication. So within the Western tradition, in the recent several hundred years, the major split between human and nonhuman animals has been predicated upon the concept of language. The fact that nonhuman animals are "not like us," they lack rationality, the lack language, all the research that's actually been done to challenge this has been very controversial because it starts to break down the human and nonhuman animal divide. And what I want to argue is that well, first of all, the concept of rationality and language use is in and of itself a measuring stick by which someone should be dominated or not dominated, and granted dignity! That happens to disabled bodies, right? Absolutely, or consumed and not consumed, and it's really problematic in and of itself because it's focused on a disembodied objectified concept of value. But further I want to argue that human animals and nature itself does communicate, and beyond the ways in which primates have learned to sign and whatnot...That's also very true, but that's not what I'm referring to here, I'm referring to, you know, the cry of the dairy cow, when her calf was taken from her. The trampling of houses when an elephant, when their native habitat has been destroyed. These otherwise very gentle creatures become angry, and are speaking up, and are communicating the injustice in their own way. We as human animals have to be willing to perceive, and listen to and understand these other ways of communicating. Right, and before when we were talking about this, and you also said, you brought up something



that was really important in touching with this the fear and the cries that nonhuman animals emit when they are faced with a butcher's knife, and I've thought about this parallel in thinking about how disabled bodies who have been throughout history, have been medicalized, so their life has been written along medical terms and medical histories, and that same fear that overcomes us as we encounter the doctor's knife, and this perpetual quest for a perfect body or a nondisabled body that is assimilated, it imitates the abled body. So the idea of fixing, the idea of curing, the idea of hiding disability becomes one of the main quests for the medical establishment. And beginning with psychiatry, right the shifting of the mind, the understanding and the changing of the mind, the taming of the "mad man," and a solution, right? Absolutely. And so a lot of our work is about, again, just to reiterate, bringing a sense of the inherent value, and dignity of being, irrespective of how and when they should communicate with us. And how to actually perceive and listen to their communications. Absolutely, and what is language, right? When we are piecing apart this very patriarchal very Western-centric, male-centric idea of what language is appropriate and what language is standard, the autistic movement, and the neurodiversity movement, is seeking justice through the argument that we all communicate, that we all have language and the fact that we are non verbal doesn't mean that we don't communicate, that we don't have very important things to say, right? The so-called unimportant facets of communication facilitate communication for nonverbal folks...it's really another crucial point of this whole idea of language, and what language is acceptable, and what language is intelligible. And what language takes less tongue, right which is also feeding into the idea of capital, productivity, efficiency, and pace. So I think we have one last point that we wanted to close with. We've been talking throughout this presentation about how certain subjectivities and certain embodiments are deemed closer to nature in terms of wildness or in terms of irrationality and in terms of their ability to be tamed. But we also wanted to bring the other side to this argument which is those beings and subjectivities that has been deemed anti-natural, so we talked about to touch on (?) the experiences of gender non-conformity, transgender, and queer bodies, as well as disabled bodies within the narrative of what is anti-natural. So we thought about what is natural? What are we meaning when we talk about "natural" here? We were discussing the Judeo Christian tradition and the "order of things" and the order of divine role, an all-encompassing patriarchal god, who is setting the rules, and who is setting the status quo, we're not really talking about the natural way of being connected to the earth. So what is natural is sort of read in terms of what is closer to the ability to produce something right? And what is profitable. In a sense the Judeo Christian tradition was sort of replaced as a religion by transnational capitalism, as a religion itself. We were talking about also, the family unit. The heterosexual family unit. And how it has always been a pillar of divine rule, right? Yeah, and you mentioned this, but the ways in which gender non-conforming, transgender, queer subjectivities have been set to destabilize the order of things, to be unnatural, in the same ways that disabled people have been thought to be unnatural, monstrous, freakish, those are very similar to the ways in which a dominator model of religion and of society has been projected a false idea of nature, onto nature, while using the discourse of nature, while not actually fully bearing witness to the endless variety and diversity of nature. There's an amazing article by a scholar named Patrice Jones called "Eros and the Mechanisms of Eco-Defense" where she talks specifically about Queer Eros. How in nature you see all kinds of expressions of affection, love, sexuality, between same-sex animals or members of the same species, and how if we really pay attention to that, it challenges and de-stabilizes our concept of what's nature. And how the function of love and sex is simply to reproduce. Exactly, so what is monstrous of the disabled body, or what is monstrous of the gender-nonconforming body, within the Judeo Christian tradition is like that



threat to heterosexual family unity, and the idea of reproducing the divine order, which is parallel to how what is monstrous and what is threatening to transnational capitalist order along the same lines of the heterosexual family unit, which is the invisible work of the women in reproducing the next generation of workers, right. So there's two kinds of monstrosities that are used as tropes and as metaphors that circulate within our narratives and literature. Absolutely, and what I would argue is that in some social justice scholarship I see sort of this desire to do away with the discourse of nature and the natural altogether and simply talk about social constructionism. But I think that that in a way often negates the materiality of our bodies and the concreteness of our experiences, as you mentioned. So I think what we need to do is to find ways to shift the discourse about nature and the natural without eradicating it altogether. Recognizing this sense of the sacred relationship with nature, and that we still have a lot to learn about what that means. And what it means to truly listen to and be in relationship to, and not to just project our own dominator contemporary human values onto. And you were saying something so beautiful before, like this idea of this magical, mysterious side of nature, as being completely dismantled, in favour of predictability. Everything that we don't know about the earth, we assume it to be predictable, by human means, and this is all done in order to redistribute the circulation of capital in the inner system of a transnational economic system that we're living within right now. So it's that separation between nature as magical, mysterious, and unpredictable, and how can we predict nature so we can predict and emphasize profit. And I see here that we're out of time, we could just keep talking but we really look forward to your questions, and we're really glad to be a part of this conference. Thank you. Thank you everyone, and thank you Anthony for inviting us to participate. Bye!



**Vol. 9, Issue 1**  
**June, 2016**

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## **Neurodiverse Identity in the Animal Rights Movement**

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Link to this presentation: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gu4JN5\\_2qxM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gu4JN5_2qxM)

Keywords: Identity, Animal Rights, Neurodiversity

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## **NEURODIVERSE IDENTITY IN THE ANIMAL RIGHTS MOVEMENT**

I am currently in my first year in the Masters in Critical Sociology program at Brock University. This paper is based on the research I have done so far in the beginning stages of my thesis. In this paper I am looking at neurodiverse identity in the animal liberation movement, with a particular interest in identity around ideas of non-conformity, authenticity, community, and solidarity with animals. I am exploring these ideas through the social model of disability and am using a post-structuralist and queer theoretical framework. Neurodiversity is a term first created for autistic people, but has now become a term to describe neurological difference more broadly. As Jordynn Jack writes in “Gender Copia: Feminist Rhetorical Perspectives on an Autistic Concept of Sex/Gender,” autism is now seen as a spectrum (2012, p. 1). Neurodiversity is seen by activists as a spectrum as well and I am basing my research on this view.

When I was applying to Brock University, I had planned to study gender non-conformity in the animal rights movement. I have been interested in LGBTQ activism and feminism since I was in

high school, and have always been particularly interested in gender. Last year, I did an internship in disability rights and learned more about the disability rights movement, including learning about mental health and neurodiversity. To me, neurodiverse activism is an important extension on my previous interest in gender non-conformity. I now see gender and neurological non-conformity and authenticity to be important in similar ways and want to expand my studies to focus on neurodiversity. I have realized that non-conformity was what I found most interesting about studying gender from a queer perspective, so I am expanding my focus to study non-conformity more generally, and I think neurodiversity is a good way to do this. I think it is really important that people should be able to be authentic for authenticity's sake and around all expression, including gender. I think this importance of authenticity goes beyond gender expression, and that is what I want to focus on in my research. I think the right to authenticity is frequently oppressed, and am learning that this is very much the case for neurodiverse people. As I am reading *Exile and Pride* by Eli Clare (2009), I am learning that this is true for many disabled people. For this research I will focus on neurological difference, but see this as relevant for disability rights as a whole.

Ultimately, I would like to become a therapist and work with people who identify as being different and non-conforming, and who may struggle with expressing their non-conformity and authenticity. I want to apply my interests in understanding the social construction of these hegemonic norms to helping people deconstruct these norms in their own lives. In learning about these ideas, I hope to empower myself and eventually others through work in counseling to live authentically outside of hegemonic constructions of normalcy in mental health, thinking, interacting, and all forms of expression.

Animals are interestingly connected to issues of non-conformity and authenticity in many ways. These include the ways in which the social construction of humanness in a dualistic hierarchy with animals is also rooted in ableist norms. Another way is our attempt to control animals and make them conform to our social norms through domestication, including violence such as shocking animals, as is discussed by Adams and Socha in the essay "Shocking into Submission" in *Earth, Animal, and Disability Liberation*. They argue that disabled people are also subjected to this cruelty and attempts to make them conform through shock therapy (2012, p. 159). Animals and disabled people can be allies in solidarity as they face the oppression of these hegemonic ideas of normalcy.

In this paper I will discuss my research so far for my literature review of my thesis, covering theory and previous research around this topic. In addition to talking about disability rights and animal rights, I will bring in some research I have found about gender and neurodiversity, because I think it highlights some really fascinating and empowering points about neurodiverse identity and non-conformity. I am still figuring out how gender may fit into my thesis research, but I definitely want to bring it in for this reason and because it is what I focused on in the past and I still find it very interesting. Gender is an important way that people express non-conformity, and the deconstruction of these norms is interesting because of their prevalence and rigidity in hegemonic culture.

As I am using the framework of the social model of disability, I will begin by discussing the work of Michael Oliver (1990) in *The Politics of Disablement*. It is important to point out Michael

Oliver and Eli Clare's use of the term "disabled people." Oliver chooses to use this term, arguing that, although many "able-bodied professionals and some disabled people" argue that you should use "person-first language," many disabled people feel that being disabled is central to and inseparable from their identity (p. xiii). This is an issue expressed by neurodiverse people as well, such as how autistic people often want to be called autistic, and not "people with autism," because being autistic is part of their identity.

Oliver cites Foucault's work from *Madness and Civilization*, saying a key point to Foucault's ideas is that madness is constructed in a dualism with "unmadness," which Oliver translates to the dualism of reason and unreason, where these notions rely on each other. Foucault analyzed the medicalization of mental differences, the view that they need to be cured. Oliver says throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, society was increasingly medicalized, with conditions being seen as treatable, rather than caused by moral and social factors (1990, p. 48).

There were many struggles over which conditions and identities should be medicalized and which should not, such as the medicalization and de-medicalization of homosexuality (1990, p. 50). This points to an interesting connection to gender and queer studies, and demonstrates the social construction of the view of conditions as medical rather than identities. Today gender dysphoria is medicalized in the DSM, which means a medicalization of transgender people. Having one's identity medicalized is complicated because, on the one hand, it enables one to get some access to health care for struggles one may experience with one's identity, but, as this disability theory from Clare and Oliver points out, it can take away one's ownership of identity as a source of pride. Neurodiverse people can experience mental health conditions, and treatment of co-morbid conditions like depression or anxiety can be helpful, but many identify with neurodiversity and do not see this in itself as an illness to be cured.

Oliver (1990) points out that capitalism's logic and values have also led to the medicalization of disability (p. xiv). When people were valued according to their ability to work within socially constructed norms of productivity, disabled people were seen as unable to work and subsequently devalued, and this still happens (ibid, p. 47). In connection to the imposition of hegemonic norms onto nature, Clare (2009) discusses how the exploitation of nature is fueled as well by capitalism (p. 63). Capitalism classifies people, nature, and all beings according to their supposed usefulness, rather than valuing them for their intrinsic worth. As long as capitalism is valuing beings based on their "usefulness," all beings will still be oppressed if they are not seen as productive in accordance with these norms.

Oliver argues that disabled people experience disability as social restriction, the idea the social model of disability is rooted in. He argues "all disabled people experience disability as social restriction, whether those restrictions occur as a consequence of inaccessible built environments, questionable notions of intelligence and social competence, the inability of the general population to use sign language, the lack of reading material in braille or hostile public attitudes to people with non-visible disabilities" (Oliver, 1990, pp. xiii-xiv).

I would now like to move on to discussing Clare's contributions to concepts of disability and identity in *Exile and Pride*. I was really struck by Clare's metaphor of the mountain as the social norms we feel pressured to strive for in society to be accepted, which is a wonderful metaphor for

this issue. Clare (2009) asks “how many of us have struggled up the mountain, measured ourselves against it, failed up there, lived in its shadow?” (p. 1) He then talks about deciding we do not need to reach the top of the mountain or even climb it at all, instead making a home somewhere on the mountain, or going back to the bottom to live in community there (ibid, p. 2). This metaphor of trying to conform and then deciding not to speaks to me in my own experiences with gender and captures how I feel about identity and social norms. An important contribution Clare makes is sharing an emotional experience of disability (ibid, p. 8). With the significance of emotion for neurodiversity and mental health, I agree that this is so important to address. A point Clare makes in regards to the idea of the supercrip, the stereotype of someone who is seen as being able to “overcome” their disability, is that disabled people sometimes use this idea to counter the stereotype of helplessness, which is used to oppress them. Clare expresses the fear that there is a nursing home at the bottom of the mountain. He says this fear of institutionalization can lead people to strive toward conformity (ibid, p. 13).

*Exile and Pride* has interesting links to the eco-ability movement in Clare’s (2009) description of his connections to the forests and the logging industry in Oregon. His description of the propaganda he was taught as a child about how nature needed the logging industry connects to the idea that nature is not able to be left alone in its wildness, but needs to be controlled according to human norms (p. 23). He similarly talks about the domestication of salmon and how soon there could no longer be any wild salmon (ibid, p. 25). Adams and Socha also make this point about the control of the wildness of nature in “Shocking into Submission” (2012, p. 170).

In the second part of his book, Clare criticizes the euphemisms used to refer to disabled people, saying these terms cover up the way they are really treated in society. For example, he says if they really were “differently abled,” they would be able to express their abilities fully and be respected for their individuality, but instead they are treated as lacking abilities. He talks about reclaiming words like queer and cripple for this reason (Clare, 2009, p. 84). This also has to do with assimilation to mainstream culture, again relating to the idea of conformity.

As Clare discusses the medicalization of disability, he argues that disabled people went from being seen as different and objectified in culture to being pitied and seen as needing medical treatment for their differences (ibid, p. 98). He says disabled people were still objectified, but with medicalization they were objectified by doctors, instead of previously being objectified for being different (ibid, p. 99). Clare is talking about the history of the freakshow and how disabled people have been objectified in different ways through history. So now they are still objectified, but it is by doctors and through charity campaigns, being pitied by people looking for ways to “cure” them and still not seeing them as authentic individuals (ibid, p. 98, 104). We can see this in depictions of neurodiverse people as helpless. These depictions do not address the agency and claimed identities of neurodiverse and other disabled people, instead showing them only as in need of a cure and to be taken care of.

Jordynn Jack (2014) addresses this in “Gender Copia: Feminist Rhetorical Perspectives on an Autistic Concept of Sex/Gender,” saying that the way autism is thought about is very much culturally constructed. Ideas around treatment of autism are connected to stereotypes and social trends. This in part explains changes in medical understandings of autism over the years. Many autistic people have spoken out against the medicalization of autism. She writes “drawing on

insights from disability studies, these individuals argue that autism is better understood as difference, rather than disability; as an alternative way of thinking, communicating, and interacting with the world” (p. 4).

The disability rights movement fought this objectification through direct action (Clare 2009, p. 105). Through the activism I participated in last year, I learned the phrase “nothing about us without us.” This captures the mentality of needing to have a voice in activism, instead of being treated as needing someone to speak on one’s behalf. Clare says that while some disabled people can benefit from medical care, it is more important to the disability rights movement to work for civil rights than cures (ibid, pp. 122-123). These activists created disability culture (ibid, p. 106). Clare says we want to be seen for our true identities, not gawked at (ibid, p. 110).

He goes on to discuss the intersections of queer non-conformity with disability non-conformity. As I said earlier, gender expression is a connection I make as well, so this is really interesting for me. Clare says queer people are also seen as outside of social norms (ibid, p. 113). Queer culture fights the stigma from this devaluation by celebrating difference and diversity (ibid, p. 113). This pride can also exist in the authenticity and non-conformity of the neurodiverse community, although neurodiverse people are often shamed for their eccentricities and divergences from what is considered normal in society.

Clare (2009) talks about how he never related to femininity as a child and says his disability freed him from gender conformity. He writes “I think about my disabled body, how as a teenager I escaped the endless pressure to have a boyfriend, to shave my legs, to wear make-up. The same lies that cast me as genderless, asexual, and undesirable also framed a space in which I was left alone to be my quiet, bookish, tomboy self, neither girl nor boy” (p. 151). This quote stood out to me because it is closely connected to other work about gender and disability, from the article “Gender Copia: Feminist Rhetorical Perspectives on an Autistic Concept of Sex/Gender” by Jordynn Jack. Jack (2012) discusses the gender identities of some autistic people, which, for the perspectives she discusses, tend toward being non-conforming. Many autistic people do not identify as gender non-conforming, but the ones who do have some very interesting ideas about gender. Jack says that some studies have found higher percentages of autistic people identifying as LGBTQ than non-autistic people (ibid, 3). I think looking at gender non-conformity among autistic people could be applied to understanding non-conformity among neurodiverse people more generally.

Jack makes the interesting argument that “due both to their ability to denaturalize social norms and to their neurological differences, autistic individuals can offer novel insights into gender as a social process” (2012, p. 2). In this way, autistic perspectives on gender have much to contribute to gender studies. Jack writes that autistic people have rhetorical ways of thinking about gender in attempts to define their own gender identities (ibid, p. 2). As I discussed earlier, Jack says some autistic individuals argue autism should be seen “as an alternative way of thinking.” Looking at gender shows one such way autistic people may think about norms differently. My overall goal with this project is to look at non-conformity in the neurodiverse community, and I think this example of gender highlights a liberatory potential of neurodiverse ways of thinking about norms. Jack writes that gender conformity and identification have been considered a key part of development, so a tendency to not engage in traditional norms around gender could be one way



autistic people are viewed as developmentally disabled (ibid, p. 5). From a queer perspective, one could ask whether a lack of conformity to something so socially constructed and unnecessarily restrictive of expression as gender is really a sign of *disability*. In many ways, I think this could be seen as an ability to look beyond gender norms, because it is important that people can question gender.

However, it is important to note that the unclearness of identity and feelings of disattachment to neurotypical understandings of gender can be confusing and in that way painful for autistic people to deal with (ibid, p. 5). Jack describes how some autistic people think of their gender as a costume they are putting on and performing (ibid, p. 7). While some queer understandings of gender are not completely able to explain the gendered experiences of all non-conforming autistic people, the idea of being able to queer gender might be helpful for them (ibid, p. 5, 3). They can also find solidarity in community with others who might have similar experiences. Discrimination can occur in regards to gender non-conformity among autistic people because of rigid gender expectations in society. Autistic people also contest hegemonic views of autistic gender, such as the stereotype of autistic people being more masculine, and the related underrepresentation of women, transgender, and queer people in representations of autism (ibid:6). Ultimately, Jack sees gender non-conformity as a form of resistance among autistic people, and I very much agree with this (ibid, p. 15).

In “Vegans, Freaks, and Animals: Toward a New Table Fellowship,” Sunaura Taylor (2013) addresses how disabled people can feel alienated by the animal rights movement because of ableist writings by Peter Singer and the perpetuation of ableist views on health by many in the vegan community (p. 759). In “Disableism within Animal Advocacy and Environmentalism” from *Earth, Animal, and Disability Liberation*, Withers (2012) also discusses ableism from animal rights organizations, such as People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals’ advertisement that perpetuated ableist myths about autism (p. 112). Withers notes how ableism from the animal rights movement harms the ability for these movements to work together (p. 121). This makes disabled animal rights activists interestingly situated in this issue, because we are between these movements and can see these connections.

Now I would like to discuss solidarity with animals. Adams and Socha (2012) write about how neurodiverse people, animals, and nature are cruelly forced to conform to hegemonic norms, which is an example of links between oppression and control. Jack (2012) mentions one autistic person’s view that she is able to empathize with animals and nature in a way neurotypical people are not able to. She sees important things that others miss. In addition to this person’s view, Jack talks about the autistic anthropologist, Dawn Prince-Hughes, and her sense of empathy and solidarity with gorillas (p. 6).

In “Disableism within Animal Advocacy and Environmentalism,” Withers (2012) makes the important point that animals can also have disabilities, such as those harmed by hunters and pollutants (p. 115). I have learned recently about instances of PTSD in animals. I would like to study the idea of neurodiversity among animals as well, and especially more positive examples of difference and disability. A lot of these examples, such as being harmed by hunters, factory farming, or testing, seem to address negative differences and harms to animals.



In “Vegans, Freaks, and Animals,” Sunaura Taylor (2013) analyzes how veganism is seen as abnormal in culture (p. 758). This way of thinking about veganism and animal rights in connection to the idea of normalcy has interesting implications for the disability rights movement, and particularly the neurodiversity movement. Taylor says it is often seen as abnormal to care about animals in American culture, describing the time in the late 1800s when doctors would diagnose animal rights activists, mostly women, with “zoophilipsychosis” to dismiss their concerns as a sign of mental illness (p. 759). I think this is an important issue to explore in studying connections between the animal liberation and neurodiversity movements, because in our current society people’s diverse mental conditions are also dismissed as illnesses and disabilities, when they may not be viewed that way by the people who have them. Taylor discusses intersectionality, writing about being white and the privilege she has despite being a woman with a disability (p. 759).

In conclusion, I am interested in studying neurodiverse identity in the animal liberation movement because I am interested in how individuals navigate and deconstruct social norms perpetuated by ableist society. Previous research demonstrates that human and non-human animals face oppression and restriction on their freedom of self-expression because of these norms. I have decided to expand my interests in gender non-conformity to look at non-conformity in expression more broadly. I think neurodiverse activism is really important because it is crucial to deconstruct social norms that limit authenticity. I believe that the right to authentic self-expression is a right shared by all people and all species. As Nocella (2012) writes in “Eco-Ability Theory in Action,” eco-ability questions all ideas of normalcy and highlights interconnections between oppression and liberation of all beings (p. 242).

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**Vol. 9, Issue 1**  
**June, 2016**

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## **Anti-Vivisection and Anti-Psychiatry**

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Keywords: Anti-vivisection, Anti-psychiatry, Liberation

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## **ANTI-VIVISECTION AND ANTI-PSYCHIATRY**

For my presentation entitled Anti-vivisection and Anti-psychiatry I will focus on the connections and opportunities for allyship between the anti-vivisection and anti-psychiatry movements. To begin with I will put forth the position that the use of other than human animals in research as well as symptom-based diagnoses and treatment in psychiatry are all unreliable. From there I will touch on incarceration and some of the many abuses faced by both psychiatrized people and other than human animals used in research, drawing on the similarities between some of those abuses, detailing the torture of other than human animals used in psychiatric related testing; which some consider to be the cruelest experiments, and providing examples of how relying on those experiments is harmful to psychiatrized people. I will conclude with an analysis of suggestions for moving beyond these practices through the further development and funding of alternatives, suggesting actions we can all take, and a call for allyship.

Before I begin I feel it is important to note that nothing I say should be taken as medical advice, I do, however, encourage people to do their own research and come to their own conclusions. There

have been many books written on all of these topics individually and this is merely an introduction for connecting these issues which I hope to expand upon later.

Also although my focus here is on psychiatry I am not interested in upholding the usual distinction between it and other medical models. I recognize that the medical model of disability is usually oppressive and harmful, psychiatry is just my experience and where I have the most knowledge. So if anything I say reinforces that distinction in anyway please let me know.

### **First I ask, is testing on other than human animals reliable?**

Well, according to Dr. Francis S Collins (2011), director of the National Institutes of Health, “the use of animal models for therapeutic development and target validation is time consuming, costly, and may not accurately predict efficacy in humans” (p. 3). Despite this the NIH; who are partially funded by taxpayers, contributes billions of dollars every year towards projects involving testing on other than human animals.

I would argue that what Dr. Collins admitted is greatly understated, given that according to a 2012 article in *New Scientist* by geneticist Kathy Archibald and pharmacologist Robert Coleman “a recent study in Regulatory Toxicology and Pharmacology shows that animal tests missed 81 per cent of the serious side effects of 43 drugs that went on to harm patients” (Archibald & Coleman, 2012) and the New England Anti-Vivisection Society states “The FDA reports that 92 percent of drugs approved for testing in humans fail to receive approval for human use. This failure rate has increased from 86 percent in 1985, in spite of all the “advances and refinements” intended to make animal tests more accurate” (NEAVS Limitations and Dangers).

The fact is species differ too greatly from one another for the tests to be reliable. For example even though chimps are our closest animal relation with DNA almost identical to our own the New England Anti-Vivisection Society says that “more than 80 HIV vaccines that have proven safe and efficacious in chimpanzees (as well as other nonhuman primates), all have failed to protect or prove safe in humans in nearly 200 human clinical trials, with one actually increasing a human’s chance of HIV infection” (NEAVS Limitations and Dangers).

These studies also fail to take into account the conditions these other than human animals live in and the effects that may have on results. Our living conditions differ greatly from theirs, with only a few exceptions approaching any sort of similarity, one of which I would argue is incarceration in psychiatric facilities or what the system calls “involuntary commitment” but before that can happen, the person is usually given a diagnoses.

### **Which brings me to the next part of my presentation--is psychiatry reliable?**

Those who are diagnosed are often told of a chemical imbalance in their brain, which medication corrects, but there is no test given that shows this and these diagnoses are completely symptom based, which is unreliable. The former American Psychiatric Association President Loren R. Moshier admitted to this in his resignation letter when he said "The issue is what do the categories tell us? Do they in fact accurately represent the person with a problem? They don't, and can't, because there are no external validating criteria for psychiatric diagnoses. There is neither a blood

test nor specific anatomic lesions for any major psychiatric disorder. So, where are we? APA as an organization has implicitly (sometimes explicitly as well) bought into a theoretical hoax. Is psychiatry a hoax — as practiced today? Unfortunately, the answer is mostly yes" (Mosher, 1998).

Now, these categories he speaks of are those in the DSM or Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, which is where psychiatric diagnoses come from. Since there are no external criteria, what gets included within each new edition of the DSM is determined by debate among a task force. In a presentation Dr. Stephen Wiseman, in what I can only assume was an attempt to add validity to the process, compared this to the debate around whether or not Pluto classifies as a planet (Wiseman 2010). I think this comparison has the reverse effect and only reinforces how arbitrary these diagnoses are. And he completely ignores the fact that Pluto's classification has little to no effect on the vast majority of people, whereas criteria for psychiatric diagnoses affects us all. In this same presentation he states that the chemical imbalance theory told to the public and patients has not been taught to psychiatrists in decades and there are many examples of others in the field admitting to this being a lie, including Kenneth Kendler who is known for pioneering research in genetic causes within the field. He wrote "We have hunted for big, simple neurochemical explanations for psychiatric disorders and have not found them. We have hunted for big, simple genetic explanations for psychiatric disorders and have not found them" (Kendler, 2005).

This lie of a chemical imbalance is said to be helpful to patients, but a 2014 study found that when people were told their depression was caused by a chemical imbalance it did not reduce self-blame, it made patients more pessimistic about their prognosis, and even lowered their expectations for regulating their own moods. It did however lead them to view medication as more credible than psychotherapy, but I wouldn't consider that helpful (Kemp, Lickel, & Deacon, 2014).

Even the former director of the National Institute of Mental Health Thomas Insel, who recently left his position to go work for google and is trying to use current technology for further surveillance of psychiatrized people (Carey, 2015), admits that "The weakness is its lack of validity. Unlike our definitions of ischemic heart disease, lymphoma, or AIDS, the DSM diagnoses are based on a consensus about clusters of clinical symptoms, not any objective laboratory measure. In the rest of medicine, this would be equivalent to creating diagnostic systems based on the nature of chest pain or the quality of fever. Indeed, symptom-based diagnosis, once common in other areas of medicine, has been largely replaced in the past half century as we have understood that symptoms alone rarely indicate the best choice of treatment" (Insel, 2013).

Given this lack of testing and lack of evidence in "abnormalities" with the brain, despite it being a theory in one way or another for over 200 years, how can treatments that are meant to alter the brain be reliable? Many studies have shown that placebos work just as well and in some cases better than psychiatric medication in the short term. And others show people tend to do much better in the long term when not on medications, for example a 15-year-long study that was released in 2007 showed that "40% of patients diagnosed with schizophrenia who were NOT on antipsychotic drugs showed periods of recovery and better global functioning compared to only 5% of patients taking antipsychotics" according to Accessibility News (2007).

And finally another major reason why these categories are not accurate is that they don't consider context. They take reactions to oppression, abuse, trauma, and other challenging issues we all face and transform them into symptoms without taking the root causes into consideration. At its core psychiatry is a form of social control and one of the more subtle ways it accomplishes this is through this de-contextualization, because it keeps those of us who have been given a psychiatric diagnosis focused inward, believing there is something wrong with our brains, instead of focusing outward and recognizing the many things wrong in our society.

**Which includes the suffering of psychiatricized people and other than human animals used in research.**

I would argue that the psychiatric system causes suffering the instant it diagnoses an individual by creating a false dichotomy with its biological model, which causes stigma. A recent article by Dr. Jonathan Abramowitz in *The Behavior Therapist* points to research which supports this idea and reports that "Research on public attitudes toward people with schizophrenia, for example, reveals that as acceptance of the biomedical model has increased in recent decades, so too has the desire for social distance from people with this condition" (Abramowitz, 2015, p. 171).

After that, psychiatricized people are at risk of being incarcerated in psychiatric facilities, while other than human animals used in research are incarcerated in laboratories. During their incarceration both have harmful chemicals forced upon them, for psychiatricized people this is referred to as involuntary treatment by the psychiatric system. This may include them being observed while taking a pill as well as a mouth check to ensure they have swallowed or an injection. While other than human animals are intentionally poisoned with chemicals that may later be branded as those medications in order to test their toxicity.

Given that these studies on other than human animals are unreliable, I believe their suffering and death is completely unnecessary. Not only that, but relying on these studies also puts those in the human trials at great risk, which for psychiatric drugs obviously includes psychiatricized people. A recent example is the death of Augustine "Leo" Liu, who was diagnosed with schizophrenia and part of a clinical trial for Risperdal. The jury ruled that the company that makes the drug, Johnson & Johnson's Janssen Pharmaceuticals, and his psychiatrist who the family alleges convinced him to enter the study for the all too common finder's fee, were responsible for his death (Karter, 2015).

Since drug manufactures within capitalism are like any other business they push to have their products on the market as soon as possible, which is often before the long term effects in human trials are known, putting everyone who is prescribed these drugs at risk. One example is an 18 year study by Nancy Coover Andreasen, an American neuroscientist and neuropsychiatrist, who admitted that "Another thing we've discovered is that the more drugs you've been given, the more brain tissue you lose." The drugs here are anti-psychotic medication commonly given to people diagnosed with schizophrenia and bi polar. They also found that "The prefrontal cortex doesn't get the input it needs and is being shut down by drugs. That reduces the psychotic symptoms. It also causes the prefrontal cortex to slowly atrophy" (Dreifus, 2008). To reiterate, these are drugs that the psychiatric system claims fixes something that is wrong with the brain, for which there is no evidence, but in actuality these drugs cause parts of the brain to atrophy. This is quite literally a chemical lobotomy. And within the same article she also admits "The reason I sat on these findings

for a couple of years was that I just wanted to be absolutely sure it was true. My biggest fear is that people who need the drugs will stop taking them.” I would argue that the truth should always be told and if it is going to lead people to stop taking medication, then we need better support to help those people gradually and safely come off of it whenever possible. Also I think this statement speaks volumes to the level of secrecy that surrounds psychiatry. These drugs even caused a whole new condition, known as Tardive Dyskinesia, which results in involuntary repetitive body movements and according to Current Psychiatry there are no FDA approved drugs for treating it (Kaspar & Ellingrod, 2014).

It’s not just anti-psychotic medication either, anti-depressants have been linked to inducing apathy, worsening depression and increasing a person’s risk of suicide. All psychiatric drugs have very harmful side effects and even the intended effects are harmful, with many of the drugs actually worsening the condition they are supposed to treat as the brain tries to balance out the changes these drugs cause. For a detailed description of this process check out Bonnie Burstow's book *Psychiatry and the Business of Madness* (Burstow, 2015).

Traces of all these drugs also end up in our water and according to a study done in Sweden on Oxazepam, typically prescribed for anxiety, the current levels of this drug found in the water dramatically changed the behavior of fish making perch less and even anti-social which put them at a greater risk for predator attacks (Taylor, 2013). Issues like this could lead to population depletion and upset the balance of affected ecosystems.

Along with being used to test toxicity in new medications other than human animals also suffer in many ways for so called advancements in the mental health field. According to the New England Anti-Vivisection Society "Animals are subjected to food, water, and sleep deprivation, sensory deprivation or overload, long-term physical restraint, social isolation, maternal separation, electric shocks, limb amputation, and brain damage and manipulation through the use of electrodes surgically implanted into the brain" (NEVAS Cognitive-Behavioral Research).

"To study behaviors and experiences, psychology research typically requires animals to be conscious and aware, and as such may be considered the cruelest of animal experiments due to the high degree of pain and suffering involved. Animals can remain in distress for a long length of time, since they are often subjected to invasive procedures that they then must recover from in order for their behaviors and experiences to be studied in relation to the resulting “injury” (NEVAS Cognitive-Behavioral Research).

In these quotes we find even more similarities between the treatment of these other than human animals and psychiatrized people. For example, a 2011 report in Ontario Canada where I am from found that restraints were used for 1 in 4 psychiatric patients and that “Since reporting of control interventions is not required, the findings likely represent a conservative estimate” and “The researchers believe rates of control interventions likely do not vary much across the country”(CBC News 2011). Restraining of psychiatrized people includes being strapped down to a bed, being physically held down by other people, fast acting medications to sedate the person, and seclusion or confinement in a room. The last example also being comparable to the social isolation other than human animals’ experience. The very act of incarceration in a psychiatric facility, with very



limited and in some cases no visitation rights for family and friends, I believe is also comparable to social isolation as well as maternal separation.

And finally, the use of electrodes on the brain in other than human animals is definitely comparable to shock treatment, which the psychiatric system now calls Electroconvulsive Therapy or ECT, used on psychiatrized people. Yes they still do this. According to psychiatrist Dr. Peter Breggin the estimate for people undergoing ECT is a hundred thousand a year, which was based on available data in 1979 and he claims there is a lot more going on now and that the majority of patients who are subjected to this so called treatment are elderly women because they are, or at least are assumed to be, more vulnerable (Breggin, 2015).

According to Dr. Breggin's site (Breggin, 2013), [ectresources.org](http://ectresources.org) ECT "involves the application of two electrodes to the head to pass electricity through the brain with the goal of causing an intense seizure or convulsion. The process always damages the brain, resulting each time in a temporary coma and often a flatlining of the brain waves, which is a sign of impending brain death." And the side effects are "typical symptoms of severe head trauma or injury including headache, nausea, memory loss, disorientation, confusion, impaired judgment, loss of personality, and emotional instability. These harmful effects worsen and some become permanent as routine treatment progresses." The site also says that "Memories of important past experiences are commonly impaired or eradicated, including weddings, birthdays, vacations, educational experiences, and housekeeping or professional skills. Sense of self or identity can be demolished, and family members often report that their loved one "was never the same again."

### **Now for the alternatives and actions we can take**

If we moved beyond psychiatry and into alternative ways to help those in distress all the testing we do on animals for this system would serve no purpose, but since we aren't there yet, some alternatives to these tests include Dr. Björn Ekwall's toxicity tests, which use donated human tissue to measure toxicity and according to the New England Anti-Vivisection Society have "a precision rate of up to 85% accuracy"(NEAVS Alternatives In Testing) along with this there have been many advancements towards patient specific medication through the use of 3D stem cell printing, which according to an article in The Scotsman from October 2015 "the team will be able to print the cells in three dimensions without damaging the cells' biological functions such as their ability to make a wide range of different cell types such as liver, heart and brain cells" (O'Neill, 2015).

There are also computer simulations and according to the National Anti-Vivisection Society "A powerful simulation of the human brain is being developed in what is known as the "Human Brain Project." This digital model of the human brain is being constructed from existing scientific data and continually refined by new data as it is collected. Experts on the subject believe this simulator will offer advantages over animal models because "[Scientists] will be able to repeat the experiment under as many different conditions as they like, using the same model, thus ensuring a thoroughness that is not obtainable in animals" (NAVS Advancements In Research Models).

Some actions many of us can take in supporting the advancements in these and other alternatives include writing letters to legislators, which groups like the National Anti-Vivisection Society can help you with. If you or a foundation you belong to have the money you can become a sponsor of



the International Foundation for Ethical Research. If taking to the streets is more your style, then I'd recommend checking out the No New Animal Lab campaign and even though they are focused on the University of Washington there are many opportunities for folks elsewhere to hold actions. There is also the Gateway to Hell campaign focusing on ending the transport of other than human animals to laboratories, and their website lists a number of local groups and offers to help you start your own if there is not one nearby. And of course look to local grassroots groups in your area to see if they are or are willing to organize around this issue.

As for alternatives to psychiatry I want to begin with making this very clear, I do not want to see psychiatric medication criminalized. I support the decriminalization of all drugs and the last thing I want is to give the state more reasons to lock people up. Dr. Bonnie Burstow sums up the position perfectly when she says "What we are against is the "medical" pushing and the prescribing of pseudo-medicine on one hand, and the government support for and legitimization of such substances and practices on the other" (Burstow, 2014, p. 260). In a great video entitled Grounded Eutopianism, that's eutopianism with an "E" Dr. Burstow puts forth what I consider to be some of the best ideas for alternatives especially because they are all non-hierarchical (Burstow Grounded Eutopianism). They involve living in a more communal way on a large scale and working on making our societies less distressing. Her other suggestions include multiple treatment options and the ability for the person in distress to always choose what's best for them. She also recommends everyone from an early age be taught the skills to assist someone in distress, so everyone could take turns filling that role, instead of those skills being centralized within a system like psychiatry. These suggestions can of course be created within our communities' as well, through knowledge and skill sharing of how to help those in distress and most importantly asking individuals in your community what they find most helpful during those times then providing that for them when needed.

People could also contact the Ministry or Department of Education for their areas to talk about getting classes on helping people in distress included in the public school curriculum, preferably starting at a young age. I think we need to be careful with this approach under the current system however, so the classes don't become a type of psychiatric indoctrination.

If it is necessary to have some people specialize in this area I would propose, as many others have including Dr. Burstow (2015) and Robert Whitaker (2010, p. 336) something similar to the Open Dialogue approach from Finland. Daniel Mackler documents this approach in his film "Open Dialogue" which is available for free online. According to Daniel it's "getting the best results in the developed world for first-break psychosis" (Mackler, 2014). The basis for this approach, according to Daniel is an open, non-hierarchical conversation that values everyone's voice in the treatment, especially the clients. Therapists work together and also openly discuss their thoughts and feelings with each other while the client is present and encouraged to add to the conversation. And they will also include the client's family in these conversations if that is what the client wants. They allow people to always have the ability to choose whether or not to have therapy, to choose the type of therapy, and to choose where that therapy will take place. And they allow people to end a session at any time. The therapy itself is less focused on finding a solution and is more about making sure the client is heard and understood, which ends up leading to the best solution for the client.

And much like alternatives to vivisection there are many opportunities to fund alternatives to psychiatry. One example, which as an anti-capitalist I feel a little strange promoting consumerism, but if you are going to order something online anyway why not see if it is available through madeconomy.com? Which is similar to Amazon and Ebay, but with all the profits going to mental health projects that are outside the system.

For actions, if you are in the greater Toronto area of Ontario like me I'd recommend looking into the Coalition against Psychiatric Assault. If you are elsewhere both The Icarus Project and Mindfreedom International provide information on chapters and affiliates as well as offering to help folks start up their own. Many areas also have Mad Pride groups and many campuses have Mad Student Societies, which may not always be anti-psychiatry but they often engage in actions that can work towards that end.

Finally, I think these two movements can work together on quite a few issues. First any anti-psychiatry action, by that I mean any action that brings us closer to ending the psychiatric system, also brings us closer to ending the torture of the other than human animals that are experimented on for that system. Other examples are opposing the companies that manufacture and test psychiatric medications on other than human animals; the major ones have offices in many countries which would make good protest targets. Protesting and outreach on university and college campuses that perform vivisection and train future vivisectioners in psychiatric related programs with the hope of deterring students from these programs and vivisection in general. Protesting meetings and events held by groups like the American Psychiatric Association. And protesting the development of new labs.

In conclusion, given that both psychiatry and vivisection are based on and justified by what I would call unreliable pseudoscience. And as I have shown both are inherently oppressive and cause incarceration and similar types of suffering. Given that both are seen by most people as necessary and beneficial to society; because of the lies they tell the public. Given that these industries have many ties to each other; and that the end of psychiatry will also mean the end of vivisection for that system. Given that the way forward, through the further development of alternatives and the phase out of the current systems, for both are similar. And given that there are many opportunities for the movements opposing these industries to work together. I think psychiatrized people, other than human animals, and really everyone would benefit from an allyship between these two movements.

For more information on anti-psychiatry, animal liberation, and their connections: <http://anpanl.blogspot.ca/>

### **Getting involved**

Letters to legislators on Vivisection: <http://www.navs.org/take-action>

Support International Foundation for Ethical Research: <http://www.ifer.org/support-ifer.php>

No New Animal Lab campaign: <http://nonewanimallab.com/>

Gateway to Hell campaign local groups and help starting your own:

<http://www.gatewaytohell.net/our-network/find-your-local-group/>

Mad Economy: <http://www.madeconomy.com/>

Toronto based anti-psychiatry group: <https://coalitionagainstoppsychiatricassault.wordpress.com/>  
 The Icarus Project groups and help starting your own: <http://theicarusproject.net/content/groups>  
 MindFreedom International Affiliates and help starting your own:  
<http://www.mindfreedom.org/member-folder/as>

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Vol. 9, Issue 2  
June, 2016

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**Imaginings of “Community:” Perceptions of (Dis)Ability, the Environment, and Inclusion  
*From Beneath the Layers of Concepts and Concrete***

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Keywords: Ecojustice Education, Ecofeminism, Critical Disability Studies

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**Abstract**

Understandings of community are culturally mediated and thus directly linked to centuries old patterns of beliefs and behaviors that rely on the historicity of the privileging of individuals over the recognition of our existence as a complex web of biologically and culturally diverse relationships that make up the living systems to which we all belong. Drawing on scholarship from ecofeminism, EcoJustice education, and Critical Disability Studies this paper examines the potential of a detailed process for critically and ethically understanding the relationships that connect us to critical projects that push us to imagine truly inclusive communities that contribute to sustaining life for all members. This paper examines how humans identifying as separate from and superior to one another and everything else became a Western concept constructed within modernist discourses that prioritize the individual over community, culture over nature, and human over animal. This research presents methodology for directly identifying how the dominant discourses reproduced in our day-to-day relationships and practices construct understandings of

“community” that threaten inclusiveness for both human communities and the more-than-human world. This paper draws from an EcoJustice Education framework to share research that involves participants being asked to examine taken-for-granted cultural assumptions influencing how we understand community as an essential part of efforts to support truly inclusive, diverse, decentralized, and sustainable communities.

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## **IMAGININGS OF “COMMUNITY:” PERCEPTIONS OF (DIS)ABILITY, THE ENVIRONMENT, AND INCLUSION *FROM BENEATH THE LAYERS OF CONCEPTS AND CONCRETE***

Recognizing the discursive pervasiveness of neoliberal capitalism and its restrictive conceptions of personhood, this paper takes the position that activist scholarship supportive of inclusion for all requires a serious commitment to rethinking how we both constitute and are constituted by understandings of “community” (Lupinacci, 2014a; Wilson, 2014). This paper will explore alternatives outside of our current historical conjuncture to the extent possible given the inherent limitations of a language rooted in visions of neoliberalism. The unsustainable limits that accompany neoliberal capitalism should compel activist intellectuals to think of potential futures—futures that support the notion of diverse, inclusive, and sustainable communities. The current atrocities of social exploitation and environmental degradation demand the full commitment to examine the cultural assumptions and limits of many currently dominant disciplining theoretical frameworks.

However, bodies bound within larger economic and exclusionary paradigms limit the imagination from moving beyond the confines of discursive boundaries. In this way, our subjectivities are so entangled with the discourses of neoliberal capitalism that many feel compelled to publicly concede to its legitimacy despite how it contributes to pervasive exploitation. Situated within the educational contexts of EcoJustice Education and Critical Disability teaching and research interests, the work presented in this paper will be directed towards the possibilities that critical education possesses to imagine inclusive communities. More specifically, the paper confronts difficult contestations of *who* is included/excluded—moving beyond the Cartesian dualisms of such problematic binaries—confronting contestations of who is included/excluded in dominant definitions of community and imagining communities that are truly inclusive. As a theoretical framework, critical educational theory spans decades. However, this paper works in solidarity with the diverse scholarship of Critical Disability Studies that seeks to challenge and interrupt perceptions of hegemonic *normalcy* and contest (dis)ableism by highlighting ‘moments’ that can provide us opportunities to challenge the dominant ideology at work when conceptualizing community through an imaginative rendering taken from a variety of ‘critical’ traditions, such as intersectional ecofeminism, Critical Disability Studies, and through the project(s) of Eco-Ability and EcoJustice.

Understandings of *community* are culturally mediated and thus directly linked to centuries old patterns of beliefs and behaviors that rely on the historicity of the privileging of individuals over the recognition of our existence as a complex web of biologically and culturally diverse relationships that make up the living systems to which we all belong. Drawing on scholarship from ecofeminism (Plumwood, 1993; Merchant, 1983) and EcoJustice education (Martusewicz,



Edmundson, & Lupinacci, 2011, 2014) this paper examines methodology for critically and ethically understanding the relationships that connect us to critical projects that push us to imagine truly inclusive communities that contribute to sustaining life for all members. This presentation examines how humans identifying as separate from and superior to one another and everything else became a Western concept constructed within modernist discourses that prioritize the individual over community, culture over nature, and human over animal (Plumwood, 1993; Merchant, 1983). This research presents methodology for professionals allied to the community (PACs)—defined by Goodley (2011) drawing from Finkelstein (1999a, 1999b) as “services and professionals that respond to and are led by the aspirations of [individuals with disabilities] and their represented organisations” (p. 173). So, the paper is shares methods for professionals allied to the community working directly to identify how the dominant discourses reproduced in our day-to-day relationships and practices construct understandings of community. Further as PACs, this work seeks to support self-advocacy through educational efforts to eliminate the pervasiveness of hegemonic structures that threaten inclusiveness for both human communities and the more-than-human world. This paper draws from an EcoJustice Education framework to share research that involves educators and activists as potential PACs being asked to examine taken-for-granted cultural assumptions influencing how we understand community as an essential part of educational reform efforts to support truly inclusive, diverse, decentralized, and sustainable communities.

This paper is an exploration of the power of imagination and discourse analysis in connection with the practice of taking unplanned excursions through local spaces. Focusing on the ways in which utopian visions of diverse communities that are situational, local, and supportive of living systems offer insight into a sustainable future, this work explores how these utopian visions complement the development of a strong critical and ethical analysis of the discourses shaping the subject—and thus how we conceive community. The paper examines how EcoJustice practices in teacher education through self-organized pedagogy are applied to untamed experiences had within the local that move participants beyond “reality” and tap into the imaginative power of unapologetically exploring “what can be” through deconstructing the discursive formations shaping ‘what is.’ This paper is based on the a priori assumption that modern industrialized culture is so pervasive in how we think and act that ‘reality’ simply reinforces the enactment of atrocities through which many people are killing each other and the planet. Yet, no matter how buried beneath layers concrete and concepts, human cultures remain of and with the relationships of mutualism that support their existence.

Despite how our eyes and institutionally socialized minds tell us to isolate and hierarchize our ‘human’ nature over remembering and reconnecting our ecological intelligence in tune with being a part of complex sets of relationships that is always there, we tend to understand the human potential to ignore this gift in pursuit of false illusions of individual existence—and those false illusions can be overcome by the fact that we have an even greater potential to recognize and celebrate the power of mutual aid and cooperation—to celebrate our existence as a part of diverse systems that doesn’t need an authority—a State that enforces dominant perceptions of *normalcy*—to ensure survival and the right to co-exist as diverse beings.



## Imagination and Community: The Theory of the Dérive

Allowing for educational spaces that encourage imagination and embrace the Utopian Impulse fosters both formal and not-so-formal opportunities to explore and imagine individually and as a community not just a revolution, but re(evolution)s of our everyday lives. Radical departures from “what is” with resulting creative spaces in which we can explore alternatives that are situational, local, and in support of living systems. In the *Theory of the Dérive*, Guy Debord (2002), describes the *dérive*—one of the primary situationist practices. Debord (2002) explains that the *dérive* is “a technique of rapid passage through varied ambiances” (p. 62). He further clarifies:

Dérives involve playful-constructive behavior and awareness of psychogeographical effects, and are thus quite different from the classic notions of journey or stroll. In a *dérive* one or more persons during a certain period drop their relations, their work and leisure activities, and all their other usual motives for movement and action, and let themselves be drawn by the attractions of the terrain and the encounters they find there. (p. 62)

What the practice of the *dérive* includes is a reference point, a practice from which one is encouraged to let go and navigate place with the courage to embrace the utopian impulse while recognizing the complex interconnected systems to which we all belong. While the actual practice of the *dérive* physically involves unplanned excursions, which students like to often call wandering, and physical interactions with place, they also are excursions of the mind. In other words, they can be practices of imagining relationships as subjects disciplined by different discourses, imagining relationships that aren’t framed in value-hierarchies. This excursion encourages us as subjects—and we are all subjects—to explore a life disciplined by something other than “what is” – or the man stream, white stream, ableist discourses of human supremacy. When we engage in such pedagogies there are opportunities to break free from the shackles of what is supposedly our ‘realities’ and shatter the chains constraining our desires to fulfill a utopian impulse: a drive to love, care for, enjoy, and celebrate our existence—not just for us, but in ways that support that right for all living beings and future generations. When we engage in such actions of solidarity, we imagine together a very different world and we celebrate where that world exists in each of our everyday lives. The result: re-evolutions! Not just one, but the many visions of imagined revolutions. EcoJustice educators seek and sometimes carve out spaces and opportunities for us all to collaborate and build solidarity. This occurs through learning from locally horizontally-organized pedagogy that inspires us to imagine and challenges current perceptions of how we understand the world. Most importantly, we take excursions or *dérives* that explore living in ways that are situational, local, and in support of living systems. In such projects in which we extend beyond the limited perceptions of what is *normal*—or a neoliberalized *normalcy*—it is essential to embrace a collective desire to imagine.

I draw on the concept of imagining to validate our desire and collective ability to live together, and to do so in such a way that allows us to equitably share the planet with each other, the more-than-human world, and future generations. Among all the imagining this encourages, all the planning, sharing—the teaching and learning—the idea is that this will spread through the community, reconnecting us with our solidarity as we move toward collectively envisioned, truly collaborative decentralized communities. Together, we give the green light to our human desire

to explore our utopian impulse—the drive we have to share and experience a place and when those places seem so few and far between, the drive for us to create them in our minds, in our art, our songs, our stories, in how we communicate and then bring them from the realm of imagination into the world which is never separate from imagination, but that we recognize as real—or how we define what we perceive to be *normal*.

### **An EcoJustice Education Framework and Critical Disability Studies in Education**

EcoJustice Education is defined by Martusewicz et al. (2011) as: “The understanding that the local and global ecosystems are essential to all life; challenging the deep cultural assumptions underlying modern thinking that undermine those systems; and the recognition of the need to restore the cultural and environmental commons” (p. 20). Central to an EcoJustice analysis in connection with deconstructing perceptions of (dis)ability is the importance of recognizing the differences between ecologically-centered cultures and dominant individual-centered cultures. Such efforts require explicit attention to understanding the eco-social structural relationships between language, culture, and education.

Understanding how language influences culture and the ways in which culture influences language is essential to understanding how we conceptualize and implement changes to what could and ought to be truly inclusive communities. Understanding the language/culture relationship opens up space within educational projects for the examination of how Western industrial cultural—or in the current historical conjecture, the neoliberalized subject or ableist self—has emerged from a specific set of cultural practices and historical events, as well as the need for activist-educators to take action to address these deeply rooted cultural assumptions. Martusewicz et al. (2011) draw from postmodernism and ecofeminism to define “discourses of modernity” as “the specific set of discourses that together create our modern, taken-for-granted value hierarchized worldview” (p. 86).

The critical examination of these discourses, or shared cultural meanings, is complex and allows for the multidimensional analysis of language and culture in connection with taken-for-granted assumptions regarding what is valuable, and then by default—what is worthless, and how these concepts are applied. The analysis of superior/inferior—for example culture/nature, male/female, reason/emotion, and mind/body—dualisms allows EcoJustice theorists to identify a powerful group of discourses that form metaphors that dominate how we, as subjects in a modern era, interpret difference and construct meaning (Martusewicz et al, 2011, 2014).

Martusewicz et al. (2011) explain that these discourses of modernity consist of individualism, mechanism, progress, rationalism/scientism, commodification, consumerism, anthropocentrism, androcentrism, and ethnocentrism. EcoJustice theorists emphasize the role these discourses—and their associated discursive practices—play together in contributing to the socio-cultural conditions through which systems of exploitation gain and maintain power to the extent that such systems become ‘the way it is.’ While EcoJustice theorists have certainly hinted at the importance of interrogating the intersections of these discourses and discursive practices in connection with (dis)ability they fail to do so explicitly. In a similar vein of research Eco-ability and Critical Disability scholars focus on the interconnected ways in which these discourses of modernity have and continue to impact perceptions of (dis)ability (Nocella II, Bentley, & Duncan, 2012). Nocella

II (2012), emphasizing the importance of connecting ableism and speciesism as “social constructions interwoven into society, promoting civilization, normalcy, and intellectualism grounded in modernity” (p. 8), defines Eco-ability as:

The theory that nature, nonhuman animals, and people with disabilities promote collaboration, not competition; interdependency, not independence; and respect for difference and diversity, not sameness and normalcy. (p. 9)

In this paper I am drawing from ecofeminism, EcoJustice Education, and scholarship from the eco-ability movement—which closely intersects with Critical Disability Studies and Critical Animal Studies—to focus on how dominant discourses of modernity have created the very socio-cultural conditions for ableist conceptions of community to exist and even thrive. Further, this assertion hinges on the function of discourses to maintain a system of exploitation by taking a closer look at anthropocentrism—or the belief system that situates humans at the center of everything and hierarchically superior to all otherized beings. Critical Animal Studies scholars interrogate the ideological manifestation of anthropocentrism in relationship to humanist discourses that emerge in relationship to an ontology of being rooted in Western philosophy and science (Nocella II, Sorensen, Socha, & Matsuoka, 2014). Eco-ability scholar Sarat Colling (2012) explains:

While anthropocentrism has led to the grim reality of widespread forest clearing, fish trawling, pollution and war, combined with the deadly practice of eugenics, this ideology has produced racial segregation, mass murder, and genocide and has led to deadly experiments on billions of human and nonhuman beings. (pp. 92-93)

Further Colling asserts that “while disability scholars have argued that ethics of the body must begin with the unstable category of *disability*” she suggests that “the category of *animal* must also be considered as an inherent part of the equation” (p. 93). Colling states: “Those viewed as *disabled* and those viewed as animal have both been figured as strange and are devalued due to perceived biological inferiority” (p. 93).

EcoJustice, Critical Animal Studies, and Eco-ability scholarship overlap in that they agree the neoliberalized perception of self in relationship to dominant social constructions of normal is a manifestation of anthropocentric discourses and thus can be understood and resisted through a process I will detail in this paper. For those of us disciplined by modernist assumptions of human superiority and privileged by dominant definitions of ability, the analysis of the aforementioned discourses allows for the examination of the relationships between our language, how we think, and our behaviors that undermine living systems. These powerful discourses contribute to the ever-growing ecological crisis—a crisis that EcoJustice educators identify and understand as a cultural crisis. Without attention to such discourses sustainability and social justice—two inseparable projects—become recursions of the same problem: the construction and maintaining of communities based on members recognized and valued based on their humanness, normalcy, and their ability to contribute to a humanist ableist society.

### **Keeping the Conversation Going and Engaging in Action**

Using variations of these figures, and the concepts discussed in this paper, to illustrate the differences between these fundamentally different ways of interpreting and understanding the

world, this work engages educators, scholars, and activists—any PACs—in a dialogue focused on imagining community conceptualized by the two different figures (see the figure shared in the video) in order to explore how community can be constituted in ways that are either exclusionary, unjust, and unsustainable or inclusive, socially-just, and sustainable. More explicitly, when engaging in conceptualizing—or imagining—community, this work asks participants to consider how an “illusion of disembeddedness” supports an economic and political system, based on anthropocentrism and ableism, contribute to conceptions of community and how an ecological understanding would, and does, contribute to understanding how we might explore alternatives to the cultural assumption contributing to the centric-thinking that allows for so much unjust social suffering and environmental degradation.

In conclusion as PACs, this work hopes to begin a necessary conversation for reconceptualizing how it is community is conceptualized together with and in support of self-advocacy through educational efforts to eliminate the pervasiveness of hegemonic structures that perpetuate the constituting of community through anthropocentric and ableist discourses and discursive practices. In summary, this paper draws from an EcoJustice Education framework and Eco-ability projects to spark a dialogue that ignites and sets fire to current dominant discourses disciplining how educators and activists as potential PACs conceive of community. A fire that rages on to inspire, interrupt, and expose the injustices currently being perpetuated—even by those whose intentions are to conceive of socially just and sustainable communities—but often find themselves excluding diverse perspectives and silenced voices from how we in solidarity imagine community.

It is in the spirit of inclusion as a concept reclaimed from discourses of exclusion (Ward 2014a, 2014b)—as a concept understood beyond the Cartesian dualism in which inclusion is an epiphenomenon of exclusivity—I conclude by focusing the discussion toward the difficult necessity for learning together the importance of recognizing and representing difference as the key to supporting cultural change (Lupinacci, 2014b; Ward, 2014b). I truly believe that if PACs and self-advocates together do not rethink the anthropocentric and ableist frameworks constituting Western industrial dominant conceptions of community then we are destined to recreate the very predicament that we set out to change. Inspired by the Critical Disability and Critical Animal Studies movements to liberate all human and more-than-human beings, I would like to employ the guiding principles of solidarity and action to the following practical steps toward extending this discussion and fostering cultural change and activist scholarship aimed toward supporting a paradigm shift from rational, mechanized, and human-centered thinking to discourses that are local, situational, and supportive of living systems (Lupinacci, 2011; 2013).

Recognizing that there is no one set way to engage in this work or predict the directions of these critical dialogues I conclude by outlining a few potential suggestions. Since, a huge part of this discussion is based on recognizing that this discussion has to include diverse perspectives in consideration of each other and the more-than-human communities, the principal action in the following steps is basically building networks of solidarity which translate to recognizing, respecting, and representing diversity among a multitude of movements to educate, organize, and take action together in diverse ways to break from anthropocentric and ableist visions of community.

- Step 1 is to engage in radical teaching and learning that explores in PACs and

collaboratively with self-advocates (individuals with disabilities) rethinking the assumptions influencing how we, as humans, construct meaning and thus how we learn to relate to each other and the more-than-human world. Further, make the commitment to critically and ethically examining how we understand educating, organizing, and taking action towards supporting collectively imagining together healthy communities that include all beings and the intrinsic value of recognizing, respecting, and representing the right of all to exist as beings that belong to the same shared ecological system. So, teaching and learning.

- Engage in critical and ethical examinations and imaginings of community. As notions of community are all too often defined in terms of human-centered exclusion and based on perceptions of normalcy, it is important to work to reclaim community in terms of who and what is included in our definitions of this construct—and how those definitions contribute to the either supporting or undermining the right of all beings to coexist in peace.
- Engage in examining community in terms of inclusion and the diverse ways in which our living relationships can be recognized, respected, and represented through teaching and learning among all members. Specifically, engage in recognizing the role activist networks, especially self-advocacy networks, play in alleviating and eliminating unjust suffering in our communities. We have to build networks of solidarity with these organizations.
- Engage in strong alliance with all those suffering and support the oppressed in solidarity while simultaneously working to shift and challenge the dominant systems that often governs the alleviation of the suffering of all marginalized and subjugated beings. In all cases we have to show our solidarities and take action to stop the systemic domination of one another, ourselves, and our more-than-human kin.

So, imagine individually and share collectively these imaginings of community with each other in spaces where those visions are not silenced nor privilege afforded to anthropocentrism and dominant perceptions of ability. Challenge those dominant perceptions of what is *normal* and imagine what could be possible. Resist the all authorities of *normalcy* governing bodies, minds, and emotions and reject the illusion that as human animals we are separate from and superior to each other and all other things on the planet. Learn together to listen to one another and to accept that voice doesn't all sound the same or even sometimes sound at all. That words are not the only form of communication and worth not defined by degrees, wealth, or one's ability to appear as independent. In fact, independency is a huge part of the problem here. The point is that we need to engage in relationships committed to diversity and recognizing and celebrating dependency. Communities ought to be understood as the ecological systems to which we all belong. When we learn what it means to belong without framing that understanding as human-centered and ableist we learn to join the fight to overcome the isolating ills and exclusionary violences of Western industrial culture.

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**Vol. 9, Issue 1**  
**June, 2016**

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## **The Environmental Vulnerability of People with Disabilities: Climate Change and Our Futures**

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Keywords: Disability, Climate Change, Vulnerability

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## **THE ENVIRONMENTAL VULNERABILITY OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES: CLIMATE CHANGE AND OUR FUTURES**

Hi everybody, my name is Alex Ghenis and I am a policy and research specialist at the World Institute on Disability, and I run the New Earth Disability program, which is looking at how people with disabilities will experience the changing world we have ahead of us – a world of resource shortages and a world of climate change. And what I'm going to be talking about today is the Environmental Vulnerabilities of People with Disabilities: Climate Change and our Future. So this is looking at how when climate change progresses, we as people with disabilities will experience it and especially experience it differently to the able-bodied population. So, here we go.

OK, so here's the overview of what's going to happen: I'm going to talk about my story, which kind of going from my childhood and teenage years all the way up until today; talk about why climate change, what is climate change and why it's important; people with disabilities as a vulnerable group within that; impacts and focus areas. Because really, climate change isn't just global warming as we used to call it. It is aggregate rise in global temperature, changing all of these different pieces of the climate - so heat waves and storms and sea level rise and drought, etc. I'll talk about each of those focus areas and some policy solutions: what we can do to safeguard the health and well-being of people with disabilities moving forward. How we can build coalitions and build movements. I used kind of a mix of policy and activism and methods to get all of that done. So moving through my interests - and I'm just going to talk about disability activism and then climate change and show how they come together.

So disability activism: this is something I've worked on, and that I currently work on, is that people with disabilities often need support for independence. And there's what I view as three different types of support. Number one is medical, which is having quality health care equipment, supplies, and medication. Me personally I've ended up in the hospital for a while: I had some random medical thing that got me in the hospital for a month this past year. I also have the wheelchair that I need to have wheelchair parts coming in and out of my medical care provider funded by insurance etc. It's a very complex system. Life quality resources, such as personal assistants: so I have personal attendants that help me in and out of bed. My apartment requires an elevator and a roll in shower, that's something that I absolutely need. Transportation: here in the Bay Area we have good accessible transit, and some people with disabilities depending on where they live might have a wheelchair van. And jobs: jobs that people can do - and actually that's something also we work on over at WID is employment policy education and training. Funding and stability: a lot of these things, such as social services and health care services, need funding. They need stable funding, they need political support - and it's kind of based off, of at the same time, economic stability. So we need funding and stability just in terms of social services. Now as well, there's interpersonal support, community and family support. When I was in the hospital for a month, I had a phenomenal friend who was there with me and stayed with me while I was in the hospital, was visiting every day or every other day. And other friends visited sometimes, but not nearly as much as this one person. That made me realize how important in so many ways these interpersonal connections are. And that even carries over outside of the hospital: in the home, people coming over and hanging out and someone helping me take my backpack on and off when I get home etc., etc. And finally all these things take time to develop, but general they are vulnerable. That medical system is vulnerable to disruptions. Same with personal assistants: somebody quits, a personal attendant quits, that's vulnerable. If somebody with a disability tries to move, it's difficult to find accessible housing, same thing with social services. Or if some sort of social network collapses - a best friend and you have a fight and you rely on that person for always driving around, it can be very, very tenuous and vulnerable for people with disabilities. So it needs support and it needs careful management in order for people with disabilities to have a good quality of life.

Okay, so I was interested in disability activism mainly because I realized that there needs to be focus to keep our lives safe and secure. And now, the switch to climate change, which was back in college - I shifted away from disability in the switch to climate change. Why? Because climate change threatens all of humanity. We are all so vulnerable because we have built our society based off of the current climate, based off of this current sea level, all of these different things is how

society has developed. And similar to disability in that way is that we live based off of the health care system, and all of humanity lives based off of how we've built up everything with regards to the current stable climate and everything can be impacted when the climate changes. Food production, natural disasters impact public health, and eventually when sea level rises up the coast people start migrating. So everything becomes in flux. And we have to work together as a world on mitigation and adaptation. So first of all a couple of words here. Mitigation is cutting down emissions: that way climate change doesn't happen as quickly. Adaptation means building up seawalls in Miami or reinforcing California's water infrastructure because of drought, it's preparing for it. Unfortunately, not enough is being done. Number one, some groups are denying the climate change exists and then fighting to do any mitigation. And on the other hand - this is actually something I'm seeing in Paris - is that a lot of people are focusing on mitigation and cutting emissions, but very few people are saying this is coming down the pipeline and we need to start getting ready for it. So that's one thing I like to focus on. Not enough is being done.

Well, climate change is real first of all, fighting those deniers, and here's how it works. Okay so a lot of people have heard about the greenhouse effect, and I say that the earth is a greenhouse. The way this works is that the Sun is what keeps the earth warm, it gives heat radiation over to us. Some of that solar radiation comes in and is absorbed by the earth's surface, most of it is, or the atmosphere. Some of it bounces back into space, but the stuff that stays on the Earth's surface and in the atmosphere just spins around in there, keeping the earth warm. And the reason for that is that there are these little particles called greenhouse gases, and the greenhouse gases they vibrate when the sun's heat hits them and then they just keep the atmosphere warm, and every now and then some of the warmth radiates back into space, but that's pretty much the basics of it. So back to the basics. Number one is that there are many greenhouse gases: carbon dioxide, CO<sub>2</sub> is the main one. There's also other ones such as methane, and that's actually a lot more potent than carbon dioxide but its lower concentrations in the atmosphere. Burning fossil fuels releases carbon dioxide, deforestation releases carbon dioxide because the plants decompose, or if there's a forest fire, their burning goes up into the atmosphere and there's less plants to absorb CO<sub>2</sub>, so that puts out more greenhouse gases. The atmospheric greenhouse gases have increased since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution: in 1870 they were 280 parts per million, so that's 0.028%, and in 2015 was over 400 parts per million, and its climbing. So since 1870, temperature has increased about 1°C: that doesn't seem like a lot but it has huge impacts. And then there's what we call "feedback loops," which will raise greenhouse gases and temperatures even more. For example, if it's drier because of climate change then there will be more forest fires which will release more carbon dioxide and then they'll just keep on going. And here's a couple of images, a couple of graphs. Number one is the CO<sub>2</sub> concentration, which just keeps going up and up and up. On the top left, it was under 320 parts-per-million 1964 which is when we started having really accurate measurements, and now it's over 400. And then on the bottom right is the global temperature, which also just keeps going up and up and up and up. So here's the deal with climate change. I was just showing how the world gets warmer, well what happens is you have various impacts. There are direct impacts, which is stronger and more frequent storms: so the atmosphere can hold more heat, and it can hold more water when it's warmer, so you get stronger more frequent storms. You have expanding drought and forest fires: we've already seen that a lot in California. Sea level rise and ocean acidification: so all the ice is melting and raising the seas, and actually warmer water expands. More intense heat waves: we've seen a lot more heat waves going on in the USA lately. And general weather pattern changes: the thing about that last one is that we've built our societies

and kind of planted our crops based off of the existing weather patterns where we live, and they're changing. So it's not necessarily that it's bad that it is some different weather pattern in itself, it's that it's changed from what we are used to.

So indirect impacts are infrastructure damage, for example sea level rise that it can get into, say, the New York subways. Food insecurity because of those crop issues I was talking about and drought. Poor health and mortality connected all of these things. Economic disruptions which will be a long-term issue. Environmental ecosystem instabilities where actually you can get a kind of rapid collapse of ecosystems which has again ripple effects. And then, widespread migration and "climate refugees." So with migration, let's say that there's a lot of flooding in some low-lying area and then everybody has to move because their land is under water, that could be number one. And number two, there could be an extreme storm that they have to move away and then they're not able to come back home. There's a lot of things and actually I'll talk about that for a little bit later on in the presentation.

So, climate change and disability. As I said, climate change will have many impacts. And each of these impacts will hit people with disabilities in unique ways relative to be able bodied population, and those things will require focus preparation. And by the way, we're going to need to address preparation in general, but the way that hits people with disabilities will be a huge one. So number one we've got storms there's Hurricane Katrina; drought, that's a very sad farmer; heat waves, that's photoshopped picture; and sea-level rise, this is a model of San Francisco with I think 25 feet of sea level rise which isn't totally out of the realm of possibility, granted a century or two out. But there's AT&T Park, the Giants baseball stadium, just flooded, so we'll see what happens with that. Okay, number one, there's going to be a greater prevalence of disabilities - so climate change will contribute to what they call "Disability Adjusted Life Years," or DALYs, and that's saying reduced quality of life multiplied by the amount of time that somebody has that reduce quality of health or disability in general, or severity of diminished health. So that's the existing focus of major climate reports, is saying "how much will climate change contribute to disability?" They don't say "how it will impact people that already have disabilities?" But how will it contribute to DALYs? There will be a lot of causes: storm-related injuries, malnutrition, invasive diseases – so we will have more malaria and zika coming in. And then climate-related conflict and war injuries and refugees: they're saying that Syria had a massive drought and that led to factors which helped spark the conflict and that has led to violence and injury and disability.

The last thing is that climate change will also disproportionately harm people with disabilities, but few are addressing it. So check this out: in addition to contributing to more disability, climate change has direct impacts on people with disabilities. Now the thing is that climate change isn't "climate change" in itself, it is a bunch of different effects, as I talked about earlier. So to see how it hits people with disabilities, you have to break it down for each of these impacts. Let's look, these are some examples. Storms and extreme weather: all of a sudden there are inaccessible shelters and evacuation methods there, somebody might not have transportation to evacuate where they live, there is fragile support systems so that the medical industry shuts down, because all of a sudden there's extreme weather. That could leave some people in a precarious position. If their caregivers or personal attendants leave early and leave them behind, then they won't have assistance either, to keep their head above water – when there's flooding then that's literal - or to evacuate also. And then, in recovery there are financial and logistical considerations: for example,

the need for specialized medical equipment costs more money. They also might have fewer resources start out at a harder time recovering. Heat waves: people with disabilities have an increased chance for heat exhaustion and heat stroke. I myself have a spinal cord injury where I can't sweat to cool myself down, that's a huge impact right there. Reduced access to air conditioning because of poverty and substandard housing can leave people with disabilities in really reduced health because of that. Invasive diseases, which we mentioned earlier, that there might be pests that come in and bring in invasive diseases. And there's a greater vulnerability because of fragile health exacerbated by socioeconomic conditions, so anything that would hit somebody able-bodied in general - even outside of the greater health vulnerabilities for people with disabilities - they might have fewer resources to be able to adapt. Now here's one more scary thing, is that all of these different factors that I mentioned earlier that will cause various disruptions, there's going to be migration because of that. It's scary but real. Now first of all, climate migrants are people that are forced to relocate due to the climate related factors, and there's a few different types right here. For example, if there is a storm and people have to evacuate but they can't move back, those are migrants. If their homes become unlivable – say, they live in Miami and then the city floods and simply becomes uninhabitable, and they have to move away - those are migrants. There's a whole other category, which are people that have to leave because of major economic disruptions or sometimes of war that is influenced by climate change. The Syrian civil war started partially due to a ten-year drought, so you could say that the refugees from the Syrian civil war are kind of climate migrants, or at least partial climate migrants. And various experts are saying that there will be 200 million to up to one billion climate migrants by 2050, so this is a huge, huge number. And for people with disabilities, relocation is especially difficult. Number one, they have to find accessible housing. Number two, they have to re-establish or maintain support networks while they move from one place to another. Number three, they might not be able or have difficulty attaining social services and other benefits. If they move somewhere in the social services are overwhelmed or, for example, might have a lengthy application process, that can put them into tenuous situation. And just doing an audio description of some picture right here, there's somebody in a polar bear outfit has a cardboard sign that says “home melted, looking for any work to help feed my family.” So a little bit tongue-in-cheek but kind of sadly real at the same time.

There are two things we can do in response to climate change. So first of all there's mitigation, which is cutting emissions to slow warming. Many of you have probably heard about this. Everybody's saying “cut emissions to keep us below two degrees centigrade,” which is a major number that a lot of folks are talking about. So then there is adaptation, or saying that climate change will happen to some extent and we need to prepare for the coming changes. And that's the truth: climate change will happen to some extent and adaptation is absolutely necessary. And here's the thing: adaptation takes time, so we really need to start now. Actually on the bottom left-hand side there are all of these different projections for temperature change - and if we really, really, really, really cut emissions, climate change is still going to be here. Warming is still going to be here, and if we continue on the current trajectory or have intense feedback loops then it's looking pretty scary. The bottom right-hand see here, I have a bunch of activist holding hands that say “stop global warming” in the center, and I just have to put a big sad face over the top of that because that's unrealistic and climate activists need to realize that. So now we know that adaptation is necessary, what do we do for disability specific adaptation as climate change progresses? So number one is we need to break things down into individual climate impacts and then address



those one by one. For storms and extreme weather events and heat waves, we need solid disaster relief and recovery which is called DRR. Number one accessible storm shelters cooling shelters and reliable transit to and from those. Numbers two, recovery support and accessibility and public rebuilding. In Hurricane Katrina for example a lot of the public rebuilding that they had wasn't supportive of low-income residents or people with disabilities. So when we do rebuild that needs to be a priority. So number three, addressing food insecurity and economic issues. There are going to be economic disruptions, it's going to be food insecurity. And actually, this is a motivation to increase the economic stability for people with disabilities in the first place - so reinforcing benefits programs and health care. As there is economic disruptions, increasing employment and financial stability through those processes. Long-term migration and relocation, this is something that I'm working on more in-depth right now. When people move, they'll need sufficient accessible housing and accessible infrastructure when they move there so that they can live and move around. Strengthening local support system such as Independent Living Centers. And these Independent Living Centers support people with disabilities through independent living and keep their heads above water. Number three, you create flexible and resilient benefits. So when somebody moves from one place to another place, they need to be able to transfer their Medicaid and their SSI over there smoothly. And finally, personal education, resources, and support while people are going through each of these. Because some stuff happens at the government and policy level and a lot happens at the individual level in terms of preparation and effective implementation of their own safety. So obviously this needs to be addressed, and how do we do it? Well, first of all there are disability rights movements and there are climate activism movements. We need to combine those and we need to create alliances. We also need to get things rolling on the policy front and on the move. So what do we do with that? Here are some of the concrete actions we can take: so number one, first and foremost, is that people with disabilities and disability organizations and agencies should be involved in all adaptation planning. This is tricky because preparation happens through a lot of agencies. They have multiple levels and there are recommendations, voluntary actions, and mandatory rules that come along with this. But the disability movement needs to absolutely commit to being a part of as many pieces in the adaptation planning puzzle as possible. The needs of people with disabilities should be addressed in all climate change preparation and it should be made clear to people, and not just those with disabilities, that this needs to be a consideration everywhere. Then adaptation should be coordinated with other policy efforts, such as flexible and dynamic benefits. You know what, when we're talking about baseline disaster relief and recovery that's already there and people are working on this. We can use climate change as motivation to do these things more in-depth, to get more focus on them, to get more focus and attention on the needs of people with disabilities in existing movements and preparation. And finally, people with disabilities must be aware of this, but continually educate both their peers with disabilities and policymakers and advocate continually. Movements keep on going and change happens through advocacy and through constant advocacy and we can go on that road. Now a couple more final things. We need to get involved in climate change, which is already happening you can see that nationwide and worldwide. Then, getting disability into initial plans is much better than trying after they are finished. It's easier to coordinate and work things in rather than try to modify plans once they are already made to incorporate the needs of people with disabilities, which is why advocates must start now and keep fighting through the process. Down at the bottom here, we've got two ovals which are "ongoing climate change planning" and "disability-related preparation," and now they are combining to say "synergy." Now, how can you help? Well think about your interests, your expertise, your organization, your connections, and your capacity for change.



Basically your ability as an advocate to do what you want to do. And then start, learn more, go read up on these issues, educate others, bring them into the movement, strategize with them. Team up with as many teams as possible, as many organizations as possible. Start that advocate advocacy and then keep on fighting. It's easier in advocacy efforts to kind of feel discouraged, but you've just got to keep fighting through it and you can make some positive change. So thank you for watching, my name is Alex Ghenis of the New Earth Disability project which is under the World Institute on Disability and here is the website: [www.wid.org/ned](http://www.wid.org/ned) my email address is [Alex@wid.org](mailto:Alex@wid.org). So thank you and keep fighting.



**Vol. 9, Issue 1**  
**June, 2016**

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## **The Dog Fancy**

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Keywords: Dogs, Breeding, Normality

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## **THE DOG FANCY\***

\* I would like to express my thanks to Samuel Haefner for his help transcribing this presentation.

Hello, my name is Scott Hurley. I am a professor of religion at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. Today I am going to be talking about "The Dog Fancy," that is the breeding and showing of dogs in conformation or beauty pageant-like dog shows as a site that reinforces notions of "normality" and also notions of "beauty" and "able-bodiedness." So my argument is essentially this, that 'The Dog Fancy' permits the manipulation, modification and destruction of non-human animal bodies for financial gain, reifies social and cultural constructions of normalcy for humans and canines, and perpetuates views that marginalize groups of human and nonhuman animals on the basis of their body shape and type.

It is worth looking at definitions of normalcy, and here I'm following Anthony Nocella II, in his article defining eco-ability where he quotes a dictionary definition of normalcy. That definition

essentially says that normalcy applies to those who are “sane” or “free from mental illness.” It is a notion that has to do with “conforming with, adhering to, or constituting a norm, standard, pattern, level or type and is related to that what is typical.” We also know that “normalcy” itself as well as “beauty,” and “able-bodiedness” are socially constructed, and that they are publicly reinforced--a notion that Lennard Davis has clearly articulated in his work when he says that “this normalcy must constantly be reinforced in public venues (like novels), must always be creating and bolstering its image by processing, comparing, constructing, and deconstructing images of normalcy and the abnormal.” So in part, what I am arguing is that the dog show is one of those public venues. And 'The Dog Fancy' is one of these “public venues” wherein notions of normalcy are constructed and reinforced.

It's also worth noting that, and I can only do this briefly, the word 'normalcy' as it's used in the modern period, arises with the creation of the field of Statistics which itself has its origins in the mid-nineteenth century. And that the field of Statistics was closely connected with, intimately connected with, the practice of eugenics and the notion that a perfect body could be created. Lennard Davis speaks of this very clearly and draws the connections very clearly, so I'm not going to do that here, but it's important to note that striving for perfection and striving for that perfect body is a process that has to be controlled. We see this with dogs and dog bodies. While it is the case that we no longer practice eugenics in the same way we did in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, there are some scholars like Dorothy Roberts who suggest that our use of DNA to determine health and wellbeing, as well as other factors, constitutes a danger for the renewal of eugenics. The fact is, though, that eugenics still applies to canines--dog breeding has been the longest eugenics experiment in history. In this case when we strive for the perfect dog body, we are definitely controlling that process significantly.

Let's talk about dog shows, and I should say first that this was a part of my world for a very long time. I was intimately connected to it: I showed dogs in this context. I don't do this anymore, I find it morally objectionable, but I have some intimate knowledge of these things. For example, I know that when people talk about the Fab Four, the Fabulous Four, they are speaking about four nationally acclaimed dog shows. Namely the Westminster Dog Show in New York City; the National Dog Show, which is sponsored by Purina, which is a dog food company; the Eukanuba Dog Show, also sponsored by a dog food company Eukanuba; and finally the Crufts Dog Show which takes place in the U.K. The first three take place in the United States; Crufts is in England. Also noted here are the viewership for each of these dog shows. Two million viewers in 2014--two million viewers watched in one form of medium or another the Westminster Dog Show. In 2014 it was twenty-two million viewers who watched the National Dog Show.

I point this out to note that this is a great opportunity for companies to advertise their products. In fact, this is what happens during these dog shows. So economics is a big part of this process, money-making is a big part of this industry. And that applies whether we are talking about these national dog shows or local dog shows. So we know that for both the national dog shows and the local dog shows, spectators come and watch - they are attracted to these shows. I also should say that that several dog shows take place every weekend somewhere in the United States. Here I'm referring to the local shows. They attract spectators and even advertise products. Oftentimes people will set up booths where they present the products of various companies while people are showing their dogs.

There is also the practice of hiring handlers. A handler is somebody who is trained to take your dog into the ring; to take a breeder's dog into the ring and present it to the judge. They are trained to demonstrate a dog's physical attributes as clearly as possible and in the best way possible so that the judge is attracted to your dog when he makes his decisions—I'm going to talk a little bit more about that process in a bit--the point here though is that these dog handlers will sometimes show between 5 to 10 dogs per dog show. They get paid \$60-\$100 per dog per day plus expenses and if you are a particularly accomplished handler you may be paid more than this. So if you are showing all throughout the year and this is your primary source of income, you can make close to a six figure salary. Finally there is retail involvement as I noted earlier. But there are also a number of companies that have made names for themselves in the dog show world and have primarily a web-based presence like, for example, Chris Christensen Systems which is itself a 4 million dollar business. They make and sell beauty products for dog shows. So the idea here is that there is big money to be made in this industry.

The breeders. To be fair, breeders and those that refer to themselves as reputable breeders don't make a lot of money and in fact they refer to their hobby as a labor of love because they often lose money. They usually have maybe 1 or 2 litters of puppies a year and the process of raising those puppies, taking care of them and so on means that they are spending quite a lot of money. However, if their dogs win big at these national shows, they stand to make quite a bit of money, upwards of 50,000 dollars as a winning prize. They also after that gain recognition and prestige, and therefore can increase the prices of their puppies. So some dogs are sold for anywhere between \$1500 and \$2,500. They can also increase their stud fees--people often want to breed their dogs to another dog which produced a puppy that won big. Breeders can charge a lot of money for such a breeding. Finally if they really know what they are doing, they can put on clinics and workshops for which they can charge a fee. So there is some money for breeders.

What is interesting however is that, the American Kennel Club on their website strongly encourages local communities to sponsor and put on these various dog shows and they do this by indicating that there is money to be made for those local communities. So here we have an example that is given on the AKC website that says an average exhibitor, the person who shows a dog, spends about \$512 per multi-day event and that in the past 8 years, the average spending by exhibitors has increased 60%. The site also goes on to note that communities can raise other sources of revenue through these various means as I've indicated here. So the American Kennel Club wants to promote dog shows in part by encouraging communities to embrace them and see them as money-making opportunities.

Okay, so let's talk about the American Kennel Club standard. The standards themselves are found on the American Kennel website and they describe very clearly the way a particular breed is supposed to look. So these standards themselves are a set of aesthetic criteria that describes ideal physical type in detail. They mention temperaments, but physical attributes are emphasized, therefore the physical appearance of the dog is privileged. The judges who use these standards to evaluate how a dog looks and behaves in the ring are not so much concerned with how dogs think or behave; they are not concerned with dogs as individuals but they are more concerned with the body type of the dog.

So the way that this works is that the standard describes what the ideal specimen of a dog is, and the judge uses that standard while he or she is looking at all of the dogs that they see in a dog show for a particular breed. They pick a winner by choosing a dog that conforms to the standard most closely. So the emphasis as I said is primarily on physical type; how the dog looks.

Now Judy Bentley has argued following Foucault that “disciplinary power is a policy of coercions that produces docile bodies, subjects who conform to goals and practices defined by policies and politics or disciplines.” I am arguing here that the American Kennel Club (AKC) and the judges that use standards designed by the American Kennel Club is that kind of disciplinary power and that the standards themselves are the policies that dog bodies have to conform to in order to reach certain goals. And in order to reach these goals, certain practices must be employed. Bentley further argues that “in order for disciplinary power to define and subjugate individual and social bodies, it becomes necessary for each discipline to develop its own specialized discourse.” Once again I am arguing that the standard delineates that discourse. It gives a language for how to talk about dog bodies. In addition to that, the people at a dog show, at the actual physical site of a dog show change their language when they talk about dogs. It becomes not “Spot” or “Charlie,” it becomes the “ideal specimen.” The “beautiful Rottweiler.” The “perfect Doberman.” The language changes, and the dog loses its personality and becomes an object or thing that is paraded around in the dog show ring.

Now there has been a lot of good work that has demonstrated that breeding according to the standards has produced a lot of problems in a number of different dog breeds. The practice of line breeding, or really what's inbreeding, has contributed to these problems. Here I have some quick examples of the ones that stand out the most, whose health and wellbeing have suffered because of these breeding standards. We have the German Shepherd, who is being bred, at least in the United States, for the sloping back that has created a rising number of hip dysplasia cases. It is also, quite frankly, difficult for these dogs to actually run as compared to German Shepherds with straighter backs. Over here we have the English Bulldog, the French Bulldog likewise could apply here. These dogs' lives over the years have been shortened significantly from about 12-13 years to about eight years. Part of the reason for that is their face--that pushed in nose which impedes the breathing. These dogs have significant respiratory problems. In addition to that, their hips have been bred to be so narrow that they cannot have a natural birth. They have to have C-sections. Once again we have human beings controlling the bodies of these dogs. Finally we have the King Charles Cavalier Spaniel who, for some of these dogs, the skull size has decreased, putting pressure on the brain which causes various neurological problems and a great deal of pain.

In addition to these health issues that arise, there is the practice of body modification that is fairly common. Cosmetic surgery applies to tail docking, ear cropping, and the elimination of dew claws on these dogs. The reason that cosmetic surgery or body modification is done is because people want their dogs to conform as closely as possible to the American Kennel Club standards. In some cases, those standards encourage the docking of tails and the cropping of ears. Here is an example of the Doberman Pinscher. I'm going to quote from the standard itself: “the ears for Doberman Pinschers are normally cropped and carried erect. The upper attachment of the ear, when held erect, is on a level with the top of the skull.” For the tail, the standard says that it is “docked at approximately the second joint and appears to be a continuation of the spine, and is carried only slightly above the horizontal when the dog is alert.” So what we have here is a standard, a written

standard, that encourages the cropping and docking of tails. You can show a dog with a tail and you can show a dog with normal, floppy ears, but the chances of winning in the ring, or the chances of a judge picking your dog as a winner, are minimized, so people general crop their Doberman's ears and dock their tails. Here are some pictures of Dobermans with cropped ears and docked tails, and some with tails and natural ears. They look very different, so there is definitely a particular presentation here that is being sought out.

In some standards, like that of the Boxer, the standard speaks specifically to the desirability of having a docked tail, and, in fact, insists that the tail should be docked. Here, for the Boxer, it says that "the tail is set high, docked, and carried upward. An undocked tail [this is key] should be severely penalized." So what we see here is in order to be successful in the ring with your Boxer, you must have the tail docked. For the ears on a Boxer, there's a little more flexibility here. You can have a Boxer with cropped ears or uncropped ears, and the standard speaks to both of those. So here we have some pictures of Boxers. In this corner, one with a docked tail and cropped ears; here, natural ears and a tail; and then here, natural ears and a docked tail. All of these can be shown, but the key here is that you have to have the docked tail to be successful.

It's also worth talking about parallels among humans and human bodies. Historically, we've continued to have a practice of body modification for human animals. Historically, we've had forced sterilization. More recently, we have something called the Ashley Treatment, which entailed removal of the uterus and breast tissue, closing bone growth plates with high-dosage estrogen treatments. This was done in order to keep a child small as she grows into adulthood in order to simplify the care of the child by preventing menstruation and the other changes that occur in the body during puberty. It was highly controversial at the time, but since then, there have been over 100 children worldwide that have had this procedure done. We also have cases of mammoplasty, rhinoplasty, and skin whitening--very common body modification practices so that human bodies can conform to stands of "normality," "beauty," and "able-bodiedness."

So, finally, to continue with the standards, what we see is the disassembling of dog bodies. If we take a look at another example from the Doberman standard, it reads "the chest broad with forechest well defined. Ribs well sprung from the spine, brisket reaching deep to the elbow. Belly well tucked up, extending in a curved line from the brisket. Loins wide and muscled." So we have a discussion of the dog that makes no reference to the individual, to the individual personality, to the dog as a being of inherent worth, but instead we have a standard that breaks down the dog's body into her various parts.

As the American Kennel Club standards define physical beauty and state who is able-bodied, they focus on the dog's body, not the dog as an individual, as I have already said. We can argue here that the individual dog, the individual personality, is the absent referent, again following Adams. When we show dogs, we change the way we talk about them. We talk about the parts of their bodies; we objectify them and refer to them as specimens—we don't use their names or see them as individuals.

We also create "throw-away" dog bodies, or the so-called "junk dog". These are the dogs that deviate significantly from the standard and therefore are eliminated from the breeding program. This includes dogs with health issues, but also includes dogs that are the wrong color, who might



have an undershot jaw or an overshot jaw. I have examples here, I'm not going to read them, but the standards--for example, the Boxer standard and the Rottweiler standard--specifically delineate what those disqualifications are. So, in defining what the able-bodied dog is, what the beautiful dog is, what the normal dog body should look like, we automatically create the "junk dog."

So, what happens to the "junk dog"? That dog is eliminated from the breeding program. Sometimes euthanasia is used, and that's used primarily for dogs that have health issues. It's not used like it was in the past to eliminate the healthy dogs that didn't conform to the standard. Those dogs are sold as "pet quality" dogs. Here, the control of the dog's body is still prominent. Most breeders will have a contract that the family who wants the dog has to sign, has to agree to, that says that they must spay or neuter their dog; that is their dog is no longer allowed to breed. Therefore, reproduction is controlled. So, again, we have an example of this disciplinary power, a policy of controlling animal bodies so that the standards are preserved and that the ideal specimen is maintained.

Again, parallels: human disability as pathological condition. In the social construction of "normality" (and "beauty") specialized discourse is used to depict human "disability" (and "ugliness") as a pathological condition. Individuals labeled as disabled, those that society deemed as ugly, are regarded as having less than "normal" lives and identities. They are marginalized and therefore regarded as expendable.

The fact is that Bulldog and German Shepherd breeders love their dogs. I'm not contending with this, even though the breeding practices are morally offensive. The problem is they don't see the problem with engaging in these practices. Why is that? I think it's because notions of normalcy, normative body types, and so on are embedded in our culture - in the way we think about beauty, health, and the able body. Dog shows therefore publicly reinforce cultural and social constructions of normalcy, the able bodied person/canine, and beauty. They are sites in which these notions of normalcy and able-bodiedness and beauty are reinforced for both canines and human bodies. And finally, canine/human relationships are non-innocent--as Harlan Weaver would put it. I believe they are influenced and shaped by hierarchical ideologies such as ableism, and in doing that, they also reinforce these ideologies. Thank you.



**Vol. 9, Issue 1  
June, 2016**

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## **Embracing Our Herstory of Animal Loving Madness**

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Link to this presentation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CrzSo0i9UM>

Keywords: Animal Rights, Animal Advocacy, Madness

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## **EMBRACING OUR HERSTORY OF ANIMAL LOVING MADNESS**

hi my name is archie. and this is Phoebe. thanks for tuning in to my presentation.  
so to briefly summarize what i am going to be talking about today – basically this is a presentation about mental health, mental illness, about identities of madness and how those topics interrelate with animal advocacy, animal defense, animal rights.

first to start off, i'm going to offer up a land acknowledgment i am a white settler residing on stolen indigenous territory and i continue to benefit from a lot of the privileges that come from the result of historic and ongoing colonization of Turtle Island, here. specifically, i am on Saanich (WSANEC), Lekwungen (Songhees) and Esquimalt – Coast Salish and Straits Salish Nations.

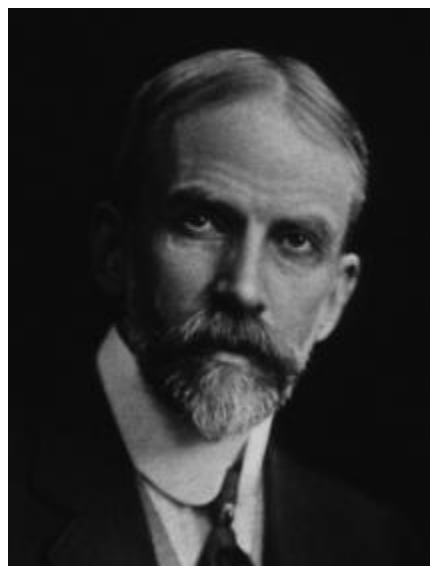
if you can, i would really encourage you to just pause the video right now and make sure that you are at least familiar with the people's territory that you are residing on, potentially occupying,

depending on where you're watching this from. and those kind of conversations are important. i think they're necessary for another video altogether, but i think that's important to acknowledge. and to go further, i'm going to just also be honest in saying that a lot of the material content i'm going to be talking about in this video – a lot of its comes from the lived experiences and from the mental-emotional labour of other peoples. so i'm not, when i am presenting this, material i'm not looking for credit or validation as something that I produced. i'm really just trying to make this space, this conference here, use my privilege to access it, to bring up these kinds of conversations that are really important when we're talking about disability, about animal politics.

as well, i want to offer a content warning for what I'm going to be talking about it's a lot of potentially triggering material. it's going to be conversations about ableism, about specifically mental illness, about disability. there is going to be conversations about speciesism, about animal abuse and animal testing. there's going to be conversations about misogyny, about patriarchy, a lot of gaslighting, and medicalization of women, and womens' bodies.

finally for the introduction, i just want to do a breathe to ground ourselves as we go through this presentation. i think it's really important, depending if this is the first video you are watching on its own, or if you are going to be watching this video as part of the wider conference that this is happening with. i think it's really important that you're really present with what i'm going to be talking about, so that way your mind is here and you're not still processing a lot of the other information that you may have picked up throughout the day, depending where you're coming from. if we can just do one quick breath, i would appreciate that. just a slow breath in... and a slow breath out... okay – thank you.

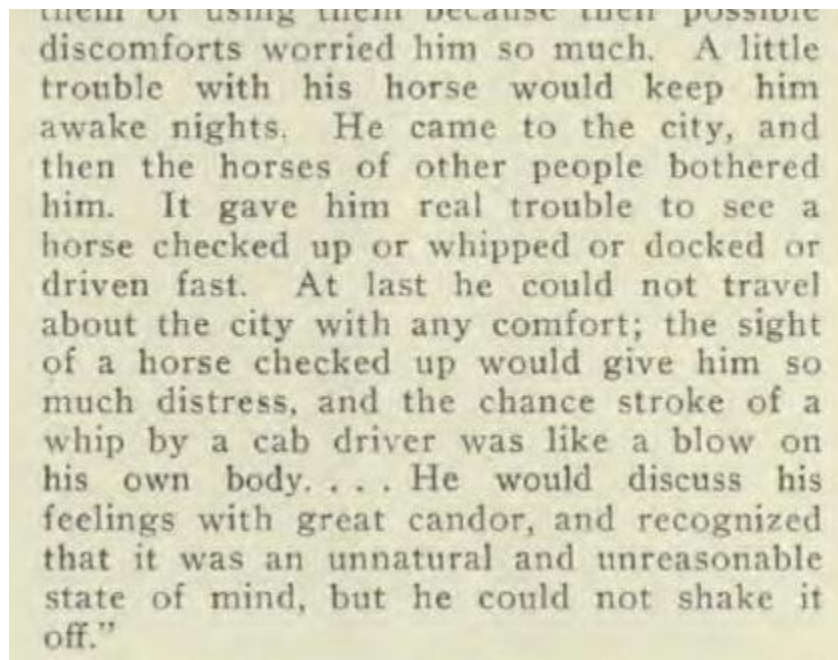
to start, when i say “embracing our herstory of animal loving madness”, what i am talking about? to explain that, i think it'd be best if i go backwards through the title itself. “animal loving madness” – this was once considered a legitimate mental disorder among the medical industry. they characterized it as a dangerous, obsessive insanity among people who were over-concerned, over-empathetic with the suffering of animals.



*Charles Dana*

the term “zoophil-psychosis” was the clinical term developed and it literally means “psychotic love of animals”. it was first coined by Charles Dana in 1909. Dana was a very influential neurologist in the United States, at Cornell, and a leading animal vivisectionist. he did a lot of animal testing, he was very invested in the industry of animal testing. Dana pronounced this medical disorder, of zoophil-psychosis, calling it a dangerous psychological malady that was manifesting in people who were advocating for animals.

Dana first published this again in 1909, in *The Medical Record*, which was a scientific journal. he described the characteristics through case studies saying that it was enduring sensitivity, an excessive over-concern with animals. some of the cases he talked about were people who were very bothered by horses being mistreated in the streets – this is the 1900s when horse carriages were very common. people who were getting upset by the beatings of horses, he characterized this as suffering from zoophil-psychosis. as well, people trying to intake a lot of stray cats, cats needing homes, cat fostering. he found this again to be a sort of bizarre obsession that was psychologically dangerous, and he was treating this medically.



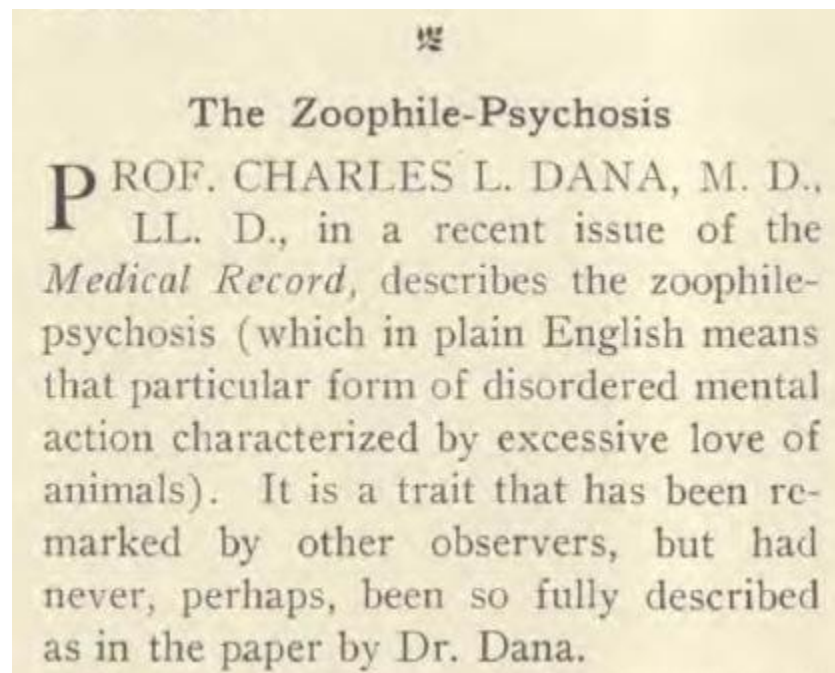
them or using them because their possible discomforts worried him so much. A little trouble with his horse would keep him awake nights. He came to the city, and then the horses of other people bothered him. It gave him real trouble to see a horse checked up or whipped or docked or driven fast. At last he could not travel about the city with any comfort; the sight of a horse checked up would give him so much distress, and the chance stroke of a whip by a cab driver was like a blow on his own body. . . . He would discuss his feelings with great candor, and recognized that it was an unnatural and unreasonable state of mind, but he could not shake it off."

*A case of zoophil-psychosis*

what Dana was getting at here, again just because he was very invested in animal testing, from his position, his status, he was describing that people who were getting sick with this animal empathy, that it was a danger to civilized society, a danger to scientific progress, that it was just a danger to people manifesting psychopathic characteristics which were initially being understood as animal advocacy, as animal rights. whereas he was trying to instead say that it's not a political issue, it's actually a group of people with mental illness who need to be treated.

and it's really convenient that his diagnosis created a massive stigma around his opponents who were trying to undermine his scientific research, his economic investments, and what he was doing.

at the time, in the early 1900s, in the united states, anti-vivisection was gaining a lot of traction, it was gaining a lot of popularity and political clout in society. a lot of the campaigns were being led by women who were also involved in a lot of suffragette movements and a lot of child protection, advocacy for the poor and homeless. so with this clinical diagnosis developed, Dana and the other medical industry, along with the media, were able to really redirect what the conversations were about. instead of about testing on animals – the legitimacy and morality of that – it was conversations about the mental well-being of people challenging these doctors, these men in offices.



a lot of mainstream media picked up on this. New York Times especially was very supportive of this diagnosis. there was a lot of articles, some of them included titles “Passion for Animals Really a Disease”, with a lot of really ridiculous quotes saying that “anti-vivisectionists care little for human suffering” and that there was a “preposterous love of pet animals that push people to the verge of insanity”. another editorial in the New York Times, in 1910, saying that anti-vivisectionists, “they are a queer people involving an actual hatred of human beings”. again, this is the kind of content that is being put out by the media in defense of Charles Dana and this zoophil-psychosis diagnosis.

so with the “herstory of animal madness”, this is applying a feminist perspective towards understanding what this diagnosis of zoophil-psychosis was really all about. when you dive deeper you can understand that Dana and the wider medical establishment, as well as the media, were also gendering this diagnosis of mental illness. they were characterizing it to be particularly common among women. among women who were out in the streets, politically aggressive in opposing dominant institutions like the medical industry. they were describing zoophil-psychosis as leading to symptoms where people would abandon their domestic responsibilities.





*Caroline Earle White – founded the American Anti-Vivisection Society in 1883*



*Diana Belais – President of the New York Anti-Vivisection Society – was frequently stigmatized as being mentally ill*



essentially reading through those lines, what the doctors were saying is that these women were not being responsible according to their standards of what a woman should be doing. they wanted to medicalize that as a dangerous psychosis. and there was a lot of quotes, even directly from Charles Danas' articles describing that zoophil-psychosis could lead to secondary symptoms including "asexuality, selfishness, jealousy, foolishness, and other related disinterest", that would relate to "caring more for felines than being a nurturing wife and potential mother". as well, the Medical Record, again this popular scientific journal, describing in a 1910 article saying that "victims of this zoophil-psychosis consisted of women who coddle their pets and love them more than babies".

this zoophil-psychosis was really related to the diagnosis of hysteria, as a psychological disorder among women.

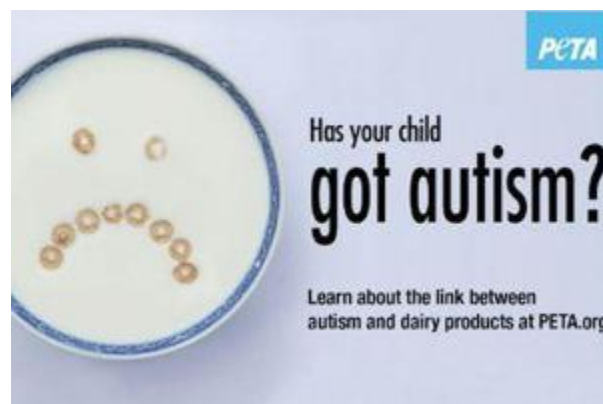


*Note the babies in chains crawling behind the "hysterical" woman.*

hysterical neurosis was not removed from the DSM until 1980, so it was a very popular way to undermine the voices of women by describing their anger, any resentment, any defiance towards patriarchal institutions as being a form of mental disturbance that needs to be treated instead of

actually listened to. with this, you can understand that when there is a male-dominated institution, in 1909, of the medical industry, of the media – again there were more articles coming out with titles saying “Women who love Animals Hate People”. again just really blatant examples that, by manufacturing this illness they were able to also simultaneously uphold repressive gender roles by dismissing the women who were leading campaigns against the testing of animals.

okay, talking about “embracing the animal loving madness”. what i am talking about here is trying to develop more comprehensive ways of having radical disability politics into animal advocacy, animal defense, specifically around mental illness. when i am talking about zoophil-psychosis earlier, i am not meaning to somehow suggest that it is somehow an origin of ableism in animal rights mainstream culture today, but more that it is an interesting illustrative example of an overlap between disability and animal advocacy back a century ago. but currently mainstream animal rights culture is definitely lacking in considering disability within a radical empowering way, of building any significant ties with communities with disabilities.



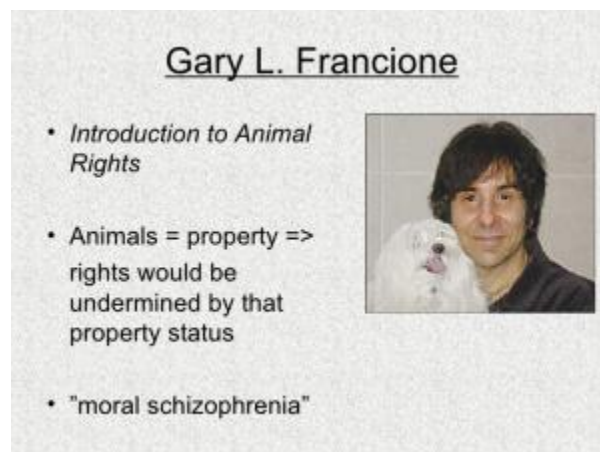
there is a lot of examples that you can draw from. just briefly to go over, you have a lot of the major organizations, the major thinkers, who take up a lot of space and gather a lot of attention and status.

you know there, is PeTA with a lot of their campaigns talking about body-shaming, and offering “healthy solutions” towards fixing people’s physical illnesses or preventing mental illnesses, in the case of autism in one of their autism anti-dairy campaign posters.



*Disability rights activists protesting Peter Singer*

as well, there's popular writers like Peter Singer who talk about elevating animals with higher IQ over peoples with disabilities who have lower IQs. then there is a lot of language around equating animal abuse with mental illness – that's one of the most popular things that i found. there is Gary Francione who talks frequently about “moral schizophrenia”, and there is just a lot of language thrown around, where it's equating meat-eating with sick people, with animal abuse as psychopaths, and a lot of slogans brought up such as “people being blind to justice”, or “standing up for animals”, and “being the voice for the voiceless.”



just talking about really ableist language as an effort to validate what this animal rights politics is about. i found a lot of this to be shortcuts to really articulating well what we are talking about when we're saying that there is speciesism in our societies that exploit animal bodies. but referring to ableist rhetoric that is built on the oppression of other bodies, other minds, peoples with disabilities that this is doomed to failure, doomed to breaking ties instead of actually building solidarity within communities.

i think what is a really important way of moving past these sorts of things, about developing a more empowering sense of madness, about mad pride within animal rights, in animal liberation. i think the ways of doing this are moving away from a lot of the emphasis on presenting animal politics as rational, as scientific, as objective. i understand the reasons for that, as a way to cater towards mainstream society and a lot of the politically influential institutions and people.



*Note the framing of the rational scientific men above the younger irrational women playing with dogs.*

but i think in the process of doing this we are losing a really important element that our emotions, that our empathy are really powerful, radical tools. they're radical expressions of who we are as people, as animals. i don't think that those are things that we should be negotiating with, or apologizing for. there is a lot of really great quotes i can draw from, from books i've read about these sorts of things.

where patrice jones, in the book "Aftershock", which is about activist trauma so it's a really interesting read if you have the time and money to devote towards that, but one of the few sentences that i drew upon for this presentation is where patrice is describing how "men of many cultures have sought to transcend to their own bodies while reducing women and animals to their body parts. seeing themselves as more rationale and self-determined, men claim the right to rule over those they see as more emotional, impulsive and bound to bodily rhythms." i think that is really a succinct way of describing what our society, built on speciesism, on ableism, is really nurturing things of objectivity, of disconnection from our bodies, from our minds, and a lot of fear of disability, of illness. i think those are things that are actually empowering for radical liberation, and things that we should not shy away from.



ways we can keep going with that, with empowering animal madness, of almost trying to reclaim identities of zoophil-psychosis. i think there needs to be a lot more emphasis on community care when we are doing animal advocacy.



*SkinnedKnees.net*

this can look like a lot of different ways, but the basic idea here is that we're not treating self-care on its own sake, but especially for peoples with illnesses, chronic illnesses, and disabilities – not treating that as somehow a side issue, as an afterthought, that is not associated with organizing, with protests, with activism. because that is a very community-involved process, where we can make space and give up space for people who need to be heard when their needs are such that they need more attention and more community support. i think that when we do this, we can move away from perceiving dependency, interdependency and vulnerability as negative things. i think those are things that we have been taught to be afraid of, out of weakness, fear of being seeing as weak, but i think they are actually very powerful revolutionary things to really explore more.

when we're doing this, when we're talking about activism for animals, i think we can for ourselves take a step back and really look out "what is activism?" and "who is defining what activism is?".

so instead of the very common depictions of activists as the people marching in the streets, making a lot of noise and taking up a lot of space, while it is important, i think it is also important to acknowledge that people who are taking time off to care for themselves, with an illness, i think that is activism in its own right. people, single mothers, who are raising children but can't attend group meetings, can't attend potlucks, because they are working or because they have disabilities and live in a community that is architecturally designed to not accommodate them, prevents them from attending things, protests and other social gatherings. i think we need to respect that those are forms of activism to exist in societies that are not built to support those kinds of people. supporting those marginalized peoples, that is activism in its own right.



so yeah, i think that's really important, that we figure out ways to redefine what our boundaries are, of activism, of community support, of self-care, of what liberation is as a whole. understand that disability, mental illness, these aren't things that need to be perceived as something to be fixed, as though there's something wrong with a disability, as though it's not wholly natural as "health" as we know it. i think the idea here is that we need to be making space for communities and peoples with disabilities to be able to access these kinds of conversations right here, and these sorts of issues towards liberation.

finally, i think another really important way that we can move towards making more accessible animal politics happen in our communities for people with physical disabilities and for mental illnesses here, i think depending on what the community actions are, whether it's the more confrontational protests in the streets involving police, or if it's engaging with animals who are being exploited right in front of us in such cases as slaughterhouses, or zoos, marine parks, things like that, i think it's really ideal if we can try to develop more of an infrastructure for support of people who are coming out to these things, to have some way to debrief, ideally with people who are trained with post-traumatic stress disorder to help transition people to not take a lot of this grief, a lot of this really violent speciesism and other things that we can experience at protests, to not take all that home with us alone. again, what i was saying earlier about making self-care and self-love for people with illnesses and disabilities, making that a community affair. i think the emphasis on protesting should really be half of the event as a whole, whereas the other half should be meant towards really feeding the community afterwards so that we can leave that space and feel that we have support and that we are being take care of by ourselves and by each other. i think that those sorts of steps are going to make a more sustainable, a more radical space available for long-term success in liberation, and more examples of momentary liberation for people to feel good and feel like we are doing things that are really feeding our souls and our spirits for resisting oppression.





*Early 1900s anti-vivisection protests in New York*

i think it's important for us to remember that taking zoophil-psychosis as a case study example to illustrate overlap between disability and animal politics, that there are a lot of ableism logic that has been internalized and kept along through the years in animal rights culture. i think there is absolutely so much potential for us to drop all of those habits and those sorts of relationships of supporting other oppressive dynamics – we can drop that from a lot of our community organizing and that we can move towards a lot more empowering ways of negotiating space, of connecting with different communities and of challenging the status quo. i think that doing that by embracing more of our emotions, embracing more of our empathy, and not being afraid of madness, of taking pride in our mad identities and our mental illnesses, i think there is really great potential that we can shift our perspectives in how we understand what health is, and what disability is, and what liberation is going to look like, today, tomorrow and for the future.

yeah, that is everything. thanks for listening.

okay bye.

### Further Readings

- **Leaving Evidence** – disability justice writer and organizer Mia Mingus, a queer physically-disabled woman of colour, writing about understanding how ableism is interconnected with racism, colonialism, capitalism and cis-gendered heteropatriarchy
- **For the Prevention of Cruelty: The History and Legacy of Animal Rights Activism in the United States**, by Diane L. Beers, Ohio University Press, May 25, 2006.
- **Zoophilpsychosis: Why Animals are What's Wrong with Sentimentality**. Menely, Tobias. 2007. Published by University of Nebraska Press. Vol 15, No 1-2. Pp 244-267.
- **Antivivisection and the Charge of Zoophil-Psychosis in the Early Twentieth Century**. Craig Buettinger: published in *The Historian*, Vol. 55, 1993, pp. 277-288

- **Women and Antivivisection in Late Nineteenth-Century America.** Craig Buettinger, published in Oxford University Press, Journal of Social History, Vol 30, No 4, 1997, pp 857-872.
- **The Mad Pride: A Celebration of Mad Culture,** Robert Dellar, Esther Leslie, Ben Watson. Published by Spare Change Books (2003)
- **The Icarus Project** – a support network and media project by and for people who experience the world in ways that are often diagnosed as mental illness, advancing social justice by fostering mutual aid practices that reconnect healing and collective liberation.
- **Overcoming the Language of Oppression: Promoting Cultural Change with Words** by Pat Risser, presented at the 2008 Annual Clinical Forum on Mental Health: Turning Knowledge into Practice. North Dakota Department of Human Services.
- **Mentalism, disability rights and modern eugenics in a ‘brave new world’.** 2009. Diane Wiener, Rebecca Ribeiro and Kurt Warner. Disability & Society. Volume 24, Issue 5,
- **The Madwoman in the Academy, or, Revealing the Invisible Straightjacket: Theorizing and Teaching Saneism and Sane Privilege.** PhebeAnn M. Wolframe. 2013. Vol 33, No 1, Wolframe.

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*archie identifies as a chronically ill, cis-queer, anarchist zen vegan. they write visionary fiction about animal & earth liberation while also managing the online resource called ELK ([www.humanrightsareanimalrights.com](http://www.humanrightsareanimalrights.com)), which has organized large-scale events around intersectionality, anti-patriarchy and anti-pipeline resistance. with a master's degree in criminology, archie has written & led conversations around anti-speciesism, prison abolitionism – and the collusion of privileged mainstream animal rights with other oppressions. as a white settler currently residing on the territories of WSANEC (Saanich), Lekwungen (Songhees) & Esquimalt People's of the Coast Salish and Straits Salish Nations, archie lives with one humyn, a boxer, a beagle and a kitty.*



**Vol. 9, Issue 1**  
**June, 2016**

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## **Walking On Two Legs: Where Ableism and Speciesism “Meat”**

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Link to this presentation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W208TpT5xJY>

Keywords: Ableism, Speciesism, Disability

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## **WALKING ON TWO LEGS: WHERE ABLEISM AND SPECIESISM “MEAT”**

Hello! So, before I begin my discussion, I just want to start with a few quick trigger warnings. The first is that I will be talking about my emotional experience as somebody who has a both what is considered to be a visible and invisible illness and so if this is something you are currently struggling with through the internalization of feelings based on how society treats you, or even just dealing with the repercussions emotionally of how society treats you, maybe go find another video and really take some time for self-care and the reason I wanted to make a point of mentioning self-care is that we as activists do not do it nearly enough. The second trigger warning is that I will be talking about violence that both nonhuman and human persons face in and outside of the slaughterhouse, and by outside I just mean in transport trucks. While I will not be discussing either of these things in any great detail, I will be talking about what nonhuman persons face once they're inside the slaughterhouse, and in more of a statistical list form I will be talking about what human persons, specifically human disabled persons, face as workers in these institutions. So if either of

these things feel like they are going to get at you in any way, in any degree, just like I said, go take time for yourself.

So I want to begin with what disability means to me. I was originally going to start with, you know, the general definition of disability and then go on to ableism and et cetera, but then somebody pointed out to me that we all know these definitions, we don't need to hear them again, and that's why I wanted to instead go in a different direction and explain what these terms mean to me so that one can better understand the road I am going down as I continue in my studies and continue in this presentation. So disability for me is an extremely complicated concept, and this is because I am thought of as having an "invisible" illness as well as a visible one. And the reason I put "invisible" in quotations there is because I do not feel that my illnesses or disabilities are invisible. If somebody really just took the time to educate themselves and learn a little bit more about both my illnesses and about ableism in general, they would realize that there really is no such thing, and I actually find it quite offensive to have my disabilities or my illnesses be called "invisible." And so even if I'm not using quotations throughout the rest of this presentation, that's just something I want to have people keep in mind and, um, but I also want to emphasize that is just my personal preference; if somebody else defines themselves as having an invisible disability and they're okay with that, that experience is also equally as valid.

So what I mean when I say that I am viewed as both is that literally one day I can be using a wheelchair and the next day I won't be and this provides me with both a unique perspective and a unique and complicated emotional struggle. So, when I'm using my wheelchair, I experience more of I guess what one might think of as the typical ways in which persons with disabilities are thought of as being discriminated against, so, you know, not being able to get up a curb because it wasn't sloped enough and because people can't imagine the difficulty that someone in a wheelchair might have trying to get themselves up this tiny little step because, for them, who is walking on two legs, it's not that big of a deal. Or being gawked at or experiencing further inspiration porn and that in itself takes its own emotional toll, you begin to feel like you are freakish or that you aren't remotely physically attractive and therefore you don't deserve a physical, sexual relationship, and so that's the way in which this particular form of discrimination that I experience as somebody with a visible disability takes and internalizes. Now, when I'm not using my wheelchair, I'm not using my cane, I face a whole different set of problems, and these problems tend to take on more of a political form. So I have a harder time getting the accommodations that people with disabilities have been given, the little ones we've been given. So I've lost my job as a result, pretty much because, even though I had a doctor's note, I wasn't "sick enough," and, to this day, I have difficulty getting my medication, medication I've been on for years, even just this week I had to fight for it because I guess again, I don't look "sick enough" or I'm not acting "sick" in the right way, and the way that this emotionally internalizes, the way that this discrimination internalizes, inside my emotional self is that I begin thinking maybe I am weak and I just can't handle it and that's why I'm undeserving of these medications or undeserving of these accommodations. And so, for me, the concept of disability is the furthest thing from simple, both in an intellectual sense and in an emotional sense. And therefore ableism, understanding ableism, is far from simple, and this is why, somewhat ironically, I have come to define ableism in the simplest way I can, and that's because I cannot summarize these feelings in a simple sentence, and unfortunately sometimes you do need those simple sentences so that you can form an argument or give a talk or help others

understand, and I think that's what we all want to do with these talks that we give, is help others understand.

So the definition of ableism that I have come to find fits the best is a form of bigotry that values non-disabled persons over disabled persons, and this results in their rights being lost, their bodily rights specifically is what I will be focusing on, and violence being done onto them, and the reason I like this definition is because it includes everybody, whether your illness is recognized or not, whether you have, you know, self-diagnosed or not, whether you are getting the treatment you need or not, whether you're in a wheelchair or not, you fit into this definition. Ableism reflects the sentiment of certain groups and social structures that value and promote certain abilities over others, and the abilities that I view as being the key ones that society, for whatever reason, seems to put such an emphasis on is the ability to walk on two legs and the ability to think in—or to be thought of as thinking—rationally. And, as you can see, this leaves out a whole host of people, this leaves out people of colour, it leaves out disabled people, it leaves out nonhuman persons, it leaves out queer people and trans people and the list just goes on and on. Because, really, the only person it does not leave out is the human abled white hetero cis person, and if you are not that person, then you are less deserving of rights, your body is less deserving of rights and respect, and therefore violence being done onto you becomes more acceptable, and, to prove this point, I want to give a number of examples that both take place inside and outside the slaughterhouse setting and the reason I picked this setting specifically is that, for me, it really seemed to be where most obviously ableism and speciesism connect literally even though we know that intersectionality is not one intersection, it's multiple, but this seems to be one of the places where the intersection is extremely obvious. And so I have chosen to focus on this for my research and the purpose of this talk specifically.

So, to begin, I want to talk about discrimination against nonhuman persons inside and outside the slaughterhouse, and the reason I keep saying “outside” is to include transport trucks, like I mentioned, and the reason this is so important for me is because the organization that I work with and that I'm a co-organizer of, Toronto Cow Save, focuses on bearing witness really of those beings trapped in these transport trucks. So the concept of “bearing witness” is one that Tolstoy came up with, and he said that when you see somebody who is suffering, instead of backing away from them as is our nature as a society, draw yourself as close to them as you possibly can and offer them the help that they deserve if you can give it to them. And so what that means for us as a group is that we walk up as close to the transport trucks as we can, and sometimes we do prevent the trucks from entering the slaughterhouse for a certain amount of time. We document their condition so that their stories may be told later, we give them food and water, and we tell them that they are loved and that their experience is worthy of being looked at, that we give them the respect of saying, “You matter.” And spending this much time, spending years in this location, has given me access to knowledge that pointed me in the direction of focusing on the slaughterhouse both academically and for my own personal intellectual journey. But, to stay on the point of nonhuman persons, we have come to know more about their experience in these two particular slaughterhouses as well as their experience in the transport trucks. And what you really see, what's really emphasized is just how much like objects they are treated. They are hung upside down by one foot and their throats are slit while they are entirely conscious, and this is done in front of their family members and friends. So they have to watch their family members slowly bleed out and there's nothing they can do about it. They have to watch their family members scream and kick

and, again, there's nothing they can do about it. They're even regularly skinned and dismembered alive, and this is because the managers don't want to slow down the kill line, even just to provide these animals with the smallest amount of humane treatment it is not worth slowing down the kill line because that means less money and, to me, that really just shows how little they are thought of as persons because they do not meet the definition of a person because they do not stand on two legs and are not thought of as thinking rationally. And so it is not worth it to consider their needs and their feelings, they are mere objects. And when these animals come in disabled, it's even worse. Now, I'm not sure if one can ever say that these animals come in completely healthy, but when you see a "dairy" mom or an egg-laying hen whose body has been so ravaged over the years that they cannot stand up, you see that there are some that come in sicker than others, and these ones tend to horribly face an even worse death because they are picked up and thrown into the slaughterhouse when they cannot walk, or they are dragged into the slaughterhouse with chains and often, because of this, they are not stunned properly and they go down the kill line completely conscious. And, practically, for nonhuman persons, where ableism and speciesism intersects.

And to now bring into this discussion what human persons experience inside and outside the slaughterhouse. I want to first start with some specific statistics. So meatpacking has the highest rate of serious injury of any job in North America. It is 33 times higher than the national average. This means that about 40,000 people are injured a day on the job. To give some examples and some particularly egregious incidents that were listed in incident reports of the last few years, and what I want you to think about when listing these is what didn't make it into the reports because we know that most of what goes on in slaughterhouses is hidden from us. Eight were injured and one was killed after an ammonia spill, an employee was decapitated by the chain of a hide puller machine, an employee was killed when their head was crushed in a hide fleshing machine, an employee was killed by a stun gun, an employee was killed by a gut cooker machine. And even though I've already talked about the violence that nonhuman animals face, I just want to mention that, just by looking at the way that these machines are labeled alone, one can tell just how horribly these creatures are treated. But, to get back to what human animals experience, I want to bring back up what I have experienced working with Toronto Cow Save, and there was one particular instance where we were there doing vigils multiple times a week and there were people from one of the slaughterhouses who were protesting. They had stopped working and they were protesting because they weren't getting the disability pay they needed, and I ended up connecting with this one person who had rheumatoid arthritis and he got this job because he felt like he had no other option. He was also not a legal citizen. And so he was promised this job where he could get higher pay than, say, in a retail setting, and so he took the job and he had just been continually getting injured ever since. So he was once burned so horribly all down his back by a knife sterilization vat of water that he was off work for three months, and he did not get paid for that entire three months. And so not only was he not paid for something that happened to him while he was on the job, but because he was not a legal citizen, he wasn't getting paid for the medications he needed as somebody with a chronic illness. And that was actually when I first began thinking about the further connections and just the deeper connections between ableism and speciesism, and that these connections didn't just exist on a certain theoretical level, but that they exist on a practical level for every one of the beings that enter the slaughterhouse, whether they are human or nonhuman, whether they enter "willingly" or unwillingly.



So, further examples that I just want to get into which show just really how ableism, for the worker, is ingrained in the slaughterhouse mentality. I want to first begin with the Atalissa slaughterhouse case. This was in Iowa, and it started in the '50s and it was recently legally settled. It involved a turkey growing and processing plant. So "growing" means where the turkeys were living, if you can truly call it "living," and this is where the turkeys were dying. The men were from institutions for the disabled and they were promised a job plus housing, and this is something people might be shocked to learn still goes on today, and we know this because the people, the management at the slaughterhouses that we bear witness at, that Toronto Cow Save bears witness at, has told us that he goes into these institutions and he "helps"—he really believes he's helping—he "helps" these people who society has thrown away into these institutions, he "helps" them re-enter society by killing and he "helps" them get a decent job. Again, he truly believes that. But, getting back to this particular case, they were given the jobs of either the pullers or the croppers, so they had to pull out the windpipe and the crop of the turkeys in the slaughterhouse setting, and this is considered to be one of the dirtiest and most physically difficult jobs there is. So here you have men that are already disabled and you're giving them a job that is pretty much guaranteed to give them further disability in the future. But, you know, I think one of the reasons that it can be argued that slaughterhouse management go and they purposely look to hire people with disabilities is because either they think they will not complain because they cannot get anything else or they think that, if they do complain, that society won't listen to them. And, sadly, both of those things are true. So these men ended up getting paid only 65 dollars a month, no matter how many hours they worked, and medical expenses were taken out of their pay. So it's sort of like with the "dairy" moms and the egg-laying moms. Now I'm not saying that getting paid less is the same as the torture that "dairy" and egg moms face, but it's still an instance in which, within a terrible situation, people who are disabled are experiencing even more terror in a terrible situation, and so these men were getting paid even less than those who didn't have medical expenses. And the housing they were given, basically they were given housing to share with roaches and mice. They also had soiled mattresses and they ended up malnourished and the reason they ended up malnourished is because the food was so horrible as a result of contamination from the rats and the roaches that they had to hold their hands over their plates so that the mice and rats and roaches wouldn't fall into their food. They also needed dental attention at the time when this case began, and almost all of them suffered from arthritis, again, as a result of the job they were given because it was known when they were given the job that it's one of the most physically grueling jobs that there are.

Another case involves the Montfort "beef" company, which is owned by ConAgra, one of the biggest agricultural institutions in the States. There was a man who could not read, and he had to have back surgery, and he needed a job to help pay for his back surgery, so this is again somebody with disabilities who found themselves in really hard circumstances and thus needed to take the only job they could get. But, while on the job, he just ended up sicker. He inhaled too much chlorine while cleaning the blood tanks and had to spend a month in the hospital because he had burned his lungs and his skin. He damaged a rotator cuff in his left shoulder and also broke a leg and shattered and ankle. He is now living off of social security. So, again, we have somebody who went into this job desperately and came out even more desperate. And so, I think it's really obvious that, on a practical level, ableism and speciesism feed off each other in the slaughterhouse setting.

And, indeed, the animal agriculture industry in general is founded on ableism and violence by decisions made about who counts as a person and whose bodies matter. And, right now, the

definition of who counts as a “person” hinges on patriarchal, hetero, cis, masculine, abled traits, the valuing of whether or not somebody can walk on two legs and whether or not somebody is thought of as being able to think rationally, and we are deciding who, you know, deserves a job good enough that they can make a living off of it, who deserves to be disabled, who deserves to be further disabled, who deserves to live, who deserves to die, who deserves to suffer, all based on these two arbitrary things. They’re things, and instead of treating these abilities like they are, like arbitrary things, we take these abilities and we say, “Okay, we’re going to treat whoever doesn’t have these things like things,” and then we have human people and nonhuman people being treated like objects, and that’s when they have their rights taken away, and that’s when their bodies no longer see respect, that’s when violence ends up being done onto them. Preference for certain abilities over others leads to a labeling of real or perceived deviations—so this is deviations from, you know, not being able or not choosing to walk on two legs and being thought of as not thinking rationally—as a diminished state of being. Just like speciesism assigns different values and rights based on abilities, not being able to walk on two legs or being thought of as not thinking rationally and then being viewed as lesser as a result and humans as superior, you can see how speciesism thus also promotes discrimination against persons with disabilities as it encourages this over-valuing of the ability to walk on two legs or to be thought of as thinking rationally. Any person, whether nonhuman or otherwise, who is perceived as not having these desired, oh-so important traits is seen as other than human. This othering of animal persons as well as persons with disabilities and more individuals, such as women, makes their loss of rights and differential treatment towards them reasonable since they are not viewed as true persons and, in fact, are viewed as objects. To conclude, because the definition of the “person” has been defined by making claims as to what it is not – for example, it is not someone who does not walk on two legs, it is not someone who communicates in a way other than the English language, it is not someone who communicates in a way that is other than “rational,” and it is not somebody who communicates emotionally – persons with disabilities and nonhuman persons hold oppressed, subordinate positions in society which result in them experiencing a loss of rights, and even the violence which is perpetrated against them, as we have seen in the examples I have provided, as being viewed acceptable. Thank you.



**Vol. 9, Issue 1**  
**June, 2016**

## **Anarchist Criminology against Racism and Ableism and for Animal Liberation**

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Keywords: Racism, Ableism, Advocacy

## **ANARCHIST CRIMINOLOGY AGAINST RACISM AND ABLEISM AND FOR ANIMAL LIBERATION**

Hey everybody, my name is Anthony and I'm really excited to be part of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Eco-ability Conference and excited that so many people wanted to present and be part of. Of course there is so much more to do with eco-ability and the Eco-ability Collective, such as captioning, which we [Eco-ability Collective] were talking about last minute and there's so much more to do to be more inclusive, but you know again prior to beginning to talk about my talk I would really like to do to make sure that you know if you're interested, you have disabilities, you're interested in environmentalism, or Earth liberation and an animal liberation, please contact me or the Eco-ability Collective via E-mail or Facebook and we would be really excited to have you participate in the Collective. We want to put on events and conferences like this and prepare them and this is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual so thank you so much. The Eco-ability Collective started in 2012, emerging out of the eco-ability book that I, Judy Bentley, and Janet Duncan were part of. That book has allowed us to emerge the conferences and a journal issue in the Journal for Critical Animal Studies that

was edited by Joe Leeson-Schatz, Kim Socha, and Judy Bentley and Kim Socha, myself, and Stephanie Eccles I believe transcribed the work from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Eco-ability Conference in the Green Theory and Praxis [Journal] edited by John Lupinacci who is presenting at this conference. So it is really exciting to see all this community around this issue so if you're doing disability, and animals, or disability, and environmentalism, or all three together, you know let's work all together. Let's build a movement that is unified rather than everyone doing you know separate things and I think is really exciting that we're doing this from all over the world because we don't have the money to do it.

So I'm going to be speaking about this my chapter in this book *Anarchism and Animal Liberation: Essays on Contemporary Elements of Total Liberation* (2015) that I edited with Erica Cudworth and Richard White and I'm really excited about my chapter. My chapter is titled "Anarchist Criminology Against Racism And Ableism and for Animal Liberation." I'll begin to talk a little about anarchism first and I just read you a few lines,

Anarchism is an ideology that has long been (deliberately) misrepresented by the government, the media, educators, and indeed by other 'radical' activists. Claiming to be an anarchist or being labeled an 'anarchist' carries with it serious stigmatization. Violent, reactionary, deviant, and unruly are some of the many labels used to describe anarchists (see Bowen, 2004; Chomsky, 2005; Day, 2004). (Nocella, White, and Cudworth, 2015, p. 40).

So to move forward Brian Dominick who founded the concept of veganarchist in his pamphlet *Animal Liberation and Social Revolution: A Vegan Perspective on Anarchism or an Anarchist Perspective on Veganism* (1997) writes,

[l]ikewise, many vegans and animal liberationists are being influenced by anarchist thought and its rich tradition. This evidenced by growing hostility among some animal lib activists towards the statist, capitalist, sexist, racist, and ageist Establishment which has been escalating the intensity of its war not only on nonhuman animals, but also on the their human advocates. (Nocella, White, & Cudworth, 2015, p. 40)

So as we can see, I will read another excerpt from Brian Dominick zine,

Besides our far-reaching vision, anarchists and animal liberationists share strategical methodology. ... But unlike liberals and progressives, whose objectives are limited to reforms, we are willing to admit that real change will only be brought about if we add destructive force to our creative transformation of oppressive society. (Nocella, White, & Cudworth, 2015, p. 41)

So that is kind of where I go into this chapter and talk about transformative justice at the very end. But, what is anarchism and how does it connect?

'Anarchism' is not easy to define because it is anti-dogmatic but defined by common principles. The theory of anarchism was first introduced and defined by William Godwin, who wrote *Political Justice* in 1793. Another influential theorist at that time was Johann

Schmidt, also known as Max Stirner. Stirner wrote *The Ego and His Own* (1845), which examined the complex relationship between the individual and society and which argued that individuals are responsible for being active members in their communities and that communities are made of individuals working together. (Nocella, White, & Cudworth, 2015, p. 41).

One might say a citizen or a democracy. So, we move into this idea that capitalism reinforces the idea that everything and everyone has value trees and birds and rocks in the water and the ocean in the ponds and a redwood versa ponderosa pine or a loblolly or a panda verses a lion verses a tiger verses a kitten verses a dog verses a shark or whale. They all have values through the lens of capitalism, right? So, we exploit these animals to benefit and to profit off of. So Proudhon once said and looked at property as theft and that is how he defined it. Then Emma Goldman argued, (arguably the most influential of all anarchists) is shaping how we understand anarchism today. She said what Proudhon said, property is theft too. So this repetitive idea that we can't own anything and then ownership is a social constructed idea fostered by capitalism to believe you we can have domination over something and anarchists are very much challenging this idea that we can dominate others, right?

And so, we move on to the idea that anarchists by definition are against authoritarianism and domination and so we must be against capitalism and the concept that capitalism fosters, which is the idea that everything has a value which also Proudhon and Emma Goldman note that everything that is property which means ownership is theft. We, I or people or dogs or trees cannot be owned; they are their own entity. So, within anarchism, the strongest group that is aligned itself to anarchism with the animal liberation movement is the Animal Liberation Front founded in 1976 by Ronnie Lee in England. The Animal Liberation Front has four simple principles (1) not to harm any living creature, (2) to cause property destruction, (3) to take pictures that display the tortures that go on on non-human animals, and (4) [to take all necessary precautions against harming any animal, human and nonhuman] to do this effectively and they were the first ones to take pictures - of monkeys being tested on, dogs being tested on, rats being tested on. They were the first ones to take pictures of mink in fur farms and they were the first ones to take pictures of chickens in factory farms. These pictures really aided to the falling or the massive public critique of animal exploitation and torture and violence towards animals in the agriculture industrial complex. Until Patty Mark in Australia began to do open rescues who was the founder of the concept of open rescues then she brought it to the United States where she did a presentation at the United Poultry Concerns founded by Karen Davis where a number of people were there from Compassion Over Killing and a number of other organizations are grassroots groups and those individuals then began to do open rescues like Compassion Over Killing and then later Mercy for Animals took the idea from Compassion Over Killing and etc. etc. and critiquing this this idea that property is theft, but also publicizing what the ALF was doing, but at that time when Compassion Over Killing was doing it and now Mercy for Animals has been doing open rescues and undercover footage and stuff. The ALF has become ranked you know one and two and three in the top domestic terrorist groups and it's not because they have harmed people, not because they want to harm people, because they don't, but because they are threatening and exposing the violence that people don't want to see and they don't know about towards non-human animals of the animal industrial complex which is the most powerful and largest industry in the world comparable to that of the military-industrial complex. I would even say the animal industrial complexes larger than that

because everything that we own from the shoes, to the clothes, the computers, and cellphones, to the military, all needs animal-by-products. So you know it's very interesting how the Animal Liberation Front does critique capitalism similarly to anarchism, but the ALF does it through physical actions by destroying property and questioning this concept [of property].

So we move into this idea that,

Therefore, the labeling of human and nonhuman animals as private property allows for the exploitive for economic, social, religious, and political reasons, include profit. Nonviolence scholar Gene Sharp of *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* (1973), along with the ALF and anarchists, do not see property destruction as violent. Steve Best argues that CAS 'challenges not only the property status of animals, but the institution of (corporate controlled) private property itself. Therefore, it is crucial that we continue to develop alternative, broader, alliance-based, bridge-building, anti-capitalist, anti-hierarchical social movement' (2009b, p. 44). (Nocella, White, & Cudworth, 2015, p. 46).

Similar to anarchism is critical animal studies rooted in anarchism is an intersectional total liberation philosophy grounded by anarchists as well as activists so you know many people have gotten involved in critical animal studies. As the co-founder of critical animal studies in 2006 as well as the Institute for Critical Animal Studies, I believe and I see that critical animal studies is moving in a theoretical neoliberal detached direction where the people that are doing critical animal studies, not all, but some are not activist. The whole idea of the Institute for Critical Animal Studies and critical animal studies came is the idea that activism informs theory which is a reflection on activism to critically reflect onto that action to see what was productive and what was not productive or what was constructed or what was not constructive in their actions. So critical animal studies has to be by activists about activism for activists and activism right. So it's a continuous cycle of action.

So anarchism against punitive justice and all forms of punishment is also against prison. If we look at the history of the prison industrial complex beginning from the 13th amendment we can see that and anarchists as well as animal liberationists, if they are to be rooted in an anti-racist philosophy must be against prisons because prisons emerged out of the institutionalization and legalization of slavery out of the 13th amendment which was at the end of the Civil War which states that slavery will only be allowed if one is duly convicted of a crime. So everyone that is duly convicted of a crime United States to this day is a slave. So we don't have 2.5 million prisoners in the United States we have 2.5 million slaves in the United States we don't have any prisoners in the United States because we allow under 13th amendment slavery. So when people that are in the anti-police brutality or Black Lives Matter movement or the animal rights movement, we cannot call upon the courts to convict individuals that have done wrong to other individuals that have harmed other individuals because what we are doing is reinforcing the prison industrial complex as well as a very punitive justice system -- that is not healing, that's not about accountability, that is not about being holistic or transformative, or building community. It's rooted in a patriarchal, racist, ableist, elitist ideology and so we need to move away from that. We look at, before moving into ableism the history of political repression and today December 4<sup>th</sup>, I was just at a rally for Fred Hampton who was murdered by the Chicago Police and with the aid of law enforcement, going out and trying to assassinate him at the age of 21, because he said we "don't fight racism with



racism we fight racism with solidarity,” so we don’t fight capitalism with Black capitalism, we fight it with community building. He brought people together and he was one of the first people out of the sixties seventies that we’re bringing people together in an urban environment like Chicago. So we have to admit that during the green scare that the FBI and law enforcement started targeting the animal liberation and Earth liberation movements that yes people were repression and people were looking at serious jail time, but most if not all those people that were targeted were people that were white and they have privilege economically to bail out economic privileges of getting decent lawyers and had the economic ability and support of friends as well as family. So my question is while these individuals were repressed without a doubt, if these individuals were Black would they be alive today or would they be shot like Michael Brown or Oscar Grant or Freddie Gray or Trayvon Martin the list goes on.

I think we need to address our privileges when discussing political repression within the Earth and animal liberation movements because to this day forty years later there are former Black Panther and former Black Liberation Army members still incarcerated for framed-up charges many a times. I think that many of the people that were repression in the green scare are now free which is a blessing, but we have to understand and address the issues of racism as well as white privilege when discussing political repression.

Now onto my discussion on ableism within this movement. I think that you know ableism must be noted if we are to be against exclusion as well as the prison industrial complex. From anarchist perspective, which is anarchist criminology, it is concerned about punitive justice, punishment, control, how we address crime, how we address conflict, and how we create peace. I think everybody that is for justice should be interested in the concept of criminal justice or criminology, and what is a crime and what is harm. I write about ableism in the movement and I say,

As anarchism is by nature no exclusionary, focus on the culturally marginalized should be a primary goal of anarchist animal advocates. This brings me to further review ableism in the animal rights and liberation movement. To begin, another reason prisons and punitive justice are not the solution to ending animal abuse is that many of those in prisons and jails have mental disabilities. Nicholas Kristof (2014), writes,

Psychiatric disorders are the only kind of sickness that we as a society regularly respond to not with sympathy but with handcuffs and incarceration. And as more humane and cost-effective ways of treating mental illness have been cut back, we increasingly resort to the law-enforcement toolbox: jails and prisons [para. 3].

In fact, ‘there are 10 times more mentally ill Americans in prisons and jails than in state psychiatric hospitals’ (Lewis, para. 1, 2014). Moreover, ‘those individuals’ conditions often deteriorate while they are incarcerated’ Lewis, para. 1, 2014). Consequently, when they are released from prison, they have more personal struggles and social conflicts, which often lead them in three directions: to homelessness, to suicide, or to re-incarceration. (Nocella, White, & Cudworth, 2014, pp. 52-53)

So we need to understand that when we are striving to look at Mike Vick or look at people that have done harm an animal abuse we cannot use the legal system because it perpetuates and funds

the incarceration of People of Color, specifically Black people, as well as the incarceration of People with Disabilities. This system needs to be abolished and if the system is to be abolished the only way to abolish it is not to use it and not to depend on the court system to provide us justice. We need to build justice for ourselves. That's when we can advocate for transformative justice, which asks for these things. So when we look at transformative justice you know we can note, that these alternatives are not possible if society does not end its oppressive relationship between ownership and property, which is the essence of capitalism.

We need also move onto the concepts and ideas of transformative justice note.

Transformative justice builds on restorative justice, a justice system that developed by Mennonites, but was influenced by aboriginal people in New Zealand. Transformative justice addresses three concerns that restorative justice does not: (1) an elimination of all systems of domination; (2) intersectional identity politics when viewing conflict, crime, or harm; and (3) being opposed to any form of policing, imprisonment, or punitive justice. Transformative justice is grounded in a voluntary process of healing and accountability that empowers community, promotes individual respect, challenges the social constructed binary of victim and offender, builds holistic critical education that fosters safer and supportive spaces collaborates with others using mutual aid, and encourages principles and values on direct democracy. (Nocella, White, & Cudworth, 2014, p. 56)

And anarchism.

So that is a little about this chapter and I hope you check out the book. I thank you for being part of this conference and I thank everybody for participating in helping promote it. Have a wonderful day and a wonderful rest of the conference and hope you join me and many others in aiding in the abolition of the punitive justice system and for transformative justice and healing and building our communities together. Let us not take and use the courts to assert justice for animals that have been abused or people that have been killed by cops. We cannot say no justice no peace prosecutor police. What we need to say is: no justice, no peace, no more police, or no justice, no peace, no more punitive justice, or no justice, no peace, no more prisons. Have a wonderful day, take care.

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