

**The Portrayal of Vegans and Veganism in the *Los Angeles Times* and *The New York Times* in 2017: A Vegan Perspective**

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **The Portrayal of Vegans and Veganism in the *Los Angeles Times* and *The New York Times* in 2017: A Vegan Perspective**

**Russell Tellier**

This thesis provides the first example of a discourse analysis of North American newspaper coverage about veganism. Specifically, it examined the *Los Angeles Times* and *The New York Times*' representation of vegans and veganism during the second half of 2017. Its objective was to uncover the dominant discourses on vegans and veganism in the newspaper coverage of 76 articles and determine if the coverage was adequate from a vegan activist perspective. The thesis found that the dominant discourse about vegans and or veganism in most of the articles in the sample was positive. Nevertheless, overall, the coverage was still inadequate from multiple vegan perspectives, due to its negative articles, lack of details about humanity's treatment of animals, and lack of focus on veganism's animal-friendly and morally obligatory status.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would first like to thank my thesis supervisor, Dr. David Secko, Chair of Concordia University's Department of Journalism, for helping me produce this thesis. He is one of the most knowledgeable and well-rounded academics I have ever encountered, and his kindness, enthusiasm, and patience are truly exceptional. Secondly, I would like to acknowledge Dr. Elyse Amend of Concordia University's Department of Journalism as the examiner of this thesis. I am very appreciative of the feedback that I received from her regarding this project. Thirdly, I would like to thank my parents for supporting me throughout the completion of my MA degree at Concordia.

## **PREFACE AND DEDICATION**

I am very proud to say not only that I am vegan, but also that I am the first person in my family to be vegan. This thesis is dedicated to the undercover investigators and vegan activists who caused me to go vegan by exposing me to the absolute savagery, heartlessness, and vileness of the industries that needlessly exploit and kill innocent nonhuman animals.

Russell Tellier

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## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

### 1.1 The Origin and Current Status of Veganism:

In a 2002 interview, Donald Watson (1910-2005) recounted that he had a wonderful first impression of his childhood holidays on his family's farm in Mexborough, England.<sup>1</sup> "As a little boy, living in a town, I was surrounded by interesting animals," he said.<sup>2</sup> At Christmas 1923, however, Watson's view of the farm changed dramatically when he witnessed the slaughter of one of its pigs.<sup>3</sup> He concluded then that, instead of being a heavenly place, the farm was actually "nothing more than Death Row. A Death Row where every creature's days were numbered by the point at which it was no longer of service to human beings."<sup>4</sup> Shortly thereafter, Watson became vegetarian.<sup>5</sup>

Eventually, in the early 1940s, Watson adopted a diet devoid of animal<sup>6</sup> products, which he named a "vegan" diet in 1944 – the same year that he founded The Vegan Society in England.<sup>7</sup> "Vegan" is a combination of the first three and last two letters of "vegetarian," because Watson believed that "veganism starts with vegetarianism and carries it through to its logical conclusion."<sup>8</sup> In the first issue of The Vegan Society's newsletter, Watson wrote:

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<sup>1</sup> Donald Watson, "Interview with Donald Watson on Sunday 15 December 2002," interview by George D. Rodger, *TheVeganSociety.com*, December 15, 2002, [https://www.vegansociety.com/sites/default/files/DW\\_Interview\\_2002\\_Unabridged\\_Transcript.pdf](https://www.vegansociety.com/sites/default/files/DW_Interview_2002_Unabridged_Transcript.pdf), 1; 3. See also Phil Davison, "Donald Watson: Founder of veganism and the Vegan Society," *The Independent*, November 24, 2005, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/donald-watson-516686.html>.

<sup>2</sup> Watson, "Interview with Donald Watson," 3.

<sup>3</sup> Davison, "Donald Watson"; see also Watson, "Interview with Donald Watson," 4-5.

<sup>4</sup> Davison, "Donald Watson"; see also Watson, "Interview with Donald Watson," 4-5.

<sup>5</sup> Watson, "Interview with Donald Watson," 9.

<sup>6</sup> This thesis refers to nonhuman animals as "animals" for the purpose of brevity.

<sup>7</sup> Davison, "Donald Watson"; see also Watson, "Interview with Donald Watson," 10.

<sup>8</sup> Rod Preece, *Sins of the Flesh: A History of Ethical Vegetarian Thought* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008), 298.

The unquestionable cruelty associated with the production of dairy produce has made it clear that lacto-vegetarianism is but a half-way house between flesh-eating and a truly humane, civilized diet, and we think, therefore, that during our life on earth we should try to evolve sufficiently to make the “full journey.”<sup>9</sup>

In addition to following a plant-based diet, Watson did not wear leather, wool, or silk.<sup>10</sup>

As well, he opposed hunting, fishing, animal testing, and blood sports.<sup>11</sup>

Originally, The Vegan Society officially defined veganism as “[t]he doctrine that man should live with-out exploiting animals.”<sup>12</sup> Today, however, The Society defines veganism as:

A philosophy and way of living which seeks to exclude – as far as is possible and practicable – all forms of exploitation of, and cruelty to, animals for food, clothing or any other purpose; and by extension, promotes the development and use of animal-free alternatives for the benefit of humans, animals and the environment. In dietary terms it denotes the practice of dispensing with all products derived wholly or partly from animals.<sup>13</sup>

In terms of the vegan movement itself, it is one of the world’s fastest-growing social justice movements, according to Melanie Joy, a well-known vegan advocate and psychologist.<sup>14</sup> In fact, in the United States (US), vegans increased from 1% to 6% of the population in only three years (2014-2017), while in Great Britain vegans increased from

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<sup>9</sup> Gary L. Francione and Anna E. Charlton, *Animal Rights: The Abolitionist Approach* (Newark, NJ: Exempla Press, 2015), 71-72.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 72.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Dario Martinelli, “Food Communication and the Metalevels of Carnism,” in *Meanings & Co.: The Interdisciplinarity of Communication, Semiotics and Multimodality*, ed. Alin Olteanu, Andrew Stables, and Dumitru Borțun (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2019), 168.

<sup>13</sup> “Definition of veganism,” The Vegan Society, accessed August 7, 2018, <https://www.vegansociety.com/go-vegan/definition-veganism>.

<sup>14</sup> Melanie Joy, *Beyond Beliefs: A Guide to Improving Relationships and Communication for Vegans, Vegetarians, and Meat Eaters* (Petaluma, CA: Roundtree Press, 2017), 87.

0.25% to 1.16% of the population in five years (2014-2019).<sup>15</sup> As of 2014, China had the largest vegan population (fifty million) of any country.<sup>16</sup>

As for why people go vegan, Radnitz et al. stated in their 2015 study that “quantitative and qualitative research has shown that health and ethical reasons [concern for animals] were most often cited for choosing to follow a vegan diet (Dyett et al., 2013; Ruby, 2012).”<sup>17</sup> Radnitz et al.’s own research indicates that those who adopt a vegan diet for ethical reasons (“ethical vegans”) are more likely to maintain the diet than those who adopt it for health reasons.<sup>18</sup>

### 1.2 Statement of purpose – Veganism and the Newspaper Coverage:

The growth of veganism is one reason to study the topic as a researcher, and indeed, you can find a wide range of research on the topic. Piia Jallinoja, Markus Vinnari, and Mari Niva (2019), for example, suggest that veganism is undergoing a clear transition from a sub-movement to a “way of life” that is supported by “top celebrities, business

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<sup>15</sup> “Top Trends in Prepared Foods 2017,” Report Buyer website, June 2017, accessed December 1, 2018, <https://www.reportbuyer.com/product/4959853/top-trends-in-prepared-foods-2017-exploring-trends-in-meat-fish-and-seafood-pasta-noodles-and-rice-prepared-meals-savory-deli-food-soup-and-meat-substitutes.html>; see also “Worldwide,” The Vegan Society, accessed May 28, 2019, <https://www.vegansociety.com/news/media/statistics/worldwide>.

<sup>16</sup> Tommy Dean, “China’s vegan population is largest in the world: Concern for health, humaneness, and the environment has led to the vegan Chinese population to increase to more than 50 million,” *VegNews.com*, January 14, 2014, <https://vegnews.com/2014/1/chinas-vegan-population-is-largest-in-the-world>.

<sup>17</sup> Cynthia Radnitz, Bonnie Beezhold, and Julie DiMatteo, “Investigation of lifestyle choices of individuals following a vegan diet for health and ethical reasons,” *Appetite* 90 (July 2015): 31-32, [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/272944910\\_Investigation\\_of\\_lifestyle\\_choices\\_of\\_individuals\\_following\\_a\\_vegan\\_diet\\_for\\_health\\_and\\_ethical\\_reasons](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/272944910_Investigation_of_lifestyle_choices_of_individuals_following_a_vegan_diet_for_health_and_ethical_reasons).

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 34; see also Alexandra Sifferlin, “These Vegans Are More Likely to Stick With It,” *Time*, April 6, 2015, <https://time.com/3772257/ethical-health-vegans/>.

people and politicians,” perhaps linked to a growing interest in sustainable living.<sup>19</sup> The role of media attention in this transition is clearly important.<sup>20</sup>

As the role of veganism continues to grow and evolve, media attention is a visible factor as related to its public perception and how veganism is portrayed. Given the pro-vegan arguments explored in the next chapter, as well as Jallinoja et al.’s (2019) analysis that a transition in positive attention may be occurring, it is relevant to investigate how vegans and veganism are portrayed in an important information source such as newspapers.<sup>21</sup> Newspapers also still represent a clear, researchable corpus of available textual media coverage that can provide insights into public discourses that may impact the future of veganism.

Yet the study of newspapers in this context is limited. In her 2009 piece on the portrayal of farmed animals in *The New York Times* (NYT) and other media outlets, Carrie Packwood Freeman observed: “Despite the growing realization that modern farming is ethically and environmentally problematic, there remains a dearth of media

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<sup>19</sup> Piia Jallinoja, Markus Vinnari, and Mari Niva, “Veganism and plant-based eating: Analysis of interplay between discursive strategies and lifestyle political consumerism,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Consumerism*, ed. Magnus Bostrom, Michele Micheletti, and Peter Oosterveer (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2019), 157.

<sup>20</sup> In terms of the influence of the media, Mark Hertsgaard, *The Nation*’s environment correspondent, and Kyle Pope, the editor and publisher of *Columbia Journalism Review* (CJR), suggest that the US media have the power to ensure that Americans survive climate change. Hertsgaard and Pope argue that said media are responsible for American ignorance about climate change, and that this ignorance is the reason for corporate and government inaction regarding the climate crisis. See Mark Hertsgaard and Kyle Pope, “The Media Are Complacent While the World Burns: But there’s a brand-new playbook for journalists fighting for a 1.5°C world,” *The Nation*, April 22, 2019, <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/climate-change-media-aoc-gnd-propaganda/>.

<sup>21</sup> In 2016, Pew Research reported that 20% of adult Americans often obtained their news from print newspapers. See Amy Mitchell et al., “1. Pathways to News,” *Pew Research Center’s Journalism Project* (blog), July 7, 2016, <https://www.journalism.org/2016/07/07/pathways-to-news/>.

research on farmed animals, ethical vegetarianism, or related activism, so the field is ripe for more exploration.”<sup>22</sup> She went on to do further research in this field, including a 2014 study of the representation of ethical vegetarianism in two popular television (TV) shows, *Friends* and *The Simpsons*.<sup>23</sup> Other authors have conducted similar studies. Nevertheless, Freeman’s observation from 2009 still holds true today.

Inspired by the work of Freeman and others, this thesis investigates the portrayal of vegans and veganism in the NYT and the *Los Angeles Times* (LAT).<sup>24</sup> The research questions addressed are as follows:

- 1) What are the dominant discourses on vegans and veganism in the NYT and LAT’s coverage?
- 2) From a vegan activist perspective, is the coverage adequate overall?

The thesis is presented in the following five chapters. Chapter 2 addresses the impact of nonveganism and veganism on animals, the environment, and humans. This discussion is necessary in order to demonstrate the relevance and importance of the thesis topic, and

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<sup>22</sup> Carrie Packwood Freeman, “This Little Piggy Went to Press: The American News Media’s Construction of Animals in Agriculture,” in *Critical Animal and Media Studies: Communication for Nonhuman Animal Advocacy*, ed. Núria Almiron, Matthew Cole, and Carrie P. Freeman (New York, NY: Routledge, 2016), 169; 171; 181.

<sup>23</sup> Carrie Packwood Freeman, “Lisa and Phoebe, Lone Vegetarian Icons: At Odds with Television’s Carnonormativity,” in *How Television Shapes Our Worldview: Media Representations of Social Trends and Change*, ed. D.A. Macey, K.M. Ryan, and N.J. Springer (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2014), 194; 197. In a 2012 book chapter, Freeman also analyzed the portrayal of turkeys in the NYT, *The Washington Post*, and NPR. See Carrie Packwood Freeman and Oana Leventi Perez, “Pardon Your Turkey and Eat Him Too: Antagonism over Meat Eating in the Discourse of the Presidential Pardoning of the Thanksgiving Turkey,” in *The Rhetoric of Food: Discourse, Materiality, and Power*, ed. Joshua J. Frye and Michael S. Bruner (New York: Routledge, 2012), 103-120.

<sup>24</sup> The other work that served as inspiration for this thesis was Cole and Morgan’s 2011 study, Crampton et al.’s 2014 study, and Kira Vorre’s 2011 MA thesis, “Vegetarians in the press: Myths and assumptions on the meat free minority.”

to set the context for the interpretation of the results. Chapter 2 also reviews the existing literature on newspaper representation of vegans and veganism, as well as theories about why people live non-vegan lifestyles. Chapter 3 explains the methods used by this thesis to conduct its analysis. The researcher's findings are then presented in chapter 4. Lastly, chapter 5 provides a discussion of the findings and the thesis' conclusions.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

Critical animal studies (CAS) scholars and animal-rights<sup>25</sup> (AR) activists consider veganism to be morally necessary, due to the harm that nonveganism causes to animals, humans, and the environment.<sup>26</sup> The following section explains what certain academics and AR activists have argued, as well as what leading institutions have said about veganism and the animal exploitation industries.

### 2.1 Humanity's Treatment of Animals:

Humans kill over 56 billion sentient<sup>27</sup> farmed animals every year.<sup>28</sup> As well, industrial farms engage in numerous inhumane practices, including forcibly impregnating animals (repeatedly), taking animal babies from their mothers shortly after birth, castrating animals without using anesthesia, imprisoning animals in crates for their entire lives,

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<sup>25</sup> It is important to note that the term “animal-rights” has more than one definition. Carol L. Glasser defines the animal-rights movement broadly as “one that seeks to provide relief to and some sort of rights for animals, beyond basic service functions such as sheltering.” Andy Lamey actually believes that it is more accurate to describe the animal-rights movement as the “animal protection” movement. See Carol L. Glasser, “Campaigning with the Enemy: Understanding Opportunity Fields and Tactic of Corporate Incorporation,” in *Animal subjects 2.0*, ed. Jodey Castricano and Lauren Corman (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2016), 394. See also Andy Lamey, *Duty and the Beast: Should We Eat Meat in the Name of Animal Rights?* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 1; 15-16.

<sup>26</sup> Kadri Aavik, “Nonhuman Animals as ‘High-Quality Protein’: Insistence on the consumption of ‘Meat’ and ‘Dairy’ in the Estonian Nutrition Recommendations,” in *Animal Oppression and Capitalism*, ed. David Nibert (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger Press, 2017), 145.

<sup>27</sup> Francione defines a sentient being as “a being who is subjectively aware; a being who has interests; that is, a being who prefers, desires, or wants.” According to Jacy Reese, the scientific consensus is that farmed animals are sentient. See Gary L. Francione, “Sentience,” *Animal Rights: The Abolitionist Approach* (blog), July 12, 2012, <https://www.abolitionistapproach.com/sentience/>; see also Jacy Reese, *The End of Animal Farming: How Scientists, Entrepreneurs, and Activists Are Building an Animal-Free Food System* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2018), X.

<sup>28</sup> Louis Komjathy, *Introducing Contemplative Studies* (Oxford, UK: John Wiley & Sons Ltd., 2018), 302.

slamming piglets headfirst into the ground, and grinding male chicks to death.<sup>29</sup> Almost all farmed animals are housed on said farms.<sup>30</sup>

“Animals are the main victims of history, and the treatment of domesticated animals in industrial farms is perhaps the worst crime in history,” says historian Yuval Noah Harari.<sup>31</sup> Industrial farms’ cruelty towards animals has also been acknowledged by the American Public Health Association (APHA), which opposes the construction of more such farms.<sup>32</sup> As for non-industrial farmed animals, although they have better living situations than industrial farmed animals, they still experience a premature death, in addition to other harms.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Corinne M. Painter, “Why Even the Oppressed Are Responsible for their Food Choices: Rejecting the Capitalist ‘Recipe Book,’” in *Animal Oppression and Capitalism*, ed. David Nibert (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger Press, 2017), 234-235; Reese, *The End of Animal Farming*, ix-x; Nathan Runkle and Gene Stone, *Mercy For Animals: One Man’s Quest to Inspire Compassion and Improve the Lives of Farm Animals* (New York, NY: Penguin Random House LLC, 2017), 23; 145; and Tracye Lynn McQuirter, *By Any Greens Necessary: A Revolutionary Guide for Black Women Who Want to Eat Great, Get Healthy, Lose Weight, and Look Phat* (Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 2010), 43-44.

<sup>30</sup> Reese, *The End of Animal Farming*, ix-x.

<sup>31</sup> Yuval Noah Harari, “Industrial farming is one of the worst crimes in history,” *The Guardian*, September 25, 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2015/sep/25/industrial-farming-one-worst-crimes-history-ethical-question>; see also “About,” Yuval Noah Harari, accessed November 20, 2020, <https://www.ynharari.com/about/>.

<sup>32</sup> “American Public Health Association Adopts Policy Statement Calling for a National Moratorium on New and Expanding Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations,” John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, June 25, 2020, <https://clf.jhsph.edu/publications/american-public-health-association-adopts-policy-statement-calling-national-moratorium>; see also “Public Health Association Calls for Moratorium on Factory Farms; Cites Health Issues, Pollution,” John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, accessed January 8, 2019, <https://www.jhsph.edu/news/news-releases/2004/farm-moratorium.html>.

<sup>33</sup> Dan Hooley and Nathan Nobis, “A Moral Argument for Veganism,” in *Philosophy Comes to Dinner: Arguments about the Ethics of Eating*, ed. Andrew Chignell, Terence Cuneo, and Matthew C. Halteman (New York: Routledge, 2016), 95.



Apart from being used as food, animals in the US are used for entertainment, experimentation, and clothing.<sup>34</sup> Animals exploited by the entertainment industry frequently experience brutalization, permanent imprisonment, and bad living conditions (among other things), whilst animals used for experiments are infected with diseases, poisoned, starved, blinded, and shot (among other things).<sup>35</sup> Moreover, the National Institutes of Health (NIH), America's medical research agency, has stated that "animal models often fail to provide good ways to mimic disease or predict how drugs will work in humans, resulting in much wasted time and money while patients wait for therapies."<sup>36</sup>

### 2.2 Veganism and Animal Harm:

Law professor and leading philosopher of animal-rights theory Gary L. Francione states: "Veganism reduces animal suffering and death by decreasing demand [for animal products]."<sup>37</sup> According to him and Anna E. Charlton (another law professor), a vegan saves around 200 animals each year.<sup>38</sup> Gaverick Matheny, the director of the Center for

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<sup>34</sup> Gary L. Francione, *Animals as Persons: Essays on the Abolition of Animal Exploitation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 27.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Kathy Guillermo, "Zika response shouldn't include animal experiments," *Sun-Sentinel*, August 17, 2016, <https://www.sun-sentinel.com/opinion/commentary/fl-veiwpoint-zika-pets-20160813-story.html>; see also "Who We Are," National Institutes of Health, accessed May 29, 2019, <https://www.nih.gov/about-nih/who-we-are>.

<sup>37</sup> Gary L. Francione and Robert Garner, *The Animal Rights Debate: Abolition or Regulation?* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2010), 234; Gary L. Francione, "Veganism: The Fundamental Principle of the Abolitionist Movement," *Animal Rights: The Abolitionist Approach* (blog), December 27, 2006, <http://www.abolitionistapproach.com/veganism-the-fundamental-principle-of-the-abolitionist-movement/>; and Gary L. Francione, "Books," *Animal Rights: The Abolitionist Approach* (blog), accessed November 15, 2020, <https://www.abolitionistapproach.com/books/>.

<sup>38</sup> Francione and Charlton, *Animal Rights*, 76; 77; 147.

Security and Emerging Technology at Georgetown University, has also made an ethical argument in favour of a vegan diet.<sup>39</sup>

Matheny's 2003 scholarly article, "Least Harm: A Defense of Vegetarianism from Steven Davis's Omnivorous Proposal," rejects Steven Davis' argument that a diet of vegetarian food and free-range ruminant meat would cause less harm to animals than a vegan diet.<sup>40</sup> Davis, a professor of animal science, estimated in 2003 that 15 wild animals are killed per hectare in crop production and that 7.5 wild animals are killed per hectare in pasture-forage production.<sup>41</sup> He concluded that if people adopted the aforementioned omnivorous diet, they would kill fewer animals than if they adopted a vegan diet.<sup>42</sup>

Matheny, however, argued that a hectare of cropland provides more food than a hectare of land used by ruminants:

In one year, 1,000 kilograms of protein can be produced on as few as 1.0 hectares planted with soy and corn, 2.6 hectares used as pasture for grass-fed dairy cows, or 10 hectares used as pasture for grass-fed beef cattle (Vandehaar, 1998; UNFAO, 1996). As such, to obtain the 20 kilograms of protein per year recommended for adults, a vegan-vegetarian would kill 0.3 wild animals annually,

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<sup>39</sup> Gaverick Matheny, "Least Harm: A Defense of Vegetarianism from Steven Davis's Omnivorous Proposal," *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics* 16, no. 5 (September 2003): 510, [https://fewd.univie.ac.at/fileadmin/user\\_upload/inst\\_ethik\\_wiss\\_dialog/Matheny\\_G.2003\\_Defense\\_of\\_Veg\\_in\\_J\\_Agric\\_Ethics.pdf](https://fewd.univie.ac.at/fileadmin/user_upload/inst_ethik_wiss_dialog/Matheny_G.2003_Defense_of_Veg_in_J_Agric_Ethics.pdf); see also "Dr. Jason Matheny," Center for a New American Security, accessed November 20, 2020, <https://www.cnas.org/people/dr-jason-matheny>.

<sup>40</sup> Matheny, "Least Harm," 505-510.

<sup>41</sup> Steven L. Davis, "The Least Harm Principle May Require that Humans Consume a Diet Containing Large Herbivores, Not a Vegan Diet," *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics* 16, no. 4 (2003): 389-391, [https://fewd.univie.ac.at/fileadmin/user\\_upload/inst\\_ethik\\_wiss\\_dialog/Davis\\_S.2003\\_The\\_least\\_Harm\\_-\\_Anti\\_Veg\\_in\\_J\\_Agric\\_Ethics.pdf](https://fewd.univie.ac.at/fileadmin/user_upload/inst_ethik_wiss_dialog/Davis_S.2003_The_least_Harm_-_Anti_Veg_in_J_Agric_Ethics.pdf); see also "OSU scientist questions the moral basis of a vegan diet," Corvallis, OR: Oregon State University, July 13, 2009, <https://today.oregonstate.edu/archives/2002/mar/osu-scientist-questions-moral-basis-vegan-diet>.

<sup>42</sup> Davis, "The Least Harm Principle," 390-391.

a lacto-vegetarian would kill 0.39 wild animals, while a Davis-style omnivore would kill 1.5 wild animals.<sup>43</sup>

Secondly, Matheny notes that Davis does not assess the quality of life of grass-fed cows or of field animals who are killed in crop production.<sup>44</sup> Matheny states that “it is hard to imagine that the pain experienced by a mouse as she or he is killed in a harvester compares to the pain even a *grass-fed* cow must endure before being killed.”<sup>45</sup> Prior to being slaughtered, such a cow might be, among other things, dehorned, branded, castrated, prevented from reproducing naturally, and transported long distances in harsh weather, while a wild mouse “lives free of confinement and is able to practice natural habits like roaming, breeding, and foraging,” Matheny says.<sup>46</sup> Thus, Matheny concludes that vegetarianism not only kills fewer animals, but also “involves better treatment of animals.”<sup>47</sup> Lastly, Matheny argues that if grass-fed cows did not exist, smaller wild animals would exist in their place and, “as long as the combined number of wild animals on nine wild acres plus one cultivated acre is greater than the number of animals on ten grazed acres, a vegan-vegetarian will allow the greatest number of wild animals to exist.”<sup>48</sup>

Andy Lamey is another critic of Davis’s study.<sup>49</sup> One of his criticisms is that Davis fails to acknowledge the difference between intentional and unintentional killing:

In most legal systems, the difference between accidental and deliberate killing is the difference between manslaughter and murder. Applied to animals, surely we

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<sup>43</sup> Matheny, “Least Harm,” 506-507; see also Lamey, *Duty and the Beast*, 74.

<sup>44</sup> Matheny, “Least Harm,” 508.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 510.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 509-510.

<sup>49</sup> Lamey, *Duty and the Beast*, 62.

recognize a distinction between accidentally hitting an animal while driving on the highway and intentionally backing over it with the express aim of ending its life.<sup>50</sup>

Lamey also identified flaws with Michael Archer's article ("Ordering the vegetarian meal? There's more animal blood on your hands"), which used information from Australian agriculture to make essentially the same argument as Davis – that a meat-based diet can be less harmful to animals than a vegan diet.<sup>51</sup> These flaws were significant enough to cause Lamey to reject Archer's argument.<sup>52</sup>

Thus, in sum, nobody has successfully demonstrated that nonveganism causes less harm to animals than veganism.<sup>53</sup> It is also noteworthy that current trends, such as indoor farming and the use of rodent contraceptives, have actually led Lamey and Bob Fischer to conclude that the number of animals killed in plant cultivation could eventually decline all the way to zero.<sup>54</sup> Francione, meanwhile, opines: "If we were all vegans and embraced the moral personhood of nonhumans, we would undoubtedly devise better ways of avoiding even incidental and unintended deaths of animals in the crop production process."<sup>55</sup> In addition to being considered less harmful to animals, veganism, as the following section will show, is regarded as environmentally superior to nonveganism.

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 6-7; 62; 79.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 80-84; see also Michael Archer, "Ordering the vegetarian meal? There's more animal blood on your hands," *The Conversation*, December 15, 2011, <https://theconversation.com/ordering-the-vegetarian-meal-theres-more-animal-blood-on-your-hands-4659>.

<sup>52</sup> Lamey, *Duty and the Beast*, 6-7; 9; 84; 91.

<sup>53</sup> For their part, Hooley and Nobis state that they are unaware of any "strong empirical evidence" that veganism kills more animals than nonveganism. See Hooley and Nobis, "A Moral Argument for Veganism," 106.

<sup>54</sup> Lamey, *Duty and the Beast*, 89-90; see also Bob Fischer and Andy Lamey, "Field Deaths in Plant Agriculture," *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics* 31, no. 4 (2018): 409-428, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10806-018-9733-8>.

<sup>55</sup> Recognizing the moral personhood of animals would mean abolishing their status as property, according to Francione and Charlton. Further, it should be noted that Francione,

### 2.3 The Environment:

Numerous reports have examined the environmental impact of animal agriculture. One such report, “Livestock’s Long Shadow” (2006), by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations (UN), identified the livestock sector “as one of the top two or three most significant contributors to the most serious environmental problems, at every scale from local to global.”<sup>56</sup> This report found the livestock sector to be the largest anthropogenic user of land, possibly the main cause of biodiversity loss, and the sector that probably caused the most water pollution.<sup>57</sup> Additionally, the report stated that the livestock sector produced more anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) than the transport sector.<sup>58</sup> GHGs are a significant contributor to climate change, a phenomenon that is, according to the UN International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), projected to reduce renewable water resources, increase displacement of people, decelerate economic growth, and produce other adverse consequences.<sup>59</sup>

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like Lamey, acknowledges that there is a significant difference between intentional and unintentional killing. See Anna E. Charlton and Gary L. Francione, “Why we must respect the rights of all sentient animals,” *Open Democracy: Free Thinking for the World*, January 28, 2018, <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/transformation/why-we-must-respect-rights-of-all-sentient-animals/>; Gary L. Francione, “There is No Third Choice,” *Animal Rights: The Abolitionist Approach* (blog), December 4, 2015, <http://www.abolitionistapproach.com/there-is-no-third-choice/>; and Lamey, *Duty and the Beast*, 79.

<sup>56</sup> FAO, *Livestock’s Long Shadow: Environmental Issues and Options* (Rome: FAO, 2006), xx, <http://www.fao.org/3/a0701e/a0701e00.htm>.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, xxi-xxiii.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, xxi. See also Marquita K. Hill, *Understanding Environmental Pollution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 192.

<sup>59</sup> Paul Hoebink, *The Netherlands Yearbook on International Cooperation 2009* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 2011), 35; see also IPCC, “Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability,” Top Level Findings from the Working Group II AR5 Summary for Policymakers, [https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/03/WGIIAR5\\_SPM\\_Top\\_Level\\_Findings-1.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/03/WGIIAR5_SPM_Top_Level_Findings-1.pdf).

Three years after “Livestock’s Long Shadow” was written, the Worldwatch Institute released “Livestock and Climate Change,” a report that attributed 51% of anthropogenic GHGs to livestock and their byproducts.<sup>60</sup> The report’s authors, Robert Goodland (who was the World Bank Group’s lead environmental adviser for 23 years) and Jeff Anhang (a research officer and environmental specialist at the World Bank Group’s International Finance Corporation), wrote that climate change could not be dealt with successfully unless vegan products replaced animal food products.<sup>61</sup>

The next year, the UN’s top environmental authority, the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), issued a report stating that the worst consequences of climate change could not be staved off unless humanity adopted a vegan diet.<sup>62</sup> The following is an excerpt from the report:

Impacts from agriculture are expected to increase substantially due to population growth, increasing consumption of animal products. Unlike fossil fuels, it is difficult to look for alternatives: people have to eat. A substantial reduction of impacts would only be possible with a substantial worldwide diet change, away from animal products.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Robert Goodland and Jeff Anhang, “Livestock and Climate Change: What If the Key Actors in Climate Change Are . . . Cows, Pigs, and Chickens?” *World Watch* 22, no. 6, November/December 2009, pp. 11,

<http://www.worldwatch.org/files/pdf/Livestock%20and%20Climate%20Change.pdf>.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 15; 19.

<sup>62</sup> Felicity Carus, “UN urges global move to meat and dairy free diet: Lesser consumption of animal products is necessary to save the world from the worst impacts of climate change, UN report says,” *The Guardian*, June 2, 2010,

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2010/jun/02/un-report-meat-free-diet>; see also

“UNEP: United Nations Environment Programme,” Office of the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Youth, accessed March 18, 2019,

<https://www.un.org/youthenvoy/2013/08/unep-united-nations-environment-programme/>.

<sup>63</sup> Edgar G. Hertwich et al., *Assessing the Environmental Impacts of Consumption and Production: Priority Products and Materials, A Report of the Working Group on the Environmental Impacts of Products and Materials to the International Panel for Sustainable Resource Management* (Nairobi: United Nations Environment Programme,

The UNEP describes the current climate emergency as “one of the most pervasive and threatening crises of our time,” and as an “existential threat.”<sup>64</sup>

Eight years after the UNEP released its report, researchers from Oxford University conducted a study that described a vegan diet as “probably the single biggest way to reduce your impact on planet Earth, not just greenhouse gases, but global acidification, eutrophication, land use and water use.”<sup>65</sup> Moreover, the study claimed that a worldwide shift to a vegan diet could reduce global farmland by 76% and thereby “take pressure off the world’s tropical forests and release land back to nature.”<sup>66</sup> Francione cited said study in his 2018 opinion piece, “Vegan or Die: The Importance of Confronting Climate Change,” which states: “We’ve known for a while now that animal agriculture is an ecological *disaster*. But it can no longer be doubted: A massive shift to veganism may not be sufficient to avert climate catastrophe but, as a practical matter, it is

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2010), [http://www.unep.fr/shared/publications/pdf/dtix1262xpa-priorityproductsandmaterials\\_report.pdf](http://www.unep.fr/shared/publications/pdf/dtix1262xpa-priorityproductsandmaterials_report.pdf), 82.

<sup>64</sup> “Why does climate change matter?” UN Environment Programme, accessed June 15, 2020, <https://www.unenvironment.org/explore-topics/climate-change/why-does-climate-change-matter>.

<sup>65</sup> Olivia Petter, “Veganism is ‘single biggest way’ to reduce our environmental impact, study finds: Avoiding meat and dairy could reduce your carbon footprint from food by nearly three-quarters,” *The Independent*, June 1, 2018, <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-families/veganism-environmental-impact-planet-reduced-plant-based-diet-humans-study-a8378631.html>.

<sup>66</sup> Petter, “Veganism is ‘single biggest way’”; see also “New estimates of the environmental cost of food,” Oxford University, accessed September 26, 2018, <http://www.ox.ac.uk/news/2018-06-01-new-estimates-environmental-cost-food>.

certainly *necessary*.”<sup>67</sup> Francione argues that veganism is superior to nonveganism from a health standpoint as well.<sup>68</sup>

## 2.4 Human Health:

### 2.4.1 Hunger

In his famous 1975 book, *Animal Liberation*, Peter Singer (who is often referred to as “the father of the animal-rights movement”) wrote, “Animal Liberation is Human Liberation too,” because humans could eliminate malnutrition and starvation by ending animal agriculture.<sup>69</sup> Currently, over 820 million people in the world (42 million in the US) suffer from hunger; however, the cereals fed to animals could feed over 3.5 billion people, according to the UNEP.<sup>70</sup> Additionally, a research article published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS) in 2018 concluded that a

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<sup>67</sup> Gary L. Francione, “Vegan or Die: The Importance of Confronting Climate Change,” *Medium*, March 11, 2019, <https://medium.com/@gary.francione/vegan-or-die-the-importance-of-confronting-climate-change-c08e31e56db8>.

<sup>68</sup> Gary L. Francione, “Elephants: They May Weigh More Than Chickens But Not as a Matter of Morality,” *Animal Rights: The Abolitionist Approach* (blog), April 4, 2011, <https://www.abolitionistapproach.com/elephants-they-may-weigh-more-than-chickens-but-not-as-a-matter-of-morality/>.

<sup>69</sup> Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation* (New York: Avon Books, 1975), vii; see also Francione and Garner, *The Animal Rights Debate*, 57.

<sup>70</sup> C. Nellemann et al., *The environmental food crisis – The environment’s role in averting future food crises*, A UNEP rapid response assessment, February 2009, United Nations Environment Programme, GRID-Arendal, <https://www.gwp.org/globalassets/global/toolbox/references/the-environmental-crisis.-the-environments-role-in-averting-future-food-crises-unep-2009.pdf>, 27; Susan Caminiti, “America’s dirty little secret: 42 million people are suffering from hunger,” *CNBC*, December 13, 2016, <https://www.cnn.com/2016/12/13/americas-dirty-little-secret-42-million-are-suffering-from-hunger.html>; and Sarah Boseley, “World hunger on the rise as 820m at risk, UN report finds: Eliminating hunger by 2030 is an immense challenge, say heads of UN agencies,” *The Guardian*, July 15, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jul/15/world-hunger-un-report>.



vegan America could feed almost 700 million people.<sup>71</sup> Animal advocate and writer Jessica Scott-Reid referenced said report in, “Why everybody should rid themselves of old habits – and go vegan,” a 2018 *Maclean’s* opinion piece that argues that veganism is morally obligatory due to animal farming’s environmental destructiveness.<sup>72</sup>

#### 2.4.2 Disease and Health Benefits

Industrial farms are breeding places for viruses, according to sociologist and vegan advocate David Nibert.<sup>73</sup> He notes that, in a 2004 report, the World Health Organization (WHO), the FAO, and the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) stated: “Many of the human diseases that are new, emerging and re-emerging at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century are caused by pathogens originating from animals or from products of animal origin referred to as zoonotic diseases.”<sup>74</sup> One recent zoonotic disease was the 2009 H1N1 virus, which might have killed as many as 200,000 people.<sup>75</sup> The first known human case of H1N1 occurred close to an industrial pig farm in La Gloria, Veracruz state, Mexico.<sup>76</sup> The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which has killed hundreds of thousands of Americans

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<sup>71</sup> Alon Shepon et al., “The Opportunity Cost of Animal Based Diets Exceeds All Food Losses,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 115, no. 15 (2018): 3804-9, <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1713820115>.

<sup>72</sup> Jessica Scott-Reid, “Why everybody should rid themselves of old habits – and go vegan,” *Maclean’s*, December 24, 2018, <https://www.macleans.ca/opinion/why-everybody-should-rid-themselves-of-old-habits-and-go-vegan/>.

<sup>73</sup> David A. Nibert, *Animal Oppression and Human Violence: Domesecration, Capitalism, and Global Conflict* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2013), 249; 261. See also Corey Wrenn, *A Rational Approach to Animal Rights: Extensions in Abolitionist Theory* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 26.

<sup>74</sup> Nibert, *Animal Oppression and Human Violence*, 251.

<sup>75</sup> Jane Dalton, “Coronavirus: Timeline of pandemics and other viruses that humans caught by interacting with animals,” *The Independent*, April 27, 2020, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/coronavirus-pandemic-viruses-animals-bird-swine-flu-sars-mers-ebola-zika-a9483211.html>.

<sup>76</sup> A.M. Dumar, *Swine Flu: What You Need to Know* (Brooklyn, NY: Brownstone Books, 2009), 25.

and had a significant negative impact on the global economy, is also probably a product of nonveganism.<sup>77</sup> During this pandemic, Francione has remarked that “going vegan is the best way to prevent pandemics.”<sup>78</sup>

The WHO also says that 21% of bowel cancers are caused by processed or red meat, and that consuming 50g of processed meat a day increases the chance of developing colorectal cancer by 18%.<sup>79</sup> At the same time, Dr. T. Colin Campbell, Professor Emeritus of Nutritional Biochemistry at Cornell University and author of a comprehensive nutrition and health study, has stated: “No chemical carcinogen is nearly so important in causing human cancer as animal protein.”<sup>80</sup> As for a vegan diet, Campbell describes it as “the ideal diet.”<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> David Benatar, “Our Cruel Treatment of Animals Led to the Coronavirus: THE STONE,” *New York Times (Online)*, April 13, 2020, <https://lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fblogs%2C-podcasts%2C-websites%2Four-cruel-treatment-animals-led-coronavirus%2Fdocview%2F2388978753%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D10246>; Lora Jones, Daniele Palumbo, and David Brown, “Coronavirus: How the pandemic has changed the world economy,” *BBC News*, January 24, 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-51706225>; and Lucy Tompkins, Mitch Smith, Julie Bosman, and Bryan Pietsch, “Entering uncharted territory, the U.S. counts 500,000 Covid-related deaths.” *New York Times (Online)*, February 22, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/22/us/us-covid-deaths-half-a-million.html>.

<sup>78</sup> Gary L. Francione: The Abolitionist Approach to Animal Rights, “‘Mask Shaming,’ – Complete Drivel,” Facebook, August 11, 2020, <https://m.facebook.com/abolitionistapproach/posts/3490684447617951>.

<sup>79</sup> James Gallagher, “Processed meats do cause cancer – WHO,” *BBC Health*, October 26, 2015, <https://www.bbc.com/news/health-34615621>.

<sup>80</sup> Man Mohan Sharma, *52 Simple Ways to Prevent, Control and Turn Off Cancer* (New Delhi: Rajendra Ravindra Printers Pvt. Ltd., 2012), 286; see also Melanie Joy, *Why We love Dogs, Eat Pigs, and Wear Cows: An Introduction to Carnism* (San Francisco, CA: Conari Press, 2010), 92.

<sup>81</sup> Erik Marcus, *Vegan: The New Ethics of Eating* (Ithaca, NY: McBooks Press, Inc., 2001), 30.

Likewise, in 2009, the world’s leading dietetics organization, the American Dietetic Association (ADA), now known as the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND), stated that:

appropriately planned vegetarian diets, including total vegetarian or vegan diets, are healthful, nutritionally adequate, and may provide health benefits in the prevention and treatment of certain diseases. Well-planned vegetarian diets are appropriate for individuals during all stages of the life cycle, including pregnancy, lactation, infancy, childhood, and adolescence, and for athletes.<sup>82</sup>

Moreover, the AND says that vegans “are at reduced risk of certain health conditions, including ischemic heart disease, type 2 diabetes, hypertension, certain types of cancer, and obesity.”<sup>83</sup>

The following are other institutions that consider a sound vegan diet to be healthy: the American Diabetes Association, the American Heart Association (AHA), the British Dietetic Association (BDA), the British Nutritional Foundation, Dietician’s Association of Australia (DAA), Dieticians of Canada (DC), the Heart and Stroke Foundation, the British National Health Service (NHS), the NIH, US Department of Agriculture (USDA), US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Mayo Clinic, Kaiser

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<sup>82</sup> W.J. Craig, A.R. Mangels, and the American Dietetic Association [ADA], “Position of the American Dietetic Association: Vegetarian Diets,” *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* 109, no. 7 (2009): 1266-1282, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19562864>; see also Patricia S. Anthony, “Global Dietetics Issues,” in *Issues and Choices in Clinical Nutrition Practice*, ed. Abby S. Bloch, Julie O’Sullivan Maillet, Wanda H. Howell, and Marion F. Winkler (Baltimore, MD: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2007), 133.

<sup>83</sup> Vesanto Melina, Winston Craig, and Susan Levin, “Position of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: Vegetarian Diets,” *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics* 116, no. 12 (2016): 1970-1980, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/27886704>.

Permanente (KP), University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine (UPSOM), and UCLA Health Center.<sup>84</sup>

#### 2.4.3 Workplace Dangers:

Slaughterhouse work is one of the most dangerous kinds of work in America.<sup>85</sup> US slaughterhouse workers have been killed on the job and have suffered injuries such as mutilations, severe burns, fractures, eye injuries, and respiratory damage, according to the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).<sup>86</sup> Slaughterhouse work is also a danger to one's mental health.<sup>87</sup> The following is an excerpt from *PTSD Journal*:

These employees are hired to kill animals, such as pigs and cows, that are largely gentle creatures. Carrying out this action requires workers to disconnect from what they are doing and from the creature standing before them. This emotional dissonance can lead to consequences such as domestic violence, social withdrawal, anxiety, drug and alcohol abuse, and PTSD.<sup>88</sup>

#### 2.4.4 Health-Care Related and Individual Savings:

According to a study published in the PNAS in 2016, a worldwide transition to a vegan diet would result in \$248 billion in annual healthcare savings in the US and \$1.06 trillion in annual healthcare savings globally by the year 2050 – more savings than would be accumulated through a transition to vegetarianism or a diet that satisfied global dietary guidelines.<sup>89</sup> In terms of the affordability of a vegan diet, a person can actually halve their

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<sup>84</sup> Francione and Charlton, *Animal Rights*, 70-71.

<sup>85</sup> Catherine A. Faver and Elizabeth B. Strand, “Unleashing Compassion: Social Work and Animal Abuse,” in *The International Handbook of Animal Abuse and Cruelty: Theory, Research, and Application*, ed. Frank R. Ascione (West Lafayette, Ind.: Purdue University Press, 2008), 178.

<sup>86</sup> Joy, *An Introduction to Carnism*, 80-81.

<sup>87</sup> “The Psychological Damage of Slaughterhouse Work,” *PTSD Journal: Not All Wounds Are Visible*, accessed September 28, 2018, <http://www.ptsdjournal.com/posts/the-psychological-damage-of-slaughterhouse-work/>.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>89</sup> Lauren Cassani Davis, “The Economic Case for Worldwide Vegetarianism: Not curbing its taste for meat could cost the U.S. almost \$200 billion each year – and the

grocery bill by adopting veganism.<sup>90</sup> Sociologist Corey Wrenn writes: “Indeed, omitting Nonhuman Animal products from the shopping list could save a low-income family enough money to feed a child.”<sup>91</sup> Francione and Matheny are others who have acknowledged that a plant-based diet is less expensive than an omnivorous one.<sup>92</sup>

Despite the lower cost of a vegan diet, however, veganism is not a viable option for everyone.<sup>93</sup> Indeed, according to Luis Cordeiro-Rodrigues, for some people, economic status and geographic location are major obstacles to living a healthy vegan life.<sup>94</sup> A. Breeze Harper has commented on this issue as well, stating: “The awareness just isn’t there in many vegan circles and in the country at large that many Americans [including those living in “food deserts”] have little access to affordable, wholesome, plant-based foods.”<sup>95</sup>

### 2.5 Theories about why People Consume Animal Products:

In her aforementioned 2014 study, Freeman cited Joy’s theory of carnism to explain why people choose an omnivorous diet.<sup>96</sup> This theory posits that people who consume

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global economy up to \$1.6 trillion,” *The Atlantic*, March 28, 2016, <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2016/03/the-economic-case-for-worldwide-vegetarianism/475524/>.

<sup>90</sup> Wrenn, *A Rational Approach to Animal Rights*, 88.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid; see also “About,” Corey Lee Wrenn, Ph.D., accessed November 21, 2020, <http://www.coreyleewrenn.com/about/>.

<sup>92</sup> Matheny, “Least Harm,” 510; see also Gary L. Francione, “The Importance of Veganism in Economically Deprived Communities,” *Animal Rights: The Abolitionist Approach* (blog), July 6, 2016, <https://www.abolitionistapproach.com/importance-veganism-economically-deprived-communities/>.

<sup>93</sup> Scott-Reid, “Why everybody should rid themselves of old habits – and go vegan.”

<sup>94</sup> Luis Cordeiro-Rodrigues, “Animal Abolitionism and ‘Racism without Racists,’” *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics* 30, no. 6 (2017): 751, [https://link-springer-com.lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/content/pdf/10.1007/s10806-017-9697-0.pdf](https://link.springer.com.lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/content/pdf/10.1007/s10806-017-9697-0.pdf).

<sup>95</sup> A. Breeze Harper, “FOOD DESERTS 101,” *The Sistah Vegan Project Blog*, accessed January 17, 2021, <http://sistahvegan.com/food-deserts/>.

<sup>96</sup> Freeman, “Lisa and Phoebe,” 194-195.

animal products, whom Joy calls “carnists,” are conditioned to do so by an “invisible” ideology called “carnism.”<sup>97</sup> The terms “carnivore” and “omnivore,” Joy says, should not be used to refer to people who eat animals, as they “describe one’s biological constitution, not one’s philosophical choice. In much fo [sic] the world today people eat meat not because they need to, but because they choose to, and choices always stem from beliefs.”<sup>98</sup>

### 2.5.1 Carnist “Defenses”:

According to Joy, carnism is sustained partly by the myths that consuming animal products is “*normal, natural, and necessary*,” and that veganism is “*abnormal, unnatural, and unnecessary*.”<sup>99</sup> She addresses the first myth by saying that what is considered normal is “simply the beliefs and behaviors of the dominant culture.”<sup>100</sup> She mentions that stoning women to death and enslaving Africans used to be normal practices.<sup>101</sup> As for the myth that eating animals is nutritionally necessary, Joy explains that it is contradicted by a staggering amount of evidence.<sup>102</sup> Further, Joy states that, while animal consumption is defined as “natural” because it is an age-old practice, the reality is that some early humans subsisted on a plant-based diet.<sup>103</sup> She adds: “And although murder and rape are

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<sup>97</sup> Joy’s website explains that “‘carn’ means ‘flesh’ or ‘of the flesh’ and ‘ism’ refers to a belief system.” See “What is Carnism,” Beyond Carnism, accessed November 21, 2017, <https://www.carnism.org/carnism>. See also Freeman, “Lisa and Phoebe,” 195; and Kashmiri Gander, “Carnism: Why we love dogs, eat pigs and wear cows,” *The Independent*, September 6, 2017, <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/food-and-drink/carnism-why-love-dogs-eat-pigs-wear-cows-leather-pork-dr-melanie-joy-vegan-psychology-a7932621.html>.

<sup>98</sup> Joy, *An Introduction to Carnism*, 30.

<sup>99</sup> Joy, *Beyond Beliefs*, 80; 86; 93; see also Gander, “Carnism.”

<sup>100</sup> Joy, *Beyond Beliefs*, 80.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, 83.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, 81-82.

at least as longstanding, and therefore as natural, as eating animals, we would never use the longevity of these practices as a justification for them today.”<sup>104</sup>

### 2.5.2 Stereotyping Vegans:

According to Joy, one common carnist defense is “shooting the messenger.”<sup>105</sup> This can consist of stereotyping vegans as anti-human, hypersensitive, eating-disordered, and other things.<sup>106</sup> Joy states: “if we shoot the messenger, we don’t have to take seriously the implications of their message.”<sup>107</sup> She describes the hypersensitive stereotype as “a powerful way for carnism to discredit the vegan message: overly emotional people are, by definition, not rational, and irrational people are not worth listening to.”<sup>108</sup> This and other negative vegan stereotypes, as this thesis will show, have appeared in newspaper coverage.

### 2.5.3 “Neo-Carnism” and the Three N’s (Normal, Natural, and Necessary):

Joy identifies the following as “neo-carnist” ideologies: “Compassionate Carnism: Eating Animals is Normal,” “Ecocarnism: Eating Animals is Natural,” and “Biocarnism: Eating Animals is Necessary.”<sup>109</sup> These ideologies, Joy writes, are especially attractive to people “who have begun to truly question the validity of eating animals.”<sup>110</sup>

Compassionate carnism dismisses veganism as extreme and says that one should only consume flesh and secretions from “humanely” farmed animals.<sup>111</sup> As for ecocarnism, it

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 82.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., 90.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 91-93.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 90.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 91.

<sup>109</sup> Melanie Joy, “Understanding Neocarnism: How Vegan Advocates Can Appreciate and Respond to ‘Happy Meat,’ Locavorism, and ‘Paleo Dieting,’” *One Green Planet*, July 29, 2012, <http://www.onegreenplanet.org/lifestyle/understanding-neocarnism/>.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

regards industrial agriculture as environmentally problematic and calls for people to eat non-industrial farmed animals.<sup>112</sup> Meanwhile, biocarnism views animal consumption as nutritionally necessary and is commonly advocated by non-vegans who experienced health issues when they tried plant-based diets.<sup>113</sup>

#### 2.5.4 The Fourth “N”:

In their research, Piazza et al. found that, in addition to using the “three Ns of justification,” non-vegans rationalize their diets by saying that animal flesh is “nice” (tasty).<sup>114</sup> Together, these four Ns make for an important context for any discussion of how various newspapers cover veganism, but they are not without debate and vigorous dispute.

#### 2.6 The Abolitionist Perspective:

It is important to point out that not all vegans share Joy’s views. For example, Francione, one of the founders of the “abolitionist” movement, rejects the theory of carnism, arguing that a non-invisible, speciesist ideology called “the ideology of animal welfare” sustains nonveganism.<sup>115</sup> Speciesism is a concept that was developed by Richard Ryder, who wrote:

Speciesism and racism are both forms of prejudice that are based upon appearances – if the other individual looks different he is rated as being beyond the moral pale. . . . Speciesism and racism (and indeed sexism) overlook or underestimate the similarities between the discriminator and those discriminated

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<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Jared Piazza, Matthew B. Ruby, Steve Loughnan, Mischel Luong, Juliana Kulik, Hanne M. Watkins, and Mirra Seigerman, “Rationalizing Meat Consumption. The 4Ns,” *Appetite* 91 (August 2015): 114-28, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2015.04.011>.

<sup>115</sup> Gary L. Francione, “‘Carnism’? There is Nothing ‘Invisible’ About The Ideology Of Animal Exploitation,” *Animal Rights: The Abolitionist Approach* (blog), October 2, 2012, <https://www.abolitionistapproach.com/carnism-there-is-nothing-invisible-about-the-ideology-of-animal-exploitation/>; see also Cordeiro-Rodrigues, “Animal Abolitionism and ‘Racism without Racists,’” 746.



against and both forms of prejudice show a selfish disregard for the interests of others, and for their sufferings.<sup>116</sup>

Francione says that Joy's argument upholds the ideology of animal welfare by encouraging people "to avoid a hard examination of animal welfare in favor of embracing some fantasy that we exploit animals as the result of some 'invisible' conditioning."<sup>117</sup>

Francione is also troubled by the fact that the theory of carnism, in his view, implies that non-vegans are morally blameless for living non-vegan lifestyles.<sup>118</sup> Arguing that an invisible ideology causes non-vegans to consume animal products, Francione suggests, is analogous to arguing that an invisible ideology caused the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) to engage in racist acts:

Imagine if, in the 1950s, someone were to suggest that there was an "invisible" ideology or psychological process that accounted for the burning of crosses on the homes lived in, or churches used by, people of color. Such a suggestion would be just plain wrong. The problem was quite visible: it was (and is) called *racism*. Any attempt to claim that the Ku Klux Klan was being "victimized" by an "invisible" ideology, apart from being absurd and offensive, would have had been nothing more than an attempt to get us to avoid a hard examination of racism.<sup>119</sup>

According to Francione, the ideology of animal welfare emerged in the 1800s, is currently subscribed to by most of society, and postulates that animal use is only immoral if it is "inhumane."<sup>120</sup> This ideology, Francione states, also strangely and erroneously posits that a "painless" death is not a negative experience for an animal:

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<sup>116</sup> David Nibert, *Animal Rights/Human Rights: Entanglements of Oppression and Liberation* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2002), 7; see also Robert Garner and Yewande Okuleye, *The Oxford Group and the Emergence of Animal Rights: An Intellectual History* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2021), 66.

<sup>117</sup> Francione, "'Carnism?'"

<sup>118</sup> Ibid; see also Gary L. Francione, "Carnism," YouTube video, 4:41, April 29, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BdV9BDSpvuA>.

<sup>119</sup> Francione, "'Carnism?'"

<sup>120</sup> Ibid; see also Cordeiro-Rodrigues, "Animal Abolitionism and 'Racism without Racists,'" 746-747.

Sentience is a means to the end of continued existence. Sentient beings, by virtue of their existence, have an interest in remaining alive; that is, they prefer, want, or desire to remain alive. Therefore, to say that a sentient being is not harmed by death denies that the being has the very interest that sentience serves to perpetuate.<sup>121</sup>

### 2.6.1 Treating Animals as Property:

Unlike those who adhere to the ideology of animal welfare, abolitionists oppose the killing of animals and the treatment of animals as property.<sup>122</sup> Francione and Charlton write:

Just as in the case of human chattel slavery, if animals are property, *all* of their interests, from the most minor to the most fundamental, can be valued by someone else – a human owner – who has property rights in the animal and who may choose not to value that interest at all and who may ignore that interest.<sup>123</sup>

Thus, abolitionists consider animal welfare reform problematic because it, in Francione’s words, “does nothing to eradicate the property status of animals.”<sup>124</sup> Moreover, abolitionists believe that such reform encourages adherence to nonveganism.<sup>125</sup>

In terms of veganism, abolitionists see it, in the words of Francione and Charlton, “as representing a fundamental principle of justice: it is simply unfair to treat nonhumans as replaceable resources, and to deny them the one right [the right not to be used as property] that we accord all humans irrespective of particular characteristics [such as

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<sup>121</sup> Francione and Garner, *The Animal Rights Debate*, 15-16; see also Francione, “‘Carnism’?”

<sup>122</sup> Francione and Charlton, *Animal Rights*, 12; see also Gary L. Francione, “‘Kicking Animals is WRONG.’ So Is Killing Them,” *Animal Rights: The Abolitionist Approach* (blog), June 25, 2014, <https://www.abolitionistapproach.com/new-welfarist-campaign-dont-kick-animals-just-kill-ethically/>; Francione and Charlton, “Why we must respect the rights of all sentient animals”; and Francione, “‘Carnism’?”

<sup>123</sup> Francione and Charlton, *Animal Rights*, 18.

<sup>124</sup> Gary L. Francione, “The Four Problems of Animal Welfare: In a Nutshell,” *Animal Rights: The Abolitionist Approach* (blog), May 2, 2007, <https://www.abolitionistapproach.com/the-four-problems-of-animal-welfare-in-a-nutshell/>.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

intelligence].”<sup>126</sup> Indeed, although Francione, as aforementioned, views veganism as a lifestyle that is superior to nonveganism from health and ecological standpoints, abolitionists, Francione and Charlton state, “[see] veganism first and foremost as a matter of moral obligation. It is what they *owe* to animals.”<sup>127</sup>

Abolitionists do believe, though, that a person is not obligated to abstain from consuming animal foods if doing so will result in his/her death.<sup>128</sup> Francione and Charlton write: “[the] position that we are arguing for here is [that] *in any situation in which there is really no choice*, animal use would be considered morally acceptable under the conventional rule that we should not impose unnecessary suffering.”<sup>129</sup> Nevertheless, Francione maintains that situations where people have no choice but to consume non-vegan food, which he refers to as “desert island” situations, “are *very rare*.”<sup>130</sup> He also concedes that there might be situations where it is exceedingly hard to obtain plant-based foods.<sup>131</sup> Consuming animal products in such situations, Francione argues, is still wrong – though not as wrong as consuming animal products in circumstances where vegan food is easily obtainable.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Francione and Charlton, *Animal Rights*, 73; see also Charlton and Francione, “Why we must respect the rights of all sentient animals.”

<sup>127</sup> Francione and Charlton, *Animal Rights*, 73.

<sup>128</sup> Bob Fischer, “Is Abolitionism Guilty of Racism? A Reply to Cordeiro-Rodrigues,” *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics* 31, no. 3 (2018): 300-301, <http://0-eds.b.ebscohost.com/mercury.concordia.ca/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=1&sid=c5cf3ebe-0928-4251-914d-f9f92b17dbb0%40sessionmgr103>.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>130</sup> Gary L. Francione, “The Meaning of ‘THE WORLD IS VEGAN! If you want it,’” *Animal Rights: The Abolitionist Approach* (blog), January 28, 2016, <https://www.abolitionistapproach.com/14044-2/>.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*

To provide further context, it will be noted that the abolitionist position is at odds with that of Singer, who practices “flexible veganism” and rejects the idea that veganism is a moral imperative.<sup>133</sup> Colin Tudge also disagrees with the argument that veganism is morally obligatory.<sup>134</sup> His position is based on the Kantian idea that “no ethical principle is really acceptable unless it could in principle be recommended to the whole world.”<sup>135</sup> There is therefore some debate about these issues that readers should engage with, but it is the position of this thesis that CAS is an important perspective to bring forward.

### 2.6.2 The Objectives of the Abolitionist Movement:

Abolitionists endeavor to grow their movement through non-violent education – public speaking, talking to friends and family, etc. – and hope to eventually abolish the property status of animals.<sup>136</sup> Another abolitionist objective is to create a world in which humans leave wild animals alone and do not bring domesticated animals into existence.<sup>137</sup> Francione and Charlton say that the problem with domesticated animals is that they never become independent.<sup>138</sup>

### 2.6.3 “New Welfarists”:

Francione and Charlton characterize People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), Farm Sanctuary, Animal Aid, and Viva! as “new welfarist” organizations.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Gary L. Francione, “Peter Singer and the ‘Luxury’ of Death,” *Animal Rights: The Abolitionist Approach* (blog), March 14, 2007, <https://www.abolitionistapproach.com/peter-singer-the-luxury-of-death/>.

<sup>134</sup> Peter Singer and Jim Mason, *The Ethics of What We Eat: Why Our Food Choices Matter* (Melbourne: Rodale Books, 2006), 229.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> Wrenn, *A Rational Approach to Animal Rights*, 27; Francione and Charlton, *Animal Rights*, 76-78; and Francione and Garner, *The Animal Rights Debate*, 61.

<sup>137</sup> Francione and Charlton, *Animal Rights*, 24; see also Francione, *Animals as Persons*, 13.

<sup>138</sup> Francione and Charlton, *Animal Rights*, 26.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., 37.

New welfarists, according to Francione, support animal welfare reforms but, at the same time, “claim to seek, as a long-term objective at least, the modification of the legal status of animals and perhaps even the eradication of property status and the abolition of animal exploitation.”<sup>140</sup> Chapter 5 incorporates both welfarist and abolitionist vegan perspectives into its analysis.

### 2.7 Newspaper Representation of Vegans and Veganism:

No major study has hitherto focused on US newspaper representation of vegans or veganism.<sup>141</sup> In fact, despite the relevance of the topic, the researcher found only four major studies on newspaper representation of vegans and veganism.<sup>142</sup> These studies are reviewed in the following section (2.7.1-2.7.4).

#### 2.7.1 The British Press (2007):

In 2011, the *British Journal of Sociology* published “Vegaphobia: Derogatory Discourses of veganism and the reproduction of speciesism in UK national newspapers,” by Matthew Cole and Karen Morgan. In this study, Cole and Morgan, using “vegan,” “vegans,” and “veganism” as search terms, searched British national newspaper coverage from 2007 using the online database LexisNexis.<sup>143</sup> The newspapers searched were the

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<sup>140</sup> Francione, *Animals as Persons*, 106-107.

<sup>141</sup> Freeman wrote in 2014 that there was no study of US news that was comparable to Cole and Morgan’s 2011 study of British newspaper coverage of vegans and veganism. See Freeman, “Lisa and Phoebe,” 211.

<sup>142</sup> The researcher found one study, a 2014 MA thesis in anthropology by Sarah E. Mann, which examined only one article about veganism in the NYT and three articles about veganism in *The Huffington Post*. See Sarah E. Mann, “More Than Just A Diet: An Inquiry Into Veganism,” (master’s thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 2014), 54-57, [http://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1021&context=anthro\\_seniortheses](http://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1021&context=anthro_seniortheses).

<sup>143</sup> Matthew Cole and Karen Morgan, “Vegaphobia: derogatory discourses of veganism and the reproduction of speciesism in UK national newspapers,” *The British Journal of Sociology* 62, no. 1 (2011): 137,

*Daily Express, Daily Mail, Daily Star, The Daily Telegraph, Financial Times, The Guardian, The Independent, Mail on Sunday, The Mirror, The News of the World, The Observer, The People, The Sun, The Sunday Express, The Sunday Mirror, The Sunday Telegraph, The Sunday Times, and The Times.*<sup>144</sup>

Cole and Morgan retrieved 397 articles in total and categorized them according to their “overall tone.”<sup>145</sup> “Negative” articles “deployed one or more derogatory discourses, usually featuring one, or a combination, from a routinized set of anti-vegan stereotypes”; “[p]ositive’ articles were those deemed favourable towards vegans or veganism, for example giving glowing reviews of vegan food or providing an explanation of one or more argument for veganism”; and “[n]eutral’ articles mentioned vegans or veganism in passing without evaluative comment.”<sup>146</sup> Cole and Morgan categorized 74.3% (295) of the articles as negative, 20.2% (80) as neutral, and 5.5% (22) as positive.<sup>147</sup> Over 70% of the articles were negative in every newspaper except *The Guardian, Financial Times, The People, and Daily Express.*<sup>148</sup>

Cole and Morgan said that the neutral articles “were almost all examples of products and services ‘suitable for vegans.’”<sup>149</sup> They also said that “overtly neutral” articles actually portrayed veganism as being difficult because “they make clear that special arrangements must be made in order for vegans to be ‘catered for.’”<sup>150</sup> What is more, Cole

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[https://vegstudies.univie.ac.at/fileadmin/user\\_upload/p\\_foodethik/Cole\\_M.2011.Vega\\_phobia\\_derogatory\\_discourses\\_of\\_veganism.pdf](https://vegstudies.univie.ac.at/fileadmin/user_upload/p_foodethik/Cole_M.2011.Vega_phobia_derogatory_discourses_of_veganism.pdf).

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., 138.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid., 137-138.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid., 138-139.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., 138.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., 147.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

and Morgan found that compassion, anti-speciesism, and non-violence – which they identified as foundational vegan values – received almost no attention in the positive articles.<sup>151</sup>

In terms of negative (“vegaphobic”) discourses, Cole and Morgan identified the following six: “Ridiculing veganism,” which was the dominant discourse about veganism in 22% of the 397 articles; “Characterizing veganism as asceticism” (the dominant discourse about veganism in 21% of the articles); “Describing veganism as difficult or impossible to sustain” (13%); “Describing veganism as a fad” (7%); “Characterizing vegans as oversensitive” (6%); and “Characterizing vegans as hostile” (4%).<sup>152</sup>

Cole and Morgan argued that vegaphobic discourses help non-vegans sidestep the moral issues surrounding nonveganism, and that:

Making veganism sound outlandish or difficult, and misrepresenting the motivations of veganism as consumer choice, enables non-vegans to treat veganism as a curiosity, at best, or a dangerous obsession at worst, as in the case of the ‘Vegan Killers’. The disarticulation of veganism from animals’ rights obliterates the anti-speciesist heart of veganism and protects the mainstream omnivorous culture from criticism.<sup>153</sup>

In conclusion, Cole and Morgan suggested that “media vegaphobia” could potentially be undermined or eliminated if vegan academics and NGOs were “to position themselves to newspaper editors and journalists as ‘experts’ or consultants on veganism and the real life experiences of vegans.”<sup>154</sup>

### 2.7.2 Vegans and Veganism in the Australian Press in 2007 and 2012:

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<sup>151</sup> Ibid., 148. Cole and Morgan discussed only one of the positive articles in significant detail – the article by Edward Batha.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., 139.

<sup>153</sup> Cole and Morgan used the term “animal rights” “as a catch-all description of ethical concerns with human uses of nonhuman animals, not as an indication of a particular philosophical position.” See Cole and Morgan, “Vegaphobia,” 149-150.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid., 150.

In November 2014, Andrea Crampton, Helen Masterman-Smith, and Angela T. Ragusa presented a conference paper titled “Reproducing speciesism: a content analysis of Australian media representations of veganism.” In this study, the authors used the online database *Factiva* and the same search terms as Cole and Morgan to search coverage from 2007 and 2012 in *The Australian*, *The Age*, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Canberra Times*, *The Courier Mail*, *The Territorian*, *The West Australian*, *The Advertiser* (Adelaide), and *The Mercury* (Hobart).<sup>155</sup> They also used the same categorizations as Cole and Morgan.<sup>156</sup> Of the 131 articles from 2007, 45% were categorized as negative, 37% as neutral, and 18% as positive.<sup>157</sup> As for the 2012 articles, 45% were negative, 43% were neutral, and 12% were positive.<sup>158</sup> (The percentages for each newspaper were not mentioned.)

The ridiculing, difficult/untenable, asceticism, hostile, fad, and oversensitive discourses were the dominant discourses about veganism/vegans in 43%, 20%, 16%, 13%, 7%, and 2% of the negative 2007 articles, respectively.<sup>159</sup> Amongst the negative 2012 articles, the ridiculing discourse was again the dominant discourse about veganism in the largest percentage of articles (50%), whilst the asceticism, untenable, hostile, fad,

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<sup>155</sup> Helen Masterman-Smith, Angela T. Ragusa, and Andrea Crampton, “Reproducing speciesism: a content analysis of Australian media representations of veganism,” (paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Australian Sociological Association: Challenging Identities, Institutions and Communities, University of South Australia, Adelaide, November 2014), 1-3.  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/274253326\\_Reproducing\\_speciesism\\_a\\_content\\_analysis\\_of\\_Australian\\_media\\_representations\\_of\\_veganism](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/274253326_Reproducing_speciesism_a_content_analysis_of_Australian_media_representations_of_veganism).

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*



and oversensitive discourses ranked second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth, respectively.<sup>160</sup> Crampton et al. identified the ridiculing, oversensitive, fad, and hostile discourses as belonging “to a general discourse of irrationality in which veganism is denigrated as a deviant lifestyle choice.”<sup>161</sup> They categorized the asceticism and un-tenability discourses under a larger discourse as well – a “discourse of impossibility directed at vegan practices.”<sup>162</sup>

Crampton et al. stated that their findings “underscore the traditionally conservative role of the mass media in manufacturing public support for, or blindness to, the corporate sector regardless of the costs to the environment, including its human and other animal species.”<sup>163</sup> They concluded, further, that the negative discourses they uncovered helped the animal exploitation industries, and that “[t]he media remain largely out of touch with, or impervious to, research and policy positions of animal advocacy, health, food security and environmental leaders, who urge a shift towards plant-based diets.”<sup>164</sup>

### 2.7.3 Vegans and Veganism in the British Press between 2008 and 2015:

In 2018, Outi Lundahl of Maastricht University produced “Dynamics of positive deviance in destigmatisation: celebrities and the media in the rise of veganism,” a study that examined the portrayal of veganism between 2008 and 2015 in the *Daily Mail*.<sup>165</sup>

Using the same search terms as Cole and Morgan and Crampton et al., Lundahl retrieved

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<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid. Crampton et al. did not go into much detail about the content of the positive articles.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid., 9-10.

<sup>165</sup> Outi Lundahl, “Dynamics of positive deviance in destigmatisation: celebrities and the media in the rise of veganism,” *Consumption Markets & Culture* 23, no. 3 (2020): 241; 246, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10253866.2018.1512492>.

a total of 1275 articles.<sup>166</sup>

In terms of Lundahl's findings, they differed remarkably from Cole and Morgan's. Indeed, whilst Cole and Morgan categorized 89.1% of the articles that they retrieved from the *Daily Mail* as negative, Lundahl categorized 76.7% of the articles that she retrieved from the *Daily Mail* in 2014 as positive.<sup>167</sup> In addition to categorizing the articles as positive, negative, or neutral, Lundahl identified three specific frames in the coverage: "Veganism as a sign of extremism and moral decay," "Veganism as a celebrity fashion," and "Veganism as a healthy diet."<sup>168</sup> The first frame, according to Lundahl, stigmatized veganism while the third frame destigmatized it.<sup>169</sup>

Between 2012 and 2015, the celebrity fashion frame was the most common frame, followed by the healthy diet frame and the extremism and moral decay frame – in 2014, veganism was framed as a celebrity fashion in 63.2% of the coverage, as a healthy diet in 24% of the coverage, and as a sign of extremism and moral decay in 14.7% of the coverage.<sup>170</sup> Lundahl argued that veganism eventually ended up being depicted as a means to achieve healthiness and weight-loss because "the media, via celebrities, has been able to harness veganism to uphold the ideologies of consumerism and healthism, both of which are linked to the overall neoliberal project."<sup>171</sup>

#### 2.7.4 Vegans and Veganism in the British Press in 2019:

Andrew Drummond of Malmö University analyzed the representation of vegans and veganism in *The Guardian*, *The Daily Mirror*, *The Times*, and *The Sun* in a 2019 MA

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<sup>166</sup> Ibid., 247.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid., 250.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid., 249.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid., 251.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid., 251; 266.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid., 265.

thesis titled “A Thematic Analysis of UK Newspapers’ Presentation of Vegans and Veganism.”<sup>172</sup> Using the electronic news resource site Newsbank (newsbank.com), Drummond employed the same search terms as the three previous studies to search coverage from March and April of 2019.<sup>173</sup> He retrieved 215 articles in total and analyzed them using thematic analysis.<sup>174</sup>

“Affordable,” “Good for human health,” “Good for environment,” “Nutritionally deficient,” “Disgusting,” and “Popular” were some of the “codes” regarding veganism that Drummond identified in the coverage.<sup>175</sup> Each code was categorized under a “theme”: “Aspirational,” “Neutral,” “Beneficial to the planet,” “Unworkable,” “Normal,” “A fad,” “Hostile,” “Unhealthy,” or “Harmful to society.”<sup>176</sup> These themes appeared in 35%, 31%, 18%, 18%, 11%, 10%, 7%, 7%, and 2% of the articles, respectively.<sup>177</sup> As well, each theme was characterized as positive, negative, or neutral.<sup>178</sup>

Overall, codes regarding veganism/vegans appeared 336 times in the sample – 49% of them were positive, 31% were negative, and 20% were neutral.<sup>179</sup> The left-wing newspapers (*The Guardian* and *The Daily Mirror*) contained a greater percentage (58%) of the positive codes than the right-wing newspapers (*The Times* and *The Sun*).<sup>180</sup> Drummond observed that, while the newspapers “frequently referenced veganism’s

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<sup>172</sup> Andrew Drummond, “A Thematic Analysis of UK Newspapers’ Presentation of Vegans and Veganism,” (master’s thesis, Malmö University, 2019), 2-3; 22, <https://muep.mau.se/bitstream/handle/2043/30091/annotated-A%2520Drummond%2520Passed%2520Thesis.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid., 18; 39.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid., 36-37.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid., 39-52.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid., 36-37.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid., 38-39.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid., 22; 38.

popularity, its health benefits, and its environmental justifications,” they did not often focus on the topic of animal welfare.<sup>181</sup>

#### 2.7.5 Summary - Newspaper Representation of Vegans and Veganism:

Cole and Morgan found that the coverage in eighteen British newspapers in 2007 was overwhelmingly negative. As for Crampton et al., they examined nine Australian newspapers and found that the coverage in 2007 and 2012, although more favourable than that studied by Cole and Morgan, was still mostly negative. Moreover, none of the dominant discourses in these studies characterized veganism as a moral obligation or environmental necessity.

The more recent studies on newspaper representation of vegans and veganism had more positive findings than their predecessors. Indeed, Lundahl found the *Daily Mail*'s coverage to be largely positive between 2011 and 2015, while Drummond categorized most of the codes in *The Guardian*, *The Daily Mirror*, *The Times*, and *The Sun* in March and April of 2019 as positive.<sup>182</sup>

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<sup>181</sup> Ibid., 53; see also Abstract.

<sup>182</sup> Lundahl, “Dynamics of positive deviance in destigmatisation,” 250.

### **CHAPTER 3: METHODS**

Newspapers here are viewed as representing a clear, researchable corpus of available textual media coverage that can provide insights into public discourses that may impact the future of veganism. Taking a critical vegan perspective, this thesis explores discourses in two American newspapers to add to the limited literature reviewed in Chapter 2.

#### **3.1 Sources:**

The NYT (online version) and LAT are the focus of this thesis because they are two of America's most significant newspapers. In fact, Freeman states that the NYT "is often used as the sole national paper examined in many media studies due to its popularity and award-winning journalism, as well as its agenda-setting power with political elites and other newspapers."<sup>183</sup> In terms of readership, the NYT has over three million paid digital-only subscribers and is read in all 193 countries that belong to the UN.<sup>184</sup> As for the LAT, it is America's largest metropolitan daily newspaper, with a daily readership of 1.3 million and 2 million on Sunday.<sup>185</sup> As well, both the LAT and NYT are non-tabloid national newspapers. Such newspapers, according to Freeman, "set the bar for journalistic standards of excellence in the profession."<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>183</sup> Freeman, "This Little Piggy Went to Press," 171.

<sup>184</sup> In terms of America's newspapers, the NYT has the third highest circulation while the LAT has the fifth highest. See William Turvill, "Top ten US newspaper circulations: Biggest print titles have lost 30% of sales since 2016 election," *Press Gazette*, October 22, 2020, <https://www.pressgazette.co.uk/top-ten-us-newspaper-circulations-biggest-print-titles-have-lost-30-of-sales-since-2016-election/>. See also Jaclyn Peiser, "New York Times Tops 4 Million Mark in Total Subscribers," *New York Times (Online)*, November 1, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/01/business/media/new-york-times-earnings-subscribers.html>.

<sup>185</sup> "About the Los Angeles Times," *Los Angeles Times*, accessed February 17, 2019, <https://www.latimes.com/about>.

<sup>186</sup> Carrie Packwood Freeman, "This Little Piggy Went to Press: The American News Media's Construction of Animals in Agriculture," (master's thesis, The University of Georgia, 2004), 37, [https://getd.libs.uga.edu/pdfs/freeman\\_carrie\\_p\\_200408\\_ma.pdf](https://getd.libs.uga.edu/pdfs/freeman_carrie_p_200408_ma.pdf).

The researcher chose to study newspapers instead of TV partly because Freeman already analyzed the representation of vegetarianism<sup>187</sup> on American TV. The researcher also anticipated that veganism would receive more attention in newspapers than on TV news programs. Further, Freeman does note that “print news sources typically have the space to go more in-depth than does television, allowing for a richer source of text to analyze.”<sup>188</sup>

This thesis also completed pilot reviews of other US and Canadian publications (e.g., *New York Post* [NYP]), but due to its goal of examining select US newspaper coverage and a desire to limit the scope of this MA project, the NYT and LAT were ultimately selected as the focus of the research. The NYP was excluded as a source partly because of its status as a tabloid newspaper.

### 3.2 Data Collection and Analysis:

To retrieve the data, searches were performed on the online database ProQuest using the three search terms used by the four previous studies. These terms provided confidence that returned searches would at least contain references to veganism and, within the constraints of the quality of the database used, provide a data set of all the articles containing these keywords. Following the example of Cole and Morgan (2011), this study did not use “veg” as a search term, as it would have returned searches such as “vegetable” and “vegetarian.” The returned data was also only textual in nature and a visual analysis of pictures was not completed.

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<sup>187</sup> Freeman analyzed the portrayal of both vegetarianism and veganism. See Freeman, “Lisa and Phoebe,” 202.

<sup>188</sup> Freeman, “This Little Piggy Went to Press” (thesis), 37.

Initially, the researcher planned to analyze a year's worth of coverage in the NYT, LAT, and NYP in order to have a sample that was roughly the same size as Cole and Morgan's. Because 2017 was the most recent complete calendar year when the topic of this thesis was chosen, the coverage from that year was selected for analysis.<sup>189</sup> Ultimately, however, analyzing a year's worth of coverage in three newspapers proved too daunting for the deep read and discourse analysis that the researcher sought to conduct. Thus, only coverage from the second half of 2017 in the NYT and LAT was analyzed.

The LAT and NYT were searched in May and September of 2018, respectively. The specific search that used the term "vegan" produced the same 165 articles (107 in the NYT and 58 in the LAT) as the search that used the term "vegans." The researcher eventually determined, however, that those searches actually produced 105 NYT articles, since two articles had duplicates.<sup>190</sup> As for the search that used the term "veganism," it produced 2 additional articles in the LAT and 14 additional articles in the NYT – though 11 of those articles (all in the NYT) also appeared in the searches that used the other two keywords.<sup>191</sup> As well, one LAT article, "LETTERS; The power of protest," featured two letters to the editor about veganism. The researcher counted each letter to the editor as a

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<sup>189</sup> Again, in this instance, the researcher was following the example of Cole and Morgan. At the outset of their study, 2007 was the most recent complete calendar year. See Cole and Morgan, "Vegaphobia," 137.

<sup>190</sup> "Catalonia, Harvey Weinstein, California: Your Wednesday Briefing" and "California, MacArthur Foundation, World Cup: Your Wednesday Briefing" are nearly duplicates, as are "It's Not the Fault of the Sandwich Shop': Readers Debate David Brooks's Column" and "The Fact is, They Still Went Fishing."

<sup>191</sup> These articles were: "Black Vegans Step Out, for Their Health and Other Causes," "A Healthful Vegan Diet," "Alicia Silverstone's Very Green Beauty Routine," "Correcting a Co-Worker's Grammar: Helpful or Hurtful?" "A Chance to Catch Vegan Tuna," "Good Vegan, Bad Vegan," "How Latham Thomas, Wellness Guru, Spends Her Sundays," and "Vegan Ice Cream Enters a Golden Age."

single article. After taking those letters and the duplicates in the NYT into account, the total number of articles in the sample amounted to 169 – 108 in the NYT and 61 in the LAT.

### 3.2.1 Article Categorization and Removal of Irrelevant Articles:

After being thoroughly read by the researcher, the 169 articles were categorized as “irrelevant,” “relevant,” or “unclear” with reference to the thesis’ research questions. The irrelevant and unclear articles numbered 87 and 7, respectively, and were excluded from the sample. The irrelevant articles did not portray vegans or veganism in any real sense, while the unclear articles did not clearly portray vegans or veganism negatively, neutrally, or positively. The following are examples of irrelevant articles: “Canada Letter: A TIFF Film About Film and an Immigrant’s Story,” “Recent Commercial Real Estate Transactions,” and “A Chance to Catch Vegan Tuna.” The first article mentions in passing that actor Charlie Hunnam was seen at a vegan restaurant in Toronto; the second article tells readers that a vegan soup shop has rented space in a New York City building; and the third article reports that some Whole Foods stores in New York and LA are using Ahimi in vegan nigiri sushi and California rolls.<sup>192</sup>

Unlike Cole and Morgan’s study, this study considered food reviews that did not mention vegans or veganism to be irrelevant, since a review of a particular vegan meal or

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<sup>192</sup> Ian Austen, “Canada Letter: A TIFF Film About Film and an Immigrant’s Story,” *New York Times (Online)*, September 8, 2017, <https://lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fsearch.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F1936646947%3Faccountid%3D10246>; Rosalie R. Radomsky, “Recent Commercial Real Estate Transactions,” *New York Times (Online)*, July 11, 2017, <https://lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fsearch.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F1917760522%3Faccountid%3D10246>; and Florence Fabricant, “A Chance to Catch Vegan Tuna,” *New York Times (Online)*, October 30, 2017, <https://lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F1957328939%3Faccountid%3D10246>.



food item is not the same as an opinion of a vegan diet or lifestyle. As well, recipe articles and restaurant reviews were considered irrelevant and excluded if they did not mention vegans or veganism. In total, 94 articles were excluded from the study while 75 articles were deemed relevant for a deep level of analysis and included.

### 3.2.2 Analysis of Relevant Articles:

This thesis employed the methods of Cole and Morgan to examine the dominant discourses on vegans and veganism in the 75 relevant articles – most of which are news articles, not opinion pieces. Because they took a Foucauldian position, Cole and Morgan viewed discourses “as ‘structured ways of knowing’ which become ‘institutionalized as practices’ (Ransom 1993: 123).”<sup>193</sup> Foucault believed that discourses “produce truths,” that “we cannot exercise power except through the production of truth,” and that new, “counter discourses” can emerge to challenge “dominant truths.”<sup>194</sup> In practice, this method of discourse analysis can make use of a coding frame to examine how each article renders a discourse as “a combination of enunciations describing objects, themes, and practices with regularity,” so that the researcher is seeking to understand how textual practices are maintaining and promoting certain repeated social relationships, in this case about veganism and select newspaper coverage.<sup>195</sup> This discursive approach not only draws on traditional methods of discourse analysis, but also makes reference to

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<sup>193</sup> Cole and Morgan, “Vegaphobia,” 136.

<sup>194</sup> Caroline Ramazanoglu, *Up Against Foucault: Explorations of Some Tensions Between Foucault and Feminism* (London/New York: Routledge, 1993), 19-20.

<sup>195</sup> P. A. Carbó, M. Andrea Vázquez Ahumada, A. D. Caballero, and G. A. Lezama Argüelles, “How do I do Discourse Analysis?” Teaching Discourse Analysis to novice researchers through a study of intimate partner gender violence among migrant women, *Qualitative Social Work*, 15 no. 3 (2016): 363-379, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1473325015617233>.

approaches in Journalism Studies for how published textual news stories (language, typography, layout, etc.) define what is deemed newsworthy about a topic.<sup>196</sup>

As per Cole and Morgan's coding frame, the 75 articles that were considered relevant were first categorized as neutral, positive, or negative. Articles with a negative overall tone towards vegans and or veganism were categorized as representing Cole and Morgan's "derogatory discourses," which feature a set of "anti-vegan stereotypes" such as ridicule, hostility, and fads. Articles with a positive overall tone towards vegans and or veganism were categorized as representing Cole and Morgan's favourable discourses that present one or more argument for veganism. Articles with a neutral overall tone towards vegans and or veganism only mentioned vegans and or veganism in passing without evaluative comment. In only one case, the overall tone of an article towards veganism was judged to be equally negative and positive (in other words, the negative and positive discourses in the article were judged to be equally dominant). This article, titled "Should Shelter Dogs Be Vegan?" was therefore categorized as both negative and positive. The unit of analysis for this coding was the news article as a whole, which allowed the results to be compared to past work on the topic. Because of this negative/positive article, the total number of articles in the sample was considered to be 76 instead of 75.

Further, like Cole and Morgan and Crampton et al., this study identified dominant sub-discourses about vegans and or veganism (e.g. veganism as difficult) in the negative and positive articles through a re-reading of the material. This discursive approach was

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<sup>196</sup> Helen Caple and Monika Bednarek, "Rethinking news values: What a discursive approach can tell us about the construction of news discourse and news photography," *Journalism* 17, no. 4 (2016): 435-455, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884914568078>; see also Brian Paltridge, *Discourse Analysis: An Introduction* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2012).

interpretative in nature and sought to provide a deeper articulation of the dominant discourses in the sample. After all of the dominant sub-discourses in the sample were identified, the researcher determined how many times each sub-discourse was the dominant discourse about vegans/veganism in an article. The number of negative, neutral, and positive articles was calculated as well.

## **CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS**

### *4.1 The Overall Nature of the Sample*

Overall, the sample was found to be 42.1% positive, 30.2% neutral, and 27.6% negative. The LAT sample contains a higher percentage of positive articles than the NYT sample. Table 1 shows the number of negative, positive, and neutral articles in each newspaper, while Table 2 shows how many times each sub-discourse constituted the dominant discourse about vegans/veganism in each newspaper.

July 1, 2017- January 1, 2018	Positive Articles N %	Neutral Articles N %	Negative Articles N %	<b>Total</b> N
NYT	<b>19</b> <b>38.7%</b>	<b>13</b> <b>26.5%</b>	<b>17</b> <b>34.6%</b>	<b>49</b>
LAT	<b>13</b> <b>48.1%</b>	<b>10</b> <b>37%</b>	<b>4</b> <b>14.8%</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b> <b>42.1%</b>	<b>23</b> <b>30.2%</b>	<b>21</b> <b>27.6%</b>	<b>76</b>

**Table 1: The Percentage of Positive, Negative, and Neutral Articles in the Sample.**

The sub-discourses uncovered by this study are listed below. Sub-discourses were not identified in the 23 neutral articles.

- Portraying veganism as healthy (Positive; 17 articles)
- Describing veganism as difficult or impossible to sustain (Negative; 8 articles)

- Portraying vegans and veganism as animal-friendly (Positive; 7 articles)
- Portraying veganism as nutritionally problematic (Negative; 4 articles)
- Portraying veganism as environmentally beneficial (Positive; 4 articles)
- Portraying vegans as unwanted (Negative; 4 articles)
- Characterizing vegans as irrational (Negative; 3 articles)
- Characterizing veganism as generically beneficial (Positive; 2 articles)
- Characterizing vegans as hostile (Negative; 1 article)
- Characterizing vegans as soulless (Negative; 1 article)
- Characterizing veganism as enjoyable (Positive; 1 article)
- Characterizing veganism as fashionable (Positive; 1 article)

**Table 2: The Dominant Sub-Discourses.**

Newspaper	Healthy	Difficult	Animal-Friendly	Nutritionally Problematic	Environ. Beneficial	Unwanted	Irrational	Generically Beneficial	Soulless	Fashionable	Hostile	Enjoyable
<i>NYT</i>	9	5	5	4	2	3	3	2	1	1	1	1
<i>LAT</i>	8	3	2	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

#### 4.2 Positive Discourses

##### 4.2.1 Portraying Veganism as Healthy:

This discourse, which encourages adherence to veganism amongst health conscious individuals, constitutes the dominant discourse about veganism in seventeen articles in total – nine in the NYT and eight in the LAT. Within the coverage, a vegan diet is portrayed as a way to achieve weight loss, improve athletic performance, prevent disease,

ameliorate disease, and maintain one's physical beauty. It is portrayed as being healthy not just for humans, but for dogs as well.

Three articles portray a vegan diet as being aesthetically beneficial. Actress Alicia Silverstone is quoted as saying that her vegan diet has “made a huge difference in my life” in the NYT news article, “Alicia Silverstone’s Very Green Beauty Routine.”<sup>197</sup> That article also says that Silverstone “likes products that are completely natural and vegan,” and that “her vegan diet is the basis of her beauty regimen.”<sup>198</sup> The NYT news article, “Jhené Aiko Talks Vampire Facials and IV Vitamin Drips,” mentions that a vegan diet is part of singer-songwriter Jhené Aiko’s beauty regimen as well.<sup>199</sup> And in the news article titled “Fierce genius on and off the stage,” Charles McNulty describes Denise Gough as a “stunningly attractive actress whose vegan diet and strict self-care regimen have preserved the radiance her character trashed long ago.”<sup>200</sup>

Part of the sample focuses on professional athletes. The LAT news article titled “WIMBLEDON; History is on the line in the women’s final” mentions that Venus Williams, a professional tennis player who has won the Wimbledon championships

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<sup>197</sup> Bee Shapiro, “Alicia Silverstone’s Very Green Beauty Routine,” *New York Times (Online)*, October 31, 2017, <https://0-search-proquest-com.mercury.concordia.ca/docview/1957662131/B83E71DF20054B8EPQ/1?accountid=10246>.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid.

<sup>199</sup> Bee Shapiro, “Jhené Aiko Talks Vampire Facials and IV Vitamin Drips,” *New York Times (Online)*, December 4, 2017, <https://search-proquest-com.lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/docview/1945028550/7B8CC2B92F734087PQ/1?accountid=10246>

<sup>200</sup> Charles McNulty, “Fierce genius on and off the stage; The stars align for Denise Gough, whose brilliant double act comes just in time,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 2, 2017, <https://0-search-proquest-com.mercury.concordia.ca/docview/1970893474/1B2F263D5BCE4DA0PQ/1?accountid=10246>.

numerous times, consumes a raw vegan diet to help alleviate the inflammation and fatigue that she experiences from Sjogren's Syndrome, an autoimmune disease.<sup>201</sup>

Two other LAT articles focus on athletes: "Muddled look at vegan athletes" and "It's not a stretch to say this is Rivers vs. Brady." The first article is a film review that mentions that various athletes, including ultramarathon runner Scott Jurek, explain in the documentary "From the Ground Up" how a vegan diet has helped them perform.<sup>202</sup> The second article, meanwhile, is a news article that intimates that some athletes adopt a vegan diet in order to improve their athleticism. After mentioning that National Football League (NFL) quarterback Tom Brady has published a book about diet and exercise, the article states: "Philip Rivers, the Chargers' quarterback, has a different approach [than Brady] to longevity and peak performance. And he's not going vegan or anything to pull it off. 'Probably not,' Rivers said with a chuckle."<sup>203</sup>

The sample from the NYT focuses on athletes, too. The news article titled "A Brutal Competition, Island to Island, in Sweden" states that Rich Roll, a former 208-pound "couch potato," lost weight and became an ultra-athlete after adopting a vegan diet and

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<sup>201</sup> Sam Farmer, "WIMBLEDON; History is on the line in the women's final; Venus Williams, 37, will try to become the oldest women's Grand Slam champion," *Los Angeles Times*, July 15, 2017, <https://0-search-proquest-com.mercury.concordia.ca/docview/1919040680/B2F8A22922004B72PQ/1?accountid=10246>.

<sup>202</sup> Katie Walsh, Michael Rechtshaffen, Kimber Myers, and Gary Goldstein, "AT THE MOVIES; CAPSULE REVIEWS | DOCUMENTARIES; A voice for sex assault victims," *Los Angeles Times*, December 8, 2017, <https://0-search-proquestcom.mercury.concordia.ca/docview/1973727498/4EA7D8E69FA14AFPQ/1?accountid=10246>.

<sup>203</sup> Dan Woike, "NFL WEEK 8; It's not a stretch to say this is Rivers vs. Brady; Chargers' quarterback still feels the thrill of going against the best, even if he's not quite the new-age workout guy the Patriots' star is," *Los Angeles Times*, October 29, 2017, <https://0-search-proquest-com.mercury.concordia.ca/docview/1956804831/8AB99D3AD61B4B66PQ/1?accountid=10246>.

taking up cycling, running, and swimming at the age of forty.<sup>204</sup> Additionally, the article mentions that Roll inspired Josh LaJaunie, a 32 year-old plumbing contractor, to go vegan, lose over 200 of his 420 pounds, and transform himself into a champion ultra-distance runner.<sup>205</sup> Likewise, it is mentioned that Jahlil Okafor of the New Jersey Nets (National Basketball Association [NBA]) lost weight on a vegan diet in a news article titled “Jahlil Okafor Gets a Second Chance, and Nets Get a Bargain”:

It’s too soon to say how inspired Okafor will be after playing all of 25 minutes in two games for the 76ers this season. But he has been on a vegan diet, dropped 20 pounds and said, of the Nets: “I’m buying into whatever they want me to do. Full-fledge, I’m all in.”<sup>206</sup>

This quote suggests that Okafor’s weight loss and adherence to a vegan diet indicate that he is committed and physically prepared to play for the Nets.

Athletic performance and disease prevention are both themes in “Black Vegans Step Out, for Their Health and Other Causes,” a news article that reports that, partly because of documentaries like “What the Health,” veganism is experiencing a revival in the African American community.<sup>207</sup> Jenné Claiborne, a vegan chef and cooking teacher, is quoted as

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<sup>204</sup> Adam Skolnik, “A Brutal Competition, Island to Island, in Sweden,” *New York Times (Online)*, September 5, 2017, <https://0-search-proquest-com.mercury.concordia.ca/docview/1935566305/5C22411078AE4A7BPQ/1?accountid=10246>.

<sup>205</sup> Ibid.

<sup>206</sup> Harvey Araton, “Jahlil Okafor Gets a Second Chance, and Nets Get a Bargain,” *New York Times (Online)*, December 12, 2017, <https://0-search-proquest-com.mercury.concordia.ca/docview/1975767197/6C0FE0F92D0B49FFPQ/1?accountid=10246>.

<sup>207</sup> The article notes that Rastafarians and the African Hebrew Israelites of Jerusalem have followed a vegan diet for a long time. See Kim Severson, “Black Vegans Step Out, for Their Health and Other Causes,” *New York Times (Online)*, November 28, 2017, <https://0search-proquest-com.mercury.concordia.ca/docview/1969059954/DE05753553F4420FPQ/1?accountid=10246>.



saying: “The food we [African Americans] have been eating for decades and decades has been killing us.”<sup>208</sup> A similar quote comes from Tassili Ma’at, who owns Tassili’s Raw Reality in Atlanta, Georgia: “I acknowledge my customers for being modern-day revolutionaries without picking up a gun or having to throw a grenade or pick up a picket sign and carry it down the street. We are defying the death industry.”<sup>209</sup> The implication, of course, is that “death industry” is a reference to the non-vegan food industry.

Further, the article reports that certain professional African American athletes have adopted vegan diets for athletic purposes.<sup>210</sup> Former NFL linebacker David Carter (nicknamed the 300-Pound Vegan) and NBA player Kyrie Irving are some of the black athletes mentioned.<sup>211</sup> The article also notes that Kip Andersen, the director of “What the Health,” said that the NBA might soon be known as the NVA – the National Vegan Association – because its number of vegan players is so significant.<sup>212</sup> The article reports that hip-hop artists, too, have embraced veganism as a result of health concerns.<sup>213</sup>

Disease prevention is also a theme in a letter to the editor in the NYT titled “Learning Your Alzheimer’s Risk.” Therein, Dan R. Frazier of Santa Fe, New Mexico, expresses disappointment about the lack of focus on the topic of vegetarian/vegan diets in Pagan Kennedy’s NYT article, “Is Alzheimer’s Coming for You?”<sup>214</sup> Frazier cites the following

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<sup>208</sup> Ibid.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid.

<sup>214</sup> Dana R. Frazier, letter to the editor, *New York Times (Online)*, November 24, 2017, <https://0-search->

quote from Dr. Michael Greger: “There is an emerging consensus that ‘what is good for our hearts is also good for our heads,’ because clogging of the arteries inside of the brain with atherosclerotic plaque is thought to play a pivotal role in the development of Alzheimer’s disease.”<sup>215</sup> As well, Frazier writes: “I firmly believe that most cases of Alzheimer’s and other forms of dementia can be avoided through a healthy lifestyle, including getting lots of exercise and eating a healthy plant-centered diet, regardless of what genes fate may have dealt you.”<sup>216</sup>

Some of the articles in the sample do not identify specific health benefits. In the LAT, “5 more women speak against hip-hop mogul,” a news article about Russell Simmons, associates veganism with “wellness”: “Over the last decade, Simmons, the co-founder of record label Def Jam Recordings, has transformed himself into a wellness impresario, releasing instructional yoga videos, publishing books about meditation and veganism, and founding Tantris.”<sup>217</sup> Meanwhile, the news article titled “FOOD & DINING; NEWSFEED” acknowledges that veganism can be healthy, as it informs readers that the California Vegetarian Food Festival in Hollywood will feature a talk on “raising healthy and happy vegan children.”<sup>218</sup>

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[proquestcom.mercury.concordia.ca/docview/1967927816/E69E9DF4D4714B76PQ/1?accountid=10246](https://search-proquest-com.mercury.concordia.ca/docview/1967927816/E69E9DF4D4714B76PQ/1?accountid=10246).

<sup>215</sup> Ibid.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid.

<sup>217</sup> Daniel Miller, Amy Kaufman, and Kim Victoria, “5 more women speak against hip-hop mogul; Def Jam co-founder Russell Simmons denies allegations that range from lewd comments to assault,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 14, 2017, <https://0-search-proquest-com.mercury.concordia.ca/docview/1976341344/5D4E49203A13405EPQ/3?accountid=10246>.

<sup>218</sup> Jenn Harris, “FOOD & DINING; NEWSFEED,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 29, 2017, <https://search-proquest-com.lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/docview/1924187050/2DD1BE89CB0A4D0CPQ/32?accountid=10246>.

“How Latham Thomas, Wellness Guru, Spends Her Sundays,” an NYT news article, presents a vegan diet as being part of the wellness/self-care routine of Latham Thomas, the founder of Mama Glow (a wellness resource for both expecting and new mothers), while the article titled “Weekly Occurrence” (NYT) mentions that columnist Deb Amlen, although not vegan, enjoys eating meatless “for health reasons.”<sup>219</sup> And, in a letter to the editor titled “A Healthful Vegan Diet,” Dr. David L. Katz of Yale University and Dr. Christopher D. Gardner of Stanford University respond to, “Not All Vegan Diets Lead to Healthful Eating,” an NYT article by Jane E. Brody that contends that meeting one’s protein requirements on a vegan diet is challenging.<sup>220</sup> Katz and Gardner write that the “contention that foods must be dutifully combined in a vegan diet to provide the requisite protein for human health is obsolete. All plant foods contain all 20 amino acids, both essential and nonessential.”<sup>221</sup> They add:

There is no more reason to stress the “complementary” choices required of vegan diets than to remind omnivores that they must carefully “combine” their meat with citrus fruit to avoid scurvy. A diet of wholesome foods in a balanced, sensible assembly is the only combining required in either case.<sup>222</sup>

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<sup>219</sup> Shivani Vora, “How Latham Thomas, Wellness Guru, Spends Her Sundays,” *New York Times (Online)*, December 22, 2017, <https://0-search-proquest-com.mercury.concordia.ca/docview/1979475149/38ECE7F799E84D35PQ/3?accountid=10246>; see also Deb Amlen, “Weekly Occurrence,” *New York Times (Online)*, August 13, 2017, <https://lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fsearch.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F1928217961%3Faccountid%3D10246>.

<sup>220</sup> David L. Katz and Christopher D. Gardner, letter to the editor, *New York Times (Online)*, October 17, 2017, <https://0-search-proquest-com.mercury.concordia.ca/docview/1951221012/1DF1E84018A24380PQ/2?accountid=10246>. Brody’s article is also titled “Good Vegan, Bad Vegan.” See Jane E. Brody, “Good Vegan, Bad Vegan,” *New York Times (Online)*, October 2, 2017, <https://0-search-proquestcom.mercury.concordia.ca/docview/1945060727/1090E71E325840A5PQ/1?accountid=10246>.

<sup>221</sup> Katz and Gardner, letter to the editor.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid.

Lastly, two LAT articles, “Your dog should go vegan,” by Karen Dawn, and, “L.A. shelter dogs should go vegan,” by Laura Frisk, claim that a vegan diet is healthy for dogs and call for the veganization of LA’s dog shelters.<sup>223</sup> In her opinion piece, Dawn defends her claim that a vegan diet is healthy for dogs by citing Dr. George Fahey, head of the animal and nutritional sciences laboratories at the University of Illinois, who says that dogs can meet their vitamin, mineral, protein, fat, and carbohydrate requirements by consuming corn and soybeans daily.<sup>224</sup> Additionally, Dawn notes that The Association of American Feed and Control Officials acknowledges that the plant-based dog foods V-Dog and Halo are healthy for dogs.<sup>225</sup> Moreover, Dawn says that her own dog is “thriving” on a vegan diet and no longer suffers from the ear infections that he repeatedly experienced as a non-vegan.<sup>226</sup> Frisk, meanwhile, writes: “Similar to Karen Dawn, my dogs have always been on a vegan diet, and they have all thrived, healthy and strong, well into old age.”<sup>227</sup> This topic – that of feeding dogs a vegan diet – apparently did not appear in any of the samples of the four previous studies on newspaper representation of veganism.

#### 4.2.2 Portraying Vegans and Veganism as Animal-Friendly:

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<sup>223</sup> Karen Dawn, “Your dog should go vegan; The Animal Services Board may switch L.A.’s shelter dogs to plant-based food,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 27, 2017, <https://0-search-proquest-com.mercury.concordia.ca/docview/1980434084/287EE442EE5042EBPQ/3?accountid=10246>; see also Laura Frisk, letter to the editor, *Los Angeles Times*, December 31, 2017, <https://0-search-proquest-com.mercury.concordia.ca/docview/1982545377/D66A81430A24703PQ/2?accountid=10246>.

<sup>224</sup> Dawn, “Your dog should go vegan.”

<sup>225</sup> Ibid.

<sup>226</sup> Ibid.

<sup>227</sup> Frisk, letter to the editor.

This discourse, which portrays vegans and veganism as being compassionate towards animals, is the dominant discourse about vegans and veganism in seven articles in the sample – two in the LAT and five in the NYT. It of course relates to the topics of animal harm, cruelty, and exploitation discussed in Chapter 2.

“California Today: Cleaning Up Fire Damage in Santa Rosa,” a news article published in the NYT, portrays both vegetarians and vegans as being compassionate towards animals (even though it can be argued that vegetarianism lacks compassion towards animals, since dairy cows and chickens are exploited and slaughtered).<sup>228</sup> The article explains that Farm Sanctuary, an American farm and animal rescue organization, hosts a “Celebration for the Turkeys” every November.<sup>229</sup> This celebration consists of giving the sanctuary’s turkeys a meal of pumpkin pie, cranberries, and salad.<sup>230</sup> The article quotes Gene Baur, Farm Sanctuary’s co-founder and president, as saying: “Thanksgiving can be a difficult holiday for vegans and vegetarians, who think it’s cruel to celebrate around the dead body of an animal. This is a celebration where the turkeys are the guests of honor, not the main course.”<sup>231</sup>

A similar NYT news article, “Brokers Who Go Big With Their Closing Gifts,” mentions that real estate broker Jannette Patterson committed to sponsoring Rebecca, a

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<sup>228</sup> Jennifer Medina and Jim Wilson, “California Today: Cleaning Up Fire Damage in Santa Rosa,” *New York Times (Online)*, November 20, 2017, <https://0-search-proquestcom.mercury.concordia.ca/docview/1966082181/A41DD25CFC9949FFPQ/1?acountid=10246>; Gary L. Francione, “Some Comments on Vegetarianism as a ‘Gateway’ to Veganism,” *Animal Rights: The Abolitionist Approach* (blog), August 13, 2009, <https://www.abolitionistapproach.com/some-comments-on-vegetarianism-as-a-gateway-to-veganism/>; and Lisa Kemmerer, “‘Engaged Buddhism in Retreat’ Revisited: A Reply to Barbara Newell’s Response,” in *Sociological Re-Imaginations in & of Universities*, ed. Mohammad H. Tamdgidi (Belmont, MA: Ahead Publishing House, 2009), 224.

<sup>229</sup> Medina and Wilson, “California Today.”

<sup>230</sup> Ibid.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid.

chicken that Woodstock Farm Sanctuary rescued from an industrial farm, as a gift for her “animal-loving” client, television journalist Jane Velez-Mitchell.<sup>232</sup> The sponsorship meant that Patterson would help pay for Rebecca’s food, shelter, and care.<sup>233</sup> Patterson is quoted as saying: “When you’re helping someone through the real estate process you become very close. For me, a closing gift should symbolize the bond you’ve made with your client.”<sup>234</sup> The article explains that Patterson and Velez-Mitchell had bonded “over a shared love of veganism and animal rights activism.”<sup>235</sup> Velez-Mitchell is quoted as follows: “It’s a wonderful feeling to be able to do business with someone and still make the world a better place.”<sup>236</sup>

One subject mentioned in Chapter 2, that of slaughterhouse violence, does appear in this study’s sample, but only in one article: “THE CONTENDERS; CLEAR EYES, BIG HEART.”<sup>237</sup> This LAT news article includes the following quote from South Korean filmmaker Bong Joon Ho, which suggests that nonveganism is revoltingly cruel towards animals while veganism is not:

There’s an expression that the moment we create a slaughterhouse out of glass, everybody in the whole world would become vegan. What the food industry is

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<sup>232</sup> Caroline Biggs, “Brokers Who Go Big With Their Closing Gifts,” *New York Times (Online)*, December 22, 2017, <https://search-proquest-com.lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/docview/1979443538/8B1D45C4FB384FF0PQ/1?accountid=10246>

<sup>233</sup> Ibid.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid.

<sup>237</sup> Gregory Ellwood, “THE CONTENDERS; CLEAR EYES, BIG HEART,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 9, 2017, <https://0-search-proquest-com.mercury.concordia.ca/docview/1961710280/87FB6C3DA7D94B06PQ/1?accountid=10246>.

always trying to do is try to thicken the walls of the slaughterhouse so that nobody can peer inside it.<sup>238</sup>

Nonveganism is also associated with animal cruelty in the NYT news article, “Citing Free speech, A.C.L.U. Sues Washington Metro Over Rejected Ads.” This article explains that the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) sued Washington, D.C.’s metro system because it refused to display a number of advertisements, including one that asked people “to reject animal cruelty.”<sup>239</sup> The advertisement featured a photo of a pig and the following caption: “I’m ME, Not MEAT. See the individual. Go vegan.”<sup>240</sup> In this instance, killing and eating animals is portrayed as cruel, whilst veganism is depicted as a compassionate lifestyle that treats animals as sentient individuals, not as inanimate objects.

In “The Weird Brilliance of Joaquin Phoenix,” also featured in the NYT, concern about animal rights is linked to veganism in the following statement about actor Joaquin Phoenix:

Phoenix is an activist, primarily concerned with animal rights (he’s been a vegan since he was 3) and has supported, among others, PETA, Red Cross and Amnesty International — but how would anyone know this, since he has no social-media presence (no Facebook, no Instagram, no Twitter) to connect with followers and inspire them?”<sup>241</sup>

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<sup>238</sup> Ibid.

<sup>239</sup> Jacey Fortin and Emily Cochrane, “Citing Free speech, A.C.L.U. Sues Washington Metro Over Rejected Ads,” *New York Times (Online)*, August 9, 2017, <https://0-search-proquest.com/mercury.concordia.ca/docview/1927312692/BACB6471223240BFPO/1?accountid=10246>.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid.

<sup>241</sup> Bret Easton Ellis, “The Weird Brilliance of Joaquin Phoenix,” *New York Times Times (Online)*, September 6, 2017, <https://0-search-proquest.com/mercury.concordia.ca/docview/1935904125/9E799CC0C0BE42A4PQ/1?accountid=10246>.

Another NYT news article in which animal rights activism and veganism are linked is, “A Mystery Ball Where the Illuminati Have Cloven Hooves.”<sup>242</sup> This article is about a ball held by Cynthia von Buhler, an illustrator, performance artist, and wildlife rehabilitator, in New York, US.<sup>243</sup> The article explains that the ball, while having an “animal-rights agenda,” was a morality play about animal welfare, genetic manipulation, and veganism.<sup>244</sup> The following excerpt indicates that von Buhler hoped to convince the ball’s attendees to go vegan:

The attendees had to fill out an application that included questions concerning their attitudes about animals and meat, and Ms. von Buhler said she saw a “great disconnect” in that people said they loved their pets but also loved eating meat. She hoped to open a few eyes.<sup>245</sup>

As well, the article mentions that, whilst von Buhler’s guests were served only vegan food, the final message of the play was that all animals “want to be freed from [their] cages.”<sup>246</sup>

Lastly, in a letter to the editor in the LAT titled “A slipperier slope,” Stewart David of Venice, Florida, describes the practice of force-feeding ducks and geese to produce foie gras as “outrageous depravity” and comments:

I applaud the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals’ decision allowing California to enforce its foie gras ban. As a 30-year vegan, I hope this is the beginning of a long and steep slipperier slope. We all draw the line somewhere, and laws curtailing the most egregious cruelties inflicted upon animals have been around for centuries.

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<sup>242</sup> Andy Newman, “A Mystery Ball Where the Illuminati Have Cloven Hooves,” *New York Times (Online)*, August 30, 2017, <https://search-proquest-com.lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/docview/1933714747/C8862A2319904C01PQ/1?accountid=10246>.

<sup>243</sup> Ibid.

<sup>244</sup> Ibid.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid.



Compassion is not finite; we can care about animals and humans simultaneously.<sup>247</sup>

#### 4.2.3 Portraying Veganism as Environmentally Beneficial:

This constitutes the dominant discourse about veganism in only four articles in this study's sample. Moreover, none of the articles in the sample cite the UNEP's 2010 report or "Livestock and Climate Change." Considering the current climate crisis, the sample's lack of focus on veganism's environmentally beneficial status is perhaps this study's most remarkable finding.

Only one article in the sample – "Should Shelter Dogs Be Vegan?" – presents the adoption of a vegan diet as an urgent environmental necessity. This article reports that, according to proponents of the proposal to feed LA's shelter dogs a vegan diet, feeding these dogs a non-vegan diet is ecologically disastrous because it results in the death of more than 31,000 farmed animals yearly.<sup>248</sup> The article includes the following quote from Roger Wolfson, a supporter of said proposal: "This is about the long-term survival of every man, woman and child in this room, and all of the people in our lives."<sup>249</sup> This quote implies that going vegan is necessary in order to ensure human survival.

"Should Shelter Dogs Be Vegan?" contrasts sharply with "How Andy Dunn of Bonobos Tackles His Workday," an NYT news article by Bee Shapiro. The latter article does not portray the adoption of a vegan diet as an urgent environmental necessity; rather,

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<sup>247</sup> Stewart David, letter to the editor, *Los Angeles Times*, September 16, 2017, <https://0-search-proquest.com/mercury.concordia.ca/docview/1940057351/17EC5C62F2B446EPQ/1?accountid=10246>.

<sup>248</sup> Jennifer Medina, "Should Shelter Dogs Be Vegan?" *New York Times (Online)*, December 22, 2017, <https://lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fsearch.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F1979490137%3Faccountid%3D10246>.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid.

it simply indicates that veganism has less of an environmental impact than nonveganism, as it quotes Andy Dunn, chief executive of Bonobos, as saying that his wife “changed to veganism because of its environmental impact.”<sup>250</sup>

As for the LAT sample, in an opinion piece titled “Don’t promote beef-eating,” vegan musician Moby denounces a California bill (AB 243) that, if implemented, would put more money into promoting beef consumption.<sup>251</sup> He writes: “If we’re going to truly address climate change, it’s simply no longer possible to ignore the profound consequences of animal agriculture.”<sup>252</sup> He then notes, among other things, that animal agriculture is estimated to produce more GHGs than all forms of transportation combined and uses a great deal of water.<sup>253</sup> He adds:

It’s been 30 years since I’ve eaten meat, and the way I see it is that with every meal, I have a choice to either cause suffering or prevent it. To choose foods that will protect our planet or foods that will destroy it. So what’s for dinner, if not beef? Some of my favorite choices right now are tomatillo gazpacho with heirloom cherry tomatoes, risotto with asparagus and mint, and vegan spinach ravioli.<sup>254</sup>

The article also notes that Moby opened a vegan restaurant in Silver Lake, California, in 2015.<sup>255</sup>

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<sup>250</sup> Bee Shapiro, “How Andy Dunn of Bonobos Tackles His Workday,” *New York Times (Online)*, December 8, 2017, <https://0-search-proquest-com.mercury.concordia.ca/docview/1974198609/27212B677A64078PQ/1?accountid=10246>.

<sup>251</sup> Moby, “Don’t promote beef-eating,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 11, 2017, <https://search-proquest-com.lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/docview/1917581849/A8D67C69E9B0446DPQ/1?accountid=10246>.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid.

<sup>253</sup> Ibid.

<sup>254</sup> Ibid.

<sup>255</sup> Ibid.

Lastly, the news article titled “From eggless mayo to animal-free meat” focuses on the food company Hampton Creek and its effort to produce and sell “clean meat.”<sup>256</sup> The article, which describes Hampton Creek as an “early darling of environmentally conscious investors,” reports that the company has created lab-cultured chicken using fetal bovine serum but hopes to ultimately produce “meat” made exclusively from plants.<sup>257</sup> Molecular biologist Daan Luining, co-founder of the Cultured Meat Foundation, is quoted in the article as saying that “[m]aking a meat alternative that still relies on an animal product undermines the justification for ‘clean meat’ and is a non-starter for vegans.”<sup>258</sup> The article states that animal farming involves using “costly resources” that are becoming increasingly scarce due to climate change.<sup>259</sup> Further, Hampton Creek’s CEO, John Tetrick, is quoted as saying: “We’re trying to do everything we possibly can to not just go public, but be around 100 years from now and really bring a needed change in the food system.”<sup>260</sup>

#### 4.2.4 Characterizing Veganism as Enjoyable:

This discourse challenges the stereotype that veganism is difficult. It constitutes the dominant discourse about veganism in only one article in the sample: “Vegan Ice Cream Enters a Golden Age.” This NYT news article informs readers that demand for nondairy products has increased substantially and that “[t]he past few years have been a glorious

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<sup>256</sup> Geoffrey Mohan, “From eggless mayo to animal-free meat; Bay Area start-up’s plan to sell chicken flesh cultured in a lab is met with skepticism,” *Los Angeles Times*, September 23, 2017, <https://lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F1941599688%3Faccountid%3D10246>.

<sup>257</sup> Ibid.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid.

<sup>260</sup> Ibid.

time for vegans and others who stay [*sic*] forgo dairy.”<sup>261</sup>

#### 4.2.5 Portraying Veganism as Generically Beneficial:

A discourse of generic benefit, which does not fit directly under issues of health, animal-friendliness, environment, or enjoyment, is the dominant discourse about veganism in two articles in the sample. In the LAT news article “Style; Idea driven by automobiles,” it is explained that designer Vicki von Holzhausen created a fabric, known as Technik-Leather, that is, among other things, vegan and eco-friendly.<sup>262</sup> The article states that Technik-Leather’s vegan status is one of its “benefits” – though it does not explain why.<sup>263</sup> Secondly, in the NYT article “What to Cook This Week,” Sam Sifton provides readers with three recipes, including one for mashed potatoes.<sup>264</sup> He writes that these potatoes “have the added benefit of being vegan.”<sup>265</sup>

#### 4.2.6 Characterizing Veganism as Fashionable:

Lundahl and Drummond both uncovered this discourse in their respective studies.<sup>266</sup> It appears in one news article in this study’s sample: “Hippie Amenities With a High-End

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<sup>261</sup> Melissa Clark, “Vegan Ice Cream Enters a Golden Age,” *New York Times (Online)*, July 21, 2017, <https://lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fsearch.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F1921230133%3Faccountid%3D10246>.

<sup>262</sup> Sari Anne Tuschman, “Style; Idea driven by automobiles; Vicki von Holzhausen designed for carmakers. From them comes a fabric for her accessories line,” *Los Angeles Times*, September 17, 2017, <https://search-proquest-com.lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/docview/1939403865/679BC8043ED24E2DPO/43?accountid=10246>.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid.

<sup>264</sup> Sam Sifton, “What to Cook This Week,” *New York Times (Online)*, November 12, 2017, <https://lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fsearch.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F1962766656%3Faccountid%3D10246>.

<sup>265</sup> Ibid.

<sup>266</sup> Lundahl, “Dynamics of positive deviance in destigmatisation,” 243; see also Drummond, “A Thematic Analysis of UK Newspapers’ Presentation of Vegans and Veganism,” 36.

Twist.” Therein, Kim Velsey of the NYT writes that veganism, Waldorf schools, doulas, and healing crystals have become fashionable.<sup>267</sup>

### 4.3 Negative Discourses

#### 4.3.1 Describing Veganism as Difficult or Impossible to Sustain:

In their 2011 study, Cole and Morgan wrote: “The ‘difficulty’ of veganism in newspaper articles typically boils down to the ridiculing of vegans’ food as bland, unsatisfying, or impossible to obtain.”<sup>268</sup> For instance, one article from the *Sunday Times* stated: “She describes Dennis as a ‘very philosophical, deep thinking person’ rather than a new age type, but he is a vegan, unlike her – she still cannot resist occasional dairy products.”<sup>269</sup> According to Cole and Morgan, such comments “reassure omnivorous readers that veganism is doomed to failure, and that they are not to feel guilty for not attempting it.”<sup>270</sup>

In eight articles in this study’s sample, the dominant discourse about veganism portrays it as being difficult to sustain. Vegan food is never described in the sample as being impossible to obtain, but a vegan diet is indeed portrayed as unsatisfying – or at least not as satisfying as a non-vegan diet. In fact, in a letter to the editor in the LAT, Carolyn Gill suggests that a vegan diet is so physically unsatisfying that a dog would rather have a shorter life that involved being fed a non-vegan diet than a longer life that involved being fed a vegan diet:

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<sup>267</sup> Kim Velsey, “Hippie Amenities With a High-End Twist,” *New York Times (Online)*, August 18, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/18/realestate/hippie-amenities-with-a-high-end-twist.html>.

<sup>268</sup> Cole and Morgan, “Vegaphobia,” 142.

<sup>269</sup> Sarah Baxter, Washington. “Essex girl fills White House race with lurve,” *Sunday Times*, May 20, 2007, <https://lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fsearch.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F316626849%3Faccountid%3D10246>; see also Cole and Morgan, “Vegaphobia,” 143.

<sup>270</sup> Cole and Morgan, “Vegaphobia,” 143.

Dawn [Karen] is free to deprive herself of the sensory pleasures of a more varied diet by practicing veganism. But until my dogs turn down a piece of steak in favor of a chunk of sweet potato, I'm keeping them on a diet that includes meat products. And while her dog Paula Pitbull may have lived to be 17 on a vegan diet, did she enjoy it? Or would she gladly have given up a couple of those years for the occasional cheeseburger?<sup>271</sup>

Likewise, in the news article, "Silver linings are his forte," playwright Paul Rudnick suggests that being vegan requires a lot of willpower and that vegan food is therefore inferior to non-vegan food:

We have some cast members that are still trying to convince me to eat fruits and vegetables and gluten-free whatever. I am their ultimate obstacle, and I will win. I like to tempt them right back and bring them cookies. If you put a cookie a few inches away from the most strict vegan, they will eat it. No one has that kind of willpower.<sup>272</sup>

Meanwhile, in the restaurant news article titled "Meals by Genet," the LAT's restaurant critic Jonathan Gold reports that chef Genet Agonafer no longer eats her famous chicken stew because she has become vegan.<sup>273</sup> Although Gold says that Agonafer's vegetable dishes are appetizing, he also says that he "would be devastated" if he had to stop eating her chicken stew.<sup>274</sup>

Articles in the sample from the NYT are similar. The following excerpt from the news article "How Much Protein Do We Need?" states that meeting one's protein requirements

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<sup>271</sup> Carolyn Gill, letter to the editor, *Los Angeles Times*, December 31, 2017, <https://0-search-proquest.com.mercury.concordia.ca/docview/1982545377/B6E050AF1AC248F2PQ/1?accountid=10246>.

<sup>272</sup> Margaret Gray, "Silver linings are his forte; Paul Rudnick looks on the bright, yet absurd, side of life in 'Big Night' and beyond," *Los Angeles Times*, September 27, 2017, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1943467010?accountid=10246>.

<sup>273</sup> Jonathan Gold, "JONATHAN GOLD'S 101 BEST RESTAURANTS 2017; 60. Meals by Genet," *Los Angeles Times*, October 29, 2017, <https://search-proquest-com.lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/central/docview/1956805297/327E15C59D94B1BPQ/4?accountid=10246>.

<sup>274</sup> Ibid.

on a vegan diet is easy, but the inclusion of the word “even” could be seen as qualifying the statement: “Even on a vegan diet people can easily get 60 to 80 grams of protein throughout the day from foods like beans, legumes, nuts, broccoli and whole grains.”<sup>275</sup>

In “Weather Channel Goes Into Overdrive Covering Back-to-Back Hurricanes,” veganism is presented as a potential, albeit unappealing, solution to the climate crisis. First, the article explains that the Weather Channel abstains from using the term “climate change” often because it does not want to antagonize its conservative viewers.<sup>276</sup> Dave Shull, the channel’s chief executive and a Republican, is quoted as saying: “I believe in climate change, and I believe it’s man-made. But I’m not a big fan of the term. It’s been politicized.”<sup>277</sup> The article goes on to quote Nora Zimmet, the senior vice president of programming for the Weather Channel, who suggests that people find veganism unappealing: “We try to find ways to educate people without isolating people. To show it through science is less alienating than saying that everyone needs to become a vegan or methane is going to kill us all.”<sup>278</sup>

Some of the NYT’s coverage reinforces what Cole and Morgan refer to as “[the stereotype] of the hypocritical vegan who is vulnerable to the temptations of nonhuman

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<sup>275</sup> Sophie Egan, “How Much Protein Do We Need?” *New York Times (Online)*, July 28, 2017, <https://0-search-proquest-com.mercury.concordia.ca/docview/1923952366/D0003E0B106B4FF8PQ/157?accountid=10246>.

<sup>276</sup> David Gelles, “Weather Channel Goes Into Overdrive Covering Back-to-Back Hurricanes,” *New York Times (Online)*, September 9, 2017, <https://search-proquest-com.lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/docview/1936857221/AF9DE96313A24499PQ/1?accountid=10246>

<sup>277</sup> Ibid.

<sup>278</sup> Ibid.

animals' flesh."<sup>279</sup> In the news article titled "Venus Williams Loves Museums, Vegan Food and Late Nights," it is mentioned that Venus Williams self-identifies as a "cheating vegan" because she occasionally succumbs to cravings for non-vegan food, while the news article, "The Fantastical Adventures of Fabulous Flournoy" notes that Fabulous Flournoy, a player/coach in the British Basketball League, went back to eating animals after following a vegan diet for eight months.<sup>280</sup> And in the news article, "Recovery, Russell Brand Style," it is stated that comedian Russell Brand sometimes "lapses" from his vegan diet by eating eggs.<sup>281</sup>

To conclude this section, it should be noted that Cole and Morgan cited research indicating that vegans, "especially those motivated by animal rights, find their diets aesthetically preferable and no hardship."<sup>282</sup> It should also be noted that, according to ethical veganism, even if one enjoys consuming animal products and generally dislikes vegan food, that cannot be used as a moral justification for adhering to nonveganism.<sup>283</sup> In their book chapter titled "A Moral Argument for Veganism," Dan Hooley and Nathan Nobis write: "That an action produces pleasure never, in itself, justifies it morally. All

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<sup>279</sup> Cole and Morgan, "Vegaphobia," 144.

<sup>280</sup> Shivani Vora, "Venus Williams Loves Museums, Vegan Food and Late Nights," *New York Times (Online)*, August 25, 2017, <https://0-search-proquest-com.mercury.concordia.ca/docview/1932228148/9815004EC7A4DB3PQ/14?accountid=10246>; and Scott Cacciola, "The Fantastical Adventures of Fabulous Flournoy," *New York Times (Online)*, December 26, 2017, <https://search-proquest-com.lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/docview/1980233908/E8432730E31A4E83PQ/1?accountid=10246>.

<sup>281</sup> Judith Newman, "Recovery, Russell Brand Style," *New York Times (Online)*, October 16, 2017, <https://0-search-proquest-com.mercury.concordia.ca/docview/1951254248/F68B4B99CD7A4852PQ/2?accountid=10246>.

<sup>282</sup> Cole and Morgan, "Vegaphobia," 141.

<sup>283</sup> Hooley and Nobis, "A Moral Argument for Veganism," 98.



sorts of historical and contemporary examples with human beings confirm this. That we are deprived of some pleasure never, in itself, morally justifies a harmful behaviour.”<sup>284</sup>

#### 4.3.2 Portraying Veganism as Nutritionally Problematic:

This constitutes the dominant discourse about veganism in four articles (all from the NYT) in the sample and presents a vegan diet as being nutritionally insufficient or risky. Drummond, Lundahl, and Crampton et al. uncovered this discourse in their respective samples.<sup>285</sup> For instance, Lundahl cited the following quote from a *Daily Mail* article:

Earlier this month, Glasgow’s Royal Hospital for Sick Children reported a 12-year-old girl with a severe form of rickets. Her parents, “well-known figures in Glasgow’s vegan community,” had unwittingly starved her of necessary nutrients found in fish and meat, causing her to develop the bone-wasting disease usually associated with 19th century slums.<sup>286</sup>

As for this study’s findings, in the news article titled “How Ruby Rose Achieves a Unicorn Effect,” actress Ruby Rose self-identifies as an “on-and-off vegan” and claims that eating fish is necessary for the brain.<sup>287</sup> To provide context, it will be noted that Rose is not the only celebrity to have recently associated good brain health with fish consumption. In August 2020, former vegan Miley Cyrus claimed that she started eating fish because her brain “wasn’t functioning properly.”<sup>288</sup>

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<sup>284</sup> Ibid.

<sup>285</sup> Drummond, “A Thematic Analysis of UK Newspapers’ Presentation of Vegans and Veganism,” 35; Lundahl, “Dynamics of positive deviance in destigmatisation,” 253; and Crampton et al., “Reproducing speciesism,” 5.

<sup>286</sup> Lundahl, “Dynamics of positive deviance in destigmatisation,” 253.

<sup>287</sup> Bee Shapiro, “How Ruby Rose Achieves a Unicorn Effect,” *New York Times (Online)*, December 4, 2017, <https://search-proquest-com.lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/central/docview/1971623943/DF7D8EBF9B604DD4PQ/1?accountid=10246>.

<sup>288</sup> “My brain wasn’t functioning properly: Miley Cyrus on why she quit vegan diet,” *The Indian Express*, September 20, 2020, <https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/health/miley-cyrus-vegan-diet-health-problems-6582878/>.

Of course, the claim that a vegan diet is unhealthy is not supported by the AND. One article in the sample, “Word + Quiz: anemia,” does mention that the AND considers an appropriately planned vegan diet to be healthy for pregnant women.<sup>289</sup> Nevertheless, the article focuses mainly on the health risks of said diet. It states that pregnant vegan women “may be at risk for deficiencies in certain nutrients, especially iron and vitamin B12.”<sup>290</sup> Further, the article says that iron deficiencies can cause anemia, which, according to a maternal-fetal medicine specialist at the University of Texas, “increases the risk of having a low birthweight baby, and increases the risk of preterm labor and delivery.”<sup>291</sup>

In the news article, “Good Vegan, Bad Vegan,” Jane E. Brody claims that, while it is easy for vegetarians who consume dairy and eggs to obtain “quality protein,” “Those choosing a strict vegan diet — one devoid of all foods from animals — face a greater challenge because the protein in most plants is not complete and must be balanced by consuming complementary sources, like beans and grains.”<sup>292</sup>

In addition to portraying a vegan diet as being unhealthy for humans, the coverage portrays said diet as being unhealthy for dogs. “Should Shelter Dogs Be Vegan?” reports that LA’s veterinarians and others in the “animal protection world” are skeptical about the idea of veganizing the city’s public dog shelters.<sup>293</sup> Jeremy Prupas, the chief veterinarian for the Los Angeles Department of Animal Services, is quoted as saying that the people he consulted, including a shelter medicine specialist and a veterinary toxicologist, all

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<sup>289</sup> “Word + Quiz: anemia,” *New York Times (Online)*, September 5, 2017, <https://search-proquest-com.lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/central/docview/1935104153/3521403180894E6CPQ/1?accountid=10246>.

<sup>290</sup> Ibid.

<sup>291</sup> Ibid.

<sup>292</sup> Brody, “Good Vegan, Bad Vegan.”

<sup>293</sup> Medina, “Should Shelter Dogs Be Vegan?”

believe that it would be unwise to veganize the shelters.<sup>294</sup> The article ends by noting that Madeline Bernstein, the president of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Los Angeles, says that it would be hard to keep shelter dogs healthy if they were vegan, as they would probably often have diarrhea.<sup>295</sup>

#### 4.3.3 Portraying Vegans as Unwanted:

This constitutes the dominant discourse about vegans in four articles in this study's sample. In an NYT news article titled "An Algorithm Isn't Always the Answer," Maris Kreizman promotes the stereotype that vegans are unattractive when she writes: "I was absolutely miserable dating appropriate-age marketing associates who lived near me. I always wanted to be at home reading instead. But I did find a weird joy in debating hypotheticals with myself: Could I date a vegan? I guess, if pressed."<sup>296</sup>

In another NYT news article, "Thanksgiving: Time of Thanks and Tofu," Philip Galanes gives advice to "Tom," who explains that his wife "makes not-so-subtle swipes at the table about the extra work" she has to do in order to provide her vegan step-son with a vegan meal.<sup>297</sup> Similarly, in the LAT cooking article, "THANKSGIVING; From our homes to yours," Jonathan Gold suggests that having to cook for vegans is annoying, as he writes that, during Thanksgiving, "We will resign ourselves to making half the

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<sup>294</sup> Ibid.

<sup>295</sup> Ibid.

<sup>296</sup> Maris Kreizman, "An Algorithm Isn't Always the Answer," *New York Times (Online)*, November 24, 2017, <https://0-search-proquest-com.mercury.concordia.ca/docview/1967870628/856CB890224042DBPQ/1?accountid=10246>. Wrenn states that vegans are stereotyped as being unattractive. See Wrenn, *A Rational Approach to Animal Rights*, 102.

<sup>297</sup> Philip Galanes, "Correcting a Co-worker's Grammar: Helpful or Hurtful?" *New York Times (Online)*, November 23, 2017, <https://0-search-proquest-com.mercury.concordia.ca/docview/1967423077/D1161C78F584F81PQ/21?accountid=10246>.

Brussels sprouts vegan because that's how some of the family rolls.”<sup>298</sup> Lastly, the opinion piece titled “A Feminist Defense of Bridezillas” suggests that finding wedding caterers who can cater to vegans is challenging and stressful.<sup>299</sup> After noting that the average wedding costs roughly \$35, 329, the article states:

Turning that budget into a multipart, multihour experience is a job not unlike being the C.E.O. of a small company: The person in charge has to set the vision, crosscheck the delightful details to ensure they're not featured on blogs about “wedding trends that are so last year,” find caterers who will leave neither the Whole 30 crowd nor the newly minted vegans starving, and ensure that it's all executed on time and with panache.<sup>300</sup>

The kind of negative vegan stereotype that these articles reinforce is discussed in “Stop Mocking Vegans,” a 2019 NYT opinion piece by Farhad Hanjoo (an admitted non-vegan).<sup>301</sup> Hanjoo comments: “Vegans are constantly tarred with the suggestion that they are unfun – they're asked whether oral sex is vegan, or accused of ruining weddings and birthday dinners with their outlandish preferences.”<sup>302</sup>

#### 4.3.4 Portraying Vegans as Irrational:

This discourse appears in three articles in this study's sample (all in the NYT): “To Stay Sane, Read More Celebrity Gossip,” “Simon Schama: By the Book,” and “Netflix and Spotify Ask: Can Data Mining Make for Cute Ads?” The first article, which is an

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<sup>298</sup> Jonathan Gold, “THANKSGIVING; From our homes to yours; Barbecued bird is not so difficult The unexpected dish that calls for seconds,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 11, 2017, <https://lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fsearch.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F1962536737%3Faccountid%3D10246>.

<sup>299</sup> Kelsey McKinney, “A Feminist Defense of Bridezillas,” *New York Times (Online)*, August 5, 2017, <https://lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F1926226826%3Faccountid%3D10246>.

<sup>300</sup> Ibid.

<sup>301</sup> Farhad Hanjoo, “Stop Mocking Vegans,” *New York Times (Online)*, August 28, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/28/opinion/vegan-food.html>.

<sup>302</sup> Ibid.

opinion piece by Julie Klam, suggests that a vegan diet is causing actor Charlie Sheen to lose his sanity, as it states: “Apparently Charlie Sheen is ‘going nuts’ on a vegan diet.”<sup>303</sup> This feeds into the stereotype of the “crazy vegan” – a stereotype that was also promoted in *The Washington Times* in 2017.<sup>304</sup>

In the second article, which is an unauthored news article, the historian Simon Schama cites “War and Turpentine” as the last great book that he has read.<sup>305</sup> He also promotes the stereotype of the oversensitive vegan by implying that vegans cannot handle descriptions of violence: “If you think you’ve had enough of the muddy gore of Flanders Fields, believe me you haven’t, not until you’ve read this book. Warning: not for vegans.”<sup>306</sup> The third article reinforces the oversensitive stereotype as well, as it implicitly identifies vegans as “snowflakes.”<sup>307</sup> In their study, Cole and Morgan found that the oversensitive discourse usually took the form of “weak jokes at the expense of vegans” – for example, one quote from *The Guardian* was: “[. . .] looks about as comfortable as a vegan in an abattoir.”<sup>308</sup>

#### 4.3.5 Characterizing Vegans as Hostile:

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<sup>303</sup> Julie Klam, “To Stay Sane, Read More Celebrity Gossip,” *New York Times (Online)*, August 11, 2017, <https://0-search-proquest-com.mercury.concordia.ca/docview/1927899436/5FF4330FE808413EPQ/1?accountid=10246>.

<sup>304</sup> Rick Berman, “Is veganism a mental disorder? Vitamin deficiencies can lead to psychiatric ailments,” *The Washington Times*, January 16, 2017, <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2017/jan/16/is-veganism-a-mental-disorder/>.

<sup>305</sup> “Simon Schama: By the Book,” *New York Times (Online)*, October 19, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/19/books/review/simon-schama-by-the-book.html?partner=bloomberg>.

<sup>306</sup> Ibid.

<sup>307</sup> Sapna Maheshwari, “Netflix and Spotify Ask: Can Data Mining Make for Cute Ads?” *New York Times (Online)*, December 17, 2017, <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1977666880?accountid=10246>.

<sup>308</sup> Cole and Morgan, “Vegaphobia,” 145.

Cole and Morgan stated that examples of the hostile discourse in their sample “ranged from the milder ‘outspoken vegan’ (The *Sun* 2007a) through ‘militant vegan’ (*The Times: Times2* 2007a: 6) to the outrageous ‘vegan terrorists’ (*The Times* 2007b: 12).”<sup>309</sup> In this study’s sample, vegans are never identified as “terrorists,” but the term “militant vegan” is used in an opinion piece – “I’m a Lesbian Who Hates Cats. I’m Going to Die Alone” – by Krista Burton.<sup>310</sup> In this NYT article, Burton says that one type of person she is not interested in being in a relationship with is a “militant vegan.”<sup>311</sup>

#### 4.3.6 Characterizing Vegans as Soulless:

This discourse was apparently not found in previous research. It appears in only one article in this study’s sample: “Still Processing: The Transformation of Dave Chappelle.” This NYT article features a discussion between journalist Wesley Morris and writer Jenna Wortham about comedian Dave Chappelle.<sup>312</sup> At one point, Morris associates veganism with soullessness:

You know what? I feel like a lot of us are Wayne Brady in that we are perceived as being these... vegan, vegetable broth, no soul having black people, and maybe it is true. I mean, there are obvious examples of people we still think have that kind of blackness.<sup>313</sup>

#### 4.4 Neutral Articles:

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<sup>309</sup> Ibid., 146.

<sup>310</sup> Krista Burton, “I’m a Lesbian Who Hates Cats. I’m Going to Die Alone,” *New York Times (Online)*, November 3, 2017, [https://search-proquest-com.lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/central/docview/1959293717/ABED7BF7DBCF4914PQ/1?account\\_id=10246](https://search-proquest-com.lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/central/docview/1959293717/ABED7BF7DBCF4914PQ/1?account_id=10246).

<sup>311</sup> Ibid.

<sup>312</sup> Wesley Morris and Jenna Wortham, “Still Processing: The Transformation of Dave Chappelle,” *New York Times (Online)*, August 31, 2017, [https://search-proquest-com.lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/central/docview/1933849380/B83C35A7628F4D5APQ/107?account\\_id=10246](https://search-proquest-com.lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/central/docview/1933849380/B83C35A7628F4D5APQ/107?account_id=10246).

<sup>313</sup> Ibid.

The 23 neutral articles in the sample deal with various subjects, such as travel, restaurants, and cooking. At the end of his NYT cooking article “Grilled Cheese Game Strong,” Sam Sifton asks his readers to read Kim Severson’s article about black veganism – “Black Vegans Step Out, for Their Health and Other Causes.”<sup>314</sup> Neither vegans nor veganism is mentioned at any other point in Sifton’s article. Another cooking article, “HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE; FOR THE FOODIE; SUCH GOOD TASTE” (LAT), states that lots of vegans will not consume sugar that is made using animal bone char.<sup>315</sup>

In the NYT article, “A Thanksgiving Casserole for Everyone at the Table,” Melissa Clark provides a recipe for wild rice and mushroom casserole, a dish that she thinks “anyone,” including vegans, can eat for Thanksgiving dinner.<sup>316</sup> Similarly, “Thanksgiving treats that won’t ruin a diet” (LAT) suggests food products for Thanksgiving gatherings attended by vegans, while “A Guide to All Things Thanksgiving” (NYT) tells readers that NYT Cooking has vegan Thanksgiving recipes in case they have vegan guests for the holiday.<sup>317</sup> Although not focused on Thanksgiving, the articles, “What to Cook This

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<sup>314</sup> Sam Sifton, “Grilled Cheese Game Strong,” *New York Times (Online)*, November 29, 2017, <https://lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F1969946690%3Faccountid%3D10246>.

<sup>315</sup> Noelle Carter, “HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE; FOR THE FOODIE; SUCH GOOD TASTE,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 5, 2017, <https://lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F1959895864%3Faccountid%3D10246>.

<sup>316</sup> Melissa Clark, “A Thanksgiving Casserole for Everyone at the Table,” *New York Times (Online)*, November 10, 2017, <https://lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F1962308123%3Faccountid%3D10246>.

<sup>317</sup> Kavita Daswani, “Thanksgiving treats that won’t ruin a diet,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 18, 2017, <https://lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F1965536092%3Faccountid%3D10246>; see also Justin Bank, “A Guide to All Things Thanksgiving,” *New York Times (Online)*, November 20, 2017,

Weekend” (NYT), “How to Feed Your Summer Crowd Without Going Crazy” (NYT), and “Dump the junk with good-for-you BBQ treats” (LAT) suggest foods that can be served to both vegans and non-vegans.<sup>318</sup> The NYT article, “My No-Good, Very Bad Dinner Party,” does not give cooking advice, but it does explain that Sadie Stein was able to accommodate a vegan guest at a dinner party that she hosted.<sup>319</sup>

Another food-related NYT article, “How to Tell Google That Meat Is Off the Menu,” informs readers that vegans, vegetarians, and people who abstain from consuming pork can find recipes for themselves by using a Google app, while “Ready for One’s Star Turn,” an article published in the NYT, mentions that vegans and vegetarians can eat a vegan version of pulled pork that is made from jackfruit.<sup>320</sup>

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<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/20/smarter-living/thanksgiving-guide.html?partner=bloomberg>.

<sup>318</sup> Julia Moskin, “What to Cook This Weekend,” *New York Times (Online)*, August 18, 2017, <https://lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F1929750269%3Faccountid%3D10246>; see also Jennifer Steinhauer, “How to Feed Your Summer Crowd Without Going Crazy,” *New York Times (Online)*, July 10, 2017, <https://lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F1917286263%3Faccountid%3D10246>; and Kavita Daswani, “Dump the junk with good-for-you BBQ treats,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 15, 2017, <https://lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F1919040506%3Faccountid%3D10246>.

<sup>319</sup> Sadie Stein, “My No-Good, Very Bad Dinner Party,” *New York Times (Online)*, October 26, 2017, <https://lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F1955424091%3Faccountid%3D10246>.

<sup>320</sup> J.D. Biersdorfer, “How to Tell Google That Meat Is Off the Menu,” *New York Times (Online)*, December 25, 2017, <https://lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fsearch.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F1979998495%3Faccountid%3D10246>; see also Deb Amlen, “Ready for One’s Star Turn,” *New York Times (Online)*, September 3, 2017, <https://lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F1934775727%3Faccountid%3D10246>.



In terms of travel articles, the NYT news article titled “A \$1,000 Day in Cape Town for \$100” notes that a restaurant in the Twelve Apostles hotel in Cape Town, South Africa, can accommodate vegans, while “BEFORE YOU GO; NEED TO KNOW,” an LAT travel news article, reports that vegans who vacation on Oceania Cruises now have access to “an extensive vegan menu.”<sup>321</sup>

The lone beauty article in the neutral category, “HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE; FOR THE FASHION FORWARD,” informs readers that they “may be pleased to know” that “Sex Kitten Eyeliner” is vegan.<sup>322</sup> Meanwhile, in the lone film article in said category, “THE YEAR IN REVIEW,” author Jen Yamato writes: “But how would you grade 2017 on the whole? Can movies effect real social change? How many cinephiles went vegan because of ‘Okja?’ How close did Hollywood come to ‘solving’ #OscarsSoWhite?”<sup>323</sup> The article, however, never says why “Okja” would drive people to veganism. Yamato never discusses the content of that movie, and she never mentions veganism in the article again.

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<sup>321</sup> Lucas Peterson, “A \$1,000 Day in Cape Town for \$100,” *New York Times (Online)*, November 8, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/08/travel/cape-town-budget.html?partner=bloomberg>; see also Mary Forgione, “BEFORE YOU GO; NEED TO KNOW,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 27, 2017, <https://lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F1932524777%3Faccountid%3D10246>.

<sup>322</sup> Alice Short, “HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE; FOR THE FASHION FORWARD,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 5, 2017, <https://lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F1959896145%3Faccountid%3D10246>.

<sup>323</sup> Tre’vell Anderson and Jen Yamato, “THE YEAR IN REVIEW; A WORK IN PROGRESS,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 17, 2017, <https://search-proquest-com.lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/docview/1977621193/9126F1EB138848B1PQ/1?accountid=10246>.

The LAT news article, “9th Circuit panel upholds state’s ban on foie gras,” states that vegans would “cheer the end of bacon and any other meat,” but it does not explain why.<sup>324</sup> Likewise, “U.K.’s New 10 Note Gets a Fresh Face: Jane Austen,” a news article featured in the NYT, simply reports that vegans are unhappy about the fact that the Bank of England has produced bills made from animal fat – the article does not explain the reason(s) for vegans’ opposition to the Bank’s use of said fat.<sup>325</sup> Another UK related news article in the NYT, “Jeremy Corbyn’s Rise From Political Dinosaur to Potential Leader,” states that British vegetarian politician Jeremy Corbyn has increased his consumption of vegan food but is “apparently” not going vegan.<sup>326</sup>

One of the only restaurant news articles in the sample, “Patisserie Chanson’s Dessert Bar Opens in Flatiron District,” featured in the NYT, claims that Moby is responsible for Ravi DeRossi’s adoption of a vegan diet.<sup>327</sup> The article does not explain the specific reason(s) for DeRossi’s dietary change. Another restaurant news article, “Where Stinky Tofu Is at Its Malodorous Best” (NYT), mentions that a restaurant in Taiwan, Dai Family

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<sup>324</sup> Maura Dolan, Jenn Harris, and Geoffrey Mohan, “9th Circuit panel upholds state’s ban on foie gras,” *Los Angeles Times*, September 16, 2017, <https://lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F1939172660%3Faccountid%3D10246>.

<sup>325</sup> Chad Brady, “U.K.’s New 10 Note Gets a Fresh Face: Jane Austen,” *New York Times (Online)*, July 18, 2017, <https://search-proquest-com.lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/printviewfile?accountid=10246>.

<sup>326</sup> Stephen Castle, “Jeremy Corbyn’s Rise From Political Dinosaur to Potential Leader,” *New York Times (Online)*, September 23, 2017, <https://lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F1941805359%3Faccountid%3D10246>.

<sup>327</sup> Florence Fabricant, “Patisserie Chanson’s Dessert Bar Opens in Flatiron District,” *New York Times (Online)*, September 5, 2017, <https://lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F1935401149%3Faccountid%3D10246>.

House of Unique Stink, attracts vegans.<sup>328</sup> Likewise, in “WORK LIFE; HOW I MADE IT: VICENTE DEL RIO” (LAT), Vicente Del Rio, the owner of Frimex Hospitality Group, says that the number of vegans who patronize his restaurants has increased.<sup>329</sup>

In an LAT opinion piece titled, “Use Facebook to convert bigots,” Conor Friedersdorf writes that, because they have collected information on their users, social media companies like Facebook can “reach and influence almost any kind of person – vegan weightlifters, estate lawyers with corgis.”<sup>330</sup> Lastly, the LAT op-ed titled “He doesn’t care about California” states that US President Donald Trump does not care about California and sees it as “a state full of vegans who live in stark modernist houses, drink wheatgrass martinis and consider Bruce Willis films high culture.”<sup>331</sup>

#### 4.5 Irrelevant Articles:

All of the unclear and irrelevant articles are cited in an appendix on pages 88-91. Those articles are categorized according to their general topics (business, travel, etc.).

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<sup>328</sup> Chris Horton, “Where Stinky Tofu Is at Its Malodorous Best,” *New York Times* (Online), November 19, 2017, <https://lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F1965802937%3Faccountid%3D10246>.

<sup>329</sup> Ronald White, “WORK LIFE; HOW I MADE IT: VICENTE DEL RIO,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 29, 2017, <https://lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F1956804979%3Faccountid%3D10246>.

<sup>330</sup> Conor Friedersdorf, “Use Facebook to convert bigots,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 2, 2017, <https://0-search-proquest-com.mercury.concordia.ca/docview/1944990623/E40EF7D8391F4523PQ/2?accountid=10246>.

<sup>331</sup> Alexander Nazaryan, “He doesn’t care about California,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 19, 2017, <https://lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdocview%2F1952365521%3Faccountid%3D10246>.

There are a total of 89 irrelevant articles cited, since the two duplicates are included, and a total of seven unclear articles.

## **CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

### *5.1 The Potential of Shifting Representations of Veganism:*

This thesis conducted a discourse analysis of 76 articles in two major American newspapers. It found 42.1% of those articles to be positive, 30.2% to be neutral, and 27.6% to be negative in their portrayal of vegans and or veganism. These findings, along with those of Lundahl and Drummond, cautiously suggest that newspaper coverage of veganism may be shifting in at least some ways.

Numerous other important observations can be made about this study's sample. First, it will be noted that zoonotic diseases and the dangers of slaughterhouse work – health issues linked to the consumption of animal products (see Chapter 2, section 2.4) – are never mentioned in the LAT or NYT's coverage. The affordability of a vegan diet is never mentioned either. Another remarkable fact is that, even though the AND and a plethora of other institutions recognize a vegan diet as being healthy, some of the coverage still discourages the adoption of said diet by portraying it as unhealthy (see Chapter 4, section 4.3.2). In other words, some of the coverage propagates one of the carnist myths identified by Joy: that consuming animal products is necessary. Adherence to veganism is also discouraged by the coverage's other negative discourses (see Chapter 4, sections 4.3.3-4.3.6).

Although the unhealthy vegan stereotype is promoted in the coverage, it is also challenged in a significant number of articles. Indeed, the sub-discourse that is dominant the most number of times in the sample portrays a vegan diet as being healthy. This is one fact that significantly distinguishes this study's findings from those of the British (2011) and Australian newspaper studies. Whether this is due to unique features of the

newspapers studied or changes in the discourse surrounding veganism is not yet clear, as comparable international data for 2017 does not exist.

Another important observation to make is that the LAT and NYT's coverage of professional vegan male athletes contradicts the view that vegans are weak, feminine, and impoverished.<sup>332</sup> It should be noted that, in the conclusion of her aforementioned 2014 study, Freeman suggested that TV programs feature "a wider range of vegetarian and vegan characters, especially males, who remain contently animal-free for life and serve as role models who inspire their friends and family to reduce and eliminate flesh, eggs, and animal milk in their daily meals."<sup>333</sup> The coverage of black vegans also challenges the stereotype that only white people become vegan.<sup>334</sup>

## 5.2 Animals:

According to Wrenn:

Vegan advocacy has one major advantage that makes social change work somewhat easier than it does in other movements: *humans like other animals*. Many people care about the plight of other animals, but a key problem is that they are not aware of how Nonhuman Animals are exploited or how they can help them (Jamieson et al., 2013).<sup>335</sup>

Part of the LAT and NYT's coverage does indeed portray veganism as being animal-friendly (see Chapter 4, section 4.2.2). Nevertheless, from a critical vegan perspective, the coverage still suffers from a significant lack of detail about the lives of animals and the harms that they are subjected to. For instance, while "Brokers Who Go Big With Their

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<sup>332</sup> Lundahl makes note of said view in her study. See Lundahl, "Dynamics of positive deviance in destigmatisation," 261.

<sup>333</sup> Freeman, "Lisa and Phoebe," 208.

<sup>334</sup> This stereotype is mentioned in "Black Vegetarians Ditch Meat and Stereotypes," *U.S. News & World Report*, May 27, 2019, <https://www.usnews.com/news/healthiest-communities/articles/2019-05-27/black-vegetarians-ditch-meat-and-stereotypes>.

<sup>335</sup> Wrenn, *A Rational Approach to Animal Rights*, 63.

Closing Gifts” mentions that Rebecca the chicken was rescued from a factory farm, it does not explain what her life on that farm would have been like. Also, the kind of comparison that Matheny performs, in which he compares the life of a grass-fed cow to that of a mouse unintentionally killed by a harvester, is never made in any of the articles.<sup>336</sup> “A slipperier slope,” “9th Circuit panel upholds state’s ban on foie gras,” and “A Mystery Ball Where the Illuminati Have Cloven Hooves” are the only articles in the sample that provide specific details about the animal exploitation industries’ treatment of animals – and the first two articles only provide details about the treatment of animals who are killed for foie gras.<sup>337</sup> Further, the coverage never mentions that non-vegans kill billions of land animals and one trillion sea creatures yearly – or that one can save around 200 animals a year by adopting veganism.<sup>338</sup> In sum, the LAT and NYT could have been considerably more informative about the impact of veganism and nonveganism on animals.

As previously noted, research indicates that concern for animals is one of the main reasons why people adopt a vegan diet, and that ethical vegans are less likely to revert to non-vegan eating than are “health vegans.”<sup>339</sup> It could therefore be argued (if one takes the position that newspapers have a responsibility to help the vegan and environmentalist causes) that veganism’s status of being beneficial to animals should be the main focus of

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<sup>336</sup> Matheny’s study, “Least Harm,” is never cited in the coverage. None of Lamey’s work is cited either.

<sup>337</sup> It is explained, for example, that the production of foie gras involves force-feeding birds until their livers grow to ten times their normal size. See Dolan, Harris, and Mohan, “9th Circuit panel upholds state’s ban on foie gras.”

<sup>338</sup> Gary L. Francione, “Eating Animals: Our ‘Choice’?” *Animal Rights: The Abolitionist Approach* (blog), August 27, 2017, <https://www.abolitionistapproach.com/eating-animals-our-choice/>.

<sup>339</sup> Sifferlin, “These Vegans Are More Likely to Stick With It.”

newspaper coverage of veganism. Said status, of course, does not receive attention in the vast majority of the articles in the NYT and LAT's coverage. Veganism's healthiness receives more attention in the sample than does its animal-friendliness.

This thesis assumes that the coverage's lack of detail about the cruelty of animal agriculture would be considered problematic by Joy, since she posits that "invisibility" is the main defense of the carnist system.<sup>340</sup> She states that violent ideologies "depend on physical invisibility," and that "[c]arnism is like the Wizard of Oz: once the curtain is pulled back from the system, its power virtually disappears."<sup>341</sup>

### 5.3 An Abolitionist Interpretation of the Findings:

From an abolitionist perspective, the NYT and LAT's coverage is certainly flawed, as it never clearly states that veganism is morally obligatory.<sup>342</sup> As well, the coverage does not express the abolitionist belief that the property status of animals is problematic because it gives humans the legal right to disregard animals' interests. Another problem from an abolitionist viewpoint is the coverage that presents veganism as unsatisfying and difficult. This coverage conflicts with the abolitionist view that veganism is a "joy" rather than a "sacrifice."<sup>343</sup> In addition to describing vegan food as being "easy, cheap, fast, healthy, delicious," Francione has remarked: "Veganism deprives us of absolutely

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<sup>340</sup> Joy, *An Introduction to Carnism*, 146.

<sup>341</sup> *Ibid.*, 35; 146.

<sup>342</sup> Francione advises vegan activists to always make it clear to non-vegans that veganism is morally obligatory. See Gary L. Francione, "Advocacy Tip: Judge Action, Not Individuals," *Animal Rights: The Abolitionist Approach* (blog), July 6, 2016, <https://www.abolitionistapproach.com/advocacy-tip-judge-action-not-individuals/>.

<sup>343</sup> Francione, "The Meaning of 'THE WORLD IS VEGAN! If you want it.'"



nothing. On the contrary, it provides a priceless gift: the peace of knowing that we are no longer participants in the hideous violence that is animal exploitation.”<sup>344</sup>

As for the coverage that portrays a vegan diet as being unhealthy for dogs, it conflicts with the abolitionist position too.<sup>345</sup> Francione has claimed that, “We have been feeding our dogs vegan food for decades and they have thrived. We have rescued sick dogs who have amazed veterinarians with their recovery. And they have all been vegans.”<sup>346</sup>

Further, it seems that abolitionists would want the main focus and emphasis of newspaper coverage of veganism to be on its moral rightness and morally obligatory status, not its healthiness or environmental friendliness. Indeed, Francione does consider it important to inform people about the healthiness of veganism; however, as aforementioned, abolitionists believe that veganism is, above all, a moral necessity.<sup>347</sup> (One statement that Francione has ended at least one of his blog articles with is: “If you are not vegan, go vegan. It’s easy; it’s better for your health and for the planet. But, most important, it’s the morally right thing to do.”)<sup>348</sup> Additionally, Francione and Charlton hold that Watson “clearly saw veganism primarily as a moral principle.”<sup>349</sup>

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<sup>344</sup> Gary L. Francione, “QUOTES BY GARY L. FRANCIONE,” *Animal Rights: The Abolitionist Approach* (blog), accessed November 15, 2020, <https://www.abolitionistapproach.com/quotes/>.

<sup>345</sup> Gary L. Francione: The Abolitionist Approach to Animal Rights, “Vegan Cats (Again),” Facebook, September 15, 2012, <https://www.facebook.com/abolitionistapproach/posts/vegan-cats-againdomestication-is-morally-unjustifiable-and-we-should-stop-bringi/363239347088207/>.

<sup>346</sup> Ibid.

<sup>347</sup> Gary L. Francione, “Abolitionist Vegan Advocacy/Education Tips: On Health,” *Animal Rights: The Abolitionist Approach* (blog), January 2, 2016, <https://www.abolitionistapproach.com/abolitionist-vegan-advocacyeducation-tips-on-health/>.

<sup>348</sup> Francione, “Elephants.”

<sup>349</sup> Francione and Charlton, *Animal Rights*, 72.

Francione claims that those who become vegan for environmental reasons “may not only lapse but may decide that an animal product has fewer adverse environmental consequences than non-animal products,” while people who go vegan only out of concern for their health frequently “cheat” by consuming animal foods.<sup>350</sup> Likewise, one vegan activist that Elizabeth Cherry interviewed for her 2016 book, *Culture and Activism: Animal Rights in France and the United States*, believed that “[u]sing ethical arguments [in vegan activism] would engender more wide-sweeping changes and would disallow eating any animal products, no matter how infrequent.”<sup>351</sup> The activist said that non-vegans respond to environmental arguments in favour of veganism by saying that low meat consumption is ecologically harmless.<sup>352</sup> Vegan activist Tobias Leenaert (who is a welfarist like Joy) has expressed the same opinion about the ethical argument in favour of veganism, remarking: “If we *had* to pick only one argument, it’s clear the ethical one has the most staying power. It is actually the only motivation for being one hundred percent vegetarian or vegan.”<sup>353</sup>

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<sup>350</sup> Gary L. Francione, “Some Thoughts on the Meaning of ‘Vegan,’” *Animal Rights: The Abolitionist Approach* (blog), October 18, 2009, <https://www.abolitionistapproach.com/some-thoughts-on-the-meaning-of-vegan/>.

<sup>351</sup> Elizabeth Cherry, *Culture and Activism: Animal Rights in France and the United States* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2016), 32.

<sup>352</sup> Ibid.

<sup>353</sup> Tobias Leenaert, *How to Create a Vegan World: A Pragmatic Approach* (Brooklyn, NY: Lantern Books, 2017), 74; Tobias Leenaert, “Can abolitionists and pragmatists ever trust each other?” *The Vegan Strategist* (blog), August 12, 2015, <http://veganstrategist.org/2015/08/12/can-abolitionists-and-pragmatists-ever-trust-each-other/>; and Gary L. Francione: The Abolitionist Approach to Animal Rights, “In a recent interview, welfarist Melanie Joy said that I don’t have any data to show that welfarist campaigns and the whole ‘happy exploitation’ approach are setting the movement back,” Facebook, August 2, 2016, <https://www.facebook.com/abolitionistapproach/posts/in-a-recent-interview-welfarist-melanie-joy-said-that-i-dont-have-any-data-to-sh/1231865613499857/>.

For her part, Wrenn believes that vegan advocacy should focus on health, but she also believes that “focusing too much” on health “may not be very helpful.”<sup>354</sup> One point that she makes is that “[t]he health argument excludes concerns about Nonhuman Animals used in non-food items, entertainment, sports, and science.”<sup>355</sup>

#### 5.4. Cole and Morgan’s Perspective:

The author predicts that Cole and Morgan would also find the NYT and LAT’s overall coverage to be inadequate, due to its vegaphobic articles and lack of focus on veganism’s animal-friendly/compassionate status. As previously mentioned, Cole and Morgan identified anti-speciesism, compassion, and non-violence – all animal-friendly principles – as veganism’s foundational values. They also concluded that:

the effort to continually reassert the connection between veganism and nonhuman animal liberation remains worthwhile, and the temptation to promote veganism under the non-confrontational guise of convenient healthy lifestyle choice may be unwise. This is not to argue that education about the practicalities of living a nonviolent life is not important, but it is prey to co-option.<sup>356</sup>

Like the vast majority of articles analyzed by Cole and Morgan, the vast majority of articles analyzed by this study do not associate veganism with any of the aforementioned values.

#### 5.5 Covering Veganism in the Climate Change and COVID-19 Era

In 2013, the LAT announced that it would no longer publish letters that expressed climate change denial.<sup>357</sup> The LAT’s letters editor, Paul Thornton, made the following statement about the ban:

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<sup>354</sup> Wrenn, *A Rational Approach to Animal Rights*, 175.

<sup>355</sup> *Ibid.*, 176.

<sup>356</sup> Cole and Morgan, “Vegaphobia,” 150.

<sup>357</sup> Graham Readfearn, “Should newspapers ban letters from climate science deniers?” *The Guardian*, October 16, 2013, <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/planet-oz/2013/oct/16/climate-change-letters-editor-newspapers-denial-sceptics>.

I'm no expert when it comes to our planet's complex climate processes or any scientific field. Consequently, when deciding which letters should run among hundreds on such weighty matters as climate change, I must rely on the experts — in other words, those scientists with advanced degrees who undertake tedious research and rigorous peer review.<sup>358</sup>

Likewise, in a 2020 opinion piece titled “Media ‘impartiality’ on climate change is ethically misguided and downright dangerous,” Denis Muller, a Senior Research Fellow at the University of Melbourne’s Centre for Advancing Journalism, expressed support for *The Guardian Australia* and *The Conversation*’s decisions to implement what he described as “in effect a ban on climate-change denialism, on the ground that it is harmful.”<sup>359</sup> Whilst acknowledging the existence and harmfulness of climate change, Muller noted that “[h]arm is a long-established criterion for abridging free speech.”<sup>360</sup>

It seems that a newspaper ban on discourse that denies the healthiness of a vegan diet would be a logical extension of the policy of banning newspaper discourse that expresses climate change denial. The former type of discourse can, of course, potentially discourage people from adopting a vegan diet – from doing, in other words, what is probably the best thing that they can do to help the environment. Like the claim that anthropogenic climate change is not real, the claim that a vegan diet is unhealthy flies in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary.<sup>361</sup> In an opinion piece in January 2020, Dr. Josh

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<sup>358</sup> Paul Thornton, “LA Times Refusing Letters from Climate Change Deniers,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 30, 2013, <https://www.latimes.com/opinion/opinion-la/la-ol-climate-change-letters-20131008-story.html>.

<sup>359</sup> Denis Muller, “Media ‘impartiality’ on climate change is ethically misguided and downright dangerous,” *The Conversation*, January 30, 2020, <https://theconversation.com/media-impartiality-on-climate-change-is-ethically-misguided-and-downright-dangerous-130778>.

<sup>360</sup> Ibid.

<sup>361</sup> Christina Nunez, “Is global warming real? Scientific consensus is overwhelming: The planet is getting warmer, and humans are behind it,” *National Geographic*, January 31, 2019, <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/article/global-warming-real>.

Cullimore, a UK-based physician, denounced a British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) article (“How a vegan diet could affect your intelligence”) for saying that it makes “intuitive sense” that veganism negatively impacts the brain.<sup>362</sup> Cullimore commented: “There are so many potential health benefits of vegan diets, not to mention the benefits for animals and the environment, that alarmist and scientifically misleading articles such as this are deeply irresponsible.”<sup>363</sup> The publication of such articles during or after the COVID 19 pandemic would be even more irresponsible.

This thesis points to the potential value of discussing what may be involved in newspapers addressing whether they should be identifying veganism as unhealthy. Further, the researcher suggests that newspapers make it a priority to hire vegan journalists. As Hanjoo says,

We need more vegan voices, because on the big issues – the criminal cruelty of industrial farming; the sentience and emotional depth of food animals; the environmental toll of meat and the unsustainability of its global rise – vegans are irrefutably on the right side of history. They are the vanguard.<sup>364</sup>

Cole and Morgan (2011) indicated that hiring vegan journalists would be a good idea, as they stated: “It has been suggested that journalists will tend to highlight reports from those who possess similar viewpoints and opinions and will largely ignore those with which they disagree when making their own reports.”<sup>365</sup>

### 5.6 Strengths and Limitations

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<sup>362</sup> Josh Cullimore, “BBC Article Bashing Veganism Is Inaccurate, Biased, And Sensationalist,” *Plant Based News*, January 30, 2020, <https://plantbasednews.org/opinion/bbc-article-bashing-veganism-inaccurate-biased-sensationalist/>.

<sup>363</sup> Ibid.

<sup>364</sup> Hanjoo, “Stop Mocking Vegans.”

<sup>365</sup> Cole and Morgan, “Vegaphobia,” 149.

This research was limited in the sample it undertook for analysis, focusing on only two US newspapers from major cities and only 76 articles from half of 2017. (The context and editorial stance of these two papers must be kept in mind when interpreting the results.) This is obviously a small sample of both the coverage in these newspapers over time and the potential coverage of veganism in a variety of other journalism outlets. It can also be debated whether key discourses about veganism will predominantly appear in newspapers as opposed to other forms of media. In addition, newspapers are not the most popular news source in the US – television is.<sup>366</sup> One final limitation to make note of is this study’s complete lack of analysis of the images that are featured with the articles.

All that said, it is important to recognize that no research currently exists on how North American newspapers cover veganism, and a newspaper can still be viewed as an important corpus for understanding how veganism is popularly addressed in the media. The deeper discourse analysis presented here thereby provides a platform on how journalism coverage of veganism has evolved since the handful of other international studies were conducted.

### *5.6 Conclusion and Future Research*

The researcher found the coverage of vegans and veganism in two major US newspapers to be more positive than negative during the second half of 2017. Twelve dominant sub-discourses were uncovered – six of them positive and six of them negative. Further, from a critical vegan perspective, the researcher found the coverage to be devoid of discussion of important topics related to veganism. Lastly, the researcher found the

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<sup>366</sup> Elisa Shearer, “Social media outpaces print newspapers in the U.S. as news source,” Pew Research Center, December 10, 2018, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/12/10/social-media-outpaces-print-newspapers-in-the-u-s-as-a-news-source/>.

overall coverage to be inadequate from multiple vegan perspectives, including a Francionian abolitionist perspective.

Of the five studies on newspaper representation of vegans and veganism, this one's findings are the third most positive. It is important to note, however, that this study is not perfectly comparable to the four others. For example, Cole and Morgan had a larger sample, included articles that this study would have excluded, and analyzed coverage from a decade earlier in a different country.

Because climate change, zoonotic diseases, and other current major issues are connected to diet, this thesis is highly relevant for those interested in veganism and its important role in our future. It is also unique because it is the first major investigation of the portrayal of vegans and veganism in the American press. As such, it lays the groundwork for future research on the topic, which could include:

- 1) Analysis of coverage of vegans and veganism in a wide selection of newspapers (American or non-American) from varied time periods.
- 2) Analysis of the visual representations that accompany the articles.
- 3) The expansion of analysis to other forms of journalism content, including social media, video, and web content.

Given that media representation of vegans and veganism has received relatively little scholarly attention, there is certainly a vast amount of additional research that could be done on the topic.

## APPENDIX

### Irrelevant Articles:

#### NYT:

#### Banking:

“Britain’s New Bank Notes: Secure. Durable. Not for Vegetarians.” (Aug. 10).

#### Beauty:

“Glitter Bombs, Past Lives and Overy Tattoos at Bust’s Craftacular” (Dec. 22); “Do-It-Yourself Make-up Guide for Brides” (Sep. 12); “Is the Best Pedicure in New York Worth \$85?” (Aug. 8); “The Familiar Promise of Health and Happiness in a Bottle” (Aug. 14); “Small-Batch Botanical Oils, Made in Brooklyn” (Dec. 21).

#### Business:

“Running a Business, Sharing an Office” (Oct. 20); “Cash Might Be King, but They Don’t Care” (Dec. 25); “Amazon, in Hunt for Lower Prices, Recruits Indian Merchants” (Nov. 26); “Now at Saks: Salt Rooms, a Bootcamp and a Peek at Retail’s Future” (Aug. 4).

#### Cooking/Food:

“What to Cook Right Now” (Oct. 30); “A Warming Curry for Fall” (Oct. 27); “For Everyday Vegetable Dishes, Meera Sodha Is the Master” (Sep. 22); “The Easiest Summer Dinner” (Aug. 7); “What to Cook This Week” (Dec. 10); “How to Build a Gingerbread House” (Dec. 8); “What to Cook This Weekend” (Dec. 15); “Anti-Anxiety Cooking” (Nov. 22); “What to Cook This Week” (Aug. 20); “What to Cook This Weekend” (Aug. 25); “What to Cook This Week” (Oct. 15); “Broths for Sipping or Souping” (Dec. 29); “A Chance to Catch Vegan Tuna” (Oct. 30); “The Secret to Amazing Mango Kulfi Comes in a Can” (Sep. 14); “From Hurricanes to Protest Movements, Food Is a Way In” (Nov. 1); “Impossible Burger’s ‘Secret Sauce’ Highlights Challenges of Food Tech” (Aug. 8).

#### Crossword:

“Lunchbox Snacks” (Oct. 31).

#### Fashion:

“Chasing Alexander Wang’s Citywide Runway Show” (Sep. 10); “Making Watches for people ‘Who Can Read and Write’” (Nov. 17); “Fashion’s Interest in Alternative Fabrics Keeps Growing” (Nov. 12).

#### Film/Television:

“Canada Letter: A TIFF Film About Film and an Immigrant’s Story” (Sep. 8); “The Tate Modern and the Battle for London’s Soul” (Jul. 18); “Action Bronson, the leader of the Most Joyously Disorienting Show on Late Night” (Dec. 29).

#### Hygiene:

“We Need to Talk Some More About Your Dirty Sponges” (Aug. 11).

#### Law:

“Drawing a Line in the ‘Gay Wedding Cake’ Case” (Nov. 27).



### Marriage:

“Justine Anania, J.D. Gross” (Aug. 6).

### Real Estate:

“Recent Commercial Real Estate Transactions” (Jul. 11); “Midtown Manhattan: New Amenities and High-Rises Attract Residents” (Aug. 9).

### Restaurant News:

“Dumbo Gets a Panoramic Menu at Sugarcane Raw Bar Grill” (Sep. 19); “Bond 45 Reopens in a New Theater District Location” (Sep. 26); “Pasta Flyer, Mark Ladner’s Latest, Opens in Greenwich Village” (Oct. 31); “A Shortlist of What We Like Right Now” (Oct. 3); “London-Based Burger & Lobster Opens 2<sup>nd</sup> Manhattan Outpost” (Jul. 18); “Chelsea Market Expands with a Food-Focused Floor” (Aug. 28); “Come for the Shopping, Stay for the Food” (Oct. 26).

### Restaurant Reviews:

“Review: Pazar Food Collective in Canterbury, New South Wales” (Nov. 22); “Vegetables with Benefits at ABCV: Related Sideshows” (Jul. 3).

### Social Networks:

“New York Today: Plan B for Penn Station” (Jul. 7).

### Travel:

“Wandering Madrid, With No Itinerary Necessary” (Oct. 26); “Seeking Solitude in Japan’s Mountain Monasteries” (Oct. 11); “Detroit: The Most Exciting City in America?” (Nov. 20); “Hunting for the ‘Promised Land,’ Haunted by Chuck Berry,” (Sep. 11).

### Multiple Topics:

“Catalonia, Harvey Weinstein, California: Your Wednesday Briefing” (Oct. 11); “California, MacArthur Foundation, World Cup” (Oct. 11); “‘The Fact is, They Still Went Fishing.’” (Jul. 15); “It’s Not the Fault of the Sandwich Shop’: Readers Debate David Brooks’s Column” (Jul. 13).

### Wellness:

“Soho House, but Make it Enlightened” (Nov. 21).

### LAT:

#### Beauty Articles:

“BEAUTY; The organics of fall” (Sep. 17).

#### Business:

“BUSINESS BEAT; 1 left on board of Hampton Creek” (July 19); “BUSINESS BEAT: Rare sign lights up again in Echo Park” (Nov 15); “BUSINESS BEAT; Farewell to ‘Whole Paycheck’? Amazon closes its deal with Whole Foods and cuts prices by up to 43% for some items.” (Aug. 29); “FOR THE RECORD” (Aug. 25).

#### Cooking:

“HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE; FOR THE FOODIE; SUCH GOOD TASTE” (Nov. 5); “THANKSGIVING; Baking’s not necessary; buy your pie to-go” (Nov. 11).

Entertainment:

“MOVIES; Capturing a day of big change for voters” (Oct. 29); “Always crazy, sexy, cool” (Jul. 13).

Fashion:

“THE RUNWAYS; Our very own wow moments” (Oct. 22).

Pets:

“PETS; FAMILY CUDDLE TIME; Hollywood stylist Tara Swennen adds a pig to the household. ‘She’s pretty chill.’”(Aug. 27).

Politics:

“ON POLITICS; Singled out by Trump but no fan; Called ‘my African American’ during the campaign, he’s now critical of president.” (Sep. 1).

Restaurant News:

“FOOD & DINING; RESTAURANT NEWS; Filipino flavors in DTLA” (Jul. 22); “FOOD & DINING; L.A.’s delightful doughnuts” (Sep. 9); “FOOD & DINING; NEWSFEED; Mexican food in a big way” (Sep. 16); “FOOD & DINING; RESTAURANT NEWS; Taqueria ends, food truck lives” (Jul. 1); “FOOD & DINING; NEWSFEED; Marche Moderne’s new view” (Oct. 7); “FOOD & DINING; Halo Top Scoops up an L.A. shop” (Nov. 11); “FOOD & DINING; NEWSFEED; Fresh on the brunch scene” (Oct. 14); “FOOD & DINING; RESTAURANT NEWS; Up late? Eat some lasagna” (July 8); “FOOD & DINING; COUNTER INTELLIGENCE; It’s a boozy Oaxacan taqueria” (Nov. 18); “FOOD & DINING; Far, far beyond Dad’s carne asada” (Sep. 23).

Restaurant Reviews:

“JONATHAN GOLD’S 101 BEST RESTAURANTS 2017; 80. Grand Central Market” (Oct. 29); “JONATHAN GOLD’S 101 BEST RESTAURANTS 2017; 27. P.Y.T.” (Oct. 29); “JONATHAN GOLD’S 101 BEST RESTAURANTS 2017; 71. Erven” (Oct. 29); “JONATHAN GOLD’S 101 BEST RESTAURANTS 2017; 40. Baroo” (Oct. 29).

Social Networks:

“THE WORLD; Debunking Mexico quake rumors; Amid chaos, a website collects data and fact-checks reports to highlight the real needs and dangers.” (Sep. 27).

Travel:

“CHOO-CHOOSE TRAINS; A journey west on four Amtrak routes is a scenic tour of the rail system’s charms and challenges.” (Sep. 3); “YOUR WEEKEND; ESCAPE TO DALLAS; PLENTY MORE KICKS BESIDES FOOTBALL” (Nov. 5); “YOUR WEEKEND; WHAT’S UP; Art at the heart of it” (Nov. 5); “YOUR WEEKEND; ESCAPE TO SARATOGA, CALIF.; LET THE MUSIC PLAY AS THE WINE FLOWS” (Sep. 10).

Wellness:

“MIND & BODY; Nourishing nibbles (but don’t tell the kids)” (Aug. 5).

Unclear Articles:

NYT:

“Maisie Allison, John Owen” (Nov. 5); “Music Mogul Russell Simmons Is Accused of Rape by 3 Women” (Dec. 13); “A Star Chef From Asia Lands in New York” (Aug. 25); “Let’s Open Up About Addiction and Recovery” (Nov. 4); “nothing, nowhere. Blends Hip-Hop and Emo to Make Tomorrow’s Pop” (Oct. 20).

LAT:

“An APPRECIATION; The chef who helped kick-start the regional craze” (Oct. 25); “THEATER REVIEW; Chaos sowed on actor’s ‘Big Night’” (Sep. 18).

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