

Variation in Values Surrounding Farm Animals
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Abstract

Meat consumption and the raising of farm animals for slaughter is a practice that is well ingrained in our society, yet the implications are rarely discussed. Sociological examination of values surrounding farm animals and the meat industry is important, as taking a deeper look into practices that are considered normal in our society can provide insight into their implications and how people actually feel about them. This research seeks to answer the question: How do values surrounding farm animals vary across gender, race, socioeconomic status, and LGBTQIA+ community membership? An internet survey of 167 college students at the University of Oregon, Lane Community College and Concordia University was conducted in order to assess values surrounding farm animals. The survey asked questions concerning the treatment of farm animals, farming practices, and dietary preferences. Preliminary findings suggest that those who identify as Christian value the material use of farm animals more than those who indicated having no religion. The majority of all respondents across all demographic categories agree that factory farming practices are inhumane, farm animals should be treated with compassion, and that it is important to take into account the environmental effects of the meat industry when making meat purchases. Results also suggested that people in oppressed demographic categories may have an increased sensitivity toward the oppression of animals.

Introduction

The mainstream ideology of any given time period and culture shapes the nature of the interactions humans have with animals and with each other. Human dependence upon and utilization of animals have evolved with our species from hunter-gatherer societies to the initial stages of agriculture, to the modern technology that has been employed to aid in mass food production (Nibert 2003). Heavy dependence on animals for consumption brings with it consequences for the planet and the species living on it, including our own.

Annually, 55 billion or more land-based animals are killed by the farming industry (Cudworth 2015). This is significant for a number of reasons. The livestock populations in the United States consume seven times the amount of grain that American people consume and 840 million people living on a plant-based diet could be fed from the amount of grain consumed by livestock in the United States (Pimentel and Pimentel 2003). Phosphorus-excretion from animal waste has harmful effects on the environment. Large amounts of forests have been clear cut in order for more farms to operate (Weller 2010). In the Amazon, 70% of land previously occupied by forest is now composed of pastures for livestock feeding (Joy 2011). Eighteen percent of greenhouse gasses from anthropogenic causes are from livestock-related activities, with livestock accounting for nine percent of anthropogenic carbon dioxide emissions, 35-40% of anthropogenic methane emissions, 65% of anthropogenic nitrous oxide emissions, and 64% of anthropogenic ammonia emissions. Additionally, livestock accounts for eight percent of human water use (Steinfeld 2006).

Besides the ill effects on the environment and health, the exploitation of animals goes hand in hand with the exploitation of people. Many scholars have argued that “speciesism is deeply rooted in the structure of society, particularly in the economic practices around our use of animals as food” (Irvine 2008:1959). David Nibert argues that animal oppression “contributes to other forms of oppression” (Irvine:2008:1960).

Meatpacking is the most dangerous factory job in the United States, and many workers are undocumented immigrants who are vulnerable to exploitation. Workers exhibit increasing levels of violence toward animals and people and develop psychological issues such as addiction and sadism. Factory farm runoff has been linked to respiratory problems, digestive disorders, and severe headaches (Joy 2011). The University of Minnesota conducted a study in which 1000 samples of food were taken from multiple retailers; 69% of pork and 92% of poultry was contaminated with *E. coli* (Joy 2011).

A qualitative study on individual experiences of oppression revealed that an individual’s membership in an oppressed group facilitated connection with members of other oppressed groups, as well as increased empathy and behavioral sensitivity toward the oppression of others (Croteau et.al 2002).

This project will examine how values surrounding animals vary across gender, race, socioeconomic status, LGBTQIA+ community membership, and religion. Assessing the way different groups of people place varying emphasis on certain values toward animals can provide insight into the effectiveness of potential environmental conservation efforts. It will also allow for the evaluation of whether those who are members of oppressed groups are more sensitive to the oppression of animals. My hypothesis is that individuals belonging to oppressed groups will have a heightened sensitivity to animal oppression when compared to those who are not members of oppressed groups and that there will be a high amount of conflict between individual values surrounding farm animals and animal product consumption.

Examining variation in these values can also bring into focus the prevailing ideologies surrounding food consumption which drive individual behavior. Melanie Joy posits that carnism, the set of beliefs that meat-eaters subscribe to, is a hidden ideology which allows people to continue to support the violence that is present throughout the meat industry; the mainstream way of life, while sometimes seen “as a reflection of universal values” (Joy 2011:31), is merely a description of an ideology which is “so entrenched that its assumptions and practices are simply seen as common sense” (Joy 2011:31). My research question will be: How do values surrounding farm animals vary across gender, race, socioeconomic status, LGBTQIA+ community membership, and religion?

Stephen Kellert created a typology of values toward animals in which categories of surrounding animals were explored and tested in several populations. He found the values to be present in each population, though varying, “often greatly in content and intensity” (Kellert and Wilson 1993:44). In order to answer my research question, I applied pertinent categories in the typology to values surrounding farm animals and posed questions relating to these values and dietary preferences to college students in survey form.

Background

This literature review will begin with a brief discussion of the sociological perspective on animals, followed by a discussion of vegetarianism and veganism. Speciesism, carnism, and the interlinked oppression of humans and animals are also examined. This will be followed by a description of Kellert’s typology of values surrounding animals as well as an exploration of the concept of biophilia. Attitudes toward farming practices are also explored. Finally, I will discuss gaps in the literature, and where my project fits in.

Sociology and its view of Animals

Sociology has traditionally focused on human society (Peggs 2012). Weber felt that “Sociology should examine how human meanings and actions shape society” (Peggs 2012:7). Mead saw humans as forming a sense of self through social interactions, in addition to being able to use language to predict the results of their actions, assess other courses of action, and collaborate with others. He saw other animals besides humans as operating purely on instinct. (Peggs 2012). Two important points here are that sociology has traditionally focused on humans rather than animals, and human society rather than biology.

Sociology has challenged ideas put forth by biological determinism, such as that males are smarter because their heads are usually bigger than the heads of women. When applied to other animals, however, biological determinism is generally not contested by sociology (Peggs 2012).

A more modern take on the idea of the animal self has been put forth by sociologist Leslie Irvine. She asserts that anthropocentrism prevents the acknowledgment of animal selves, despite evidence that animals have the ability to see themselves as objects. Further, she argues that “The differences are of degree rather than kind. Non-human animals have capacities that are important for their social lives” (Irvine 2007:11).

Vegetarianism/Veganism

Vegetarianism and veganism differ in that vegetarians refrain from consuming meat, while vegans refrain from consuming any animal products (Rosenfeld 2019). Four main reasons are cited for becoming vegetarian; these include animal cruelty, personal health, larger environmental concerns, and world hunger concerns (Peggs 2012).

Gallup polls conducted in 1999, 2001, 2012, and 2018 asked participants if they were vegetarian or not. The polls in 2012 and 2018 also asked participants if they were vegan or not. There has been little change in these numbers over time. In both 1999 and 2001, six percent of respondents indicated being vegetarian. In 2012, five percent indicated vegetarianism and two percent indicated veganism. In 2018, five percent indicated vegetarianism and three percent indicated veganism. Those with liberal political orientation are more likely than conservatives to be vegan or vegetarian. In the 2018 poll, 11% of liberals indicated vegetarianism and five percent indicated veganism, while only two percent of conservatives indicated either veganism or vegetarianism. Those earning under \$30,000 per year were more likely (9%) to indicate vegetarianism than those earning higher income, but not significantly more likely to indicate veganism. Age was not significantly correlated with veganism but had an interesting correlation with vegetarianism. Seven percent of those age 18-29 years of age indicated vegetarianism, while eight percent of those 30-49 years of age, three percent of those 50-64 years of age, and two percent of those 65 and older indicated vegetarianism. Sales of plant-based foods increased by 8.1 percent in 2017, suggesting increased interest in these products without the willingness to give up meat and other animal products. (Jones and Saad 2018).

Researchers studying products other than meat have found that consumers evaluate products by comparing their symbolic meanings with their concepts of themselves, and the same has been suggested with meat. Meat has been found to represent environmental control, masculinity and social hierarchy (Allen and Wilson 2000). A study was conducted in order find out whether meat symbolizes hierarchical domination to consumers and whether consumers consume or abstain from meat based on their evaluation of its symbolic meaning. Vegetarians and omnivores were compared in the dimensions of authoritarianism and social dominance orientation. Social dominance orientation items “tap the beliefs that some people are inherently inferior or superior to others and the approval of inequality in group relationships” (Allen and Wilson 2000:408). Veganism vs omnivorism was measured on a ten-point scale with veganism at one end and willingness to eat most animal products on the other end. For study one, a mail survey was conducted yielding 158 respondents. Omnivore association was positively correlated with right-wing authoritarianism. The social dominance scale was also positively correlated with omnivorism, but only slightly. Men scored higher than women on the vegan-omnivore scale (leaning more toward omnivorism and less toward veganism) (Allen and Wilson 2000).

For study two, a mail survey was conducted with 348 respondents. Participants identified thirteen of their most and least important human values as well as where they landed on the vegan-omnivore scale. Respondents who indicated themselves to be omnivores placed a stronger emphasis on social power and dominance. In contrast to study one, however, men were not shown to be more omnivorous than women. It is important to note that these reflect human to human values. Vegetarians were shown to place a higher value on emotional states while omnivores valued self-control and rationality. This is notable since meat is shown to be symbolic of masculinity, which is typically thought of as non-emotional (Allen and Wilson 2000).

Oppression, Speciesism, and Carnism

Animal oppression has been studied in a variety of contexts. The texts discussed here explore the roots of animal oppression whilst making connections to other forms of oppression. Carol Adams, the author of *The Sexual Politics of Meat*, notes that there has been a strong historical alliance between feminism and vegetarianism, and explores the concept of male dominance as symbolically and literally represented through the slaughter and consumption of animals. She examines the parallels between violence toward animals and violence toward and rape of women. Absent referents of women and animals, she claims, have had a strong presence in western society. Where vulnerable women are made to feel like pieces of meat through language, subjugation, and exploitation, animals are made into actual meat. “Through the structure of the absent referent, a dialectic of absence and presence of oppressed groups occurs. What is absent refers back to one oppressed group while defining another” (Adams 1999:44). She argues that absent referents of oppressed groups prevent us from making connections between them. She claims that meat-eating, racism, antisemitism and other forms of oppression, “...are oppressed by a culture that does not want to assimilate them fully on their grounds with rights” (Adams 1999:70). She proposes a theory of objectification, fragmentation, and consumption where subjects who are members of oppressed groups are viewed as objects. This objectification enables fragmentation, the perception of a whole in terms of its individual parts. She applies this concept to animals and to women noting the butchering of animals and the sale of meat in individual animal parts, as well as the exploitation of women emphasizing the features of individual body parts rather than the whole person. Consumption occurs without a referent, as individual pieces of meat are no longer thought of as animals (Adams 1999).

Oppression is built into the structure of our society, such that it may not be readily apparent when it occurs. David Nibert proposes a theory of oppression involving three factors which also apply to the human oppression of animals. The first factor is economic exploitation, in which humans exploit or use some “other” group for their own gain (Nibert 2002). The second is “Unequal power, largely vested in control of the state” (Nibert 2002:13). The ability of one group to dominate and control or kill another is an important factor in oppression, and usually this power comes with political control. (Nibert 2002). Last is ideological conditioning, in which the oppression is made to appear normal and right to those who benefit from it. Social institutions that are invested in the control or elimination of the oppressed group are advanced (Nibert 2002).

Nibert posits that speciesism is an ideology that “like racism, sexism, and classism, results from and supports oppressive social arrangements” (Nibert 2002:10). It is a set of broadly held beliefs (Nibert 2002). Another way of thinking about speciesism comes from Monika Bokiniec, who states that speciesism is “the idea that our moral obligation to other living beings depend on to what species they belong” (Bokiniec 2014:27). Problems arise, Bokiniec says, from the moral and empirical implications of this claim. It results in the rights of one species being held in higher regard than the rights of another species. The interests of one take precedence over the other particularly when there is a conflict between the two sets of rights (Bokiniec 2014).

Joy’s ideas around carnism support Nibert’s theory of oppression. Joy relates that culturally shaped perceptions dictate which animals are deemed appropriate for consumption. These perceptions come from schemas which are psychological frameworks serving the purpose of categorizing the vast amounts of information an individual takes in. When values and behavior are incongruent, moral discomfort results. Easing this discomfort can take one of three forms: changing values to match behavior, changing behavior to match values, or changing our perception of our behavior so it seems to match our values. The system which creates the schema of meat-eating in our society provides tools with which individuals can distort their perception of certain animals enough to feel comfortable eating them. This distortion serves to ease

the moral discomfort which comes from the fact that people generally do not feel positively about unnecessary animal suffering, yet most consume them (Joy 2011). In Joy's discussion of carnism as a violent and hidden ideology, she argues that in order to accept carnism's ideology, one must believe a series of myths that promote it. She puts forth the idea of the "Three Ns of Justification," normal, natural, and necessary, as the cognitive mechanisms through which people justify eating meat. Joy states, "The Three Ns have been invoked to justify all exploitative systems, from African slavery to the Nazi Holocaust. When an ideology is in its prime, these myths rarely come under scrutiny. However, when the system finally collapses, the Three Ns are recognized as ludicrous" (Joy 2011:96). This fits with Nibert's theory of oppression as the Three Ns are consistent with ideological conditioning which makes the system of oppression appear to be normal and right to its beneficiaries. Adam's writing also supports this as she discusses that both men and women are socialized to participate in the killing of animals because both benefit from the practice (Adams 1999).

Joy elaborates further on the cognitive processes by which people have come to be comfortable with animal consumption. In what she calls the cognitive trio, normal psychological processes when used excessively, work to distort information. This trio includes objectification, deindividuation, and dichotomization. Objectification comes about when living beings are viewed as objects. Much of the means by which justification occurs is language. Language around animal consumption involves distancing from the living animal that once was and referring to the final product as beef, pork, ham, and other "meat" products. Deindividuation occurs when individuals are viewed only with regard to the larger group they are a part of. Joy notes that viewing a group of others in terms of their group identity is normal to an extent, but deindividuation is when individuality fails to be recognized. A study by Paul Slovic explored the correlation between the number of victims in a traumatic situation and reactions of observers. He found that the higher the number of victims, the less observers were likely to care, and the more individuality of the victims was blurred; this effect started at two victims (Joy 2011). Taking this into account, one can see how easily the animal victims of the meat industry may be blurred into a large and deindividuated group. Dichotomization is the mental process by which people separate information into opposing categories. We categorize animals as edible or inedible. Joy states, "If we filter our perceptions of animals through categories laden with value judgments, we can, for example, eat our steak while we pet our dog and remain oblivious to the implications of our choices" (Joy 2011:122).

The oppression of animals is an underrecognized oppression. While many interpersonal studies involving oppression have focused on relationships between oppressed groups and oppressors, a body of literature focuses on relationships between multiple oppressed groups and overlapping membership in these groups. A qualitative study was performed involving the first dimension of the dimensions of identity model. This model outlined social and psychological dimensions along which individuals differ significantly (Croteau et al. 2002). The first model involves gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, and SES. Each individual belongs to different categories in the dimension, some of which place them in privileged categories and some which place them in oppressed categories. Participants were each a member of at least one oppressed group (Croteau et al. 2002). Forty-two participants were interviewed about the interplay between multiple statuses e.g. female, white, LGBT+, working class, etc. Participants indicated that they felt connections with those who were members of other oppressed groups besides their own. Additionally, participants indicated that they felt a general sensitivity toward members of other oppressed groups as they were able to apply their experiences of oppression to other dimensions in which they had privilege. Many acknowledged, however, that they could not fully understand the experience of others' oppression. Participants also indicated a feeling of trust or bonding across different oppressed groups as a result of "a shared sense of facing societal oppression" (Croteau et al. 2002:250). Too, participants indicated that

having a privileged status in one dimension affected the ways in which they themselves or others regarded their oppressed status (Croteau et al. 2002).

Transgendered individuals are members of a demographic group whose underrecognized oppression and stigmatization has recently become more prominent. Recent years have seen social progress toward trans rights. Studies from several countries suggest that trans prejudice is greater in heterosexual males than in heterosexual females. Several studies also indicate that heterosexual males hold more negative views of trans women than trans men (Veanne 2018). Men rated feminine males as less likeable, less intelligent, and even causing contempt or disgust, more often than masculine males. Another study found that gay males exhibit less trans prejudice than heterosexual males, but more than lesbian females (Veanne 2018). A study was conducted in order to determine levels of trans prejudice in gay men, bisexual men, and cisgendered heterosexual men. The purpose of the study was to examine if the significance of gender in determining self-identity also predicted levels of trans prejudice. Questionnaires were administered in order to determine gender self-esteem, trans prejudice, and demographic categories. Results suggested that heterosexual men exhibited significantly more trans prejudice than bi-sexual men, and that bisexual men exhibited significantly more trans prejudice than gay men. Heterosexual males had significantly higher scores in the area of violence and teasing toward trans women than toward trans men, while bi-sexual and gay males had similar violence and teasing endorsement scores toward trans men and trans women. Violence scores for all three groups, however, were quite low. Gender self-esteem was not found to correlate to sexual orientation. Higher gender self-esteem scores were shown to significantly correlate with high trans prejudice for heterosexual and bi-sexual males, but not for gay males. Higher gender self-esteem in heterosexual males, however, was not a predictor of violence or teasing toward trans persons. Agreement that transgenderism is a psychological disorder positively correlated with trans prejudice (Veanne 2018).

Membership in a group that faces discrimination may lead to derogatory behavior toward other marginalized groups in an effort to emphasize positive perceptions of one's own group. It may also, however, lead to feelings of common identity relating to experiences of a shared relative disadvantage when compared to majority groups. A study in which participants received a description of a person with an unidentified race who had been labeled mentally ill, Black participants indicated feeling the individual was less dangerous and that they were more willing to live around him when they had been primed with ideas of Black victimization (Craig and Richeson 2012). A nationally representative sample of Blacks and Latinos suggested that increased feelings of discrimination against oneself or one's group increased perceived discrimination across demographic groups. Perceived discrimination, however, did not increase feelings of closeness to Blacks by Latinos, and only slightly increased feelings of closeness by Blacks to Latinos (Craig and Richeson 2012).

A study of 32 Asian-American women was conducted in which half were primed with an article containing discriminatory content toward Asians and half were not. Increased perceived similarity to Blacks was shown in the experimental group. Although both groups showed disagreement with anti-Black statements, the experimental group showed more disagreement (Craig and Richeson 2012).

In a study of 25 Latino-Americans in which 11 were in the experimental group and 14 were in the control group, participants read over 3 articles after previously filling out a questionnaire regarding an Anti-Black scale. The third article in the experimental group was discriminatory toward Latinos. The experimental group indicated increased perceived similarity to Blacks. Participants in the experimental group evaluated Blacks more favorably. Additionally, participants in the experimental group indicated evaluating Blacks and other Latinos as more competent than did the control group (Craig and Richeson 2012). The

experimental group also evaluated other Latinos as exhibiting significantly more warmth and Blacks as exhibiting slightly more warmth than did the control group. Regarding ratings of warmth and competence of whites, no significant differences were noted between the control and experimental group (Craig and Richeson 2012). The findings of these studies suggest the possibility of members of oppressed groups exhibiting increased sensitivity toward the oppression of others. They were conducted with specific oppressed groups, however, which could mean that findings are not generalizable to all forms of oppression. Additionally, since these studies were involving the oppression of people, the oppression of animals could fail to elicit the same level or form of empathy.

Research has shown many factors to have an effect on the extent to which members of stigmatized groups evaluate members of other stigmatized groups positively or negatively. A literature review on this topic revealed that whether an oppressed group will view another stigmatized group with derogation or a coalition mindset is significantly affected by whether the groups are stigmatized along the same identity dimension i.e. race, LGBTQIA+ status, etc. (Craig and Richeson 2016). When stigmatized along the same identity dimension, groups have been shown to view members of other stigmatized groups more positively. When faced with discrimination along a different identity dimension, however, it has been shown that stigmatized groups tend to view other stigmatized groups less positively. Exposure to explicit connections between stigmatized groups has been shown to influence positive evaluations of other stigmatized groups (Craig and Richeson 2016). Thinking about lessons from historical oppression of one's own group has been shown to increase feelings of moral responsibility toward another oppressed group, provided the group is not adversarial. If the other group is adversarial the opposite effect is seen. Conceiving one's own experiences of facing discrimination may elicit feelings of sympathy toward other stigmatized groups while conceiving discrimination against one's own group may lead to a negative evaluation of other stigmatized groups. If there is perceived competition between groups such as competition for resources, stigmatized groups tend to evaluate others more negatively. If it appears that the groups may benefit one another, there is a tendency toward more positively evaluating the idea of the groups working together. Positive contact with the majority group decreases feelings of commonality among stigmatized groups. Perceptions of another group as closer to the mainstream can reduce positive evaluations. Perceptions of members of other stigmatized groups as being in high SES categories can reduce empathetic feelings toward them (Craig and Richeson 2016).

These studies demonstrate that the evaluation of oppressed groups by those who are also oppressed may be influenced by many factors. While there is a trend toward feelings of solidarity with other minority groups, there are also many factors that decrease positive feelings and increase feelings of separation toward other oppressed groups.

Kellert's Typology and Values Surrounding Animals

A typology of attitudes toward animals was created by Stephen Kellert during the early 1970's. A random sample of 553 participants was conducted in the United States (Kellert 1978). In 1977, the US Fish and Wildlife funded a project to explore these attitudes more in-depth within the American public, in which there were 2455 respondents. (Kellert 1984). Both studies were based on the original typology which identified ten different categories of attitudes toward animals. Kellert stated, "Each category of the typology is thought to represent a basic human relationship and dependence on nature indicating some measurement of adaptational value in the struggle to survive and, perhaps more important, to thrive and attain individual fulfillment" (Kellert and Wilson 1993:58-9). Of particular interest are the moralistic, utilitarian, dominionistic, negativistic, humanistic, and ecologicistic categories. The moralistic category measures concern with the rights of animals, and opposition to maltreatment of animals. The utilitarian

category measures concern for material value of animals. The dominionistic category measures satisfaction gained from domination over animals. The negativistic category measures aversion to animals due to fear or dislike. The humanistic category measures affection for particular animals, mainly pets. Finally, the ecologicistic category measures concern for ecology, ecosystems, and their inhabitants.

The preliminary study and the expanded study showed elderly people (65+ for 1978 study, 75+ for 1984 study) scoring high in the negativistic and utilitarian categories and low in the naturalistic category.

There were some notable contrasts in the results from the two studies: While in both studies females scored high in the moralistic and humanistic categories, in the 1984 study females were among the highest-scoring in the negativistic category. Additionally. In the 1978 study, females were not shown to score highly in the naturalistic or ecologicistic categories, suggesting that their higher relative concern for animals could possibly be more in the area of pets and animal cruelty than wildlife and the environment. While both studies showed African Americans to score low in the naturalistic category, the preliminary study (1978) did not reveal African Americans to score significantly higher than whites in the dominionistic and utilitarian categories; In the 1984 study, however, African Americans scored among the highest in the dominionistic and utilitarian categories. An interesting contrast between the two studies occurred in the area of income level. In the preliminary study (1978), income was not as significant of a predictor of attitudes toward animals as other demographic categories. Of mention is that those with incomes between \$15-\$20,000 scored higher in the naturalistic category than those with incomes above \$20,000. In the expanded study, those with low incomes scored lowest in the naturalistic category. Those with high incomes, however, were among the highest-scoring in the dominionistic category.

The expanded study (1984) revealed that the most common attitudes toward animals are moralistic, utilitarian, negativistic, and humanistic. Findings suggested that people with lower education levels scored lower across all dimensions except utilitarian, dominionistic, and negativistic scales. This suggests that people with lower education levels at the time of the survey had less affection for animals, the exception being in sporting or other situations where animals were be used for material gain. Results suggested a relative lack of interest in, affection, and concern for animals among those identifying with non-white racial categories. The study concludes that there is a great deal of variation and contradiction in the results, and that until human factors in wildlife management are better understood, environmental degradation will continue (Kellert 1984).

In collaboration with E.O. Wilson and multiple other authors, Kellert contributed to *The Biophilia Hypothesis*. Wilson proposed that humans have a natural drive, biophilia, to focus on life in its many forms, and that this drive stems from self-interest and preservation of our own species. He associated it with competitive advantage and the ability to feel fulfillment in one's own life. Kellert argued "Even the tendency to avoid, reject, and at times, destroy elements of the natural world can be viewed as an extension of an innate need to relate deeply and intimately with the vast spectrum of life about us" (Kellert and Wilson 1993:42). Authors of this text put forth the idea that biodiversity loss and environmental degradation is a symptom of humans' alienation from nature, and that human existence is consequently less fulfilling. This can be viewed in terms of moral reasoning or not. Wilson states, "The great philosophical divide in moral reasoning about the remainder of life is whether or not other species have an innate right to exist" (Kellert and Wilson 1993:38). Aaron Katcher and Gregory Wilkins discuss the term biophilia as potentially independent from moral concerns, where what is left is the tendency to focus on life. They also note that biological conservation would be just as important whether or not this tendency is innate (Kellert and Wilson 1993).

There have been some examples within the United States of citizens imposing constraints on what forms of livestock production practices are acceptable by voting on certain constitutional amendments such as in Florida and Colorado. Some of the main public concerns about large scale farming operations concern the harm they cause to the environment. Multiple studies have shown that increased physical or social distance affects the level of environmental concern when compared to those living near farms or farmers. Because ill effects on water quality are legally contestable, and because it is something most people care about, this is frequently a key argument of those opposing major farming operations (Sharp and Tucker 2005). Multiple studies have shown that local communities may be more concerned with the negative effects of major farming operations on local economies than with their effect on the environment. Animal welfare is also a concern of the public around large scale farming operations, though this seems to be the case in Europe more so than in the United States (Sharp and Tucker 2005).

A mail survey examining public perception of large scale farming operations in Ohio was conducted; 4,013 participants from a stratified sample returned surveys in 2002. Only 33.2% of respondents indicated being “familiar with some of the issues related to large-scale poultry and livestock production facilities in Ohio” (Sharp and Tucker 2005:215). Of those indicating familiarity with these facilities (1,312 respondents), there was a positive correlation between women and African-Americans and concern for livestock well being. There was also a positive correlation between support of small farms and pro-agricultural attitudes and concern for animal welfare. There was a negative correlation between education and concern for livestock well being. There was also a negative correlation between social closeness to, or trust of farmers, and concern for livestock-well being. The strongest negative correlation was between feeling strongly that large scale agriculture made positive contributions to the economy and concern for livestock well being. An overall livestock concern model was tested including both environmental concern and livestock concern. Those living in cities, African-Americans and older respondents were positively related with concern. Residing in southwest Ohio was negatively related with concern (Sharp and Tucker 2005).

Gaps and where my research fits in

The literature referenced above outlines the societal conditions necessary for oppression as well as how oppression affects relationships between marginalized groups. Joy’s research explores carnism and how it fits into our society. An underexplored issue is how views of animals, animal product consumption, and current beliefs along the dimensions of Kellert’s typology vary. Higher education tends to increase awareness of the “isms” in our culture (sexism, racism, classism, speciesism, etc.), and college-aged students are coming into adulthood while forming views on a broad range of issues. For these reasons, it will be insightful to ask college students to share their views on these topics. Mainstream society depends on the oppression of animals to maintain its current state; this oppression, while perpetuated by continued animal product consumption, stems from regulations and practices imposed by institutions and governments. Some important aspects of the oppression of animals are who supports and actively participates in it, as well as who is against it. The current study will shed light on support for current animal treatment practices as well as values surrounding how humans as a group as well as individuals relate to animals.

My hypotheses for the current study include:

Hypothesis 1: Respondents who are members of oppressed groups will answer in ways that indicate an increased sensitivity to the oppression of animals when compared to respondents who are not members of oppressed groups.

Hypothesis 2: Responses will indicate a high level of conflict between values around animal treatment and actions which support the meat industry (animal product consumption).

Hypothesis 3: Those falling into lower perceived SES categories will answer in ways that indicate an increased sensitivity to the oppression of animals when compared to those falling into higher perceived SES categories.

Methods

In order to answer my research question, I administered a Qualtrics survey (see Survey in Appendix) to college students. The first question of the survey was agreement (or lack thereof) of informed consent. To assess values toward farm animals, I asked questions based on the typology of values toward animals created by Stephen Kellert. The original typology identified ten dimensions of values, but for my survey I used six which pertain the most to value decisions potentially involved in evaluation of issues surrounding farm animals: ecologicistic, moralistic, utilitarian, dominionistic, humanistic, and negativistic. I included a question based on the MacArthur Ladder of subjective socioeconomic status; this scale has been used in several studies and has been shown to correlate significantly with objective factors of SES (Alder and Stewart 2007). Also included was a set of questions which asked the respondent to indicate whether they consume animal products without restrictions, or whether they restrict consumption in some way (e.g. vegan, vegetarian, pescatarian). If the respondent indicated animal product restriction, a short answer question was posed which asked the reason for such restriction. If the respondent indicated that they include meat in their diet (no restrictions, pescatarian), the question was posed as to how often they consume meat.

For this paper, I will use the term “Values” to mean the value judgements a person has about appropriate things for people to take into consideration regarding decisions in support of animal treatment practices AND value judgments about the relationship between humans and animals. I will use the term “Farm animals” to mean animals typically used in the US on farms for meat including cows, pigs, chickens, and turkeys. I will ask participants to respond to statements on Likert scales.

After review, the University of Oregon Institutional Review Board determined the study to be exempt. In order to gain respondents for my survey, I contacted multiple schools and nineteen departments within the University of Oregon. The Sociology and Planning, Public Policy, and Management departments at the University of Oregon agreed to send the survey to their listservs of students. After making contact with Lane Community College and going through a review process, a link to the survey was included in the electronic version of the Lane Community College Newsletter. Additional colleges I reached out to include Portland Community College, Western Oregon University, Portland State University, Concordia University, and Southern Oregon University. A professor at Concordia University agreed to distribute the survey to their students.

The population upon which I base my sample will be all the students at the University of Oregon, Concordia University, and Lane Community College. I am interested in identifying how values toward farm animals, as well as feelings about appropriate treatment of animals, specifically

farm animals that are typically used for meat vary across gender, race, socioeconomic status, LGBTQIA+ membership, and religion. In order to measure this, I will compare answers to questions in the moralistic, ecologicistic, humanistic, utilitarian, negativistic, and dominionistic categories across social groups by proportions. I will identify whether there is a conflict between personal values regarding the appropriate treatment of farm animals by humans and actions that support treatment conflicting with those values (eating meat) by comparing how individuals answered in the moralistic category to their answers about animal product consumption. I will also examine whether membership in traditionally oppressed groups increases sensitivity to animal oppression.

Results

Out of 199 surveys started, 167 were completed. In the race category, 146 indicated being white. Due to the lack of diversity in this section, comparisons in the race category were omitted. As there was little variation in values surrounding farm animals across SES categories, comparisons in this category were also omitted. A question was included asking respondents to indicate their academic major, but the way the question was formatted in Qualtrics made answers inaccessible. As a result, comparisons were also omitted in this category.

Of those respondents who indicated the gender they identify with, 115 selected “Woman”, 38 selected “Man”, and 10 selected “Non-binary”. Of those respondents who answered the question “Do you consider yourself a member of the LGBTQIA+ community, 44 answered “Yes”, 50 answered “No”, and 74 answered “No, but consider myself an ally”. Among these answer categories, those who answered “Yes” were composed of 29 women, 9 men, and 8 (17%) non-binary. Those who answered “No” were composed of 37 women and 16 men. Those who answered “No, but consider myself an ally” were composed of 55 women, 19 men, and 2 non-binary.

Of those who indicated their religious preference, 10 selected “Buddhism”, 6 selected “Catholic”, 41 selected “Christian”, 3 selected “Judaism”, 88 selected “None”, and 12 selected “Please specify” which provided an option to write in an answer. For this analysis, the categories of “Catholic” and “Christian” will be combined. Due to few or no respondents indicating religious preferences other than “None”, “Buddhist”, or “Catholic/Christian”, comparisons in this category only included these groups. For this analysis, the answer categories of “Agree” and “Strongly agree” will be combined into the category “Agree”, as well as the answer categories of “Disagree” and “Strongly disagree” being combined into the category “Disagree”.

Seventy-seven percent of respondents agreed with the statement, “When purchasing meat, it is important to take into account the effects of the meat industry on the environment.” 94.2% of respondents agreed with the statement, “Farm animals should be treated with compassion.” 89.3% of respondents agreed with the statement, “Factory farming practices are inhumane.” 93.1% of respondents disagreed with the statement, “I avoid animals considered to be farm animals because I fear or dislike them.”

The majority of respondents from all demographic groups indicated they disagreed with the statement, “It is wrong to kill animals for food,” with significant differences across the gender, LGBTQIA+, and religion categories. In the gender category, male respondents expressed the most disagreement by proportion (74%), followed by females (65%), and non-binary (50%). In the LGBTQIA+ category, those who answered “No” expressed the most disagreement (78%), followed by those who answered “No, but consider myself an ally” (60%), and those who answered “Yes” (57%). In the religion category, those who indicated “Christian” or “Catholic” as their religious preference expressed the most disagreement

(77%), followed by those who answered “None” (60%), and those who answered “Buddhist” (40%) (See Figure 1).

There were significant differences across demographic categories in agreement with the statement, “The primary value of farm animals is their material value to humans,” with most agreement by proportion from men in the gender category (41%), followed by women (27%), and non-binary (20%). In the LGBTQIA+ category, the most agreement by proportion came from those who answered “No” (40%), followed by those who answered “Yes” (24%), and those who answered “No, but consider myself an ally” (23%). In the religion category, the most agreement came from those who answered “Christian” or “Catholic” (41%), followed by those who answered “None” (22%), and those who answered “Buddhist” (20%). Interestingly, in the gender category, the most disagreement by proportion was from women (52%), followed by non-binary (40%), and closely followed by men (38%). In the LGBTQIA+ category, the most disagreement by proportion came from those who answered “No, but consider myself an ally” (59%), followed by those who answered “Yes” (46%), and those who answered “No” (36%) (see Figure 2).

As for dietary preferences, males indicated the highest proportion of no animal product restrictions (74%) and the lowest proportion of vegetarianism (13%), and veganism (0%) in the gender category, followed by women (69% no animal product restrictions, 17% vegetarian, and 4% vegan), and non-binary (10% no animal product restrictions, 30% vegetarian, and 0% vegan). In the LGBTQIA+ category those who answered “No” indicated the highest proportion of no animal product restrictions in their diet (82%) and the lowest proportion of vegetarianism (6%) and veganism (0%), followed by those who answered “No, but consider myself an ally” (65% no animal product restrictions, 18% vegetarian, and 5% vegan), and those who answered “Yes” (50% no animal product restrictions, 27% vegetarian, and 5% vegan). In the religion category, those who answered “Christian” or “Catholic” indicated the highest proportion of no animal product restrictions in their diet (83%) and the lowest proportion of vegetarianism (7%) and veganism (2%). 50% of those who answered “Buddhist” indicated no animal product restrictions in their diet, 20% indicated vegetarianism, and 0% indicated veganism. Of those who answered “None,” 57% indicated no animal product restrictions, 24% indicated vegetarianism, and 6% indicated veganism (see Figure 3).

When prompted for level of agreement to the statement, “I have less empathy for farm animals than for those considered to be pets, the most disagreement by proportion in the gender category came from non-binary respondents (90%), followed by women (54%) and men (46%). In the LGBTQIA+ category, the most disagreement by proportion was seen from those who answered “Yes” (65%), followed by those who answered “No, but consider myself an ally” (55%), and those who answered “No” (43%). Interestingly, in the religion category, the most disagreement by proportion was seen from both Christian/Catholic respondents and Buddhists (60% in both demographic groups), followed by those who answered “None” (49%) (See Figure 4).

When prompted for agreement level with the statement, “Farm animals were put on earth for humans to use,” the most disagreement by proportion came from non-binary respondents (90%), followed surprisingly by males (74%), and females (66%). In the LGBTQIA+ category, the most disagreement by proportion came surprisingly from those who answered “No, but consider myself an ally” (81%), followed by those who answered “Yes” (68%), and those who answered “No” (53%). In the religion category, the most disagreement by proportion came from those who answered “None” (82%), followed

by those who answered “Buddhist” (80%), and those who answered “Christian” or “Catholic” (38%) (See figure 5).

When prompted for level of agreement to the statement, “It is not wrong to use animals for food and clothing because we need to for our survival, the most disagreement by proportion in the gender category came from non-binary (50%), followed by men (37%), and women (27%). In the LGBTQIA+ category, the most disagreement by proportion came from those who answered “Yes” (42%), followed by those who answered “No, but consider myself an ally,” (33%), and those who answered “No” (18%). In the religion category, the most disagreement by proportion came from those who answered “Buddhist” (50%), followed by those who answered “None” (34%), and those who answered “Christian/Catholic” (21%) (See figure 6). The main reasons respondents cited for restricting animal products in personal diet include animal welfare, environmental concerns, and personal health.

Limitations

There are several limitations to this study. Eugene is a very liberal location, and college students tend to be somewhat liberal. This means that the values of the survey respondents may be more liberal than those in the general population. A small sample size was collected for this survey, because of lack of incentive to participate and a limited window of time for participation. This means a less representative sample. Anonymizing my results through Qualtrics meant that it was not possible to keep track of where individual responses were coming from. Homogenous sample results made it fruitless to compare responses across race and some religion categories. Additionally, there was little variation in values surrounding farm animals across SES categories. Some individual answer categories within demographic categories did not gain enough respondents to include them in comparisons, and others were limited. For example, zero respondents indicated Islam as their religious preference and only two indicated Judaism. As a result, these and other answer categories with very limited respondents were not included in comparisons. Of the respondents that indicated gender, there was a large proportion of women (70%) compared to men (23%) and non-binary (6%).

Discussion

The meat industry has detrimental effects on the environment. There are also many social impacts of our society’s continued reliance on animals as a food source. In reviewing the results of this study, we can see that compassion toward farm animals was endorsed by the majority of respondents. Most respondents, however, did not oppose killing animals for food. Joy discusses the idea that most people do not support the unnecessary suffering of animals, yet also consume them. The results of this study support this idea in that most agreed that farm animals should be treated with compassion, but disagreed with the statement, “It is wrong to kill animals for food”.

94% of respondents agreed with the statement, “Farm animals should be treated with compassion.” 89% of respondents agreed with the statement, “Factory farming practices are inhumane.” 66% of respondents disagreed with the statement, “It is wrong to kill animals for food”. 67% of respondents indicated no animal product restrictions in their diet and 12% indicated pescetarianism. 89% of respondents agreed that factory farming practices are inhumane, yet 67% do not restrict animal products in their diet; these statistics indicate significant conflict between values and actions among respondents. These results support Hypothesis 2 in that responses illustrate a high level of conflict between beliefs surrounding animal treatment and animal product consumption.

A substantial difference in farm animal valuation and animal product consumption was shown across demographic groups, specifically gender, LGBTQIA+ community membership and religious preferences. The demographic groups with answers indicating the most empathy toward farm animals, and dietary preferences which restrict animal products to a greater degree when compared to those in other demographic categories proportionately, were minority demographic groups (those who answered “Yes” to LGBTQIA+ membership, non-binary, and those who indicated “None” or “Buddhist” for religious preference). These findings support Hypothesis 1, which was that membership in oppressed groups would be correlated with increased sensitivity to the oppression of animals.

I partially answered my research question asking how values surrounding farm animals vary across gender, race, socioeconomic status, LGBTQIA+ community membership, and religion. Since there was not enough variation in the SES categories among respondents, this part of the question was left unanswered as well as the race category due to respondent homogeneity. Hypothesis 3 was neither supported nor shown to be incorrect.

Those who identified as men, Christian/Catholic and those who answered “No” in the LGBTQIA+ category answered in ways which indicate valuing farm animals for their material value more than respondents in other demographic categories.

Respondents’ indication of dietary preferences were consistent with study 1 from Allen and Wilson (2000) which found that men scored higher on the vegan-omnivore scale than women, but not to study 2 which found no difference on average between men and women on the same scale.

The trends shown by survey results may stem from less empathy toward oppressed groups from those with privileged status. They may also be tied to the masculine connotations of meat-eating mentioned by Adams (1999) and Allen and Wilson (2000). Christians/Catholics have traditionally held a more dualistic view, in which animals are present to serve the needs of humans. This may contribute to the trend in Christian/Catholic responses of emphasizing the material use of farm animals more than those who indicated “None” or “Buddhist” as a religious preference.

The results of the question, “Please rate your agreement with the following statement: It is wrong to kill animals for food” conflict with the results of the question: “Please rate your agreement with the following statement: It is not wrong to use animals for food and clothing because we need to for our survival”; this may be for multiple reasons. Adding a justification for killing animals may prompt some to lean more toward feeling that killing animals is appropriate. Conversely, some people may have been led to disagree with the statement because they do not feel it is necessary to use animal products for our survival. It could have been potentially been more useful to question agreement level with the statement, “It is not wrong to use animals for food and clothing *in situations where* we need to for our survival”. Additionally, framing the question about academic major in Qualtrics in a way that asked for a general major category would have lent itself more readily to comparison than the way I formatted it for this survey.

Sociological exploration of farm animals and the way humans relate to them is important as the consumption of animals is ingrained in our society, and has environmental, social, and moral implications. While prior research demonstrates the increased sensitivity of those in marginalized groups toward the oppression of others, the current study illustrates that this increased sensitivity extends beyond marginalized persons to the oppression of farm animals. Current social conditions are such that underrecognized oppressions are gaining more recognition and there is increased advocacy for the rights of those in these categories. Animals are no exception, as slow progress is being made toward more

humane treatment of animals (Shields, Shapiro and Rowan 2017). As more research brings to light the oppression and violation of the rights of marginalized groups, including animals, there will be more evidence in support of preserving and protecting the rights oppressed humans and animals.

Future research might include a more in-depth study around motives for diets including meat and diets restricting animal products in some ways. Additional research may also include the extent to which target populations are open to adopting more plant-based diets. More demographic categories and larger sample sizes for future studies with the same premise could provide more generalizable and telling results. Research into thoughts and feelings around current policies regarding the meat and dairy industry and research into the political motivations and implications of such policies could also produce useful results.

Appendix

Survey:

- Please indicate which gender you identify with?: * Man *Woman *Non-binary
*Please Specify_____
- Please indicate which race you identify with (check all that apply): *American Indian/Alaska Native *Asian *African American/Black *White
*Hawaiian/Pacific Islander *Middle Eastern *Please Specify_____
- Please indicate your ethnicity:
*LatinX *Non-LatinX
- : Please imagine a ladder with 10 rungs representing all people in the United States. The top of the ladder (10) represents the best off- those with the most education, the most money, and the most respected jobs. The bottom of the ladder (1) represents the worst off- those with the least education, the least money, and the least respected jobs, or no jobs. The higher you are on the ladder, the closer you are to the people at the top. The lower you are, the closer you are to the people at the bottom. Please indicate where you would place yourself on this ladder, 10 being at the top, 1 being at the bottom:
*1 *2 *3 *4 *5 *6 *7 *8 *9 *10
- Do you consider yourself a member of the LGBTQIA+ community?
*Yes *No *No but consider myself an ally

The **ecologicistic** dimension :

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements:

- When purchasing meat, it is important to take into account the effects of the meat industry on the environment

The **moralistic** dimension :

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements:

- Farm animals should be treated with compassion. (For this survey, please think of the term "farm animals" as animals typically used in the US on farms for meat including cows, pigs, chickens, and turkeys.)
- It is wrong to kill animals for food
- Factory farming practices are inhumane

The **utilitarian** dimension:

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements:

- It is not wrong to use animals for food and clothing because we need to for our survival
- The primary value of farm animals is their material value to humans

The **dominionistic** :

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements:

- Farm animals were put on earth for humans to use

The **humanistic** dimension:

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements:

- I have less empathy for farm animals than I do for the types of animals generally considered to be pets.

The **Negativistic** dimension :

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements:

- I avoid farm animals because I fear or dislike them

In order to assess actions around meat eating meat products I will ask participants to respond to the following statements:

- Please indicate any animal product restrictions in your diet or the category that comes the closest:

*Meat eating/no animal product restriction *Pescatarian/Eat fish but no other meat products

*vegetarian/do not eat any meat products *Vegan/do not eat any animal products

- If indicated that you eat meat products, please indicate the average frequency or the category that comes the closest:

*More than once per day *once per day *2-3 times per week *once per week *monthly *never

- If you have indicated that you restrict animal products, please briefly indicate your reason(s) for doing so

Figure 1:

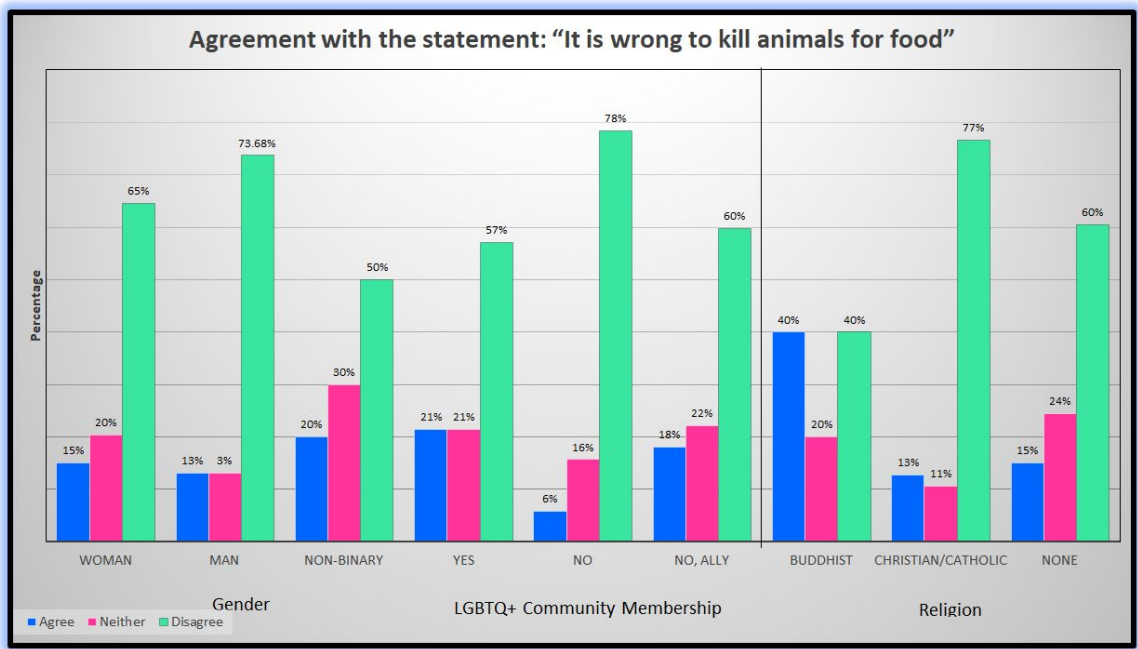


Figure 2:

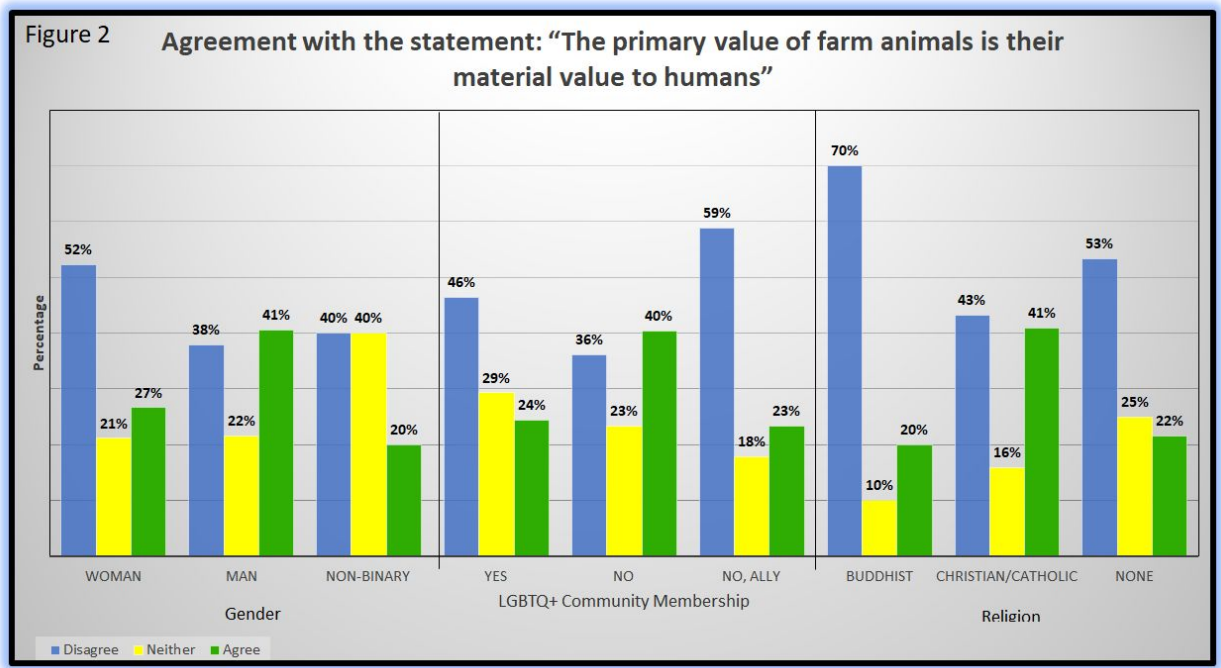


Figure 3

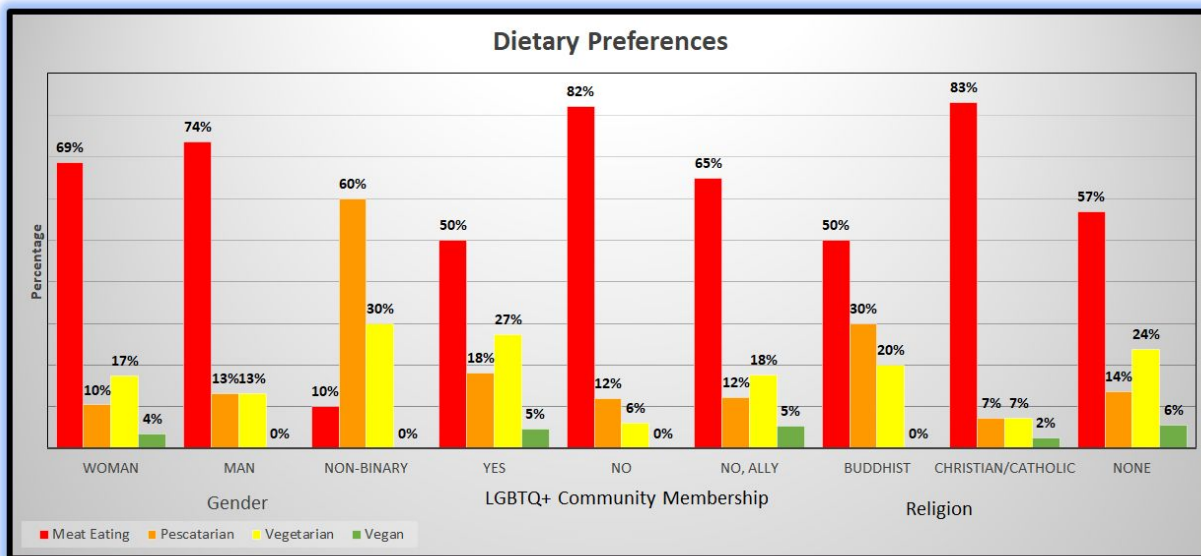


Figure 4:

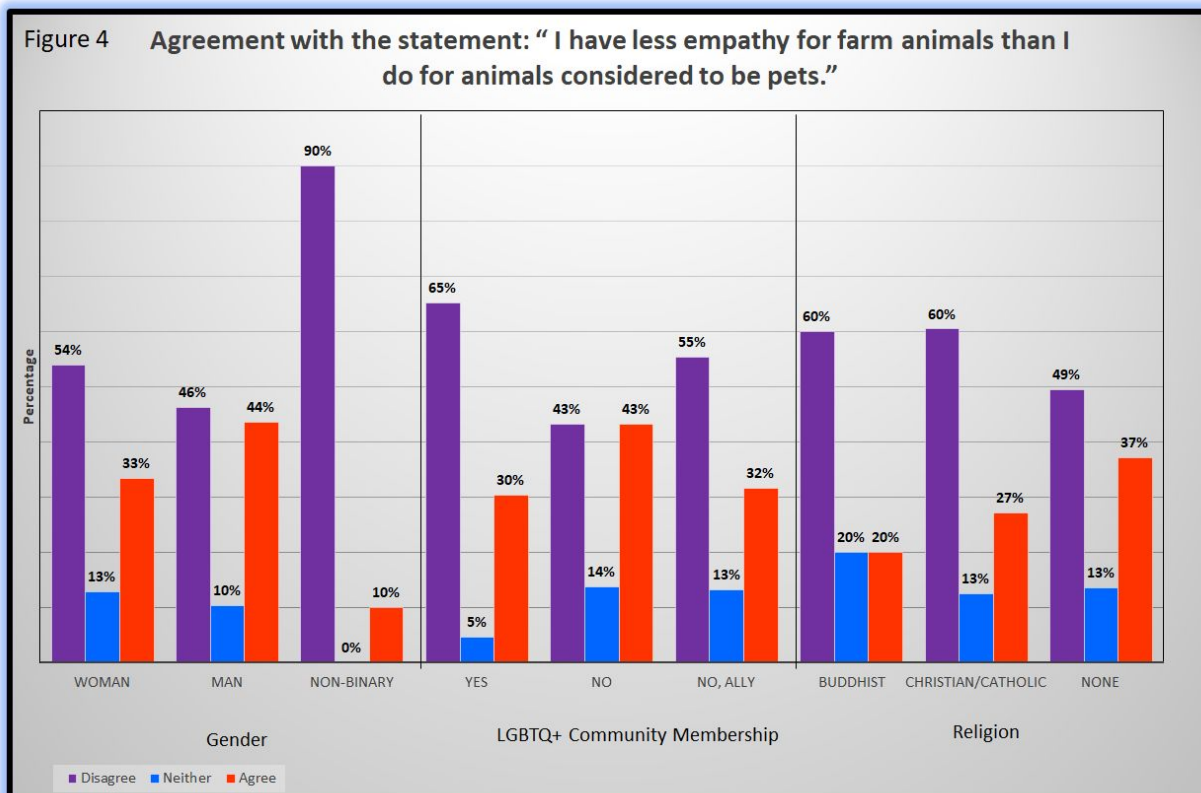


Figure 5:

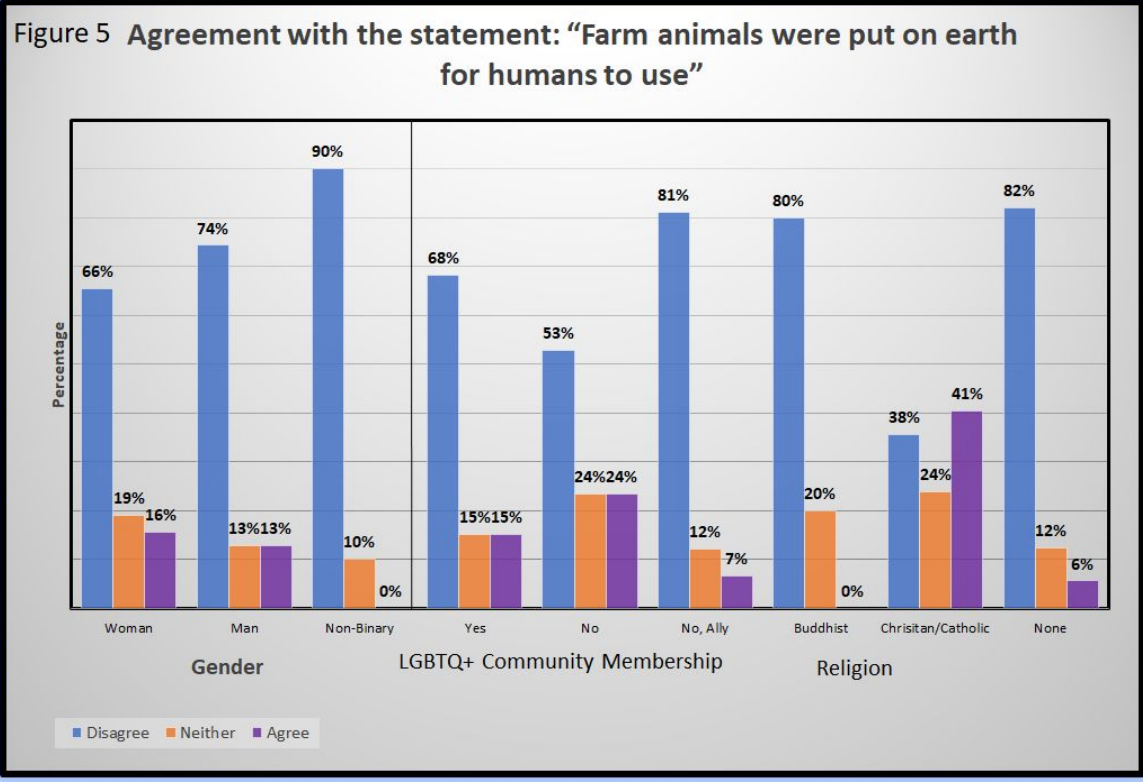
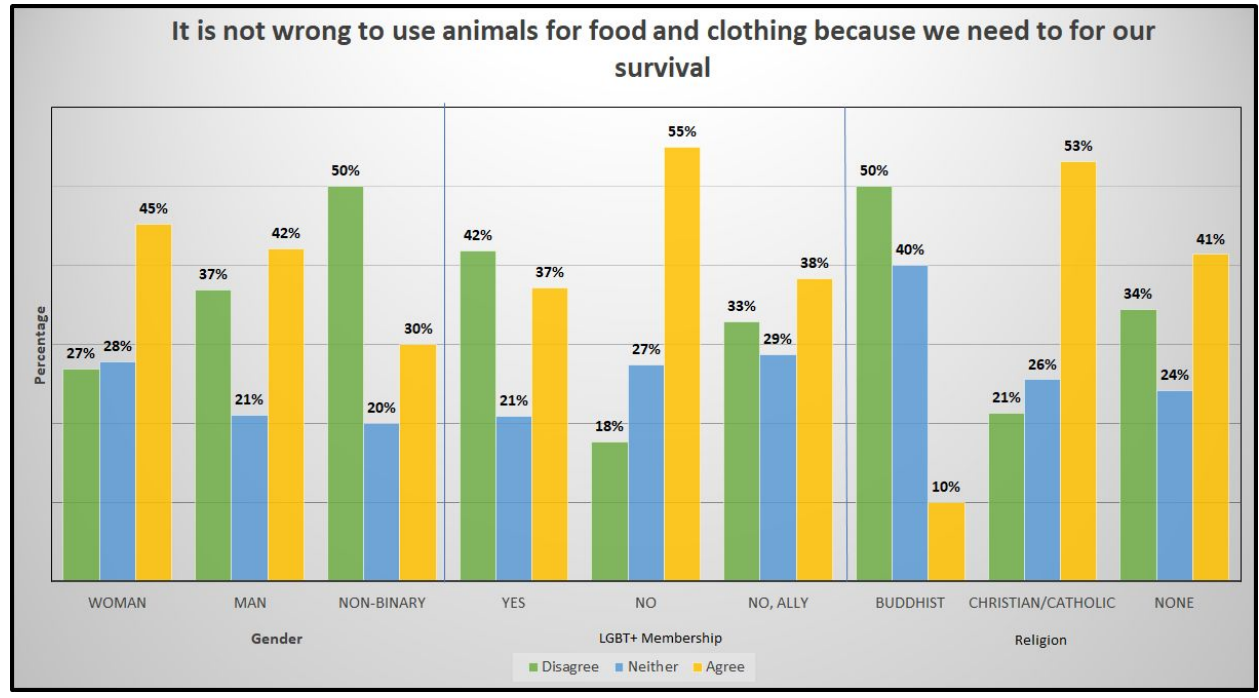


Figure 6:



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