

Reproducing Dairy: Embodied Animals and the Institution of Animal Agriculture

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Abstract

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This text draws on the United States dairy industry as a case study to understand how the institution of animal agriculture is continually reproduced through a repressive political climate, through routine agricultural practices, and through teaching new generations of young people to farm. Framed by the global intimate, I argue that we can learn much about human-animal relations by attending to the relationship between the individual, intimate animal, and global economic processes of commodification. I argue that bovine animals in the dairy industry are subject to a gendered commodification of their bodies based on their sex at birth and that routine practices and industry discourses reveal the violence against these bodies. The conditions under which animals are raised for food in the U.S. are determined by a political climate where animals' legal protections are lax and efficient and scholars, activists and consumers are barred from accessing information about the conditions under which animals are raised and slaughtered. Paired with this political climate, powerful educational institutions work to normalize the current institution of animal agriculture through educating young people in 'proper' human-animal relations. Telling the stories of individual animals and humans throughout the text, I draw attention to the grievability of animals' lives and deaths in the food system in an act of making the personal – the intimate – political.

Preface

This dissertation is an original intellectual product of the author, Kathryn A. Gillespie. The work presented in this dissertation has, thus far, led to the following publications:

Gillespie, Kathryn. 2014. Sexualized violence and the gendered commodification of the animal body in Pacific Northwestern US dairy production. *Gender, Place and Culture*. Work appears in Chapters 4, 5, and 8.

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CHAPTER 1. Sophie Introduction: Centering the Embodied Animal



Figure 1: Sophie at Animal Haven, California; Photo source: Gillespie, 2012

With rattlesnake guards wrapped around our feet and legs, Maggie Lake¹ and I tromped through the tall grass out into the field where the geriatric herd spent their days. Maggie Lake was the education director for Animal Haven, a sanctuary for formerly farmed animals in California. Several old cows and steers lounged in the field in the June morning sun. We approached slowly – some of these animals had remained wary of human strangers despite the fact that many had spent years at the sanctuary learning to trust and love the sanctuary employees. Sophie and Emily lay in the tall grass not far from one another. Sophie was a Holstein (with the characteristic black and

¹ The names of humans and animals have been changed throughout this text where necessary to protect the anonymity of the research subjects in accordance with requirements of the institutional ethics review board at the University of Washington.

white patches), the most common breed of cows used for dairy in the United States. As we stood there, Lake told me what was known of Sophie's history.

Sophie was born and raised on a dairy farm housing approximately 3,000 cows in the San Francisco Bay Area in Central California. At the farm, her tail was docked and her ears were tagged for identification. At the farm, she was impregnated via artificial insemination at 18 months old and then once a year every year after that. Her calves were taken away from her just hours after birth, and she was milked intensively until her productivity and reproductive capacity waned. At 5 years of age, Sophie developed a bad case of mastitis (a painful infection of the udders) and was sent to auction for slaughter with many other unnamed cows who had been used for dairy production. Sophie was bought at auction by a university veterinary teaching hospital, to be used as a teaching tool. She spent approximately 20 weeks (two academic quarters) at the school where students used her to practice venipuncture (where they find a vein and draw blood from her neck) and rectal exams.

At the end of the 20 weeks, Sophie was going to be sent back to auction for slaughter, but a veterinary student intervened and Animal Haven was able to get involved and take her in. While at the university, Sophie did not receive medical treatment for her mastitis and the infection got worse. The staff at Animal Haven had to take her back to the veterinary teaching hospital to have her mastitis treated. It took nearly two years to treat her mastitis and since mastitis treatment is invasive and the infection itself is extremely painful, Sophie's distrust in humans grew. Adding to this distrust, the staff at the teaching hospital hurried her while loading her into a trailer and

Sophie panicked and fell and broke her leg and hip – an injury from which it is difficult for even a young, healthy cow to recuperate.

When she returned to Animal Haven, sanctuary employees also discovered that she was pregnant – something that went unnoticed at the veterinary teaching hospital. Not long after, Sophie gave birth to a stillborn calf at the sanctuary. She had never been permitted to spend time with her newborn calves while in the dairy industry. At Animal Haven, she spent several hours with her dead calf, grooming him after he was born. For a number of years, Sophie lived in the main herd at the sanctuary and welcomed new orphaned calves who came to the sanctuary. As we stood there in the field, Lake told me that Sophie never fully recovered from the ill treatment she had experienced on the farm and at the teaching hospital and remained wary of humans, but she found great joy in living in community with the other cows and steers, and in parenting orphaned calves who were new to the sanctuary. When she became too old and frail to live safely with the main herd (she could be easily injured by younger, rambunctious steers), she was moved into the geriatric herd with the other older cows and steers.

While we talked, Sophie relaxed and bowed her head for Lake to scratch her neck and back. The flies were landing on her back and she was glad to have Lake brush them away and scratch those hard-to-reach places. Sophie's story could easily be read on her fourteen year old body – in her docked tail that could not swat flies away from biting her back, in the holes permanently punched in her ears from the dairy farm's ear

tagging, in her chronic limp from her leg/hip injury, and in her wariness and distrust of strangers.

It was June of 2012 when I met Sophie and walked around Animal Haven with Lake learning about the animals who lived there. In August, Sophie died at the sanctuary.

* * *

The intimate lives of farmed animals have long been an understudied subject of geographical research, and for good reason. Studying the embodied farmed animal and, in particular, the impacts of commodification on animal lives and bodies lays bare the uncomfortable ethical and political dimensions of human-farmed animal relations in which animals are subjected to uneven structures of power and hierarchy. Animal geographers have overwhelmingly focused their analyses at the scale of populations (not individuals), a fact which results in work that abstracts from the lived realities of the embodied animal (Bear 2011). In this work, I argue that animal geography can make important strides forward in critical cross-species work by engaging the feminist geographical lens of the global and the intimate (Pratt & Rosner 2012), which connects intimate, lived experience with global structures of political economy. While global intimate analyses have thus far focused only on the human body, extending this feminist work to include non-human lives and bodies offers the potential for a more nuanced understanding of the intimate effects of political economic processes, like commodification, in multispecies contexts.

If we see the animal as embodied and singular, and not as an abstracted population as animal geographers have done, then the violence of human-animal relations (and the places where these relations play out) comes into focus. But the aim of my work here is not merely to focus on the embodied animal as a de-contextualized being; rather, the focus on the animal, like Sophie, as a unique being is a lens through which to 'scale up' to understand the population at large and the embodied implications of global political economic processes. In this mode of analysis, the population, then, is no longer a herd of faceless animals moving through an apolitical space. Instead, the population becomes a collection of embodied beings, each with their own life and body, their own suffering, their own grief. With this in mind, I shift back and forth between talking about the embodied animal (Sophie, the heifer with ear tag #6490, the bull with ear tag #7050, the calf with ear tag #604) and the group (cows, bulls, calves) as a way to 'scale up' and understand the embodied plight of the herd.

Focusing on the embodied stories of animals, like Sophie's, contributes to the intellectual project of understanding the way commodification processes impact intimate lives. Sophie's life was unusual in that she was routed away from slaughter first by her purchase by the university veterinary teaching program and then by the intervention of the student who contacted Animal Haven. At the sanctuary, Sophie was named, her ear tags were removed, she received the veterinary care she needed, and she lived out her life and was not slaughtered for her flesh. In these ways, Sophie's story was exceptional, but Sophie's life at the dairy farm, her presence at auction, her chronic case of mastitis and the other physical traces of dairy production left on her body

represent the mundane reality of cows raised for dairy in the United States. Thus, Sophie is both a distinct being with her own story of her life and death *and* she is a lens through which to understand the lasting impacts of commodification on the cow more generally.

At the end of 2013, there were over 9.2 million cows in the United States dairy herd (Mathews 2014). Dairy production is tied closely with the meat industry, which slaughtered more than 3.1 million “dairy cows” in 2013 for (primarily ground) beef and 761,600 calves for veal during that same period (USDA 2013)². These statistics are important for understanding the scale of production in the U.S. dairy industry, but they have the potential to obscure the lived reality of each of the 9.2 million cows living and laboring for dairy production each year:

When discussing the treatment of such a large number of animals, it is hard not to write either in a droning monotone or somewhat sensationally [...] It is not simply more than [9.2 million] animals a year, but it is one, and one, and one, amounting to the large scale mistreatment of individual animals (Wolfson 1996: 4).

My aim here is to make legible the stories of the ‘one’ – the singular animals in the dairy industry – and take seriously, without sensationalizing, their experience. At the same time, I argue that these intimate stories can say something meaningful about the commodification of living, embodied subjects embedded in the political economy of dairy production. Donna Haraway writes, “Stories are material practices [...] Discourses are not only social products, they have fundamental social effects [...]

² These numbers exclude animals slaughtered on farms and reflect only animals slaughtered in federally inspected facilities.

Scientific discourses both bound and generate conditions of daily life for millions” (1989: 289). Thus, the stories of the embodied animals told throughout this text recount the social effects of commodification for nonhumans, and they are involved in the production of a counter narrative of human-farmed animal relations – one that makes legible the violence of dominant cross-species social relations in animal agriculture.

Animal agriculture is a hegemonic system deeply embedded in material and discursive histories of tradition, necessity, and beliefs about species hierarchies. Animal agriculture, in many ways, is a thoroughly mundane practice: humans’ domestication of animals dates back 10,000 years and is understood as being central to the success of the human species. It is precisely this long history and the way humans benefit from it that works to naturalize the institution of farming animals and make the daily practices of animal agriculture seem innocuous. In fact, the daily practices of animal agriculture inflict violence on animal bodies and this violence is normalized as part of the domestication process (Nibert 2013). This project is largely dedicated to making this violence visible and taking it seriously as a site of normalized oppression.

Violence against the animal body is borne out in the material and discursive practices of the industry as I will explore throughout this text. But it is also present in the everyday language we use to talk about animals. As Haraway (1989) argues, discourses have ‘fundamental social effects;’ language shapes how we think about and treat others. The language we use to talk about animals has the power to reproduce hierarchies of human exceptionalism, or it as the potential to engage in liberatory

discursive practices (Dunayer 2001)³. I do not use the term 'cattle' in this text because it has its etymological roots in 'chattel,' meaning 'property,' and calls up references to chattel slavery. Instead, I use 'bovine animals' or 'cows'. Similarly, 'livestock' literally means 'live stock' and reinforces animals' status as live property. The terms 'farm animal,' 'dairy cow,' and 'veal calf' are equally problematic: each define animals in terms of their productive value to humans and reproduce the notion that these animals are 'purpose bred'. Instead, I use the terms 'farmed animals' and 'cows used for dairy' in order to reflect the fact that these animals are subjected to processes of farming and commodity production (and not that these inherently form their identity). When I do use the terms 'livestock' or 'dairy cow' here, I use them in scare quotes to emphasize the problematic nature of these terms. I do not use the term 'brutal' to describe any of the practices of industry (though they could be characterized as such) because 'brutal' has its etymological roots in the word 'brute' which refers to 'lower animals,' or being 'dull or stupid' and, as such, denigrates nonhuman animals. Finally, when I refer to 'animals,' I am referring to nonhuman animals, but it is important to acknowledge that humans themselves are animals and that the terms we use (human/animal, human/nonhuman) do powerful work to maintain hierarchies of human dominance over other species.

The dominance of humans over animals is rarely conceptualized as problematic because of its normalization and the myriad ways in which humans benefit and profit

³ Dunayer's (2001; 2004) are central to understanding the way language operates to maintain hierarchies of power and dominance. For another excellent exploration of language and law in the context of race and racism, see Seshardi (2012).

from the appropriation of animals' lives and bodies (Nibert 2013). "The most insidious oppressions are those that so insinuate themselves into the fabric of our lives and into the recesses of our minds that we don't even realize they are acting upon us" (Parenti 2007: n.p.). Animal oppression is one such form of oppression (Nibert 2013) and animal agriculture is just one site where this set of power relations plays out. The dairy industry, then, is just one site where human dominance over animals is readily visible in mundane detail and where it is possible to see the multiple forces (material, discursive, legal, political and educational) working to reproduce such a powerful and insidious institution.

Indeed, the lives of bovine animals in the United States dairy industry are characterized by intensive management and manipulation of the reproductive and productive capacities of the body. The commodification of the bovine body for breeding, milk, semen, and meat is highly gendered based on the animal's biological sex at birth. Cows are used for the production of milk until their productivity wanes and they are slaughtered at 3-7 years of age, while most male calves are slaughtered at approximately 4-6 months of age for veal. By contrast, the natural lifespan of a dairy-breed cow is upwards of 20 years (Nowak 1997) (see Figure 2). This connection between dairy and slaughter is one that is under-recognized in public consciousness, as popular conceptions of the dairy industry emphasize that the production of dairy is benign. The many facets of routine dairy production – artificial insemination, semen production, feeding, tail docking, castration, dehorning, birthing, milking, transport, sale, slaughter, and rendering – are largely absent from the popular imaginary about dairy production.

My aim here is to make legible these processes and explore the connections between these processes and industries in the context of the lived experience of the animal. The intellectual aim of laying bare the violence of these processes is to confront a gap in the way geographers conceptualize the animal. In animal geography, for instance, even when these agricultural practices are discussed, they are not counted as violence against the animal. Similarly, feminist geographers do not tend to concern themselves with violence against the animal. This acceptance of animal use as hegemonic and the absence of animals in feminist geographical work, respectively, is a problem of what Babbie (2005) terms content validity: “the degree to which a measure covers the range of meanings included within a concept” (149). The conceptualization of routine agricultural practices as benign by geographers and other social scientists denies the very real implications of the meaning of these practices for the animals themselves.

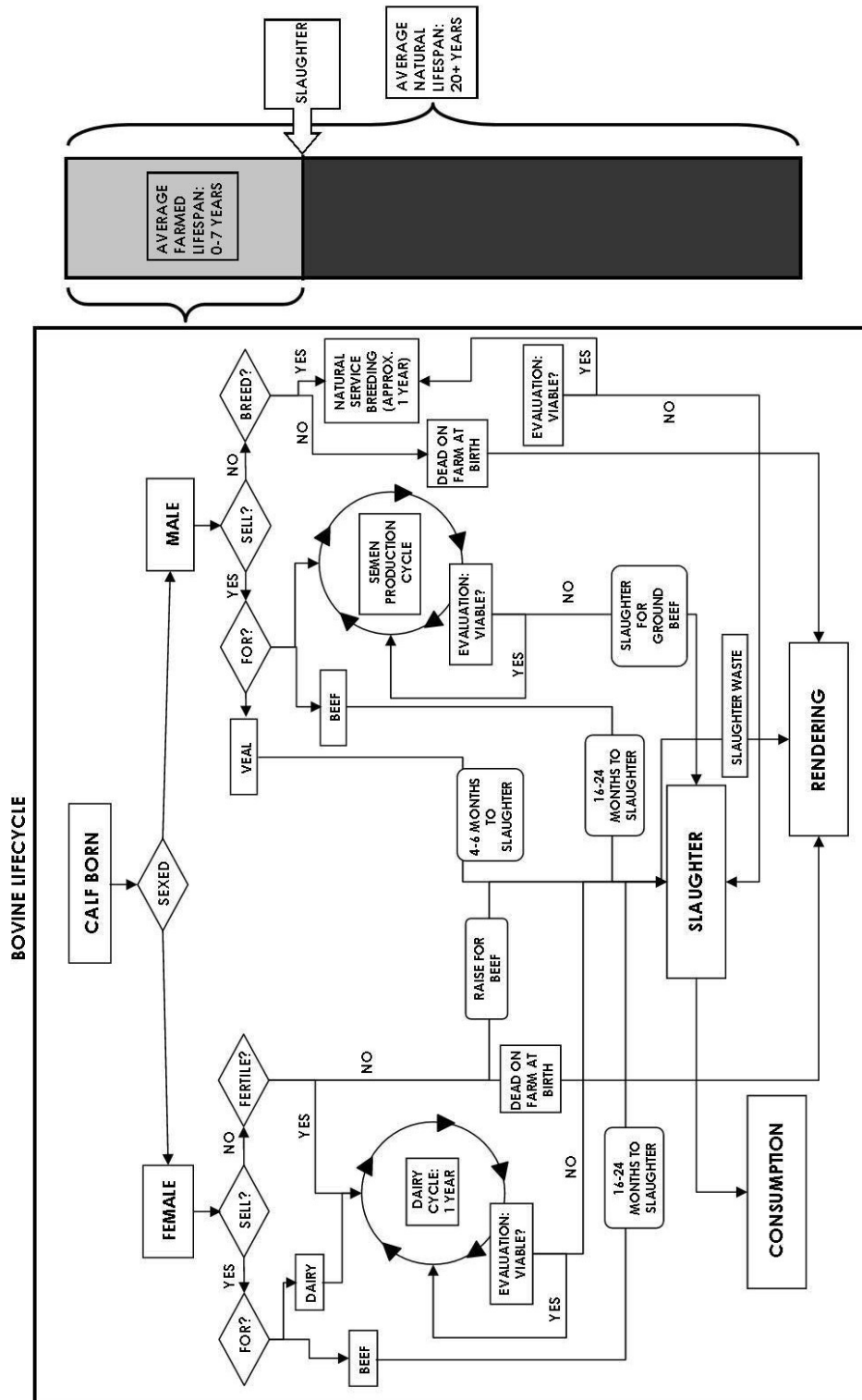


Figure 2: Differential bovine lifecourses by sex at birth in the dairy industry; Source: Gillespie, 2014

My research for this project took me to various places of dairy production and other places where the lives of animals used for dairy could be understood. I travelled to a small-scale dairy farm, to sanctuaries for formerly farmed animals, to auction yards, to the World Dairy Expo, and to the Washington State Fair. I explored peripheral but integral industries related to dairy and became familiar with the details of semen production, veal production, and the rendering process. I drew on previous research conducted for my MA thesis on the slaughter process at industrial and small scales. I spoke with people who were involved with 4-H as children and former animal science students from university agricultural animal science programs to explore the role of education in the reproduction of the dairy industry. Each of these places inhabited or touched (even for a moment) by the living or dead animal revealed something important about the hegemonic paradigm of animal agriculture. Threaded through these very different places was the gendered commodification of the animal and the violence inherent in the appropriation of animal bodies.

“Feminism,” as Donna Haraway writes, “is a story-telling practice” (1989: 255). In this tradition, I engage the intimate animal in narrative and storytelling. The nature of the dairy and related industries, and the limited access to places of animal agriculture explored in subsequent chapters, is such that full life histories of animals were nearly impossible to obtain. Transport, sale, slaughter, and the general culture of commodification in the industry limited what was knowable about each animal. As

such, many of the vignettes herein are mere moments in the animals' lives, fragments of a much more complex commodified life.

Toward a Multispecies Global Intimate

Animal geographers' tendency to conceptualize the animal in terms of populations abstracts from the ethical and political impacts of commodification processes on their lives and bodies. In response to this gap, I emphasize greater attention to embodied animals as a lens through which to understand the plight of the herd and the impacts of commodification of real, living subjects. I accomplish this by putting the animal geographies literature into conversation with recent work on the global and the intimate (Pratt & Rosner 2012; Mountz & Hyndman 2006). The global intimate emphasizes the co-constitution of the relationship between embodied, intimate subjects and global, political economic processes. Thus, the global intimate provides a lens through which to make visible the impacts on animals in the dairy industry as a way to understand the political and ethical implications of commodification more broadly. At the same time, the global intimate is currently theorized only in the realm of the human subject; thus, this project pushes global intimate analyses (and feminist geographies more broadly) to consider the animal.

The intellectual contributions of this project are threefold. First, this project speaks to the animal geographies literature by arguing that the ways in which animal geographers have conceptualized the animal in terms of populations and not as individuals, despite claims by some that the sub-discipline should be concerned with

the ethical and political lives of animals. Thus, my contribution to animal geographies is a focus on the individual within the context of political economic processes of commodification in order to make visible the impacts of this commodification on animal lives. Second, drawing on geographies of the global intimate to understand this relationship between the intimate animal and global political economic processes, I extend work on the global intimate to include a consideration of other-than-human lives. As such, I make a call for developing a multispecies conceptualization of the global intimate. Third, these literatures, along with my empirical findings, inform the larger project of this text: to understand the ways in which the hegemonic system of animal agriculture gets reproduced, and the impacts of the reproduction of this system on animals. Ultimately, in addition to the specific contributions to the animal geographies and global intimate literatures, this project asks geographers to rethink who we care for and about and to think critically about hegemonic systems of hierarchy and dominance, like animal agriculture. Extending who we care for and about to nonhuman animals involves focusing “our attention on the social and how it is constructed through unequal power relationships, but it also moves us beyond critique and toward the construction of new forms of relationships, institutions, and action that enhance mutuality and well-being” (Lawson 2007: 8). In these unequal power relationships between humans and animals, a feminist attention to a caring ethic and the embodied implications of political economic processes moves us forward in envisioning and enacting new nonviolent kinds of interspecies encounters in our lives and work.

Animal Geographies: Towards a Conceptualization of the Individual⁴

Animal geographers recognize the profound centrality of animals to our lives and work (Urbanik 2012; Emel et al 2002; Emel & Wolch 1998), from those animals with whom we share our homes (Haraway 2008; 2003; Power 2008; Nast 2006; Tuan 1984) to those whom are 'wild' and 'domesticated' (Yeo & Neo 2010; Whatmore 2002). Farmed animals, in particular, are commodified by the billions annually in global spaces of food production through processes of breeding, confinement raising, commodity extraction, and slaughter (Emel & Neo 2011). Due to the ubiquity of animal use in these and other ways, animal geographers have argued that we have an intellectual and ethical responsibility to give careful consideration to these lives and the suffering that animals experience as a result of their commodification (Emel & Neo 2011; Seager 2003; Wolch & Emel 1998). Scholars of domestication have argued that domestication processes express power (as dominance and submission) and physical mutation with potentially deleterious effects on animal lives (e.g., Tuan 1984; Anderson 1997). Other efforts to move beyond the animal-as-commodity feature the face-to-face social relations between humans and animals (e.g., Haraway 2003); the political processes to which animals are subject (e.g., Hobson 2007); and, occasionally, the body and sexuality of the nonhuman other (e.g., Brown and Rasmussen 2010). Other animal geographers have focused their energies on exploring the politics and particularities of animal welfare (e.g., Buller & Roe 2013; Johnston 2013). Global innovations in biotechnology impact human and

⁴ I have tried to minimize the use of the term 'individual' in the text in order to avoid calling up reference to the neoliberal individual subject. Instead, I have tried to refer to the 'embodied' or 'singular' animal. In this section, though, I speak of individual animals to engage in direction conversation with the animal geographies literature which speaks of the individual versus the population.

animal lives and bodies and some geographers have focused on the integration of technologies of production and extraction on animal lives (e.g., Coyle 2006; Holloway 2007). This integration of technology (e.g., artificial insemination, milking machines, semen extraction, etc.) is fraught with complex ethical and power relations between humans and animals in the context of global political economies of agricultural and biotechnologies.

In spite of a growing tradition of geographies that feature farmed animals, the animals themselves, like Sophie, are often absent from these works. This is a problem more generally true of animal geographies – that animal geographers tend to “speak of collectivities such as ‘animals’, ‘species’ and ‘herds’, while speaking less of individual creatures” (Bear 2011: 297). Bear raises an issue consistent throughout the study of animals in geography – a point which is poignantly driven home in the articulation of a recent animal geographies progress report: “A gathering swarm, a swelling herd, a flock or a vast shoal; animal geographies has, over the last 15 or so years, become an increasingly present, dynamic and potentially innovative subfield of geography” (Buller 2013a: 1). Indeed, animal geographies, in many ways, *has* become ‘increasingly present, dynamic and potentially innovative;’ yet, in the realm of foregrounding individual animals as a unit of analysis in research and connecting them to the global economic processes that facilitate their commodification, animal geographers have much work to do.

There have been three notable geographical exceptions where animals as singular, individual beings have been featured. First, the most well-known is, of course,

Haraway's (2008) writing on her relationships of mutual love with canines, Cayenne and Roland. However, in focusing on this relationship of care and mutuality with her dogs in the context of agility training, Haraway sidesteps confronting the intimate implications of violence and commodification of not-so-lucky animal bodies. Second, Whatmore and Thorne (2000) and Whatmore (2002) both feature an individual elephant; yet, Philo argues that in spite of efforts to feature the animals, they still remain abstracted presences in this work (2005: 829). Finally, Bear (2011) focuses on the life an individual octopus – Angelica – living in captivity in an aquarium. This work likely comes closest to an analysis that centers the animal and the ethico-political dimensions of their life; even so, Angelica becomes less singular as we discover that the octopus in the tank dies frequently and is immediately replaced with another octopus, always named 'Angelica.' These exceptions offer an opening in geography to develop more case studies that center the animal *and* connect his/her experience to unequal structures of power and political economy.

Even though the embodied animal is largely missing from the literature, a great number of animal geographers are concerned with the political and ethical dimensions of animals' lives (e.g., Hobson 2007; Philo & Wilbert 2000; Weston & Abram 1999; Wolch & Emel 1998). Indeed, in 1998, Wolch and Emel made an urgent politically and ethically motivated call to 'bring the animals back in' to human geography when they wrote:

The plight of animals worldwide has never been more serious than it is today. Each year, by the billions, animals are killed in factory farms; poisoned by toxic pollutants and waste; driven from their homes by logging, mining,

agriculture, and urbanization; dissected, re-engineered, and used as spare body-parts; and kept in captivity and servitude to be discarded as soon as their utility to people has waned. The reality is mostly obscured by the progressive elimination of animals from everyday human experience, and by the creation of a thin veneer of civility surrounding human-animal relations, embodied largely by language tricks, isolation of death camps, and food preparation routines that artfully disguise the true origins of flesh-food. Despite the efforts made to minimize human awareness of animal lives and fates, however, the brutality of human domination over the animal world and the catastrophic consequences of such dominionism are everywhere evident. (Wolch & Emel 1998: xi)

In spite of this impassioned indictment of the violence of human-animal relations, this call, and the majority of subsequent work by animal geographers, focuses on animal populations and numbers so large they unintentionally abstract from the impacts on living, breathing bodies. Even though a passage like this one draws attention to the violence of animal use and the purposeful invisibility of that use, conceptualizing animals in terms of populations does little to tell us about the plight of animals, and as such, does not connect us with their struggles. If animal geographers are concerned with the power-laden hierarchies of human-animal relations and the real, embodied violence animals experience, then research that focuses on *individuals* themselves is needed. Bear writes, “A focus on individual animals offers considerable potential to engage and mobilise wider human interest. [...In fact,] such studies might help humans to engage and empathise more closely with the pressures and problems faced by the individual in question” (2011: 303). Indeed, “engaging the individual is, then, part of a wider political and ethical project to move animals from the shadows” (Bear 2011: 303).

Ethical and political considerations of animal lives are central to my work here and follow in the tradition of those animal geographers who consider these issues. Though ethical and political concerns have not always been central to animal geographies, some scholars recognize the inherently ethical (Jones 2000) and political (Hobson 2007) dimensions of human-animal encounters. Indeed, animal geographers offer a unique attention to space, place and scale that provides a nuanced opportunity to bring animals, humans and the environment together in a 'geographical community' (Lynn 1998) and feature animals as part of the moral landscape (Matless 1994).

For some geographers, these ethical and political commitments mean that studying animals requires a precise focus on questioning the status of the animal as a resource/commodity and, in particular, their 'use, regulation, exploitation, and/or conservation' (Hobson 2007: 251; Gillespie 2014; Collard & Dempsey 2013; Emel & Neo 2011; Weston & Abram 1999). Though certainly not the dominant trend in animal geographies, critical animal geographers should "shed light on what is objectionable about commodifying nonhuman life" (Collard & Dempsey 2013: 2682). This commodification is wrapped up in global political economies and histories of agricultural production (Wolch & Emel 1998; Philo & Wilbert 2000;).

In spite of this work on the role of the farmed animal in agriculture taken up in these various contexts, the individual animal is still routinely obscured and the gendered impacts of these embodied processes are not well understood. The analysis undertaken here recognizes that the gendered animal body is subject to, and the subject

of, powerful political processes linked to global political economic structures of trade, commodification, and technological innovation. By focusing research on animals' commodification and the impacts of this commodification on their lives and bodies, we can transcend the narrow conceptualization of the animal-as-resource and question the underlying structures that produce and maintain these conditions for them.

Focus on the embodied animal has the potential to reveal a distinct politics and ethics of animal agriculture that has so far been under researched in agriculture: the violence woven into the very fabric of animal agriculture. To draw on the example of bovine animals, since they are the focus of this work here, animal geographers have conceptualized the cow only within the context of the hegemonic system of animal agriculture. Work on cows explores the increasing role of technology in dairy production in contrast with earlier, less technologically advanced methods of production (e.g., Holloway et al 2014a; Holloway & Morris 2008; Holloway 2007). This literature produces insights that new technologies of automated milking machines allow cows to exercise more freedom in the milking process; in other words, that these new technologies allow cows to “choose” to be milked (Holloway et al 2014b; Stuart et al 2013). Even within this literature, scholars recognize the limitations of seeing animals as inherently agricultural subjects – that alienation in production will persist in contexts where profit is prioritized over the lives and wellbeing of those involved (Stuart et al 2013). And indeed, the welfare of farmed animals is often understood in the context of how improved welfare benefits commodity production, and in turn, the welfare itself is also commodified in the marketing of the commodity products (Buller & Roe 2013).

Similarly, cultural studies of milk have focused on the role of milk in cultural contexts around the world. Milk has been explored in the context of understanding the history of rituals and beliefs relating to the production and consumption of milk around the world, culminating in the current widespread belief that milk is a contemporary nutritional staple (Valenze 2011). Melanie DuPuis (2002) outlines the history of how milk became a ubiquitous staple in the American diet with particular emphasis on the political-economic and cultural conditions that promoted the widespread consumption of cow's milk. Other analyses focus on the social, political, and economic dimensions of milk and its transformation from production as part of a cottage industry to industrialization (Nimmo 2012). Another dimension of the history of milk is the effort to control and standardize milk as a substance under the legal, scientific and practical guidelines of dairy production (Atkins 2010). Conflicting nutritional treatises on the healthfulness of dairy show that milk is currently a hotly contested nutritional topic: some argue for the healthfulness of cow's milk as an integral part of the diet (e.g., Patton 2005), others argue for the consumption of only raw cow's milk (e.g., Schmid 2009), while still others offer evidence of the deleterious effects of cow's milk on the human body (e.g., Keon 2010; Campbell & Campbell 2006). Milk is a ubiquitous commodity product and the 'dairy cow' an important part of the U.S. American imaginary about production and consumption. And yet, a nuanced analysis of the cow herself tends to be absent from accounts.

In the majority of work on meat, dairy and egg production, animals are understood as being members of a population or species and not as individuals in their

own right. Animals on farms are understood in the context of domestication histories and practices (Anderson 1997), farming technologies (Holloway 2007; Urbanik 2007; Holloway & Morris 2008), subjectivities (Hobson 2007; Johnston 2013), global processes of commodity extraction (Emel & Neo 2011), as workers in their own right (Porcher & Schmitt 2012; Stuart et al 2013), and in the inter-individual and collective interactions between humans and animals on farms (Porcher 2006). Even in work on animal welfare, welfare is often understood in terms of the individual as part of a population and is often couched in the implications of welfare for productivity and public perception (e.g., Grandin 2010; Buller & Morris 2003; Buller & Roe 2013). Farmed animals, except in the case of very small scales such as the animal on hobby farms (Holloway 2001), are a category of animal life not frequently rendered visible at the site of the singular animal.

Buller (2013b) observes the ways in which embodied animals are made visible only at particular moments in the process of their commodification. For example, at the moment of slaughter animals are killed individually, or when an animal becomes sick and stands out apart from the herd or flock (Buller 2013b). Foucault's governmentality is useful here as a lens through which to understand the connections between control and dominance of individual bodies versus populations. In particular, his distinction between anatomo-politics and biopolitics reveals the ways in which the politics of the wellbeing and management of the individual body and populations intersect (see Brown & Knopp 2010 for a discussion of the way these theories intersect on the ground; also, Foucault 1978, 2003, 2007, 2009). The politics of these intersections draw attention to the way the control of the population (and the abstracting nature of analysis at the

scale of only the population) is reliant on anatamo-politics, in other words, the disciplining of the individual body. Conversely, anatamo-political analyses that look only at the state and institutional management of the individual body and do not 'scale up' to the population risk a specificity that does not take into account the biopolitical (or population-based) implications of this control. Sophie, then, is an important anatamo-political subject through which to understand the impacts of commodification and control on the animal body, but she is also a lens through which to conceptualize the biopolitical dimensions of cows used for dairy as a species. What made Sophie stand out from the herd was the fact that she was one of the few cows used for dairy who have made it to sanctuary. Yet, in spite of these extraordinary circumstances, my intention here is to focus not so much on the exceptional aspects of animal lives (though they are certainly there) but on the mundane details that make their lives characteristic of other cows raised for dairy in the United States. Thus, the intersection of anatamo- and bio-politics is integral for studying the impacts of political economic processes of commodification on the lived experience of cows raised for dairy in the United States.

Philo notes the difficulty of trying to understand the experience of animal life – “what animals possibly think, feel, experience, intend, etc.” – in particular because we may intentionally shy away from this type of research to “avoid the dangers of anthropomorphism” (2005: 829). Careful anthropomorphism (Johnston 2008), though, is necessary to attempt to understand animal life, and the perpetual fear of anthropomorphizing is limiting the forward trajectory of studying nonhuman animal lives in the social and natural sciences (Bekoff 2000). “By engaging in

anthropomorphism – using human terms to explain animals’ emotions or feelings – humans make other animals’ worlds accessible to themselves” (Bekoff 2000: 867; see also Allen and Bekoff 1997; Crist 1999). In order to come to know animals’ experience in the way I am advocating here, we must take up the project of careful, critical anthropomorphism in spite of these fears and aversions. We must try to know and understand the way animals experience the processes to which we subject them and explore our ethical and political responsibilities to them as a result. Of course, this rendering of animal experience will be ‘partial, contingent and incomplete’ (Whatmore 2002); we cannot fully know an animal’s experience, just as we cannot fully know another human’s experience. And, importantly, the animals’ experience will be formulated here, not only through my perspective as the researcher, but through the farm and sanctuary workers and other humans involved in the shared telling of these animals’ stories. This critical reflection on the problematic dimensions of ‘knowing an animal’s experience’ is vitally important. And yet, at the same time, if we do not attempt to understand this experience, “animals – in detail, up close, face-to-face, as it were – [will] still remain somewhat shadowy presences” in our research (Philo 2005: 829) and, perhaps more importantly, in our ethical and political considerations.

In response, the intellectual contribution of this text for the animal geographies literature is in demonstrating the way research that focuses on the embodied animal provides a more robust conceptualization of the ethical and political dimensions of animal use. In part, this lack in the animal geographies literature is due to the aversion to focusing work on the embodied animal. But animal geographers have also been

largely unwilling to confront the violence of animal agriculture as an institution characterized by relations of human dominance and the subordination of animals.

The Global Intimate: Towards an Inclusion of Nonhuman Animals

As a way to respond to this need for work that attends to the lived experience of animals, the ethical and political implications of this experience, *and* understands the violent nature of animal agriculture as an institution, I draw on the framework of the global intimate. Bringing the global intimate to bear on animal geographies literature offers entry into the lived experience of animals in the dairy industry, while it simultaneously attends to the global, political and economic forces impacting these lives. Thus far, the global intimate has been theorized only in the context of human experience and, as such, this project extends the global intimate to other-than-human bodies in order to expand our circle of who we care for and about and engage more deeply in how political economic forces impact all lives and bodies – human and nonhuman. Bringing together literatures on animal geographies and the global intimate responds to the gaps in each and extends work on both to develop a more attentive animal geography and a more robust theorization of the global intimate.

The global intimate is a geographical theoretical approach that attends to the intertwined relationships among global political economies and power relations, and intimate bodies and experiences. It is an approach that attempts to “disrupt grand narratives of global relations by focusing on the specific, the quotidian, and the eccentric” (Pratt & Rosner 2006: 14). The intimate is connected deeply to this quotidian,

everyday experience and the way global processes are understood in the context of intimate, everyday life. The intimate can be understood as “embodied social relations that include mobility, emotion, materiality, belonging, [and] alienation” (Mountz & Hyndman 2006: 14). Everyday experience cannot be divorced from global processes, and the global intimate is a lens through which we can know the global through the intimate and vice versa (Pratt & Rosner 2012). Feminist analyses of globalization processes urge us to engage in research that ‘cuts across various scales’ and views local and global scales as co-constituted (Nagar et al 2002). Similarly, the intimate is not just conceptualized as the everyday in the here and now, but it attends to the subtle “interconnectedness to everyday intimacies in other places and times” (Mountz & Hyndman 2006: 14). This interconnectedness of experience across space and time, then, makes global intimate analyses relevant far beyond a particular case study, and carries implications for understanding the impacts of global processes on other bodies and lives, near and far, human and nonhuman.

The global and the intimate emerged in response to feminist critiques of the common invocation of the global/local framework. Feminist scholars argue that global/local relations reproduce a binary aligned with the masculine/feminine (Freeman 2001). The global is typically associated with masculinity, reasoned analysis, theory and objectivity and the local is associated with femininity, emotion and embodiment; the local is acted upon, rather than being a source of action like the global (Pratt & Rosner 2006). The global/local binary also “imaginatively constructs the local as a defense against powerful global forces in a way that seems to confirm the force and

inevitability of certain modes of global capitalist expansion” (Pratt & Rosner 2006: 14; Massey 2005; Gibson-Graham 1996; Grewal & Kaplan 1994). This is seen in the food localization movement (explored later) whereby sourcing food locally, from small farmers, is seen as a defense against global industrialization when, in fact, these practices may reproduce the very system of global capitalism they are meant to oppose. Setting the global and the local in opposition to one another has the potential to elide important nuances and points of contact, collision, and change that may emerge in the co-constitution and overlap of scales. Replacing the local with the intimate intentionally moves away from the false dichotomy of the global/local and instead looks at the interdependence and interactions occurring across scales (Pratt & Rosner 2006).

My deployment of the global intimate here is relevant for those interested in cross-scalar analyses, and I have intentionally engaged the global intimate as a lens to more accurately theorize the nuances of this ethnographic study specifically and the relationship between intimate bodies and global political economic processes of commodification more broadly. Following global intimate scholars (Pratt & Rosner 2006, 2012; Mountz & Hyndman 2006), I argue that the global intimate is a productive and under-utilized framework through which we can better understand global and local processes and impacts across scales. Current work on the global intimate lacks attention to more-than-human bodies, however, and I argue here for a careful and in-depth theorization of the animal body in dairy production to illustrate the potential for extending this framework to bodies and lives beyond the human. My aim in this project is to take up and illustrate the theoretical potential of the global intimate and to extend

the global intimate to involve a consideration of nonhuman bodies through nuanced attention to global political economy, the body, the everyday, and the animal.

The intimate is embodied in feminist attention to the 'everyday.' This is an important and often overlooked realm of social life and everyday life is often linked to analyses of social reproduction, which is "as much the fleshy, messy and indeterminate stuff of everyday life as it is a set of structured practices that unfold in dialectical relation to production, with which it is mutually constitutive and in tension" (Katz 2001: x). Katz (2001) argues that as a geographical lens, a critical interpretation of the social reproduction of the everyday reveals that certain practices, processes and structures are not inevitable or natural – in fact these everyday conditions are produced and maintained through their social reproduction. The everyday, in this context, is essential for critically understanding both the everyday, lived impact on animal bodies and the way these practices get normalized through their repetition and a routine mundanity of agricultural practice. The 'everyday' is a site for potential liberatory knowledge-making practices about the animal's lived experience, and it is also a potentially oppressive site whereby practices are made routine and are, in the process, normalized and depoliticized.

Emel et al (2002) urge animal geographies to focus future research on economies of animal bodies and an important aspect of this analysis should focus on the ways in which animal bodies have power exercised over them through technological interventions (Rasmussen 2012). Looking at work on the *human* body, we gain valuable insights about the lived experience of global processes, the way

these processes are written on the body, and the way bodies impact other bodies and global processes. Geographers recognize that the body is an important site of social structuration and exercise of power (Johnston and Longhurst 2010; Brown 2000; Duncan 1998; Nast and Pile 1998; Butler 1993). As the 'geography of the closest in,' the body is among the most intimate sites for understanding the impacts of political economic processes and power relations (Rich 1986: 212). The body is inherently geographical as an entity existing in place and as a place itself (McDowell 1999). The body is fundamentally an everyday place and we are each familiar with what it is to have a body – what it is to be *embodied* – in a mundane, ordinary way (Nast and Pile 1998). It is precisely because we are all embodied and have some understanding of what that means that I begin this text with the embodied vignette of the cow. It is also why I spend the remainder of the text exploring the animal's everyday lived experience and the discourses governing this experience, the places in which control of these bodies is reproduced, the politics limiting access to this kind of knowledge and the systems of education that reproduce these relations. This everydayness of being embodied, combined with the mundane (and at times painful) realities of our bodies breaking down, aging, getting injured, etc., is a potential site for empathizing with human and nonhuman others and expanding our circle of who we care for and about to more distant others, like the cow. Honing in on the gendered/sexualized component of thinking about these bodies, I draw attention to a specificity of everyday experience: the body as an important site for understanding the gendered, sexed subject (Longhurst 2005). In addition to drawing attention to the body for the

sake of understanding the animal subject, this analysis makes connections across scales as it ties together the global and the intimate (Mountz & Hyndman 2006; Pratt & Rosner 2012).

In the case of bovine animals in the dairy industry, the body is literally an intimate subject of gendered commodification and it is *through* places like farms, auction yards, expos, and the body spaces of humans in the industry that the animal is materially and discursively constructed and reproduced as a gendered commodity in the global political economy of animal agriculture. Attention to this everydayness of the animal body reflects the uneven, problematic power relations at work in commodifying the gendered animal body and the sexualized violence that results from these power relations in order to ‘make theory out of the practices of the everyday’ (Pratt & Rosner 2012).

The intimate in the global intimate, then, brings together the everyday and the body to reveal the impacts of routine, mundane processes on the body. Taken together, these provide a rich entry point for understanding the way structural conditions (policies, practices, norms, etc.) impact lives and bodies. Gill Valentine writes that, “the scaling up of [...] geographies of intimacy [...] have a political outcome [and demonstrate] more effectively the significance of power and affective relations within, and to, the global economy” (2008: 2106). While this literature on intimacy and the body does not address the animal body or the animal’s everyday experience of political economic process, I argue that extending this literature to include animals will fill a gap

in the literature and provide a more robust conceptualization of the global intimate that encompasses more than just human experience.

The etymology of the word ‘intimate’ traces back to the Latin *intimare*, which means ‘to impress or make familiar’ (Mountz & Hyndman 2006). My intent is to, in the spirit of the global intimate, make animals and their experiences of the dairy industry familiar as a way of better understanding the violent impacts of global political economic processes of agriculture, industrialization, and commodification on animal bodies. In addition, I argue that human intimates are impacted by, and shape, political processes through agricultural legislation, and that human individuals and institutions reproduce the broader, global institution of animal agriculture (and the impacts on intimate animals) through various forms of agricultural education. The global intimate, then, is a frame for understanding and making sense of the multi-faceted conditions that converge to create and maintain the violence of routine animal agriculture.

The framework of the global intimate allows us to see and understand the consequences of the commodification of the body and it opens possibilities for rethinking how we value other bodies and lives. Seeing the cow as a global intimate, and grieving the routine violence she and others experience, necessarily politicizes an intentionally depoliticized understanding of animals in agriculture. Through this process of making legible the political and ethical dimensions of animal use, we expand our circle of who we care for and about to include animals. Instead of seeing the cow as an abstract commodity embedded in an inevitable global structure of agricultural use, we can understand the oppression and marginalization of the animal and the gendered

violence and commodification to which she/he is subjected through the routine practices of commodity production.

Situating the Research: Scale and Location in U.S. Dairy Production

Between 1970 and 2006, the number of dairy farms in the United States decreased by 88%, the number of cows in the U.S. herd fell from 12 million in 1970 to 9.2 million in 2013 and, simultaneously, milk production doubled (USDA n.d.). More recently, between 2001 and 2009, the number of operations with milk cows declined by 33% and milk production increased by 15% while the number of cows in the U.S. dairy herd remained relatively steady with an increase of 1% in that same period (USDA 2010). Meanwhile, USDA (2010) records show that between 1970 and 2006 the number of large-scale farms (those housing 500 or more cows) increased by 20% and, in particular, those with 2,000 or more cows increased drastically – by 128%. The largest dairies in the United States house well over 15,000 cows, while the more common large-scale dairies house between 1,000 and 5,000 cows (USDA n.d.). The number of small farms (with fewer than 500 cows) declined by 35% between 2001 and 2009 (USDA 2010) and the number of the smallest farms (with fewer than 30 cows) accounted for nearly 30% of the total number of US dairy farms, even though they produced just 1% of all milk (USDA n.d.). This trend indicates consolidation in the industry – meaning that fewer cows are producing more milk on fewer farms than ever before – as small farms close in favor of more industrial-scale production. This documents a process familiar throughout much of modern agriculture – the consolidation and intensification of food production (e.g.,

Weis 2007; Schlosser 2001; Berry 1997; Cronon 1991) – which magnifies the impact on human and non-human animal bodies.

Geographically, dairy production is growing in the Western United States and large-scale dairies in particular are increasing in Western states. California is by far the most productive state for dairy production, accounting for 20.9% of all US dairy production (USDA 2010). Seventy-four percent of all US dairy production in 2009 occurred in the top ten dairy-producing states (in descending order of percentages of overall production): California (20.9%), Wisconsin (13.3%), New York (6.6%), Idaho (6.4%), Pennsylvania (5.6%), Minnesota (4.8%), Texas (4.7%), Missouri (4.2%), New Mexico (4.2%) and Washington (2.9%) (USDA 2010).

I chose to focus my fieldwork in California and Washington – both in the western United States to reflect the geographical shift of dairy production westward. As the largest dairy producing state in the country, California was an obvious choice.

California's Central Valley features many industrial scale dairies, some with upwards of 30,000 animals per farm and more than one fifth of national dairy is produced in the state (USDA 2010). Washington was chosen for different reasons. While Washington is in the top ten of dairy producing states, it accounts for only 2.9% of national production (USDA 2010). Washington was chosen for its unique geographical-agricultural climate around the Puget Sound region, featuring smaller-scale farms serving niche populations interested in supporting local, organic, and small-scale farmers (Jarosz 2009a). Looking at these two scales against one another is important in order to draw out the nuances of each scale of production. Studying only industrial scale production, and making an

argument about dairy production in general based on this scale alone, for instance, erases the particularities of important scalar differences, as well as the opportunity to report the (at times, striking) similarities between the two.

Discourses in popular food politics literature emphasize that small scale animal agriculture is more ‘humane,’ better for the environment, supports local communities, and produces higher quality animal products (e.g., Kingsolver 2008; Pollan 2007; Waters 2007). This growing movement toward local, seasonal, sustainable eating asserts that there are radical differences between small, local production and industrial production. Indeed, there are some important differences between small and industrial scale production, but the emphasis on small-scale production as the ethical and sustainable path forward in the context of animal agriculture elides important similarities between the two relating to the gendered commodification of animal bodies at both scales and the routine violence experienced by these lives and bodies.

Small scale production gets framed in the scale of the local, while industrial production gets delocalized and enters the realm of global. This calls up the critique outlined above in which the local is constructed as a defense against the inevitable tide of globalization. And certainly this can be seen in popular media, like the 2009 documentary film *Food, Inc.*, which harshly condemns industrial animal agriculture (i.e., factory farming) and positions small-scale, local meat, dairy and egg producers as the ethical alternative. The story told in the narrative that promotes local animal products is that consumption of animals is a given, and that if we buy less meat, dairy and eggs, and if we buy the “right kind,” we can continue our participation in the capitalist food

system uninterrupted and ethically unscathed. Yet the consumption of these alternatively sourced animal products sets up a false local/global dichotomy which the lens of the global intimate helps us to reveal by drawing attention to the way these scales are co-constituted. Local, small-scale consumption of animal products is not a radically different alternative to the current system of meat, dairy and egg consumption and it currently only accounts for less than 1% of production (Safran Foer 2009). First, those who make a commitment to support local sources of animal products will typically not avoid animal products that are produced industrially when eating outside of the home (in restaurants, as guests at the homes of family or friends, at work functions, etc.), making consumption of these products a norm only when they are available and convenient (Safran Foer 2009). Second, the consumption of local, alternatively sourced animal products in the U.S. is typically embedded in conditions of race and class privilege, as critiques of the local food movement more generally illustrate (e.g., Guthman 2008; Slocum 2007). Only certain consumers in positions of privilege have physical and economic access to these products. Finally, as will be demonstrated throughout this text, while scale of production may improve some conditions for animals raised for food, it does not erase other important similarities in the violence against animal bodies in places of agricultural production. Thus, the framework of the global and the intimate allows for a more nuanced non-binary view of the animal in agriculture, as it attends to scalar differences *and* leaves space for points of overlap and contact.

Research Design and Methods: A Multispecies Institutional Ethnography

Engaging with the gaps in the animal geographies and feminist global intimate literatures informed the kinds of research questions I posed for this project as well as the kinds of methods needed to answer these questions. In order to feature the embodied animal and fill a gap in animal geographies informed by the global intimate, I posed the question: what are the impacts of political economy and commodification on the intimate animal body? Related to this question, I also found it important to provide a more robust picture of the political conditions that impact farmed animals as a way to understand the intellectual implications of looking at the global and the intimate together. Thus, I asked: how might human and animal lives shape, and be shaped by, political processes? For this reason, the narratives at the beginning of each chapter are focused on intimate stories – both human and nonhuman animal stories -- to provide a fuller conceptualization of the ways in which human and animal political processes cannot be divorced from one another. Finally, I was interested in how this analysis travels beyond this particular case study to understand the ways in which a hegemonic institution, like animal agriculture, gets continually reproduced through legal-political, material, and discursive mechanisms. And so my final research question asked: how is the institution of animal agriculture reproduced through material and discursive practices, political and legal mechanisms, and educational paradigms?

My methods reflect the theoretical frameworks outlined here: this research was conducted as an *institutional ethnography* (reflecting the global intimate), informed by the recent methodological trend in anthropology of the *multispecies ethnography*

(reflecting work featuring the animal in the social sciences). The *institutional ethnography*, as a primary method embodying the politics and practice of the global intimate, is characterized by asking “subordinated groups about ‘how things work’ [...in order to] discover institutional practices that shape their realities” (Smith 1978; Babbie 2005: 308). “This approach links the ‘microlevel’ of the everyday personal experiences with the ‘macrolevel’ of institutions” (Babbie 2005: 308). Institutional ethnographies involve interviewing, observation and document as data, but depart from other forms of ethnography by “treating those data not as the topic or object of interest, but as ‘entry’ into the social relations of the setting” (Campbell 1998: 57). Thus, researching the bovine animal used in dairy production through interviews, observation and textual analysis gives us entry into both the lives of animals in the dairy industry and the institution of animal agriculture more broadly.

The *multispecies ethnography* brings those formerly situated in “the realm of *zoe* or “bare life” – that which is killable – [into] the realm of *bios*, with legibly biographical and political lives” (Kirksey & Helmreich 2010: 545; cf Agamben 1998). This ethnographic approach aims to make visible the political and ethical dimensions of intimate animal lives. Multispecies ethnographies focus on “how a multitude of organisms’ livelihoods shape and are shaped by political, economic, and cultural forces” (Kirksey & Helmreich 2010: 545). Bringing together the multispecies and institutional ethnographic traditions enables the study of the impacts of institutional processes on nonhuman lives, as well as the way these lives shape and are shaped by hegemonic structures, like agriculture.

To perform this *multispecies institutional ethnography*, I engaged in nine months of intensive fieldwork, employing qualitative social science research methods – participant observation and interviews, and drawing on textual analysis. My fieldwork was centered on five different types of field sites: the farm, the auction, the sanctuary, the expo, and the fair. The farm was essential for understanding the site where animals in the dairy industry spend the majority of their lives and where their commodification is embodied in everyday production practices. The auction allowed me to see the literal commodification of the animal in the form of sale, and the transition site between farms and between farm and slaughterhouse. The sanctuary offered an alternative place where animals are generally not commodified for their productive and reproductive capacities and where the lasting impacts of a former life in the dairy industry can be observed in the animal’s body and life. The expo offered a site to explore the role of advertising and technological innovation and the role of agribusiness in industry practices. Finally, the fair was a site to explore the role of show in dairy production and the role of childhood educational programs, like 4-H, in reproducing the practices of animal agriculture across generations.

I conducted in-depth interviews with sanctuary workers, a dairy farmer, and individuals formerly involved with 4-H and university agricultural animal science programs. These interviews provided necessary first-person accounts of routine practices in dairy production, the role of human involvement in the lives of animals, and human involvement in the reproduction of farming animals. I engaged in participant observation in 5 different farmed animal auctions at two different

Washington State auction yards. I attended and observed as a participant the World Dairy Expo and the Washington State Fair’s 4-H dairy day. I participated in tours of a dairy farm in the Puget Sound area of Washington State and two sanctuaries for formerly farmed animals in northern California. The nature of participant observation varied in these different places. Gold’s (1958) continuum (see Figure 3) indicates a continuum of participation and observation from full observation at one end and full participation at the other.

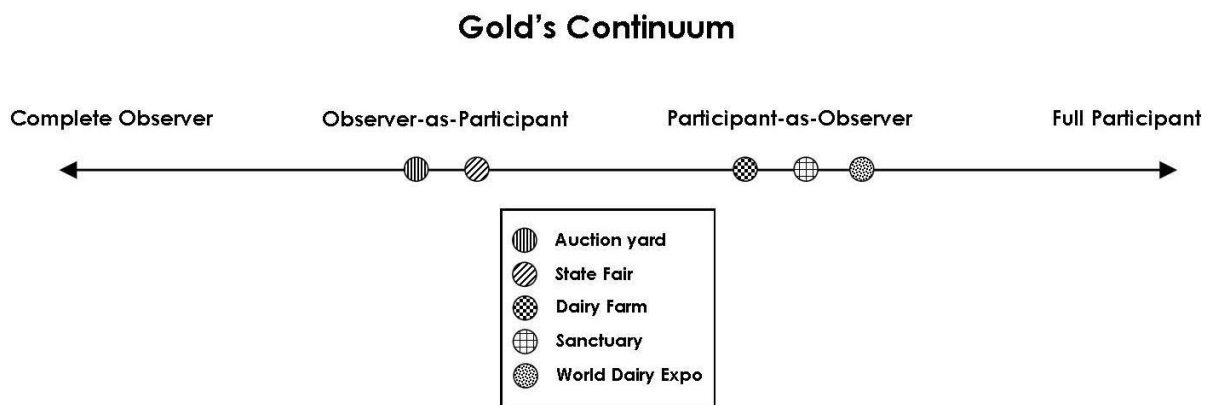


Figure 3: Gold’s Continuum; source: Gold 1958; reproduced and personalized by Gillespie, 2014

On this scale, my participation in the auctions was characterized by ‘observer-as-participant’. I did not participate in the buying/ selling of animals; I sat in the audience as a spectator and observed. At the Word Dairy Expo, my participant observation involved ‘participant-as-observer’; I visited each booth, collected industry literature and advertising materials, attended public presentations, and interacted with industry representatives. At the Washington State Fair, like the auction yard, my participant

observation was more heavily observation focused; I attended the fair as a spectator, watched the 4-H dairy show, and explored the animal barns and displays related to animal agriculture. I was a more active participant in the farm and sanctuary tours, where I asked many questions, listened to the tour narrative, and took photographs of the animals and their surroundings.

Textual analysis for this research involved both content and discourse analyses. I performed a manifest and latent content analysis of relevant legal documents governing animals' lives in the dairy industry and those governing access to places of agricultural production at the state and federal level. This built on earlier research conducted for my master's thesis regarding animal welfare legislation and laws regulating the slaughter of animals for food in the United States. This content analysis helped to provide the necessary background for understanding how animals' bodies in the food system are regulated and how these regulations may suggest different conceptualizations of commodification, or barriers thereto. I completed a content and discourse analysis of industry handbooks for dairy production practices (e.g., instructions for artificial insemination, feeding manuals, instructions for semen extraction, etc.). These documents came from various sources, including industry companies and university agricultural extension programs, and helped me to understand industry norms for routine dairy production practices and their instrumental involvement with animal bodies. I also performed textual research to understand peripheral but essential industries to dairy production – the veal farm, the breeding farm, the slaughterhouse, and the rendering plant. Finally, I performed a discourse analysis of industry

advertising materials (e.g., semen catalogs, vaccine suppliers, animal housing companies, etc.) to understand how these processes are conceptualized by the industry itself. These discourses embodied common themes – humor as a distraction, gendering of animal bodies, simultaneous acknowledgement and obscuration of the violence against the animal, etc.

Together, these qualitative methods of interviewing and participant observation as fieldwork, building on extensive textual research and analysis, provide the foundation for this ethnographic analysis of the lives of bovine animals in the dairy industry. My fieldwork at the farm, sanctuaries, and auction, in addition to content analysis of industry and agricultural extension manuals, were integral in answering my first research question about the impacts of commodification on intimate animal bodies and lives. A review of state and federal legal documents and texts written on the legal dimensions of animal agriculture, in conjunction with my fieldwork on the lived realities of animals, were integral to addressing my second research question on the way human and animal lives shape, and are shaped by, political processes. For my final research question on the reproduction of animal agriculture, I drew on my content analysis of legal documents to understand the legal-political reproduction of the system. I drew on my fieldwork at the World Dairy Expo and discourse analysis of industry advertising materials to shed light on the discursive violence and reproduction of the system. And I explored the educational paradigms that work to reproduce and resist the institution of animal agriculture in my fieldwork at the fair, my content and

discursive analysis of 4-H materials, and during my time at the sanctuaries for formerly farmed animals.

Politics of Research Design

When I began the research process, my proposed methods were different from those that I ended up employing to access data about the dairy industry. Originally I had planned to apply an established ethnographic methodological trend of academic fieldwork on the meat industry to my own work on the dairy industry. Other scholars have found success in accessing places of meat production through obtaining work as undercover researchers (e.g., Pachirat 2011; Striffler 2007). These studies involve researchers obtaining a job in the industry without disclosing their position as a researcher and, thus, this method involves deception. This deception is justified by the argument that it is increasingly one of the only ways to gain access to these places. I planned to gain access to both an industrial and small scale dairy farm through obtaining work for several months in each and, in this way, engage in a classic long-term in-depth ethnographic study of these sites.

I began the required ethics review board approval process for research involving human subjects with the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Washington and quickly learned, in preliminary phone conversations with IRB staff members, that deception would decidedly not be approved for this kind of research project. Deception, I was told, was appropriate only for medical research projects where it was necessary to deceive subjects about whether they were going to be given an

active medication, or a placebo, for example. I would be granted permission to approach industrial dairy farms only if I fully disclosed my position as a researcher and went through the formal approach and request process to interview and observe the operations at the facility. I was told in this phone conversation that approving deception in this case would open the university up to liability issues.

The politics of the ethics review process impacting the research design of social scientists is nothing new and the process of ethics review is often highly bureaucratic and ambivalent in nature (Martin 2007; Valentine 2005). Geographers have argued that medical models of ethics review are not appropriate for most social science research; in fact, they often stand in the way of geographers and social scientists conducting research that interrogates ethically-motivated questions in the first place (Dyer and Demeritt 2009). Importantly, ethics is not a “kind of rational, distanced, objective reflection”; rather, “ethical reflection is a relational and situated process, less about being distanced and objective, and more about recognizing how our ethical decisions are shaped by our social and material environment” (Greenhough 2007: 1140). Thus, an ethics review board that does not attend to the relationship and subjective dimensions of intra- and interspecies social relations limits the kind of qualitative research questions that can be asked and answered.

The ethics review process I underwent was further complicated by the involvement of animals in my research. The fact that I would be conducting research in places where I would have contact with farmed animals meant that I also had to acquire approval from the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). The IACUC

is primarily dedicated to overseeing the use of animals in medical research and the review process is heavily tailored to this particular use of animals in academic research. As part of the approval process, both my supervisor and I had to complete an online Animal Use Training Program to ensure we engaged in ethical research practices (AUTP 2013). During the Animal Use Laws and Regulations Training, we were tested on legal guidelines for laboratory research and use of animals, the species-specific approved methods of 'euthanasia' at the end of a protocol, and the 'Three Rs' - reduction, refinement, and replacement - designed to improve the welfare of animals in medical research. In fact, while the three Rs are important, they also work to belie ethical questions about the place of animals in medical research in the first place (Davies 2012: 9). Because this training program and ethics review process was designed explicitly for research involving animals in medical research, my project fell in an in-between space of a sort of ethics review board 'no man's land'. The review process was not designed to handle animals as subjects of research outside of a laboratory setting. For example, through this online training, I learned the best methods for decapitating rats, but nothing about appropriate conduct relating to cows living on sanctuaries or farms. I was required to follow all guidelines and laws governing animal husbandry on the farms I visited. However, since the only federal legislation protecting farmed animals in the United States is the Humane Methods of Livestock Slaughter Act (HMSA), 'ethical' research protocols in this case were limited to not violating 'humane handling' during the slaughter process (which I was not involved in at all). My research attempted to study animal subjects in a similar method to the way human subjects are

studied, not in the way animals are traditionally used in research. I was attempting an ethnography of the animal and the IACUC was not equipped to meaningfully assess the ethical nature of my work primarily because of the way animals are valued as research subjects. If I had been drawing blood from a cow, pig or dog in the laboratory and conducting research on this blood, the IACUC would have been well-equipped to regulate my research according to their standards relating to animal use. As I embarked on fieldwork where I would meet Sophie, however, the IACUC had little to offer by way of setting standards of ethical conduct with animals outside the laboratory.

This shortcoming in the way animals are conceptualized as research subjects is likely not unique to the University of Washington; rather, it is characteristic of a much more insidious and dominant view of animal more generally – that they are here for humans to use, and ethical practice involves ensuring that they do not suffer ‘unnecessarily’ during this use. Indeed, Dyer and Demeritt (2009) acknowledge that while human ethics review boards assess the ethical nature of some dimensions of research, they also do not address many ethically questionable structures of power, hierarchy and inequality. As such, research that challenges the conceptualization of animals as commodities in ethics review processes (in medical research, in food production, etc.) is still very much an outlier in the academic setting. As this kind of fieldwork involving animals becomes more common in places outside of the laboratory, it will be necessary to develop more extensive guidelines and protocols for researchers conducting this kind of research. Of course, this will necessarily involve a reconceptualization of how we think about ethical practice relating to animals.

Throughout the lengthy process of human and animal subjects ethics review, I worked to redesign the project in order to meet restrictions from the IRB. Because I would not be able to engage in undercover research in industrial scale facilities and small scale dairy farms, I designed the research according the requirements for full disclosure to the farms I contacted. I began by attempting to gain access, as an academic researcher, to industrial and small scale farms and made contact with 5 large-scale dairy farms and 16 small-scale dairy farms throughout Washington, Oregon and Northern California. I explained that I was a researcher and would like to tour the farm, observe the process of dairy production, and interview farmers involved with the process. Based on friendly informal conversations I had had with booth workers at local farmers markets, I was anticipating that smaller scale dairies would be open to having me visit and ask questions about the process of dairy production. Further, many of these small farms' websites welcome visitors and operate with the façade of full disclosure. For example, one Puget Sound area dairy, Samish Bay Cheese, writes on its website, "We think our animals have a good life here. We invite you to visit and judge for yourself" (Samish Bay Cheese 2013). When I inquired about visiting for a brief tour and interview with the farmers working there, I was denied (the owner cited that he was simply too busy for that sort of thing). When I asked about visiting during another season when the farm was less busy, I was denied again. Other small farms cited time constraints as a reason for denying me the opportunity to visit the farm, but the most common reason cited by small farmers for barring me access to visit was 'biosecurity.' Biosecurity refers to efforts to reduce or eliminate the transmission of infectious disease among animals

raised for food that have grown more common with the intensifying industrialization of farming animals and the risk of these diseases being intentionally spread as a form of bioterrorism. One farmer said, “It’s the FDA/USDA rules – we can’t have people walking in and out of the plant.” When I asked another farmer what he meant by biosecurity, he got flustered and got off the phone quickly, unable to answer the question. Biosecurity, then, seems to operate not so much as a legitimate fear of contamination or a bioterrorist attack, but as an industry-state sanctioned buzz word emerging from the post-9/11 political climate (explored in Chapter 2) in which anyone could be the target of terrorist activity and the food industry, in particular, could be a vulnerable target for biological terrorism.

Most large-scale dairies in the Pacific Northwest contract milk from smaller suppliers who exclusively produce milk for that company. Some of these large companies are cooperatively owned, whereas others are straight contract relationships. Several of these larger companies use a combination of industrial-scale production on 3,000+ head dairies (and even larger in California) and smaller individual dairy contractors. These large-scale farms also cited biosecurity as a reason for barring access. One large Oregon dairy stated that they did not offer tours or even the names of the supplier farms for reasons of privacy and biosecurity. A representative from another large Washington dairy stated that she “couldn’t even tell [me] the names of the farms [they] use” to supply their milk. When I pursued contacting this particular company further, I was told that the farms they work with do not allow visitors because of “safety issues and health codes.”

Out of 21 farms with which I was able to make contact, I was permitted to visit only one farm – Ansel Farm, the 500 cow dairy described in chapter 4. I arrived at the farm, which uses the milk from the cows to make cheese onsite, and met the farmer with whom I had spoken on the phone. He was well into his 80s and had been raised on a dairy farm in Wisconsin. A dairy farmer all his life, he was an expert in the process of raising, milking, breeding, and caring for cows in dairy production. As he showed me around the farm, it became clear that he was from a different time and I wondered if perhaps that was why I had been permitted to visit this particular farm. He reminisced about the way dairy farming used to be and the technological changes and consolidation in the industry he had seen in his lifetime. Privacy, biosecurity, closed doors to small farms – these were all more recent characteristics of the industry, and ones he had not completely adopted.

The other places I included in my fieldwork – the auction yard, the fair, the World Dairy Expo – were chosen partly for their public accessibility. While they are all public places, there were notable encroachments into these places relating to restricted access, privacy, and security. The World Dairy Expo, in service to greater privacy and restricted access, had a number of booths dedicated to state-of-the-art farm security systems, designed to keep out thieves, activists, or any prying eyes trying to see how the farm operated. Some auction yards have signs that explicitly state, “NO PHOTOGRAPHY ALLOWED,” echoing repressive agricultural legislation sweeping the United States. And in auctions I attended where there were no signs preventing photography, I felt disciplined by the audience itself. I was keenly aware, after I tried to

pull out my phone and snap a photo of one of the animals, that taking photographs was not only inappropriate, it made me stand out as even more of an outsider than I already was (I was told on more than one occasion that I was clearly a “city girl” in spite of my efforts to blend in).

If I had been able to use ethics review board approved deception in my research and obtain work in the industry and/or embed myself in these places more fully without disclosing my positionality as a researcher, I could have perhaps accessed more information about the lives of animals in the dairy industry, the behind-the-scenes workings of the industry, and the routine practices of each phase of commodifying the animal. Pachirat (2011), for instance, for his PhD dissertation, obtained work in a Nebraska slaughterhouse by concealing his identity as an academic researcher. The result was an ethnographic account of slaughterhouse work in the three different jobs he held during his time there (a liver hanger, a worker driving live animals into the chutes, and a quality control officer). Because I was denied IRB approval to obtain employment by concealing my identity, my research was limited in certain ways. I certainly do not provide an ethnographic account of working in the dairy industry here. What I realized, though, throughout my own evolving research process, is that the ethnographic account I provide here is multispecies and multi-sited and is less about my own experience and more about trying to capture the impacts *on the animal* of dairy production. This multispecies, multi-sited ethnography is precisely the type of research that was needed to understand the lifecourse of the animals (the cow, the bull, the calf) in dairy production. An ethnography of only one site (e.g., a dairy farm) would have

given me a one-dimensional account of the animal as an embodied, intimate subject and I would have missed the multi-faceted story of the animal's life in all its phases. Pachirat's account of slaughterhouse work (as well as Striffler's 2007 account of working undercover in a chicken slaughtering plant) was not actually about the animals' experience of these places. Instead, these texts were about the monotony and injustice of slaughterhouse labor, the political economy of labor relations, the violence of industrialization, etc. In retrospect, and after reading these and other ethnographies of the meat industry, I wonder how possible it is to tell a story about an animal from within a slaughterhouse or, in my case, from working within a dairy farm where the focus is so overtly on commodity production and extraction. Pachirat (2011) explains that the way the slaughterhouse is designed does highly effective work to segregate the killing and deconstruction of the body from the living, breathing animal. While these in-depth ethnographies focusing on one particular kind of place are highly effective for uncovering the human experience of these places, other modes of ethnographic work may be needed to access the animal's experience at the heart of these industries.

Although I was able to obtain a wealth of information about the animals used in dairy production and related industries without obtaining work in places of dairy production, slaughter, and other related industries, my research was still limited by this restricted access. Of crucial importance for future research on animals in animal use industries, the current political climate of increasing restrictions and repression will continue to further restrict and criminalize access to these places. In order to conduct research that fully grasps the intimate details of animals' lives and the impacts of

political economic processes of commodity production on those lives, access to the multiplicity of sites they inhabit is critical. This access is important for the improvement of animal welfare legislation protecting animals used in the industry *and* it is important for conducting rigorous academic research to produce scholarly accounts of animals' experiences of agricultural production.

The impacts on academic researchers of these increasingly repressive laws are potentially many beyond accessing places as research sites. This legal climate is implicated in criminalizing certain forms of academic research. Rik Scarce, for example, is a sociologist who was conducting research on the radical environmental movement in the early 1990s. He had confidentially interviewed members of the movement during his research and was later subpoenaed to testify before a grand jury in a case against Rod Coronado (a former research subject who was being accused of removing a number of animals from Washington State University's research facility). Scarce refused to testify, citing that it was a violation of research ethics and a breach of confidentiality. For refusing to testify, Scarce was imprisoned for 159 days (Lovitz 2010). Pachirat (2011) could have been prosecuted under ag gag laws had he conducted his research in 2013 in Iowa instead of Nebraska. Under Iowa's HF 589, Pachirat's ethnography of a slaughterhouse would have been illegal specifically because he obtained employment by concealing his identity as an academic researcher.

Repressive laws (explored in the next chapter) protecting industry interests (ag gag, AETA, etc.) and the current farmed animal welfare laws (or lack thereof) are reflective of a more widely held trend that conceptualizes animals as commodities and

prioritizes capitalist tenets of profit, efficiency, and innovation over ethical considerations for other species. This trend is primarily visible in the lax and largely nonexistent animal welfare legislation impacting farmed animals as industry interests are repeatedly privileged over even the most basic protections for animals. Laws that repress academics and activists in producing knowledge and sharing information about the realities of animals' lives inhibit the ability of humans to make change in the conditions under which animals are raised for food (or in thinking about whether they should be raised for food at all). This political climate simultaneously characterized by repressive laws relating to access and lax animal welfare legislation has very real implications for the animals living and dying in the dairy industry. And while the aim of my work here is specifically about making legible the lives of animals in the dairy industry, these politics are relevant for understanding the plight of animals in agriculture at large, as well as for animals used in other places, like those in laboratory research. And finally, the politics of research design here are important for thinking about how academic researchers concerned with the lives of nonhuman animals might design and reformulate studies that do not fit into the conventional models of research involving animals.

Outline

The remainder of this text responds to my research questions through four main themes: 1) a politics of law and access; 2) appropriating animal bodies through

gendered commodification and sexualized violence 3) material and discursive places of commodification; and 4) educational paradigms of human-farmed animal relations.

The first part of the text explores a politics of law and access by exploring access-limiting agricultural policies and animal welfare legislation to understand the political climate and legal background for understanding animals' place in the dairy industry. These modes of legal regulation create a repressive political climate whereby animals' lives and deaths are virtually unprotected and inquiry and opposition (through academic research and public advocacy) are repressed through barring access to places of agricultural production. This is important for a global intimate analysis of embodied animals in dairy production because of the ways which laws (or lack thereof) impact intimate lives and bodies.

Chapter 2 begins with the story of a downed cow outside a slaughter plant and Amy Meyer (the first person to be prosecuted under a state 'ag gag' law) to understand the increasingly repressive legal climate surrounding animal agriculture. Focusing on two examples - the federal Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act (AETA) and state "Ag-Gag" laws, I explore how laws like these are instrumental in limiting physical access to places of animal agriculture and creating a climate where dissent is increasingly categorized as terrorism. This is important for academics, activists and consumers interested in spaces of animal agriculture and it is also important for the reproduction of uneven power relations between humans and animals in animal agriculture. For animal geographers, in particular, these laws may inhibit research that aims to understand the embodied, specific experience of animals and their commodification.

Chapter 3 tells the story of the cow with sticker #743 at a California auction yard as an example of the real, embodied implications of the current animal welfare law and regulations. Animal welfare laws, particularly for farmed animals, are notoriously lax and insufficiently enforced. This chapter explains the current state of animal welfare legislation governing animals' lives in the food industry to further develop an analysis of the broader political climate of animal agriculture. Understanding animal welfare laws provides important empirical background information for understanding the relationship between the global and the intimate (the effects of structural practices, like law, and the intimate impacts of these legal structures on embodied animals) and the reproduction of animal agriculture as an institution more broadly.

The second part of the text focuses on the material, lived experience of the cow, bull, and calf to understand the gendered commodification and sexualized violence to which these bodies are subjected. These chapters are important for understanding the intimate animal as well as for understanding the 'scaling up' of this analysis to understand the way a population of animals (a dairy herd, for example) is a collective of suffering individuals. Further, the cow and the bull and their reproductive capabilities combine to produce the calf, entwining them all in the reproduction of the industry itself as they birth new generations of commodifiable beings.

Chapter 4 features the story of the heifer with ear tags #6490 living at Ansel Farm as a lens through which to understand the life of the 'dairy cow' and is the first of three chapters about the lived, embodied experience of animals in the dairy industry. Cows raised for dairy are subjected to the appropriation of their lives and bodies through

forced reproduction via artificial insemination. Their calves are removed hours after birth and the cow is moved into the milking string, where she is milked 300 days out of every year. She is re-impregnated annually and sent to slaughter when her milk production begins to decline. She is the female embodiment of the reproduction of animal agriculture birthing new commodity producers.

Chapter 5 tells the story of the bull with ear tag #7050 at a California 'livestock' auction in order to better understand the role of the bull in the dairy industry – raised on separate breeding farms where they are forcibly ejaculated in the production of semen for the artificial insemination of females. Like the cow, the bull is subject to sexualized violence through the collection of semen and will be slaughtered when his (re)productive capacity declines. He is the male embodiment of the reproduction of animal agriculture, supplying the semen that is integral in the generation of new commodifiable calves.

Chapter 6 highlights the story of the calf with ear tag #604 at a California 'livestock' auction as an entry into exploring the lived experience of calves in the dairy industry, from birth to the gendered appropriation of these bodies and the bodily mutilations they experience as part of the commodification process. If calves are born female, they are typically raised up in the dairy industry to replace their mothers as milk producers. Male calves, however, are generally considered a byproduct of dairy production, and dairy producers have no use for them (except for a few select bulls) and the majority are raised for 4-6 months for veal, while others are raised as steers for beef. The dairy industry is notably silent on the subject of male calves (and veal in

particular) even though approximately half of calves born in the dairy industry are male and will overwhelmingly be raised for veal.

The third part of the text highlights two particular places of commodification: 1) the auction yard as a site of material commodification, and 2) the World Dairy Expo as a place of discursive commodification. The geographies of these places are integral in the process of commodifying animals' bodies in the dairy industry. These places illustrate how place itself is materially and discursively constructed to manage, control, and maintain a logic of inter-species dominance between humans and animals.

Chapter 7 highlights the story of the cow with ear tag #1389 at a Washington auction yard to understand the tensions between containment and controlled mobility in the auction yard as key features of the commodification process. The auction yard is a place where the commodification of the animal body is laid bare. Each animal is assessed and sold based on their physical characteristics and their viability as milk, meat or semen producers. The circulation of animal capital at the auction highlights the way animals are made into lively commodities in the industry.

Chapter 8 features the story of Betsy, a cow shown at World Dairy Expo in Madison, Wisconsin in order to understand the connections between embodiment and discourse as they function to reproduce, reveal, and conceal the violence against the animal. Industry discourses about cows' and bulls' bodies reflect the violence of the system in the humor of advertising materials (e.g., semen catalogs, ads for vaccines, etc.). They also illustrate that the bull is also made to take responsibility for the violence against the cow. Advertising materials for the semen industry produce the cow as a

hyper-sexualized female wanting sex and the bull as a virile, icon of masculinity – a process which obscures the violence enacted on both bodies.

The fourth part of the text draws on two different examples of educational paradigms that are actively involved in defining human-farmed animal relations: 4-H programs and the farmed animal sanctuary. 4-H is a place where the tensions between the embodied animal and the abstracted animal are visible and where children learn to reproduce the institution of animal agriculture across generations. The sanctuary is a place where the intentional and repeated acknowledgement of the animal as a singular being works to reject animal agriculture as a hegemonic institution and imagine alternative human-farmed animal relations.

Chapter 9 opens with the story of Daniel and Daisy, a boy and the heifer he raised for 4-H. This chapter features 4-H's farmed animal program to understand how animal agriculture gets reproduced through teaching children to farm. In particular, this chapter explores the implications of youth education on the lives of animals and the relationships formed between children and animals in these places. Looking at education is essential for understanding how the structural mechanisms that keep animals, like the cow, in their place operate across time and space.

Chapter 10 uses the story of a cow, a calf, and Maggie Lake to understand shifting human-farmed animal relations (from a university animal science program to Animal Haven). This chapter explores the sanctuary as a place where the current conceptualization of animals as commodities is being contested and human-farmed animal relations actively redefined. The chapter outlines some of the more complicated,

morally ambiguous dimensions of sanctuaries as well as the potential for the sanctuary to be a geographical place of resistance, mourning, possibility and hope.

Finally, to conclude, the final chapter tells the story of a steer who escaped the auction yard and was shot by auction workers on the nearby country highway. The conclusion returns to the global intimate as a way to understand the impacts of commodification on intimate bodies – both human and nonhuman – and the way institutions of human dominance, like animal agriculture, are reproduced through material, discursive, legal, political and educational mechanisms of power and privilege. I propose a theory of multispecies grievability (drawing from Judith Butler and James Stanescu) as a way to politicize the lives and deaths of nonhuman animals. Finally, I conclude by reflecting on the limitations of this project and the possibilities for future research which this path of inquiry suggests.

PART 1: A POLITICS OF LAW AND (IN)ACCESS

CHAPTER 2. A 'Downer' Cow and Amy Meyer Access-limiting Agricultural Policies

On February 8, 2013, a living, immobile cow, termed a 'downer'⁵ by the industry, was moved with a tractor across the grounds of the Dale T. Smith & Sons Meatpacking Company in Draper, Utah. Amy Meyer stood on the side of the road next to the slaughterhouse and watched. As a consumer interested in food production practices, Meyer had heard that the animals moving into the slaughterhouse could easily be seen from the road at this particular packing plant and went to see for herself. Meyer, who stood on the public easement next to the road, was 100 feet from the slaughterhouse with a fence and field in between her and the structure. From there, using her phone's video camera, she recorded what she saw (Potter 2013). Similar video footage showing collapsed but conscious animals moved with forklifts had been used by the Humane Society of the United States to prosecute a California meatpacking plant in 2008 in the largest U.S. meat recall in history where it was discovered that sick animals were entering the food supply and, specifically, the national school lunch program (HSUS 2012). As Meyer stood there filming, Bret Smith, the manager at the meatpacking company, approached her in a pickup truck and informed her that she was not permitted to film the slaughterhouse. Capturing the exchange on her own video camera (see Meyer & Potter 2013), she replied that she was under the impression that where she

⁵ "Downer" animals are those who have become non-ambulatory and cannot move on their own (USDA 2008). The cow with ear tag #1389, for example, may have been characterized as a "downer" cow, in spite of the fact that signage at the auction yard declared that they did not allow downer animals into the auction.

was standing was a public easement and that it was legal for her to film the slaughterhouse from there. Smith replied that she was filming the plant from private property and that he would call the police. Meyer responded that she would be willing to move from the roadside if the police told her it was not a public place.

Smith: "You cannot videotape my property from public property, so I'm asking you to stop. Now I'll leave and call the cops [...] if you have something to ask me about my business, why don't you have the balls to come and ask me. We're running a legitimate business over there and you guys have no business recording me from anywhere."

Meyer: "Why are you concerned with being filmed if you have no problem, if you think this is a legitimate business?"

Smith: "If you, uh, read the rights here, the laws in Utah, you can't film an agricultural property without my consent."

Meyer: "That's correct, on your property."

Smith called the police. When the police arrived, there was some confusion about the actual content of the laws. The police officers began by saying that she was not being arrested or charged with anything, that they just wanted to ask Meyer some questions. Meyer asked the officer to verify that where she was standing was a public easement. He verified that it was. Meyer asked repeatedly if she was being detained and the officer replied that she was not. Meyer stated, "I don't need to answer any of your questions. I have done nothing illegal. I am not suspected of anything illegal. I'm

on a public easement next to the street...I'm not going to talk to you. I'm done talking with you. When my lawyer calls I'll let you talk to him."

The police officer eventually stated that Meyer was free to go and informed her that prosecutors would determine whether she should be prosecuted after they "screened charges."

Meyer was charged with agricultural operation interference under Utah's HB 187. This was the first prosecution under a state "ag-gag" law. Due to overwhelming public outrage, the charges were dropped 24 hours later.

This chapter analyzes one dimension of the legal climate under which intimate animals are commodified in the political economy of U.S. animal agriculture: a politics of access to spaces of agricultural production. While this chapter is heavily focused on a politics of access for humans interested in entering places of animal agriculture, this information is central as background to the animals' lived experience and how these experiences are obscured through legal mechanisms of limited access. Legal mechanisms, such as those outlined here, operate as national and state enactments of 'the global' in the global intimate, reflecting the ways laws structurally impact the lived experience of intimate animals. Lack of access to these spaces translates to limiting knowledge about how animals are treated in spaces of commodity production. Thus, the passage and maintenance of these laws are deeply political and a critical part of the back story.

Geographers have critically engaged with the way post-9/11 security discourses and material practices are shaped in the arenas of shifting geopolitical landscapes of notions of (in)security (e.g., Cowen & Siciliano 2011; Kaplan 2003; Sidaway 2008), fear (e.g., Gregory and Pred 2007; Hyndman 2007; Sparke 2010), and citizenship (e.g., Cowen and Gilbert 2008). Importantly, these scholars have put forth insights drawing on particular case studies that challenge the hegemony of security as a discourse that justifies repressive material practices. These works have focused more on geopolitical trends in security shifts impacting human lives rather than on the repressive suite of laws cropping up in spaces of animal use. Thus, this chapter contributes to that literature in how we think about the geographical dimensions of a post-9/11 political climate and the myriad ways this shifting political landscape impacts intimate bodies (both human and nonhuman).

The story of the immobile cow and Amy Meyer represents one facet of the politics of access surrounding agricultural places: a debate over whether journalists, activists, scholars and concerned citizens should be permitted to witness, record, and/or distribute information about the activities of agricultural businesses and the impacts of these activities on living, embodied animals, like the immobile cow referenced here. Ag gag laws are one example of recent legislation passed to restrict access to places of agricultural production and discourage voices of dissent against these industries. Ag gag laws are part of a broader web of legislation – the USA PATRIOT Act and the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act – that comprises the current political climate relating to the politics of animal use industries. In addition to these

access-limiting laws, which affect humans' ability to uncover the realities of animal lives in the dairy and related industries, animal welfare laws (explored in the next chapter) directly impact intimate animal lives in their inefficacy and insufficient coverage.

Ag-gag laws are a suite of anti-whistleblower bills emerging at the state level meant to criminalize whistleblower investigations of agricultural industry activities. The purpose of these bills is to limit access by investigative journalists and activists to places of agricultural (primarily animal) production. In 1990, Kansas passed the first of such bills (KS ST 47, 18 1990), termed the "Farm Animal and Field Crop and Research Facilities Protection Act," prohibiting photography or filming, and property destruction and the liberation/theft of animals from agricultural or university medical research spaces. In 1991, Montana and North Dakota both passed similar bills. Since then, Arkansas passed an ag-gag bill in 2012 that states that only law enforcement agents are permitted to investigate animal cruelty (AR SB 13 2012). Iowa passed a bill in 2012 making it a crime to enter an agricultural production facility under false pretenses (HF 589 2012). Missouri approved a bill (SB 631 2012) stating that employees filming an act of cruelty must report it to the authorities within 24 hours – a law, which on the surface seems to be concerned with stopping cruelty immediately, but in effect makes it illegal to build a more substantive case of long-term cruelty charges against a facility. Utah's bill (HB 187), prohibiting the recording of agricultural activity, passed in 2012 and was used just a year later to bring charges against Meyer for taking video of a slaughterhouse from a public road.

Future iterations of ag-gag bills may broaden their scope as recently proposed bills indicate (Potter 2013). North Carolina's Commerce Protection Act does not specify only agricultural spaces or medical research facilities, but could apply to limiting the distribution of information in many industries (Potter 2011). Bills such as these could be used, for example, to prevent opposition to the environmentally deleterious effects of fracking and other extractive industries (Potter 2009). Laws like these are meant to silence dissent and the distribution of information about consumer related industries and practices, and they reflect corporate interests (Potter 2011). Those proposing the laws at the state level are closely tied to agricultural industry interests and many of the bills are endorsed by industry interest groups (e.g., California's bill, which was defeated, was sponsored by the California Cattlemen's Association). Though the first iterations of ag-gag bills took shape in the 1990s, the political climate after September 11, 2001 has made it possible for bills restricting access to places of animal use (e.g., agriculture and research laboratories) to become more ubiquitous across the country.

After September 11, 2001, the USA PATRIOT (Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism) Act was passed to remove restrictions on intelligence collection by U.S. law enforcement agencies. Terrorism is defined by the U.S. government as "the unlawful use of force and violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives" (28 CFR 0.85). Among other changes to federal law, the PATRIOT Act made it easier for law enforcement agencies to detain immigrants suspected of

engaging in 'terrorist' activity and, importantly for this particular project, it expanded the definition of 'terrorism' to include the category of 'domestic terrorism.' The PATRIOT Act defined domestic terrorism as activities that "involve acts dangerous to human life that are a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or of any State" or activities that "appear to be intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination or kidnapping" and if the activity occurs "primarily within the territorial jurisdiction of the United States" (PL 107-56, Sec. 802 2001).

The post-9/11 passage of the PATRIOT Act paved the way for other legislation argued by many to repress and restrict rights to privacy and free speech. In 2006, the federal Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act (AETA) was passed (PL 109-374) as an amendment to the Animal Enterprise Protection Act (AEPA) of 1992. "The AETA expanded the AEPA to include both successful and attempted conspiracies. It also prohibits intentionally placing a person in 'reasonable fear' of death or serious bodily injury while damaging or interfering in the operations of an animal enterprise" (Bjelopera 2012: 35). Additionally, the law expanded to include secondary and tertiary targets. Drawing on the PATRIOT Act's category of 'domestic terrorism, the AETA targeted those involved in direct action tactics (economic damage, threats etc.) against animal enterprises (farms, laboratories, etc.). Under the AETA, a person can be charged as a 'domestic terrorist' if they are found to be engaging in activities for:

the purpose of damaging or interfering with the operations of an animal enterprise; and in connection with such purpose –

(A) intentionally damages or causes the loss of any real or personal property (including animals or records) used by an animal enterprise, or any real or personal property of a person or entity having a connection to, relationship with, or transactions with an animal enterprise;

(B) intentionally places a person in reasonable fear of the death of, or serious bodily injury to that person, a member of the immediate family (as defined in section 115) of that person, or a spouse or intimate partner of that person by a course of conduct involving threats, acts of vandalism, property damage, criminal trespass, harassment, or intimidation; or

(C) conspires or attempts to do so (PL 109- 374, Title 18, Sec. 43 2006)

This law explicitly targets activists who engage in ‘direct action’ tactics of resistance.

Specifically, the AETA targets radical animal rights movements (along with radical environmentalist movements like the Earth Liberation Front), like the Animal

Liberation Front (ALF), whose mission is to carry “out direct action against animal abuse in the form of rescuing animals and causing financial loss to animal exploiters,

usually through the damage and destruction of property” (ALF 2013). A leaderless

movement comprised of anonymous participants, the ALF, in its own words, “is a

nonviolent campaign, activists taking all precautions not to harm any animal (human or otherwise)” (ALF 2013). The ALF targets animal enterprises and intentionally inflicts

illegal property damage as a form of economic sabotage in addition to removing

animals from farms, laboratories and other places of animal use in order to place them

in sanctuaries or other animal rescue sites. On the subject of the illegality of their actions

the ALF states that the U.S. legal system – which categorizes animals as property – is

corrupt, and there exists a “higher law than that created by and for the corporate-state

complex, a moral law that transcends the corrupt and biased statutes of the US political

system. Simply put, the rights of one species do not trump the rights of others” (Bjelopera 2012: 12). In identifying domestic terrorism, counter-terrorism agents distinguish terrorists as those operating with political or ideological motives, whereas non-terrorist criminals are motivated by self-centered impulses (Bjelopera 2012).

Critics of the AETA and counter-terrorism efforts targeting animal rights and environmentalist movements, like Will Potter, have pointed out that the activities of the ALF and the ELF, for instance, are very different in nature than crimes committed by groups who have set out to harm humans. In fact, in the more than 1,100 actions performed by the ALF and ELF, many of which caused significant economic damage to places of animal use, not a single person has been physically harmed (Potter 2009). Potter (2011; 2009) argues that instead of responding to a real threat against human safety, efforts to condemn animal rights and environmental direct action as terrorism serve corporate economic interests and perpetuates what he terms a “Green Scare.” This “Green Scare” harkens back to the communist “Red Scare” and is characterized by intimidation tactics involving the use of terms like “eco-terrorist” and “animal rights extremist” to promote fear and silence dissent in all its forms, as well as advance a political economic agenda privileging businesses that profit from the exploitation of animals and the environment (Potter 2011). These efforts to silence dissent may come in the form of silencing illegal activity, but this culture of fear around dissent may also silence legal resistance in the form of nonviolent civil disobedience, other forms of activism, film, and journalism, as well as potentially deterring academics from speaking

out in alliance with the political perspectives of the animal liberation or environmentalist movements.

Under the AETA, there are varying levels of sentencing depending on the severity of the damages caused. For instance, someone who conspires to plan an act of economic sabotage valuing less than \$10,000 or plans to threaten personnel at an animal enterprise can be fined and/or imprisoned for up to 1 year. If the economic damage is between \$10,000 and \$100,000, the accused can be fined and/or imprisoned for up to 5 years. The penalties increase with the cost of economic damage performed. One million dollars in economic damages can result in a person spending 20 years in federal prison as a 'terrorist.' The emphasis on economic damages suggests that a primary (if not *the* primary) concern in prosecuting violators of the law is the economic interests of agricultural, research and other animal use industries. In fact, all legislation relating to farmed animals in the United States – ag-gag laws, animal welfare laws and common farming exemptions, and the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act – is implicitly concerned with preserving the economic interests (i.e., profits) of meat, dairy and egg producers, often at the expense of animals' wellbeing.

Though earlier, similar legislation – the Animal and Ecological Terrorism Act of 2003 – proposed by the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), did not pass (the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act went on to pass in 2006 instead), it is worth noting here. The Animal and Ecological Terrorism Act, along with restricting access to animal enterprises in the same ways as the 2006 AETA, would have made ag-gag legislation federal law by making it illegal at a national level to take film or

photography of an animal enterprise (ALEC 2004). The bill is so broad, however, that it would have “classified non-violent civil disobedience by environmental and animal rights activists as terrorism” (Potter 2012; ALEC 2003). ALEC, in its own words, “works to advance the fundamental principles of free-market enterprise, limited government, and federalism at the state level through a nonpartisan public-private partnership of America’s state legislators, members of the private sector and the general public” (ALEC 2013). ALEC is paid by corporations for membership to the organization and the council drafts model legislation advancing corporate interests (Potter 2012).

For the purposes of this analysis, ALEC’s role in potential agricultural policies is worth noting because of its reference to academic work. In ALEC’s document, *Animal and Ecological Terrorism in America*, Section II is entitled “From Books to Bombs: Development of Animal/Environmental Extremism” and links philosophical and political academic work on animals and the environment to the activities of radical direct action efforts.

The political movement for environmental and animal rights [...] has migrated from the personal quarters and inquisitive considerations of collegiate academia into the hearts and minds of a dedicated few [who are] hell-bent on revolutionizing a system of perceived abuse into one that abides by deeply rooted philosophies of fundamental animal equity and environmental preservation. (ALEC 2003: 5).

The connection made here between the academy and animal rights “extremism” and “eco-terrorism,” along with the title “From Books to Bombs,” implies that academic work may be indirectly implicated in inciting actions defined by the federal government

as terrorism. This could potentially have the effect of silencing politically engaged academic work aimed at critiquing the agricultural industrial complex and/or it could also impact the willingness of university ethics review boards to approve research related to such subjects, as I mentioned in Chapter 1.

Laws like ag-gag, the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act, and the proposed Animal and Ecological Terrorism Act limit the protection of farmed animals, they discourage knowledge production (by academics and investigative journalists), and they aim to produce and maintain a political climate whereby dissent is silenced. Undercover investigations – performed by activists and academics alike – have been integral in uncovering and exposing criminal instances of cruelty against animals in places of agricultural production and sharing with the public the lived realities of humans and animals involved in agricultural production. Film and photographs, taken by undercover investigators, have been used to marshal criminal cruelty charges against individuals and corporations, as well as educating the public about the cruel acts of violence to which animals are subjected in food production. Often, these undercover efforts are the only access the public has to information about meat, dairy and egg production practices. Whistleblowers for the industry are particularly important as laws protecting animals in food production are notoriously weak and insufficiently enforced. The current political climate in which farmed animals are impacted by national and state legislation is characterized simultaneously by these increasingly repressive and economically motivated anti-animal protection laws and lax and ineffectual animal welfare laws.

The intellectual aim of this chapter has been to lay the groundwork for understanding how legal mechanisms (as an enactment of the global) operate to control and impact the embodied human and animal intimate. The way laws limit access to spaces of agricultural production is important for understanding how the institution of animal agriculture in its current incarnation is reproduced. As a hegemonic institution, animal agriculture relies on laws like ag-gag and the AETA to prevent knowledge production about the routine violence against the animal. In addition to being an important intellectual issue (for thinking about the global and the intimate, for thinking about gaps in the animal geography literature, and for thinking about the reproduction of the institution of animal agriculture), this politics of (in)access is important for academics, activists and journalists interested in accessing spaces of animal use. Thus, barring access through legal frameworks to these places is a methodological problem for academics (and others) that deserves great care and attention in future research.

**CHAPTER 3. The Cow with Sticker #743
Animal Welfare Laws in Action**



**Figure 4: Cow with sticker #743, Auction yard in California’s Central Valley;
Photo source: Gillespie, 2013**

The cow with #743 stuck to her side lay in one of the holding pens behind the California auction house. Her legs splayed out behind her at an unnatural angle; she was unable to get up. From the catwalk above, I watched her struggle to move her legs into a position where they would hold her weight. These futile attempts exhausted her and her breathing was labored as saliva foamed from her mouth. Now and then, she

bellowed hoarsely. Like the other animals who appear at auction, the effects of her use in the dairy industry were legible on her body. Her tail was docked short. Her over-full udders were crushed beneath the weight of her body. Her ears were tagged.

When I first noticed her, she was lying in a pen, with a small herd of other cows standing around her, waiting to be auctioned. Over the course of the two hours I spent at the auction, I kept checking in on her from the cat walk. At one point, the auction workers came and herded the other cows into the adjacent pen and closed the gate behind them, isolating the cow with sticker #743. They bound her back legs together with a cord to see if that would help her to stand. She still could not stand. Milk and blood leaked from her udders onto the manure-covered ground beneath her.

The cow with #743 was what the industry terms a 'downer.' The state of laws regulating the treatment of non-ambulatory animals has been the subject of much debate over the last few decades. In 2004, in response to fears about the spread of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE; commonly known as mad cow disease) after a non-ambulatory cow with BSE was found in Washington, the federal government placed a ban on non-ambulatory animals entering the food supply (Animal Welfare Institute 2013). This ban included loopholes, however, that allowed for the assessment and treatment of non-ambulatory animals to be determined on a case-by-case basis and many non-ambulatory animals continued to make it into the food supply. Eventually, this loophole was closed in 2009, but a loophole remains to allow non-ambulatory calves to be sold and slaughtered for meat (veal in particular) (Animal Welfare Institute 2013).

Due to increasing concerns about food safety, animal welfare, and the absence of federal laws, individual states began passing laws to regulate the treatment of non-ambulatory animals in their states. California, for instance, passed a law in 2009 that defined non-ambulatory animals as those who cannot stand or walk and required that these animals be immediately euthanized. The law also required that non-ambulatory animals not be dragged or pushed (as was the cow pushed by the forklift witnessed by Amy Meyer). In 2012, the Supreme Court ruled unanimously that slaughter should be regulated exclusively by the federal government and struck down California's law (Barnes 2012).

In the years between 2009 and 2012, the cow with barcode #743 would have been required by state law to be shot immediately when auction workers determined she could not get up. However, in post-2012 California, there were no regulations governing how long she would lie there or what would happen to her. When I left, she was still there, isolated in the pen, her back legs bound together, in distress. Likely the auction workers would have shot her with a firearm at the end of the day, her body would have been hauled away by a 'deadstock' hauler⁶ to a rendering facility where her body would be processed into useable products.

⁶ 'Deadstock haulers pick up dead animals from farms, auction yards and other places of animal use, and deliver them to rendering facilities. During my fieldwork, I spoke to a deadstock hauler who specialized in hauling dead horses. When I inquired about the rendering process he said, "Well, honey, it's awfully odd for a lady to be interested in this stuff. Rendering is a nasty business. I've seen grown men lose their lunches when they walk into a rendering facility." While an analysis of rendering is beyond the scope of this particular project, I see this as being an important part of my future research agenda.

* * *

The increasingly repressive legal climate around animal agriculture explored in the last chapter impacts the lives and bodies of animals indirectly through working to conceal practices and conditions which may cause public concern about animal welfare. The intellectual aim of this chapter is to further develop the backdrop of the legal and political climate governing animal bodies in the U.S. food industry through outlining the laws that directly impact intimate animal lives. Understanding the connection between these structural legal forces and the intimate bodies they govern informs the broader multispecies global intimate analysis of this text. Further, animal geographers have theorized animal welfare in terms of how to assess and improve welfare practices for farmed animals (e.g., Buller and Morris 2003; Johnston 2013), but these approaches operate within a framework that does not challenge the hegemony of animal agriculture. Rather, these take a pragmatic approach to thinking about the limitations of law and ways to improve welfare for animals, since, they assume, animal agriculture is here to stay. By contrast, I review the state of U.S. animal welfare laws here to argue that these laws work to reproduce the institution of animal agriculture by assuaging public concern about animal welfare. The story of the cow with barcode #743 illustrates just one of the ambivalent enactments of laws governing animal welfare in the United States.

The Animal Welfare Act (AWA), a federal law enforced by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) designed to “protect certain animals from inhumane treatment and neglect,” does not include animals used for “food, fiber or

other agricultural purposes” (APHIS 2002: 1). The Humane Methods of Livestock Slaughter Act (HMSA), initially passed in 1958, is the only federal law that includes farmed animals in its coverage and certain species killed for food are not included in the HMSA (e.g., birds, fish, rabbits). The law was drafted and passed after mounting discomfort with the meat industry among consumers and a growing understanding that the meat industry operated inhumanely on a number of accounts (both for animals and humans). These concerns were built on the knowledge of dangerous conditions for workers in the meat industry and unsanitary conditions for the production of food, which had been brought to the public’s eye much earlier, in 1906, with Upton Sinclair’s (1960) groundbreaking work of fiction, *The Jungle*. Then, in the 1950s, news reports spread about “persistent reports of continued cruelty to livestock at a few plants” (FSIS 2009: 2). The realization that animals were being treated with cruelty in the food industry, paired with the repeated exposure of workers’ experiences in the meat industry and unsanitary conditions for food production, fostered a political climate in which the HMSA was passed. Whereas this work mainly focused on the lived experience of humans laboring in the Chicago meatpacking industry, my work here is interested in the experience of animals laboring and dying under these laws.

The HMSA was designed with multiple benefits for both producers and animals involved in production:

the use of humane methods in the slaughter of livestock prevents needless suffering; results in safer and better working conditions for persons engaged in the slaughtering industry; brings about improvement of products and economies in slaughter operations; and produces other benefits for producers, processors,

and consumers which tend to expedite an orderly flow of livestock and livestock products in interstate and foreign commerce (USC 1958: 1).

The guarantee to “prevent needless suffering” is a direct response to public outcry about instances of cruelty in slaughterhouses. The text of the HMSA also emphasizes the safety of workers in slaughterhouses as a problem rooted in the early 20th century response to *The Jungle*. Interestingly, there is particular emphasis in the text of the HMSA on the economic benefit associated with the improvement in the quality of the meat. Animals not injured or mistreated during the process of slaughter provide more sellable meat; injured animals produce meat that is bruised and has to be trimmed more extensively, resulting in more waste and loss of profit (FSIS 2009).

The HMSA of 1958 “required that livestock be rendered insensible to pain by a blow, gunshot, or electrical or chemical means that is rapid and effective before shackling, hoisting, casting, or cutting” (FSIS 2009: 2). Compliance with the 1958 law was *voluntary* for all producers not selling their products to the federal government (FSIS 2009). This meant that meat sold to the general public was not required to be produced under these standards. The Humane Methods of Livestock Slaughter Act of 1978 (an amendment of the 1958 law) is the current law governing the slaughter of some animals for food. In 1975, Peter Singer published his now-classic *Animal Liberation*, which shocked the public with its unflinching exposé of the conditions under which animals were raised for food, as well as with its sustained utilitarian argument that claimed it was irrational to exploit animals in these and other ways. This work, as well as becoming a “bible” for the animal rights movement, generated more general concern

about welfare of animals in the food industry. As a response to this new wave of concern about animal welfare, in 1978, the HMSA was made amended and made *mandatory* for all USDA-inspected slaughter facilities (FSIS 2009). The law outlined two approved humane methods of slaughtering animals. The first was that animals must be ‘rendered insensible to pain’ prior to slaughter by a gunshot, blow, electric shock, or efficient chemical exposure. The second method of humane slaughter deemed acceptable was ‘ritual slaughter’ in which the animal has his/her carotid artery cut and is rendered unconscious by a rapid loss of blood (USC 1958). Common examples of animals killed by ‘ritual slaughter’ are those slaughtered for Kosher or Halal meat (FSIS 2009). The 1978 amendment added a note that the humane *handling* of animals should be considered during the process of slaughter. The HMSA applies to adult bovine animals, calves, horses, mules, sheep, and pigs, but excludes birds, rabbits, and fish (USC 1978).

In 2001, *Fast Food Nation* by Eric Schlosser was published and quickly became a New York Times bestseller. Schlosser recalled many of the same and similar details of slaughterhouse workings as did Sinclair in *The Jungle*. This time, though, the focus was on the historical development of the fast food industry and the unsanitary, unsafe and unethical circumstances under which food was produced for this industry (Schlosser 2001). Also in 2001, an article entitled “They Die Piece by Piece” was published in the *Washington Post*, which documented humane-standards violations, exposing inhumane conditions at a vast number of cattle slaughter facilities. Cows were witnessed being skinned alive, having their legs and tails cut off and their bellies cut open while still

conscious. The article revealed that these violations were not unusual, but in fact commonplace:

Preventing this kind of suffering is officially a top priority for the USDA's Food Safety Inspection Service. By law, a humane-slaughter violation is among a handful of offenses that can result in an immediate halt in production — and cost a meatpacker hundreds or even thousands of dollars per idle minute. In reality, many inspectors describe humane slaughter as a blind spot: Inspectors' regular duties rarely take them to the chambers where stunning occurs. Inconsistencies in enforcement, training and record-keeping hamper the agency's ability to identify problems (Warrick 2001, n.p.).

The public outrage raised by Warrick's article and by *Fast Food Nation* pushed the government to respond to accusations of lax enforcement standards and general negligence. The George W. Bush administration responded in the 2002 Farm Bill, which suggested greater enforcement of the HMSA standards. This encouragement of enforcement was meant to ease public alarm over conditions in the meat industry as well as make the meat industry operate more efficiently. The 2002 Farm Bill states:

It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of Agriculture should — (1) continue tracking the number of violations of [the HMSA] and report the results and relevant trends annually to Congress; and (2) fully enforce [the HMSA][...] It is the policy of the United States that the slaughtering of livestock and the handling of livestock in connection with slaughter shall be carried out only by humane methods, as provided by [the HMSA] (PL 107-171: Sec. 10305).

This abbreviated historical account of federal farmed animal welfare legislation over the last century uncovers the ways in which journalists, investigators, and academics have been integral in raising public awareness about cases of cruelty in food production. This public awareness, in turn, generates pressure on lawmakers to draft and/or further enforce farmed animal welfare legislation. Despite these efforts, federal protections are

weak (the HMSA) or nonexistent, the HMSA is insufficiently enforced, and there are no federal welfare laws governing the lives of farmed animals.

Anticruelty and animal welfare legislation at the state level is designed to prevent certain animals from cruel treatment, but there are a number of problems with these statutes. Washington State law states that,

(1) A person is guilty of animal cruelty in the first degree when, except as authorized in law, he or she intentionally (a) inflicts substantial pain on, (b) causes physical injury to, or (c) kills an animal by a means causing undue suffering, or forces a minor to inflict unnecessary pain, injury, or death on an animal. (2) A person is guilty of animal cruelty in the first degree when, except as authorized by law, he or she, with criminal negligence, starves, dehydrates, or suffocates an animal and as a result causes: (a) Substantial and unjustifiable physical pain that extends for a period sufficient to cause considerable suffering; or (b) death (WSL 2010: 16.52.205).

As exhibited in this excerpt, the details of these laws are broad and apply to all types of animals, which cause a distinct lack in specifics relating to farmed animal welfare.

While these laws generally include farmed animals, there is no enforcement system to ensure that these laws are followed. Additionally, “the burden of proof on the prosecution is very high, that is, beyond a reasonable doubt” (Wolfson and Sullivan 2004: 209). Abusers of farmed animals are generally not prosecuted for violations because the ‘burden of proof’ requires proof of *intention*. An example in New Jersey illustrates the difficulty in prosecution: an egg company was charged with violating anti-cruelty laws for throwing sick, but living, laying hens into a garbage can filled with dead hens, and leaving them there to die. Because the prosecutor could not prove that

the employee had ‘knowingly’ discarded living hens, the case was dropped (Wolfson and Sullivan 2004: 209). In addition to the difficulty of prosecuting producers for cruelty to farmed animals, those convicted are usually required to pay only limited fines, “for example, Maine has a maximum fine of \$2500, Alabama and Delaware have a maximum fine of \$1000, and Rhode Island has a maximum fine of \$500, for general cruelty to animals” (Wolfson and Sullivan 2004: 210).

Another major obstacle to the enforcement of anti-cruelty laws and the HMSA enforcement is what attorney David Wolfson terms Customary (or Common) Farming Exemptions (CFEs). CFEs are laws passed at the state level that grant meat industry companies exemptions from animal cruelty laws.

The majority of states have put CFE laws on their books [...] Using words like “common,” “customary,” “accepted,” and “established,” CFE laws allow any method of raising farmed animals to continue, no matter how cruel, so long as it is commonly practiced within the industry (Marcus 2005: 57).

As long as a particular form of inhumane treatment of animals is deemed ‘common’ practice by the industry itself, a company cannot be prosecuted. “As a result, in most of the United States, prosecutors, judges, and juries no longer have the power to determine whether or not farmed animals are treated in an acceptable manner. The industry alone defines the criminality of its own conduct” (Wolfson and Sullivan 2004: 206). Acceptable practices include severing the tails of pigs and cows, castrating young animals, and cutting chickens’ beaks off – all without anesthetic. During the slaughter process, acceptable practices include using electrified prods to force animals to move, as well as allowing a certain percentage of animals to be conscious through the slaughter process.

In Washington State Legislature, the chapter entitled “Prevention of Cruelty to Animals” includes a section, “Exclusions from Chapter” which contains Washington’s CFE law and reads,

Nothing in this chapter applies to accepted husbandry practices used in the commercial raising or slaughtering of livestock or poultry, or products thereof or to the use of animals in the normal and usual course of rodeo events or to the customary use or exhibiting of animals in normal and usual events at fairs (WSL 2010: 16.52.185).

CFEs like this one operate in many states to exempt protection of farmed animals in their daily lives. As long as enough producers agree on or conduct similar practices, these practices become routinized and normalized and power is granted to the industry itself to define how animals are and should be treated. Customary Farming Exemptions are one example of industry pushback against legislative efforts to protect the welfare of farmed animals.

My aim here has been to understand the current state of animal welfare laws, as a backdrop for moving forward into the next section on the lived experiences of animals in the dairy industry. Understanding these laws, their limitations, and the way they may function to reproduce animal agriculture is important for the intellectual project of understanding the connections between political-economically motivated legal structures, and the intimate bodies they are supposed to protect. The way animal welfare laws have been diluted (and exemptions created) by industry lobbyists has resulted in a legal climate whereby welfare is often sacrificed in service to capital accumulation. Geographers (e.g., Buller and Morris 2003; Johnston 2013) working on

farmed animal welfare issues respond to this by focusing on the impediments to better welfare in the industry and strategizing ways to overcome them. However, I contend that reading this history of (largely) failed animal welfare legislation lays bare the ways in which the welfare and wellbeing of animals, like the cow with sticker #743, is at odds with the commodification process. In fact, when animals are commodity producers (and commodities themselves), their welfare is bound to be compromised to some (and often, to a large) extent.

To conclude this section on the legal-political mechanisms governing the animal body, the emergence of farmed animal welfare laws (e.g., the HMSA) has been tied closely to the production of knowledge (explored in the last chapter) by journalists, academics and whistleblowers concerned with the cruel treatment of animals in the industry. This knowledge production has resulted in small legislative steps forward and large repressive legislative steps backward in the access of individuals to places of agricultural production. 'From Books to Bombs,' explored in the last chapter, is used by ALEC to argue that the knowledge about agricultural places of production – even that produced by academics – has directly fueled the attacks against animal agricultural use industries. In this case, ALEC is referring explicitly to perceived 'acts of terrorism,' but ALEC implicitly refers to the way books and other forms of academic knowledge has incited outrage by the general public to 'attack' corporate interests in the public's demands over the last century for tightening animal welfare legislation. Thus, it is imperative for academic work to continue that challenges the agricultural industrial

complex and imagines radical alternatives to the institution of farming animals at any scale.

**PART 2: GENDERED COMMODIFICATION AND SEXUALIZED VIOLENCE:
APPROPRIATING THE ANIMAL BODY**

**CHAPTER 4. The Cow with Ear tag #6490
On Calves, Milk and Meat: Commodifying the Female Body**



Figure 5: Heifer with Ear Tag #6490 at Ansel Farm; Photo source: Gillespie, 2012

The small Jersey heifer with ear tag #6490 approached me and stretched her head out, neck extended over the fence. Startled, my instinct was to step back, but Homer Weston, the farmer who stood next to me, said “Oh, you’re fine. She’s just curious.” Gently, she reached out her long grey and pink tongue and licked my arm. Her big brown eyes, long eyelashes and fuzzy cap of reddish brown hair were hard to resist and I reached out to scratch her neck and behind her ears. She licked me again.

I was standing at the fence peering into the ‘maternity pen’ at Ansel Farm, a 500-cow dairy farm in the Puget Sound region of Washington State that sells cheese and milk at regional farmers markets. The pen itself was barren with a dirt, manure-covered ground and troughs of feed and water. There were approximately 60 pregnant cows in the pen, within two weeks of giving birth, who spent the days pacing back and forth in the pen, eating and drinking water, and occasionally licking and nuzzling one another. The heifer with ear tag #6490 was two years old and this was the first time she would give birth, which meant that she still had somewhere between one and five years as a dairy producer before she would be sold by Ansel Farm for slaughter.

Weston had a soft spot for Jersey cows. As we stood there by the maternity pen, he said, “there are good qualities about both breeds – I mean, the Holsteins and Jerseys – but there’s nothing sweeter than a little Jersey heifer. Look at those eyes.”

* * *

I have chosen to feature the heifer with ear tag #6490 in this chapter because she is a fairly mundane representation of a cow in the dairy industry; she has not been subjected to extreme forms of cruelty or abuse. In fact, her life and treatment is significantly better than the overwhelming majority of other cows raised for dairy in the United States. The small size of the farm and her young age has much to do with her condition (she appears well-cared for and robust). Thus, my intention in telling her story and featuring this smaller-scale farm is to show that even in non-industrial settings, animals raised for dairy are subject to certain forms of violence and the

persistent appropriation of their bodies for commodity production. For cows in the commercial dairy industry, the cow with ear tag #6490 stands in for the 'best case scenario' for cows used for dairy. And yet, her body is still appropriated for commodity production and she is subjected to processes of artificial insemination, separation of her calf, mechanic milking and, eventually, slaughter – processes which are only intensified for cows laboring in larger scales of production.

This chapter, then, illustrates an example of smaller scale production practices and the violence against the animal body even in such sites of improved welfare. This chapter also, more fundamentally, contributes to my overall argument about the need to attend to the embodied experience of the animal; in other words, what forms of appropriation and commodification a cow raised for dairy undergoes during her short life and what it might be like to *be* the cow with ear tag #6490. This intimate analysis of the cow with ear tag #6490 (and others like her) is important because her life and suffering matters on its own. But it is also intellectually important because this glimpse into her life makes intimate the violence of commodification for living beings and connects the global circulation of capital to the intimate body who bears the brunt of this commodification process.

The reproduction of the dairy industry as an institution is intimately embodied in animals like the cow with ear tag #6490. Female animals in the dairy industry reproduce the next generation of dairy producers (calves), this reproduction results in the production of the primary commodity product for the industry (milk) and, when they are no longer reproductively viable, they are commodified again, finally, in death

(for meat). The lives of cows raised for dairy in the United States are characterized by their gendered commodification and the sexualized violence against their bodies. Outlining the typical practices involved in raising females for dairy production reveals the gendered commodification of their bodies and the way their biological capacities are exploited for dairy production. Industry discourses (explored in Chapter 7) expressed through marketing materials for various industry products further reveals this commodification and the positioning of the cow in a complex political economy of dairy and food production. Looking at the material realities of the cow as positioned within the global intimate, we can begin to understand the very real impacts on these lives and bodies and the broader implications for human-animal relations and their embeddedness in global political economy.

Feminist critical animal studies scholars have long noted the effects of gendered commodification and violence against the animal body with particular emphasis on the ways in which female animals are disproportionately exploited for their (re)productive capabilities in places of commodity production (e.g., Adams 1990; Gruen 1993; Davis 1995). Indeed, across the institution of animal agriculture, female animals are bred, labor and die for their reproductive capabilities. Hens raised for eggs are some of the most intensely exploited animals in the world; ninety-five percent of egg-laying hens in the US are housed in battery cages too small for them to spread their wings (United Egg Producers 2010) and the majority of hens are 'de-beaked' to prevent cannibalism in such close quarters (Cheng 2011). Hens undergo induced molting to boost egg production through the withholding of food and water (Dunkley et al 2008) and are slaughtered at

2-3 years of age when they are deemed 'spent'. Sows, who are highly intelligent and social animals by human standards of intelligence and sociability, are repeatedly impregnated and housed in gestation and farrowing crates too small to turn around to breed generations of pigs slaughtered for pork (Wise 2009). Sows are impregnated as soon as possible after giving birth and will typically birth at least two litters of piglets per year; when a sow's reproductivity declines, she is slaughtered for meat. Outside the U.S., models of intensification in animal agriculture are taking hold as chickens, pigs and cows are being raised intensively around the world and as other animals, like guinea pigs, are being increasingly intensively bred and slaughtered for meat in Peru, for example (Garcia 2010). Embedded in this appropriation of female bodies is the overt and implicit misogyny visible in the discursive and material practices of animal use (Haraway 1989). Within this trend of reading the gendered female animal body as oppressed as feminist critical animal studies have done, I use this framing here to understand the intimate effects on the female cow's body as a way to fill the gaps in animal geographies.

The material practices of animal agriculture in the United States have shaped cows' bodies at the most basic genetic level as they are the result of a long genetic heritage of selective breeding. The management and control of animal bodies as populations through breeding and genetic manipulation has been understood through Foucault's⁷ biopower, conceptualizing animal populations as subjects of control and

⁷ The work of Foucault has been widely theorized by critical animal studies scholars as they extend his theories of pastoral power, biopower, sovereign power, disciplinary power to understand power over animal populations (Taylor 2013). Because it has been taken up so extensively elsewhere, I will not

manipulation through physical intervention (e.g., Holloway et al 2009; see Foucault 1978, 2003, 2007). For Foucault, biopower is about the disciplining and economization of the physical body in order to create *docile* bodies (Foucault 1978). Breeding cows for docility and economic productivity has resulted in the United States dairy industry being dominated by two breeds: Holsteins and Jerseys. Both breeds have been prized for their docile nature as well as their productivity and, as such, can be understood as being subjected to mechanisms of biopower whereby those in power (human farm workers) exercise power and control over subordinate populations (the cows) by literally shaping their bodies (through breeding and body modification) to be easily controlled. This system of power and control is integral for understanding the broader set of power relations at work in a multispecies global intimate. And yet, while these biopolitical exercises of power inform how populations are controlled, a feminist attention to the body is necessary to understand how the individual is linked to global political economic processes of production and consumption, as well as for understanding how the embodied animal is a *lens* through which to understand the ethical and political implications of these processes at large.

Holsteins, the quintessential U.S. American “dairy cow” with characteristic black and white patches, comprise 90% of the U.S. dairy herd (EPA 2012a). Physically, Holsteins are large in size, consume large amounts of feed, and produce high volumes of high quality milk. While other less common cross-breeds have been bred for qualities

reproduce these arguments here. For some Foucauldian analyses of farmed animals, in particular, see Cole (2011), Coppin (2003), Holloway et al (2009), Holloway (2007, 2005), Holloway & Morris (2007), Novek (2005), Shukin (2009), Thierman (2010), Twine (2010), Wadiwel (2002).

like disease resistance, fertility, ease of calving and strength, Holsteins have been almost exclusively bred for milk production. As a result, Holsteins can produce excessive quantities of milk (ten times the normal amount of milk needed to sustain a calf) but they frequently suffer from mastitis, lameness and declining fertility – all problems which cause them to be slaughtered at 3-7 years of age. Jersey cows comprise 7% of the U.S. dairy herd and are typically much smaller in size, with a creamy brown colored coat (EPA 2012a). Their smaller size is preferred by some farmers due to the lower cost of feeding and housing (Weston, personal communication, 2012). Jerseys are also often preferred for cheese-making due to the high percentages of butterfat and protein in their milk (EPA 2012a).

Before they reach reproductive maturity, heifers (female bovines who have not yet given birth) like the heifer with ear tags #6040 are subject to processes of branding, ear tagging, dehorning, and tail docking (each of which will be explained in detail in Chapter 6). When they reach reproductive maturity, heifers are impregnated for the first time at 15 months of age via artificial insemination. If the insemination is successful, the cow will give birth nine months later, at 24 months old. Cows usually give birth to a single calf, but occasionally there will be twins.⁸ Increasingly, artificial insemination is the most common method of reproducing animals in the food industry (from cows to turkeys and pigs) (Morrell 2011). Artificial insemination is preferred due to its greater efficiency, control over the reproductive process, and the overall

⁸ If a cow gives birth to male and female twins, the female is sterile (called a freemartin), and many of these 'freemartins' arrive at auction to be sold for slaughter – useless except as 'meat' because they are not able to reproduce.

intensification of production even on smaller farms. Artificial insemination, or A.I., is performed using semen from a bull (the production of which is explored in the next chapter) and an insemination gun. The animal is restrained in a darkened box that holds her in place and blocks her vision (a darkened area with restricted vision will typically calm an animal) for ease of insemination (Grandin 1989). The human worker inserts his/her hand into the rectum which enables the inseminator to physically manipulate the reproductive tract into the desired position, while the other hand wields the insemination gun (DeJarnette & Nebel 2012). The worker inserts the right hand, which is holding the insemination gun, into the vagina, through the cervix, and deposits the semen into the uterine body (DeJarnette & Nebel 2012).

That animals must be tightly restrained for this process indicates the resistance on the part of animals to being artificially inseminated. The darkened box that holds the cow is colloquially called the 'rape rack' – a nickname, which lays bare and acknowledges the violation of the cow's body (explored in later chapters; Gruen 1993). Indeed, this discourse internal to the industry suggests that females experience artificial insemination as rape – a process by which she is restrained and penetrated by a man (who makes her body docile with the darkened box in order to calm and dominate her).

Pregnant cows are moved into a 'maternity pen' approximately two to three weeks prior to giving birth. At any one time, there were 60-80 pregnant cows waiting in the maternity pen at Ansel Farm. When a heifer or cow goes into labor, she is typically isolated and monitored while giving birth to her calf. Within a day after birth, the calf is removed from the cow and the cow is immediately moved into the 'milking string' – a

pen where they are housed in between milkings. Cows typically bellow consistently for their absent calves for a full two weeks after the calves are removed from them (Weston, personal communication, 2012). Calves are removed from their mothers immediately because cows and calves experience greater emotional distress the longer they are allowed to bond (Weston, personal communication, 2012; also, see Weary & Chua 2000 for work on the effects of separation).

Dairy farms are increasingly spatially ordered around a logic of efficiency. Thus the geography and layout of the farm itself reveals the ways in which animals are managed in these production spaces for maximum productivity. At Ansel Farm, the maternity pen and milking string pen were directly adjacent to one another and attached to a large barn that housed the milking 'parlor.' The spatial logic of the farm prioritized containment and easy movement to and from the milking parlor. Animals at this farm were not pastured; it is, for many farmers, too time consuming and labor intensive to pasture animals who are being milked three times per day (Weston, personal communication, 2012). Keeping the animals in the pens attached to the barn meant that they were just yards away from the milking parlor at all times and could be efficiently herded in to the parlor to be milked. This close proximity, paired with the shift to milking machines from human labor for milking, meant that the number of farm workers needed to manage a herd of 500 was relatively low.

The pens were furnished with large troughs of water and feed and the floors were dirt, manure and concrete. The animals were fed a 'total mixture ration' (TMR), a combination of hay, grain (corn and cottonseed), and silage. Silage is corn, grass and

other cereals, cut young and prepared as a moist, fermented mixture that helps with protein digestion. Corn is not a natural feed for cows, and their bodies have difficulty digesting the grain (Pollan 2007). In Weston's words, "corn passes right through cows, so it has to be ground up" (personal communication, 2012). Ansel Farm grew and processed silage onsite, storing it in large piles under long plastic sheets with truck tires to weigh down the plastic. Other feed supplies were bought from Idaho and Eastern Washington.

At Ansel Farm, animals could move between the pens and the barn. In the outdoor pens, they ate and drank in close quarters. Inside the barn, there were stalls – steel bars as divisions and concrete floors – where the cows could lie down. Weston's shared his vision of the day in the life of a cow at his farm: "they lie down, chew their cud and talk to their neighbors while they wait to be milked" (personal communication, 2012). They are milked three times a day – in the morning, at noon, and in the evening. Milking parlors can be arranged in different layouts, some in rows of milking machines and some in circular, rotating layouts. This milking parlor was laid out with two rows of ten milking stations. Twenty cows at a time were herded into the parlor and lined up in front of the individual stations (See Figure 6).

Weston explained the milking process to me. First, the cow's teats are sprayed with iodine and wiped vigorously (to stimulate milk production). Next, the human worker attaches the machine's 'teat cups' to the cow's teats (See Figure 7).



Figure 6: Milking parlor with machines (one row) at Ansel Farm; Photo source: Gillespie, 2012



Figure 7: Milking demonstration at the Washington State Fair; Photo source: Gillespie, 2012

Suctioning two teats at a time, the machine extracts milk from the udders and, using an automatic shut-off mechanism, the machine disengages the teats when the milking is complete. Before exiting the milking parlor, the worker dips each teat into iodine as a disinfectant and herds the cows back into the milking string. The process of milking is both a relief for cows, like #6490, and a potential source of extreme discomfort and pain. Like lactating human women, cows experience relief when their young nurse (as it releases the painful pressure of full mammary glands). Because calves are immediately removed from their mothers, this natural process of nursing as a form of connection, relief and nourishment between the cow and calf, is co-opted by the enrollment of machines for milking. Thus, milking may provide some sense of relief for cows who may be suffering from full udders and the absence of calves. Weston explained, “Cows like to be milked; they *want* to be milked” (personal communication, 2012). Of course this perceived desire to be milked is more likely due to the fact that cows may find some sense of relief in the process as a way to manage the discomfort of over-full udders. However, milking can be an explicitly painful process as well. When cows have mastitis (a common, painful infection of the udders), milking causes pain and extends the chronic pain of the infection beyond the site of the milking parlor. Furthermore, if workers are rough in handling the attachment of the teat cups to the udders, the milking machine itself can cause pain or injury to the sensitive and delicate skin of the udders.

Weston boasted that this milking technology, now commonplace in even small-scale facilities, meant that one man could milk 20 cows at a time in approximately 5-7 minutes. After each group of 20 cows is milked, the milking parlor is sprayed down and cleaned. Increasingly, this process is becoming more automated on dairy farms around the world with automated-milking-systems becoming more popular in order to further eliminate human labor (Holloway 2007).

As we exited the milking parlor, we encountered a man driving a tractor with a scraper attached to the front that dragged along the ground and scraped manure into slits in the floor of the barn. This manure was mostly liquid and poured into a holding pit under the barn. Later, it was pumped out into trucks and driven out to manure lagoons on the property. Manure lagoons are the most common way of dealing with waste from animal agricultural production facilities. These lagoons, which are earthen pits in the ground, hold the manure and then, often, the liquid is collected and sprayed over fields as fertilizer. Manure lagoons have been linked to a number of deleterious environmental and health impacts for areas surrounding them and human workers have been known to drown in them, as they have become overcome by the stench and fallen in. According to Weston, county and the state inspectors fly over the lagoons to observe any spills or overflows, for which farms can be fined. As we stood there watching the tractor scraping the manure into the pit, the smell of rancid manure was very strong. Weston said, "That there's the smell of money."

And indeed, cows raised for dairy are subject to a gendered commodification of their lives and bodies in a way that is directly linked to the production of capital. The

practices now common in the industry (and taken up even by small farmers) involve careful calculations of profitability and eking out the most capital from each animal. Cows are milked for approximately 300 days out of every year. In order to continue to produce milk, they are artificially inseminated and impregnated again within three months of giving birth. Thus, for nine months out of every year, cows are pregnant and milked until approximately 60 days before giving birth (called the “drying off” period). Sixty to ninety days after giving birth, cows are artificially inseminated again and the cycle repeats every year until the cow is 3-7 years old. By contrast, a cow’s natural lifespan is upwards of 20 years. This forced reproduction occurs year round; in other words, cows’ reproductive process is disconnected from the seasons and is, instead, determined by a schedule of productivity and economic efficiency. As soon as a cow can physically be re-impregnated, she will be.

When a cow’s milk production or ability to get pregnant declines at 3-7 years, she is deemed “spent” by the industry. Factors that may contribute to a cow being categorized as “spent” are mastitis, lameness, other diseases, and declining fertility and milk production. Mastitis is a common ailment among cows used for dairy (and some lactating women suffer from this ailment as well). It is an infection of the udders with symptoms including redness and swelling, persistent severe pain and inflammation (especially during milking), and flu-like symptoms (fever, body pain, fatigue, etc.). In addition to being painful for the animal, mastitis can pose a human health risk if an infected cow’s milk enters the commercial milk supply. It is also seen as an economic hardship for the industry – mastitis can be costly and difficult to treat and a cow with

mastitis represents an economic loss of production for the farm. Lameness is also a significant welfare issue for cows raised for dairy. The condition is painful and causes cows to limp or have difficulty walking and placing weight on the affected leg. Lameness is most often caused by lesions on the hoofs caused by being housed on cement, which is harmful to the health of the animal and yet overwhelmingly common in the industry. Cement flooring is relatively inexpensive, readily available, and easy to spray down for cleaning, but it is also extremely hard on the cows who stand or lay on it 24 hours a day and its slickness when wet with water and manure poses a hazard to cows who frequently slip and fall, injuring themselves. Increased rates of lameness (and indeed, poor welfare in general) have been associated with decreased milk yield (SCAHAW 1999). Other common diseases include milk fever (hypocalcemia), ketosis, reproductive disorders, and bacterial diarrhea (EPA 2012b). These conditions are common due to the severe physical strain and nutrient depletion caused by forced impregnation and excessive milking characteristic of the industry. Some of these diseases are generally preventable with the use of vaccines and treatable with various antibiotics and other medications, and there is a large market for these within the industry. However, often treatment involves too much effort or is too costly, it is simply not economically viable to treat the condition, and the cow will be marked as “spent” and sent to slaughter.

The term “spent” here is noteworthy. “Spent,” of course, refers to the fact that she is “used up” and no longer reproductively viable, but it also literally calls up reference to her declining economic value. Her body and its productive and

reproductive capacities are literally capital enlisted in the process of further producing capital goods and profits. When this viability is gone, this particular capital is spent. The farmer makes a careful economic calculation in which the cost of maintaining her is weighed against her profitability as a milk producer. Her body's value to the industry is in rapid decline in its current state, and she is sent to slaughter whereby the last bit of capital is extracted from her body in the form of "meat" and other products (see Shukin 2009). Some farms have direct relationships with the slaughterhouse and will transport animals directly to slaughter. Other farms do not involve themselves in the slaughter process and will sell animals at cull market auctions where 'meat' buyers purchase them and transport them to slaughter themselves. Other farms have 'livestock buyers' come directly to the dairy farm and animals are sold directly from the farm and transported to slaughter. Cows used for dairy are overwhelmingly used for cheap and processed 'meat' and 'ground beef.' Their bodies are too worn out and damaged to be used for higher quality 'meat' products. Homer Weston confided that, 'if you're eating a burger from a fast food joint, you're most definitely eating a dairy cow' and stated that their cows likely end up as McDonald's hamburgers. This is especially noteworthy because the dairy products (cheese and milk) sold from this Weston's farm were sold at farmers' markets. Thus, small scale dairy farming is not divorced from industrial production and consumption practices. What parts of the cows' bodies were not sold for 'meat' products would likely be sent to a rendering facility where various body parts would be rendered into usable products, including fertilizer, leather, glue, cosmetics, soap, and pharmaceuticals.

The heifer with ear tags #6490, at the site of the dairy farm, is subject to the control and appropriation of her physical body and her biological capacities for commodity production. The reproductive capacities of the female body are central to her gendered commodification, and her life and body is managed in service to the accumulation of capital in a political economy of food production. The economic logic that underwrites the use of her body connects her (re)productive capacities as a gendered animal laboring in the industry to global circuits of capital related to milk, veal, semen and beef production. This capital circulation links the heifer with #6490 to other animals in the dairy and related industries, and also illustrates the violence of global systems of capital accumulation. The global and the intimate, then, is embodied in the heifer with ear tag #6490 as she waits to give birth to her first calf, an experience that will start her on a path to declining fertility and productivity and, in a few years, slaughter.

Linking back to the broader intellectual project of this text, the heifer with ear tags #6490 is a lens through which to understand the global and intimate in the nonhuman context, thus expanding the global intimate and feminist geographical theory more broadly into other-than-human worlds. The story here of the heifer with ear tags #6490 is also a way to understand the embodied animal and the intimate experience of animals used for commodity production, illustrating the urgency of featuring the singular in animal geographies as a way to push the sub-discipline in more critical directions. Thus, rather than merely theorizing animal life at the scale of the population (e.g., Buller and Roe 2013; Holloway & Morris 2008; 2007; Holloway

2005) , this chapter contributes an analysis of the embodied female that both urges us to consider the ethical dimensions of human-animal relations in an intimate way *and* attends to the distinctly gendered embodiment of the female cow. Finally, the details of the life of the cow are integral for understanding the consequences of the hegemony of animal agriculture – in other words, the ways in which animals are subjects of oppression and human domination in service to everyday commodity production. Laying bare the life of the cow at the heart of this mundane institution is instructive for understanding the way the violence against her body and life is made invisible by the very everydayness of her use.

CHAPTER 5. The Bull with Ear Tag #7050
On Semen and Meat: Commodifying of the Male Body

A Holstein bull with ear tag #7050 broke away from the others as they were being loaded into the transport truck at the back of the California auction yard. He and three other bulls had just been sold for breeding and were on their way to the breeding farm where they would be used to produce semen for the artificial insemination of cows in the dairy industry. Spooked by the noises and the men with electric prods herding them, he bolted back down the corridor, trying to escape. The men scattered frantically to veer him off, slamming a gate closed just as he tried to pass through. Trapped, the bull trotted back and forth, looking for another way out. He was young, healthy and strong, his coat shiny and thick and his muscles visible as he trotted back and forth in the enclosed chute. Though he was much stronger than the men attempting to load him into the transport truck, the layout of the auction yard was designed to subdue the powerful strength of 1000-pound animals. The men were breathless from the chase, and they were angry at the bull for his escape attempt, cursing loudly. One of the men held an electric prod and jabbed the bull repeatedly with the electric prod. Leaping forward with each shock, the bull was forced up the ramp into one of the truck's compartments. Once the bull was in the compartment, the man jabbed him several times with the electric prod through the holes in the trailer and the bull lunged against the side of the trailer walls trying to get away from the prod. Finally, the men closed the trailer and the truck slowly pulled away from the auction yard out onto the open road on its way to the breeding farm where the bulls would be kept for semen production.

* * *

Feminist scholars have focused on the ways in which the female animal body is disproportionately exploited for its reproductive potential (e.g., Adams 1990; Gruen 1993; Davis 1995). And indeed, the cow used for dairy, the hen used for eggs, and the sow used for breeding live short lives of intensively controlled forced reproduction. Their bodies are pushed to their reproductive capacity, their offspring are removed from them shortly after birth, and when they are no longer reproductively viable, they are slaughtered for their flesh. There is no doubt that female animals in the food industry are intensely exploited specifically because of their sex. But a gendered analysis of animals in the food industry that looks only at the female body is an incomplete analysis. Male animals, too, are exploited for their reproductive capacities in the production of semen – an integral ingredient in the reproductive process. While the gendered commodification of the female body may be more obvious and readily apparent – because it calls up human experiences of rape, pregnancy, childbearing, etc. – bulls in the dairy industry are subjected to the exploitative extraction of their semen as a commodity product. Thus, this chapter explores the lived reality of the male in the dairy and semen industries.

This attention to the male body follows the growing trend in geography and beyond to consider the male body as it is tied up with norms about masculinity and the social construction of masculinity (Connell 1995; Jackson 1991; Longhurst 2001); the varied and contingent enactments of masculinity (Jackson 1994; May 1998; Reeser 2010); the role of masculinity in 'gay sexual-spatial relations' (Berg and Longhurst 2003: 354;

Brown 1998; Knopp 1998) and the social and cultural dimensions of the male body (Dutton 1995; Goldstein 1995). Indeed, the male body has received considerably less attention in popular culture (Jackson 1994) as well as in the academic realm, partly because of the way men's bodies have been viewed as being without a sex (Bordo 1999). The female body, with its distinctly female body parts (e.g., ovaries, uterus, etc.) and distinctly female biological processes (e.g., menstruation, pregnancy, childbirth, menopause), eclipses the male body in studies on the way this body is understood and the role it plays in understanding the body as a sexed object (Beauvoir 1952). And yet, the male body, too, is driven by hormonal changes and the physical responses in distinctly male body parts (e.g., penis, testicles) that shape the male as a sexed subject (Bordo 1999). While the male *animal* body has not been explored in any detail, the bull's body is tightly managed and controlled in response to his hormonal fluctuations (e.g., how hormones affect his temperament) and biological capacities (e.g., his ability to produce semen). This makes him an important subject of study in order to understand the particularities of how the male animal, too, is a subject of gendered commodification and everyday violence in the production of semen as a commodity. Thus, one contribution of this chapter is to urge scholars working on geographies of masculinity to consider the ways in which conceptions of masculinity and ideals of the male body travel across species lines to impact the lives of nonhuman animals.

Further, this attention to the male body extends feminist global intimate analyses by making the global intimate at the site of the male body, as bulls are connected to global circuits of semen as a commodity. An analysis of the male animal body, together

with the previous chapter on the female body, addresses the need for animal geography to more thoroughly engage with embodied animal and the impacts of commodification on their lives and bodies. Finally, similar to the way the female body is intimately involved in the tangible, embodied reproduction of the dairy industry (and animal agriculture at large), the male body and the semen it produces is an essential component to this reproductive process. Thus, the female and male bovine animals together have been enrolled in maintaining humans' use of animals for dairy production.

Being born male in the dairy industry dictates one of several particular kinds of futures for the calf. The overwhelming majority of male calves in the dairy industry are slaughtered shortly after birth for veal or inexpensive meat (a topic explored in detail in chapter 6). A small percentage of male calves with exceptional genetic heritage are raised, intact, for breeding purposes. These bulls are typically either used as 'natural service bulls' or for semen extraction for use in artificial insemination. Bulls are reproductively mature at 14 months of age and it is preferable to use bulls who are young - 1.5 to 2.5 years old who are at their prime of fertility and are less likely to carry sexually transmitted infections (Lima et al 2011).

'Natural service' (NS) breeding involves the consideration of many factors, including "health, semen quality, libido, mating ability, and social ranking among other bulls and females" (Lima et al 2011: 1). In order to ensure the continued vitality of a potential breeding bull, a 'breeding soundness evaluation' (BSE) is recommended on a regular basis. This test is meant to ensure prime breeding abilities and is also integral to

identifying sexually transmitted infections in herds. Sexually transmitted infections are fairly common in dairy herds and a combination of testing and vaccination is recommended to maintain healthy bulls and cows (Lima et al 2011).

When bulls are no longer viable candidates for breeding purposes in NS herds, they are sent to slaughter. Culling in NS herds is done for a number of reasons; a California survey (Champaigne et al 2002) recorded that the most common reasons for culling bulls were size (73% of respondents cited size as a reason), health (65% of respondents cited health), bull temperament (53%), and age (37%). Temperament of bulls is of primary concern to dairy farmers; in fact, industry norms say that “bulls of any age which have bad temperament should not be tolerated on dairy farms” (Chenoweth et al 2003). The leading cause of death among humans handling farmed animals is attacks by bulls, and bulls in the dairy industry more frequently fatally injure humans than bulls in the beef industry (Grandin 2006). One effective method for impacting the temperament of males is early castration (Grandin 2006), which is, of course, impossible if an animal is to be used for breeding. Bulls who show signs of resistance are characterized as having a ‘bad temperament’ and, thus, the industry creates more docile bodies through killing animals who do not fit the particular standard of a ‘good’ (i.e., nonresistant) disposition. Interestingly, the discourses explored later that promote the bull as a virile, masculine figure are partially at odds with the practice of culling bulls with ‘bad temperaments’ – males who are *too* masculine or aggressive and have too much of a mind of their own do not remain in the industry.

The nose ring is one method of humans exercising control over bulls in the industry. The nose ring is a device applied to facilitate the “restraint, leading and management of bulls” (Divers & Peek 2007: 35). In the application of a nose ring, the human performing the procedure uses a nose lead to pull the bull’s head forward until fully extended. A scalpel can be used to pierce a hole through the septum of the bull or alternatively, a specially designed set of nose ring pliers can be used. The nose ring is then inserted through the hole and clamped shut. Proper placement of the nose ring in the septum is important or the septum can tear and will need to be surgically repaired for valuable bulls (Divers and Peek 2007). The nose ring is a method of physical control and dominance over the bull because the septum is a sensitive area and bulls are reactive to this sensitivity. Thus a farm worker, who may be just a fraction of the bull’s size, can control the animal through an exercise of power derived from causing pain to the animal.

Although some farmers choose to use the ‘natural service method’ of reproduction on dairy farmers, artificial insemination is increasingly the preferred method of reproduction for dairy industry workers because of its reliability and ease of control over the reproductive process. Approximately 80% of cows in the dairy industry in North America and Europe are impregnated via artificial insemination; as such, to speak about dairy reproduction is to speak primarily about artificial insemination (Morrell 2011). The advantages of artificial insemination include the ability for farmers to use semen from bulls with “superior genetic merit,” to reduce the number of bulls

kept on the dairy farm, and to sustain shorter calving intervals “resulting in a more consistent, uniform calf crop” (Cothren 2012).

In artificial insemination, the bull is typically not present on the dairy farm. Instead, bulls are increasingly raised on separate breeding farms. Bulls raised on breeding farms for semen production are forcibly ejaculated 2-3 days per week and 2-3 times per collection day using either an artificial vagina or an electro-ejaculator (Rouge 2002). When an artificial vagina (AV) is used, a trained steer (a castrated male), a female in estrus, or a dummy is enlisted as a ‘teaser’ to arouse the bull. As described in a University of Idaho teaching manual, the steps are as follows: “1) Mount--female in estrus, teaser animal or dummy; 2) Restrain mount; 3) Clean bull's sheath and belly; 4) Lead bull to mount to tease and be teased; 5) As bull mounts, grasp sheath and direct penis into AV 6) Hold AV near buttocks parallel to angle of vagina; 7) Let bull serve the AV (don't thrust AV on penis); 8) Do not touch penis” (AG 534-J: 8). ‘Teaser’ steers are commonly used and are made to stand in place while the bull attempts to mount him. Once the penis is erect, after several false mounts, the human handler manually diverts the penis into the AV. The AV is a long, tube-shaped device that uses stimulates ejaculation through ‘thermal and mechanical stimulation’ (Rouge 2002). The AV collects the semen, which is then processed for use – typically stored and frozen for later sale. The use of an AV can be difficult and potentially dangerous for the human handler and ‘teaser’ steer or female. The steer or female can be injured by the bull’s attempts to mount them and the human handler can be injured during the process as well.

Another widely used method for semen collection is electro-ejaculation. Electro-ejaculation is performed by a human handler inserting an electric probe into the bull's rectum (see Figure 8).

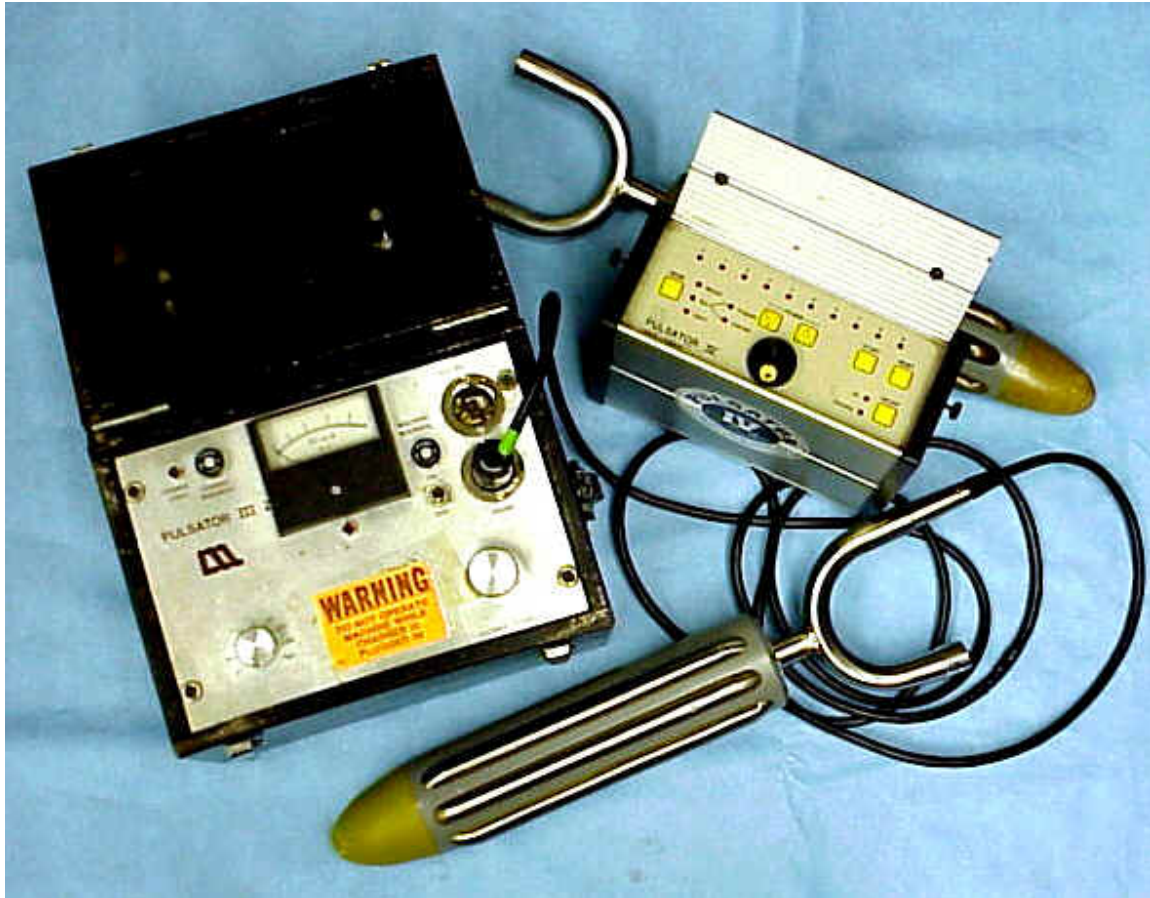


Figure 8: Electro-ejaculator, Photo source: Vet Med, LSU

The probe delivers a series of electric currents to the prostate, causing the bull to involuntarily ejaculate (Rouge and Bowen 2002). This method is often more efficient because it is less dependent on the bull's willingness or arousal. The animal is restrained and the ejaculation process is entirely involuntary. However, this method often produces lower quality semen than other methods, like the artificial vagina. Electro-ejaculation is a painful procedure (Mosure et al 1998). In fact, in a number of

other species, electro-ejaculation is performed under anesthesia, but bulls experience this practice without anesthesia.

The homoerotic undercurrents present in the routine practices of semen extraction for artificial insemination cannot be ignored. Human handlers in this process are typically men who oversee, and are actively involved in, the process of forcibly ejaculating the bull – either through the use of the ‘teaser’ and artificial vagina or through the application of the electro-ejaculator. The ‘teaser’ steer is an interesting figure in the scenario where the artificial vagina is used. He is castrated – always a ‘bottom,’ on the receiving end of sex, except that there is no penetration. Just before the steer would be penetrated, the human handler diverts the bull’s penis into the artificial vagina, reassuring us that this is certainly not gay sex – there is a vagina involved, after all, even if it is plastic, detached from any female body, and wielded by a man. In the case of the electro-ejaculator, the human handler is also intimately involved in the forced ejaculation process. He inserts the device into the bull’s rectum and delivers the electric shock to the prostate. He is literally responsible for the bull’s ejaculation, though the electro-ejaculator has a more sinister connotation because of the bull’s involuntary involvement and because of the pain involved.

Bulls are increasingly being housed not on dairy farms but on separate breeding farms specializing in semen production. A separate place has emerged for semen production that distances the production of semen from the cow. This is the result of industry division and consolidation in a quest for greater efficiency and profit and has resulted in the creation of an international market for semen as a commodity in ‘beef’

and dairy operations around the world (Johnson 2012). Semen as an internationally traded commodity is sold and bought on the basis of the quality of the genetic makeup of the semen, and thus, semen from particular bulls is sought after as these animals are idolized as being of exceptional pedigree. The embodied bull, then, is connected to this global political economy of semen and dairy production, embodying the global intimate. Further, the intimacy of ejaculation and the act of sex is tied up in this same political economy, making clear the connections between the gendered commodification and sexual appropriation of the bull and global structures of agricultural production and sale.

The bull's role in the reproductive process of dairy production is one that is under-acknowledged and yet the industry is fundamentally dependent on the production of semen to reproduce itself. The intimate violation of the bull for semen extraction by farmers links the intimate to the global political economy of commodity production in the industry. The semen becomes a commodity enrolled in the production of other commodities – milk and meat. Thus, the semen and the male body is integral to the reproduction of the industry as a whole just as the female body and her ability to produce calves is a process on which the industry relies.

The intimate experience of the bull should not be underestimated here; in some ways, the violation of the cow is more immediately obvious: forced impregnation is a direct violation of the cow's body and her reproductive system. Males enrolled in the production of semen are not voluntarily donating their semen as is the case in many instances of human semen collection/donation; they are not willingly masturbating and

then willingly handing over their semen. The semen collection process, and particularly the use of the electro-ejaculator violates the bull's body, causing him to ejaculate in a process of forced semen collection. The pain of the bull during electro-ejaculation and the violation of the male body during semen extraction make the intimate, embodied impacts on the bull visible as these are connected to global circuits of capital in the trade of semen as a global commodity. Semen, as a typically disembodied commodity product in artificial insemination, becomes embodied when read through the lens of the global intimate, and the singular bull – the bull with ear tag #7050 – comes into focus as a real being who suffers in service to capital accumulation.

Focusing on the bull as a gendered body embedded in structures of political economy and commodity production extends geographical analyses in several ways. The bull with ear tag #7050, understood through research on what bull's undergo for semen production, is a way to center the gendered, embodied animal in animal geographies in order to gain a specificity of animal experience that does not currently exist. As outlined above, the bull is also a way to extend global intimate analyses to the nonhuman animal body in order to understand the violence of commodification for nonhuman and human bodies. A particular focus on the male body also has the potential to push geographies of the human male body and masculinity to consider how conceptions of male embodiment are relevant in other-than-human contexts. Finally, a focus on the bull extends feminist critical animal studies scholars' analyses focusing on the gendered appropriation of female bodies to the understudied site of the

male body and suggests pathways for further inquiry into the male and female commodification process.

CHAPTER 6. The Calf with Ear Tag #604
On Veal and Dairy: Transforming the Newborn Body

A day-old Holstein calf stood alone in the auction pen before the auction began. The auction ring was clean — this was the first sale of the day and the wood shavings lining the floor of the pen had not yet been soiled by animals passing through. The tiny calf stood in the middle, looked around and bleated. The calf's persistent cry was the only sound in the room, drowning out the distant noise of gates clanking and other animals bellowing from the pens outside. He was a newborn and his drying umbilical cord dangled from his belly as he stood there, slightly wobbly on his spindly legs.

The man who herded the animals through the auction pen entered the ring with a paddle and leaned on the fence in front of the auctioneer's platform to chat with the auctioneer. The calf, noticing the man, approached him and gently nuzzled his leg. He stood no taller than the man's knee and his nose nuzzled at the side of the man's thigh. In one efficient motion, the man turned and smacked the calf in the face with the paddle he was holding and spoke (much too loudly for the fairly quiet room), "I'm not your mother!" The calf cowered and then ran away from the man, across the pen.

I sat in the bleachers and watched. The man saw me watching and turned to me, giving an embarrassed smile and a nervous laugh. I felt compelled, for some reason, to smile back — a thin, forced smile. I was nervous that if I did not smile, I would be identified as someone who didn't belong. Smiling (or trying to) seemed to be an important gesture to demonstrate I was at ease in that place — not out of place. The silent awkward moment between us passed. The auction began and the calf sold — the

first in a string of day-old calves who entered and left the auction pen on wobbly legs, fearful of the men who herded them.

* * *

The calf with ear tag #604 is a lens through which to understand the commodification of the newborn bovine body and the procedures to which that body is subjected in service to capital accumulation. The calf, as an embodied subject separate from the cow and bull, is important because of the efficiency with which the calf is appropriated immediately following his birth. This chapter outlines the various potential futures for calves born into the dairy industry in order to show the intimate impacts of commodification on the newborn body. The newborn animal is also the embodiment of the reproduction of the dairy industry (and animal agriculture at large). With each new female calf, another generation of dairy producers is born. With each new male calf, the potential for a new breeding bull is born.

The calf with ear tag #604 and the man smacking him in the face also represents the industry's unwillingness to see the animal as a singular being. When the calf approached the man, a momentary face-to-face encounter occurred (Haraway 2003). The calf approached the man with curiosity and requested attention, and the man recognized (with his acknowledgement that the calf was seeking his mother) and rejected this basic need for comfort (by smacking the calf's face). In that moment, the man both recognized the calf as an embodied animal and then denied that this embodiment (the calf's experience) was important. Smacking the calf away was,

perhaps, a necessary move for the man, who was about to participate in the abstracting commodification of the calf. Thus, attending to encounters like these, and featuring the calf as an important embodied figure in cross-species analyses attends to the greater need for specificity of animals' experience in animal geographies. But the global intimate importantly informs how the animal's experience is largely dictated by global economic logics of efficiency and commodification.

The way that calves are commodified in the dairy industry is dependent on their sex at birth. Approximately five percent of all calves in the dairy industry die at birth (EPA 2012). Of those that survive, healthy female calves are typically raised up into the industry as replacement heifers for dairy herds. Females are sometimes raised on the same farm where they were born or they may be moved to another farm until they reach reproductive majority, and often farmers will sell females to other dairy farms looking to increase their herd size. Young heifers sold as 'replacements' for dairy herds appear frequently at auctions.

Male calves, on the other hand, have little to no use to the industry and are typically sold, or disposed of, at birth. Some male calves are castrated and raised as steers for beef; however, the majority of male calves born in the dairy industry are raised in confinement and fed milk replacers until they are 16-18 weeks old when they are slaughtered for veal. The dairy industry, then, is inextricably linked to the veal industry because veal production operates as a way to eke capital from the bodies of male calves – bodies that would otherwise be considered 'waste products' in the industry. If a newborn male calf appears to be ill or weak, he will likely die or be killed

(often by firearm) at birth onsite at the farm as it is not economically viable to put time or resources into his care. These bodies are sometimes composted on the farm or sent to rendering or, if these weaker calves seem to be slightly more robust, they will be kept alive for 2-3 weeks and slaughtered for cheap 'bob veal.' 'Bob veal' is a less expensive alternative to 'special-fed veal,' and is the flesh of extremely young calves.

Approximately 15% of calves raised for veal are slaughtered for bob veal and do not live past three weeks of age (FSIS 2013).

It is unusual for dairy farms to be involved in the raising and slaughtering of male calves for veal, and they will generally sell day-old calves at auction to buyers interested in raising them, or they will contact a buyer to purchase the calves directly from the farm. The dairy industry fosters the invisibility of male calves and conceals the link between dairy and veal production. Because the ethical dimensions of veal production have received significant public attention since the 1980s, the dairy industry attempts to publically distance itself from the tarnished veal industry. The mistreatment of calves in the veal industry was brought to the public eye in the 1980s and 1990s when it was revealed that calves were raised for veal chained in tiny crates with low light and were isolated and immobilized for their short lives. Despite public disfavor, this is still primarily how calves raised for veal are treated – isolated and confined in individual crates. In 2007, the American Veal Association called for producers to phase out individual crates and shift to group housing for calves by 2017 (AVA 2011). Though this may have the potential to improve the experience of calves during their abbreviated

lives, producers are not required to shift to group housing; the American Veal Association has merely made the recommendation.

On more than one occasion during my research, I encountered evidence of the dairy industry's attempts to distance itself from veal. There is something particular about calves (their perceived innocence, their cuteness, the fact that they're babies) that evokes empathy with consumers with whom I spoke; in other words, calves seem to be seen as individual, embodied beings more easily than adults. This embodiment and the empathy it evokes is a challenge for the dairy industry where adult cows are given numbers and are largely conceptualized in terms of population. At the farm I visited, I asked the farmer what happened to the male calves born at the farm. He replied that a 'livestock' buyer came to the farm to pick up the calves, but that he did not know how these buyers planned to use the calves. However, when I asked if they might be used for veal, he quickly replied that their farm had nothing to do with veal and did not want anything to do with it. At the World Dairy Expo, too, I inquired about raising calves for veal and industry representatives were hesitant to talk about the dairy-veal connection. This invisibility of the veal industry is essential for the maintenance of a positive image of dairy production. I have encountered on countless occasions consumers who eat dairy and claim that they would never eat veal – they declare that veal is unethical and they do not want to support that industry, with no knowledge that the dairy industry relies heavily on the production of veal and vice versa. In fact, consumers of dairy support the veal industry every time they buy a dairy product. It is important for the continued success of the dairy industry that the dairy-veal connection remains hidden.

As part of the local foods movement where consumer ‘connection’ to food is touted as essential for ethical eating, there is a push for ‘ethical’ veal. This is one dimension of the larger trend in meat eating for those who believe that an ‘ethical’ method of killing animals for food is possible through small-scale farming. In 2012, a story ran in *Edible Seattle* featuring veal producers who buy and raise day old calves from local dairies. The author asserts that this ‘ethical veal closes the loop at local dairies’ (Pennington 2012). On one hand the focus on local veal production draws attention to the connection between dairy and veal in a way that is unusual, and in a way that may cause consumers to engage more directly with the embodied animal. On the other hand, this move to eliminate the taboo associated with eating veal works to further naturalize the use of animals in the dairy and veal industries. In the case of Sea Breeze Farm (a tiny farm on Vashon Island, WA selling at Seattle area farmers’ markets), the owner, George Page, works hard to naturalize the process of farming animals – to make it seem like he is getting back to nature, back to the ‘way things have always been’. This process of naturalization is evident in a news article about Page, “In his view, large-scale modern farming has segmented animal husbandry, breaking up what was once a whole and healthy ecosystem. Byproducts – such as male calves on a dairy farm – then become problems rather than just pieces of the puzzle. At Sea Breeze, he wants every piece to play its part” (Denn 2009, n.p.).

Indeed, industrial production and its segmentation have attracted a great deal of attention to the politics of food and agriculture and pushed consumers to rethink their consumption habits. In the case of dairy and veal, it is precisely the segmentation of

these industries that has both revealed and concealed the violence of the process of raising and killing animals for food. Industrial production and its division reveal the violence of the system which becomes visible to consumers when certain aspects of these industries are exposed (e.g., exposés in the 1980s about veal production). But the segmentation of the industry also enables the concealment of other kinds of violence. For instance, the division between the dairy and veal industries works to the dairy industry's benefit because dairy can continue to sell well when consumers boycott veal for ethical reasons. Disconnecting from the reality of the embodied veal calf (crated and offending our sense of how animals should be treated) makes it possible to imagine that dairy production does not involve any of these more unsavory practices. This division between the two industries whereby male calves become "problems" in effect emphasizes the violence of human-animal relations in this context. In the case of Sea Breeze, where male calves become "just pieces of the puzzle," the violence of humans raising and killing animals becomes naturalized by the suggestion that this is a return to a "whole and healthy ecosystem." Rather than asking consumers concerned with the ethical, political and environment dimensions of animal use in the food industry to *move forward* to radically rethink the system itself, consumers of niche, local animal products are reassured that eating veal is actually a way to *go back*, to get closer to nature – to close the natural loop of dairy-meat consumption. This imagined alternative of 'ethical meat,' however, is still situated in a hierarchy of dominance and subjugation whereby humans exercise power and control over animal lives, albeit in a more aesthetically palatable package.

The aesthetic and discursive work of 'humanely raised and slaughtered' obscures the violence of meat, dairy and egg production in any form (see Gillespie 2011b). Further, this trend in consumer-food connection results in desensitizing consumers from the violence of using animals for food perhaps even more so than in the mainstream industry (see Gillespie 2011a). The mainstream meat, dairy and egg industries rely on a lack of consumer knowledge about the role of animals in these industries and paint generic images of the 'family farm' to reassure consumers at the site of consumption – the grocery store. The niche, local suppliers of 'ethical' or 'humane' meat, dairy and eggs, on the other hand, operate under the guise of full disclosure, which encourages consumers to acknowledge the process of killing animals for food, while at the same time necessarily denying the system of human exceptionalism and dominance that this act of killing reproduces.

Calves killed for veal are unique in the public eye as their youth is readily visible – the fact that they are babies and that they are cute tends to evoke empathy among consumers. The raising of these tiny calves in crates is disturbing to many consumers because of calves' cuteness factor, but also because of the affinity many consumers have for children and babies – and the thought of separating a mother and baby and raising the baby in a tiny dark box is abhorrent to many. Black, in a *Washington Post* article praising the consumption of 'ethical' veal, however, points out the inconsistency of this line of thinking: "one common consumer complaint is that the animals are killed so young. But veal calves are in fact older than chickens, turkeys and pigs and about the same age as lambs when they are slaughtered" (Black 2009). Her objective here is to

point out the inconsistency of our uncritical consumption of some baby animals and not others in order to make veal more palatable. But I would argue that drawing attention to the age at which farmed animals are killed (still in their adolescence) is actually one means by which to bring farmed animal into our circle of who we care for and about. There is something noteworthy and emotionally affecting about the calf raised for veal. There is something in the reality of this newborn animal being housed, isolated from his mother and others of his kind, for a short life before he is slaughtered, that offends our sensibilities and appeals to our emotional responses. Rather than deny this emotional response as Black would have us do, I argue that bringing the calf raised for veal, the bull used for semen, the cow used for dairy, the chicken raised for eggs and meat, the turkey raised for Thanksgiving, and the pig raised for bacon and pork into our domain of empathy is a deeply political act of refusing to engage in everyday practices that dominate and violate other species for our own gustatory pleasure. The life of the calf is an entry point, then, into expanding our circle of who we care for and about to more distant others with which we are intimately intertwined every time we choose to eat dairy, meat or eggs.

Industry uses of the calf with ear tag #604

Prior to arriving at auction, the calf with ear tag #604 would have been removed from his mother just hours after birth; in fact, it is the recommendation of the Bovine Alliance on Management and Nutrition (2001) that calves and cows should be separated within the first hour after birth. Homer Weston at Ansel Farms explained that they

remove both female and male calves so quickly after birth because the animals bond more closely the longer they are allowed to be together. As it is, Weston explained, cows will bellow for up to two weeks for their calves after they are separated. Weston acknowledged the trauma experienced by animals after separation and the deeply emotional nature of bovine relationships.

When calves are born, their blood does not contain the antibodies needed for a healthy, functioning immune system; calves get these antibodies from drinking colostrum, the first milk produced by the cow after birthing (BAMN 2001). Colostrum has higher concentrations of protein, fat, vitamins and minerals than regular milk and gives the calf essential nutrition immediately after birth (BAMN 2001). One would think that the easiest way for calves to obtain colostrum would be to let them feed from their mothers immediately after birth. However, concerns about bacterial infection, transmission of disease, contaminated colostrum, and the intensification of the cow-calf bond drive the logic to prevent calves from feeding directly from the cow.

One disease of particular concern to dairy farmers is Johne's disease, or *paratuberculosis*, a fatal gastrointestinal disease affecting ruminant animals (Collins and Manning 2010). Though the disease is common in both captive and 'wild' ruminant animals, it is most common in cows used for dairy and 68% of U.S. dairy herds contain at least one infected animal (Collins and Manning 2010). The disease is typically contracted in very young calves and can lay dormant for months or even years before symptoms occur. Transmission can occur through the milk of infected cows, through the consumption of infected water, grass and feces, and in utero (Collins and Manning

2010). The disease causes diarrhea, weight loss and overall decline in body condition and milk production; in spite of eating sufficient amounts of food, a bovine animal with Johne's will, in effect, be starving to death (Collins and Manning 2010).⁹

To avoid the transmission of this and other diseases and infections in the first place, colostrum is generally collected, tested with a colostrometer and must be approved before it is fed to the calf by human handlers. Colostrum can be fed through various methods: allowing the calf to suckle directly from the cow, bottle feeding, or with esophageal feeders (BAMN 2001). Allowing the calf to feed directly from the cow is not recommended, however, because of the concerns over contamination listed above and because calves may not consume enough of the colostrum in the allotted feeding time to obtain the necessary antibodies (BAMN 2001). Thus, the industry recommendation is to bottle-feed colostrum or use an esophageal feeding tube to force-feed the calf within the first hour after birth.

If good quality colostrum is not available, a colostrum replacer is generally fed to calves. Colostrum replacers are made from dried bovine colostrum or serum and are usually effective in providing the calf with the necessary nutrition and antibodies. Similarly, when calves are transitioned off of colostrum, they are generally fed a milk replacer until the time when they are weaned onto a dry, calf starter feed. Milk replacers contain a range of ingredients: animal fat and vegetable oil, animal plasma, casein, dried skimmed milk and whey, lecithin and vitamin and mineral supplements

⁹ It is likely that a number of the cows sold alongside the cow with ear tag #1389 at the cull market auction (explored in Chapter 7) suffered from Johne's – certainly, the suggestion of starvation was legible on many bodies at the cull market auction.

(BAMN 2008). Additionally, milk replacer may contain mixtures of animal and plant protein products (including fish, meat and bone meal, dried blood, soy, cottonseed, and brewers yeast) (BAMN 2008). These milk replacers are mixed and fed to calves in bottles or buckets until weaning. Often, it is difficult to get calves to drink the milk replacers and so companies have emerged, and advertise at the World Dairy Expo, which produce flavor additives for colostrum and milk replacers to encourage calves to drink the formula. The Bovine Alliance on Management and Nutrition states that milk replacers improve ‘biosecurity, calf performance and economics’ and that “high quality milk replacers will allow calf growth and performance equal or even greater than that attainable with whole milk” (2008: 1).

More than 60% of dairy producers in the U.S. wean calves at eight weeks of age or more, while fewer than 30% wean calves at six weeks (BAMN 2003). Based on a calculation of total feed per calf for the first eight weeks of life, feeding a calf a combination of milk replacer and calf starter feed and weaning at eight weeks cost approximately \$15 more per animal than weaning at 5 weeks (BAMN 2003). Thus, it is economically advantageous to wean calves as early as possible while maintaining their health. Colostrum and milk replacers are one indication of the division of the industry where a biological process among animals is co-opted and commodified by human intervention in the creation of ‘replacement’ products for this natural feeding process.¹⁰ In fact, claims that milk replacers perform better than cows’ milk is one of the many

¹⁰ This is not unlike the market for human infant formula and the history of pushing formula as the “healthier” option for even those women who had no problem breastfeeding their children.

examples of a techno-fix in the industry, where pressures put on the cow's body are mitigated or obscured by technological innovations designed to replace or augment the biological functions of the cow's body.

Calves raised for veal are typically housed in individual crates indoors in “environmentally controlled veal barns for animal health and safety” (FSIS 2013). The calves are housed in rows of crates and can see the other calves in the barn, but are restricted from any contact with one another. Calves are housed alone to prevent the spread of disease and contaminants between calves. Some farmers have transitioned from wooden crates to plastic crates or hutches which are easier to clean, are lightweight and disassemble easily. Calf hutches by Calf-Tel® look like large plastic domed dog houses and are marketed for raising calves for dairy herds, but can be used in raising calves for veal. Calves, like other nonhuman and human adolescents, are playful, and seek the contact and companionship of others. They are typically chained to the front of the hutch so that they can move inside and outside the hutch. However, because of their playful nature, calves regularly hang themselves on the chains while trying to play with calves housed in neighboring hutches. Thus, according to the representative for the Calf-Tel® calf hutch at the World Dairy Expo who shared this information, small fence enclosures were preferable for containing calves in the hutches (Calf-Tel® public presentation, 2012) (See Figures 9 and 10)

Female calves, too, are raised in isolation in hutches until they are old enough to join the herd. This isolation is in stark contrast to the way bovine animals prefer to live. Bovines are herd animals and will remain together as a herd for their lifetime if



Figure 9: Calf hutches by Calf-Tel®, (Photo source: Calftel.com)



Figures 10: Calf hutches by Calf-Tel®, (Photo source: Calftel.com)

allowed. Thus, raising calves in hutches restricts their species-specific behavior preferences and isolates calves from much-needed companionship. On some farms, calves will be transitioned to group housing in a larger hutch or pen with other calves once the threat of disease transmission has passed. This is the case especially when females are being raised as replacement heifers and socialization is necessary to acclimate them to living in herds with animals after being raised for a period in isolation.

Body mutilations as standard industry practice

Calves experience a number of procedures that mutilate their bodies to more easily facilitate commodity extraction, including tail docking, castration, dehorning, branding, and ear tagging. These procedures are done routinely without anesthetic and can cause both acute and chronic pain to the animal. Further, practices like ear tagging and branding mark the animal as property and all of these procedures represent the appropriation and colonization of the animal's body for commodity production.

Tail docking, or the removal of part of the animal's tail (see Figure 11 below for an image of a cow with docked tail), is performed primarily among females either at weaning or just before or after a cow's first calving. Not all farms remove the tails of calves, but it remains a common practice among many dairy farmers. The logic behind tail docking was originally related to beliefs about the health and hygiene of cows and workers, and the quality of milk. For instance, one justification for tail docking was that cows sometimes get excessive manure on their tails which transfers to the udder and

was believed to cause mastitis; thus, farmers decided that it would be logical to cut the tails off to prevent this potential problem (Reynolds 2010).



Figure 11: Cow with docked tail at auction in California; selling for slaughter; Photo source: Gillespie, 2013

However, there is no evidence that tail docking improves cow or worker health, reduces instances of mastitis, or improved milk quality (Reynolds 2010; WSU 2010). The one benefit of tail docking *for the farmers, not the cows*, is that it makes it easier for humans involved in the milking process, so the cows' tails do not hit them in the face while they are attaching them to the milking machines. The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), in fact, "opposes routine tail docking of cattle. Current scientific literature indicates that routine tail docking provides no benefit to the animal, and that tail docking can lead to distress during fly seasons. When medically necessary,

amputation of tails must be performed by a licensed veterinarian” (AVMA 2013a). Indeed, cows’ tails serve important functions for their comfort, health and social relationships. Cows use their tails to communicate with others and signal estrus activity, they use their tails to protect themselves against flies, and their tails are important for temperature control as they help to keep them cool in summer months (Reynolds 2010).

Methods for tail docking include using an elastrator band, pruning shears, a cauterizing docking iron, or a burdizzo (See Figure 12).¹¹ In the case of the elastrator, the most common method of tail docking the United States, an elastic band is applied tightly around the tail with the effect of making the majority of the tail necrotic. Three to seven weeks after banding, the necrotic portion of the tail will fall off, or it might be cut with pruning shears by the farmer (AVMA 2013b). A cautery tail docker can be used to cut the tail and cauterize the stump. And a burdizzo can be used to break the tail after which shears would be used to cut the tail off below the break.

Tail docking causes the animal both short and long term acute and chronic pain and cows with docked tails suffer the same ‘phantom limb’ experience as humans who have had a limb amputated (Eicher 2006). In addition to the AVMA’s opposition to tail-docking, legislatures like the state of California have banned tail docking, though many of the cows at the California auction yard I visited had their tails docked. State laws like these have the potential to eliminate some of the unnecessary and painful procedures to

¹¹ A burdizzo is a pliers-like device used to castrate farmed animals. It clamps and severs the blood vessels leading to the testicles which, over time, will shrivel and disappear. This tool can also be used as an improvised tail-docking tool.

which cows in the dairy industry are subjected. Yet, threats to even these efforts (which do not challenge the industry itself, only its more obviously violent practices) include the failed-yet-relevant King Amendment to the Farm Bill¹², which would have preempted state laws governing animal welfare.

Castration is performed on young male calves usually before six months of age, but often earlier. Male calves are castrated for a number of economic reasons important to the industry, in spite of the fact that castration causes slow growth rate and abbreviated weight gain (AVMA 2012a). Primarily, castration lowers testosterone levels, which reduces sexual activity and aggressiveness (AVMA 2012a), making them more appealing to buyers who would raise them for meat. In short, castration makes male animals worth more at auction than intact males. Castration also lowers the muscle pH of male animals, which impacts the quality of the flesh from that animal (AVMA 2012a); consumers in the United States are accustomed to the flavor and quality of castrated animals. Ultimately, castration is one method by which the industry makes more docile male bodies by limiting their sex drive and accompanying aggression as a result of higher levels of testosterone in the body – all in service to capital accumulation.

There are several types of castration of bovine animals, but ‘surgical’ removal of the testicles is the most common. ‘Surgical’ castration involves using a knife, like the Newberry castrating knife (See Figure 11), to slice open the scrotum and then remove the testicles using another ‘emasculator’ tool to remove the testicles.

¹² The King Amendment to the new Farm Bill of 2014 states that a state cannot refuse the agricultural products of another state based on the conditions under which they were produced (see King 2013a). The amendment did not pass, but the implications of this kind of amendment would have limited the ability of states to implement animal welfare laws that were stronger than federal guidelines.



Figure 12: Newberry castrating knife; Photo source: Gillespie, 2014

Once the testicles have been removed, it is recommended to apply an antiseptic powder or spray to prevent infection (Lane et al n.d.). A second surgical method of castration is to cut off the lower third of the scrotum, pull the testicles out and sever them, or pull them until the cord attaching them breaks (Lane et al n.d.). Other common methods include the use of an elastic rubber ring applied at the base of the scrotum to restrict blood supply after which the testicles take about three weeks to shrivel and fall off, or the use of a burdizzo (i.e., emasculatome) to clamp and sever the blood vessels leading into the testicles, rendering them nonfunctional (See Figure 13). These methods all cause some combination of acute and chronic pain and the industry norm is still to not provide anesthetic due to the costliness of these medications.



Figure 13: Burdizzo/emasculatome (castration pliers); Photo source: Gillespie, 2014

Disbudding and dehorning are performed on male and female calves to remove the animals' horns. It is recommended that calves be dehorned before they reach two months of age, and preferably before one month of age, in order to prevent complications (Hopkins et al, n.d.). These procedures are performed to prevent bruising to the flesh of the animal prior to sale, to prevent injury to farmers and other animals, and to save space (bovine animals with horns require more feeding trough and living space) (AVMA 2012b). Like castration, dehorning is performed within an economic logic of the animal-as-commodity: "Dehorning calves is a simple, cost-effective practice that adds value to feeder cattle" (Hopkins et al, n.d.). Economic concerns often outweigh welfare concerns and this is readily visible in these and other routine

practices of the United States dairy and meat industries. While other countries have laws regulating how and when disbudding and dehorning are performed, the U.S. has no regulations for these procedures.

Disbudding is a procedure performed on very young calves to remove the beginnings of horn buds and destroys the horn-producing cells in the forehead by hot iron disbudding or caustic paste. Hot iron disbudding burns the horn-producing cells and is the most common method of disbudding. Caustic paste chemically destroys the cells. Both methods are extremely painful and can cause long-term tissue damage to the surrounding areas (AVMA 2012b). Other methods of disbudding include “using knives, shears or dehorning spoons, cups, or tubes” (AVMA 2012b). Dehorning is a procedure performed on older animals once the horns are fully formed. Common tools used in dehorning are hand saws, obstetrical wire, or keystone dehorners and bleeding is a common problem with these methods (Hopkins et al, n.d.). In both disbudding and dehorning, animals must be tightly restrained because the procedures are highly painful. Occasionally, if not performed properly, the horns will begin to grow back (see Figure 14).

Branding is another procedure to which both male and female calves in the dairy industry are subjected as a part of the commodification of their bodies. Branding is a literal mark of ownership burned permanently into the skin of the animal, creating a scar in the shape of the symbol of the brand. The most common method of branding is hot-iron branding without anesthetic and has been performed for thousands of years (AVMA 2011). Freeze branding is another method gaining popularity and tattooing is

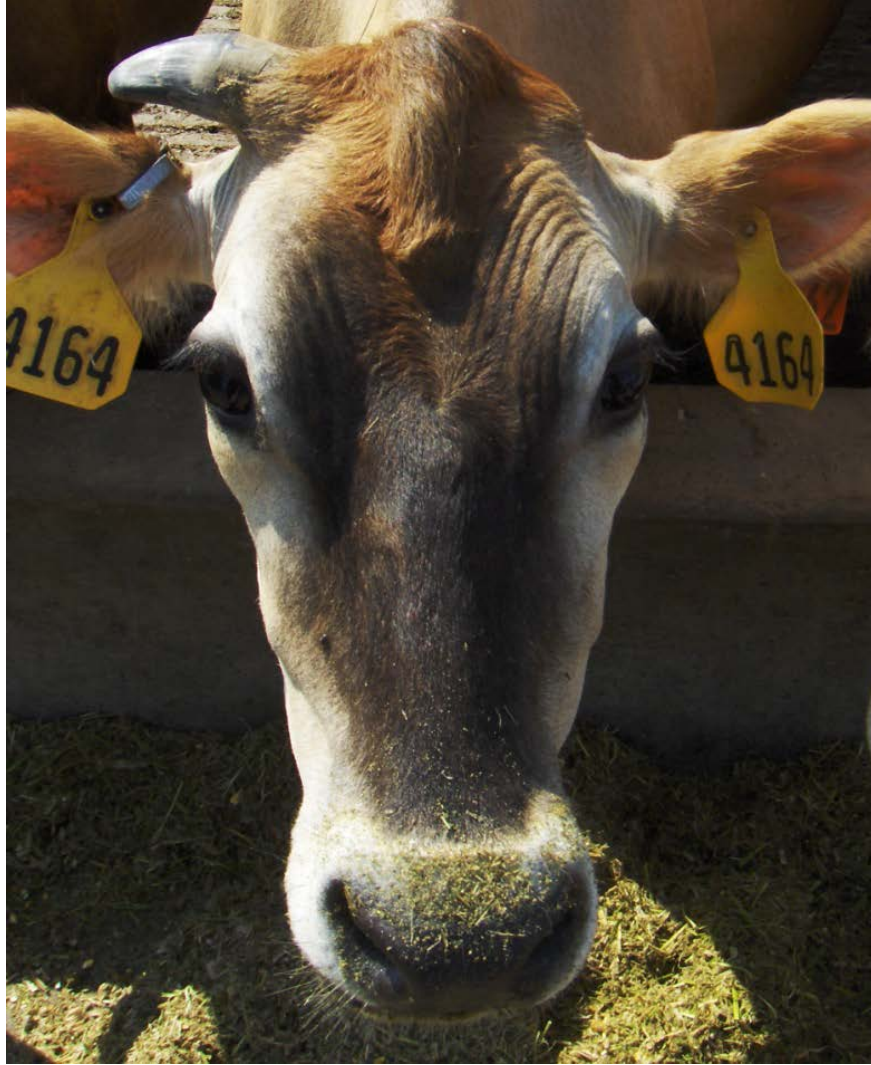


Figure 14: Horn growing back from incorrect dehorning; Photo source: Gillespie, 2012

another method of permanently marking ownership of the animal. All of these methods are painful to the animal and are performed without anesthetic.

Brands (see Figure 15) are unique to each farm and are a source of pride and history for inter-generational farmers, which is likely what sustains the practice of branding. There are currently alternative methods of identification that are less painful for the animal (e.g., paint marks, microchips, electronic leg bands, and electronic collars), but the continued practice of branding (much like the whole institution of

farming animals more generally) represents a stubborn refusal to evolve traditions to meet ethical advances in what we know about animals and the effects of our treatment on them.



Figure 15: Hot iron brand on hip of cow; Photo source: Gillespie, 2012

Both female and male animals in the dairy industry are ear tagged. Ear tags are generally plastic or metal tags with identifying numbers and sometimes barcodes that contain an Animal Identification Number (AIN), the herd, the sire and dam from which the animal was bred, the farm, and/or any identifying characteristics the farmer wishes to include. Animals may have ear tags on one or both ears. Electronic ear tags are gaining popularity and are scan-able by machine in more automated systems where computers may track the activity of each animal. Ear tags are attached to the animal's ear generally with an applicator which punches the tag through the ear. The tag

punches a permanent hole in the animal's ear, and this trace of identification and mark of ownership can be read on the body long after the ear tag is gone (See Figures 16, 17, 18). These routine procedures in the dairy industry are literal markers on the body of the calf of the global political economic processes of commodification and appropriation that these animals undergo for food production. The purpose of these bodily modifications is to transform and regulate the body to accommodate the commodification process. The intimacy of castration, branding, tail docking, and dehorning – the way that the pain of these procedures is experienced intimately by the animal, and performed by farmers – is connected to these global processes of commodity production and the way certain procedures driven by economic logics get normalized through routine practice.



Figure 16: Front view of ear tags; Photo source: Gillespie, 2012



Figure 17: Rear view of ear tag; Photo source: Gillespie, 2012



Figure 18: Hole in ear years after ear tag removal; Photo source: Gillespie, 2012

This chapter has focused on the calf as the embodied reproduction of the dairy industry, where the birth of calves (like the calf with ear tag #604) produces a new generation of dairy producers, semen producers, and sources of meat (veal, ground beef, etc.). The calf with ear tag #604, nuzzling the man's thigh and looking for his mother, engenders the violent impacts on the singular animal and the economic logic of the industry which denies this embodied experience. The calf suffering - calling and searching for his mother - is important for animal geographers and feminist global intimate scholars concerned with animal lives and violent political economic social relations.

Together, the analyses of the heifer with ear tag #6490, the bull with ear tag #7050, and the calf with ear tag #704 combine to lay bare the violence of commodification against real, embodied animals laboring, dying, and being born in the industry. The tendency of consumers, animal geographers and other scholars concerned with violence to ignore these experiences - the heifer waiting to give birth to her first calf who will be taken away from her hours after birth; the bull's frantic attempts to escape the auction yard; the calf searching and calling for his mother in the empty auction ring - works to reproduce the institution of animal agriculture and deny the importance of animals' inner experiences. The embodied animals themselves are essential to feature in global intimate analyses of human-animal relations; but the places where these encounters and cross-species social relations play out are also integral for understanding the importance of geographical analyses that consider the animal. Thus, the next section explores the auction yard as a material place of animal commodification

and the World Dairy Expo as a place where the commodification of the animal is discursively reproduced.

PART 3: MATERIAL AND DISCURSIVE PLACES OF COMMODIFICATION

CHAPTER 7. The Cow with Ear Tag #1389 Containment and Mobility at the 'Livestock' Auction

A black and white Holstein cow with ear tag #1389 limped through the door into the public auction pen. She was small for her breed and her history as a producer of dairy was easily legible on her body. Her tail was docked, her hide was covered in scrapes and abrasions, and she had an auction sticker with a barcode stuck to her side. Her frame was slight and her ribs and hip bones protruded visibly beneath her skin. One of her back legs was severely lame and the source of her limp. Her udders hung to the ground and were red with mastitis. Lameness and mastitis are common in cows used for dairy and the severity of these ailments often signals the end of a cow's productivity as a milk supplier. This was the cull market auction, where "spent" cows used for dairy were auctioned – approximately one cow per minute – to meat buyers who would transport them to slaughter. The animals were herded one at a time from the holding pens in back through the auction pen door. Two teenagers (a boy and a girl) used long rods to keep each cow circling in the pen while the auctioneer sold each cow to the audience. Most of the cows at this particular auction sold for \$50 or \$60 per hundred pounds of weight. When the auctioning of each cow ended, the cow was herded through an exit door where she would step onto a scale that would transmit her weight to a screen above the auctioneer's stand. The screen would show her weight, the price per hundred pounds and then calculate the total price for the animal while the next cow was being herded into the pen.

When the cow with ear tag #1389 entered the auction pen, the auctioneer started the bidding low – at \$20 per hundred pounds. No one bid and the price quickly dropped to \$15, then \$10, and finally to \$5. No one bid. The cow with ear tag #1389 did not sell for \$35 and the teenage girl began to herd the cow toward the door. Suddenly the audience erupted in a chorus of “uh ohs,” “oh boys,” and “there she goes” as the cow collapsed on the ground in the auction pen. There was a momentary pause and then the auctioneer said, “Well, let her rest, I guess.” They left the cow there in the pen and continued the auction around her. Finally, a cow came into the pen whose movements startled the cow with ear tag #1389 and she struggled to her feet and was herded out of the pen. The auction eventually concluded, the animals who had been sold were loaded into trailers destined for slaughter, and those who did not sell were kept in the pens behind the auction yard. When the auction workers returned to work the next morning, the cow with #1389 was dead in her pen.

* * *

While the focus in this text is on a global intimate analysis of the embodied animal in agriculture, the geographical places within which animals labor and die are essential for understanding the material and discursive reproduction of animal agriculture as an institution. The auction is a place where the violent commodification of the animal body is laid bare in material ways. The auction yard, as a space of control, management, and economic efficiency, is a prime example of the way particular places are spatially ordered to reproduce the animal-as-commodity and the institution of

animal agriculture more generally. Places like the auction yard also expose the tensions between the singular animal, the population, and the structural political economic material practices of commodification. The global and the intimate is illustrated starkly at the auction yard where the intimate animal is simultaneously singular and impacted by the global political economic structures of commodification *and* where she is abstracted, a faceless body valued for her singularity only inasmuch as she has potential viability as a commodity producer and as a commodity herself.

Farmed animals at auction are typically sold individually based on their physical condition and reproductive and productive potential; thus, the embodied animal is, to a certain extent, central to the auction and the way it functions. Buyers bid on and purchase singular animals. And yet, the nature of the auction yard and the continual movement of animals through the auction ring have an abstracting effect for the viewer and the animals easily blur together into a faceless population. Buyers often would focus on the auction only when an animal on which they were planning to bid came through the ring, or when something slightly unusual happened in the ring (like the collapse of the cow with ear tag #1389). Even as I sat there intentionally focusing closely on each animal who came into the ring, the animals blurred together and as I tried to recall the individuals at the end of each day, I was often unable to call up their faces or remember their numbers. As a result of this unintended abstraction from the individuals, I noticed the way the auction itself was spatially ordered to facilitate this disconnection and forgetting. At the cull market auction where the cow with ear tag #1389 collapsed, she was the only one who stood out in my mind after that auction was

over – because she collapsed, because she was in the ring for several minutes, because she was not efficiently maneuvered through the ring and sold without incident. Noting this tension between close attention to the singular animal and the abstraction from that animal is important for animal geographers concerned with the way commodification processes function and impact embodied animals and our encounters with them.

The scene above took place during the summer of 2012 at a Washington State auction yard during a cull market auction. In the dairy industry, animals sold at cull market auctions are typically those who have been deemed no longer productive and are ‘culled’ from dairy herds, brought to auction, and are bid on by meat buyers who will transport them to slaughter. Some calves turn up at the cull market auction, particularly male calves who are of little use in the dairy industry. There is also the occasional steer or bull at the cull market auction, but cull markets are overwhelmingly populated by cows previously used for dairy. At this particular auction yard, cull market sales are held twice a week, and approximately two hundred animals are sold on average during each sale period.

Originally, the auction was a peripheral part of my research, just one of the places – one stop – along the lifecourse of bovine animals in the dairy industry. And yet, this place has become integral for understanding the experience of the cow used for dairy and the commodification and violence against these bodies. This is both because of difficulties accessing dairy farms and other private industry places (farmed animal auctions are open to the public) and also because there is something noteworthy about the auction itself. The management of animals in this place of stark commodification,

the way the place itself is designed to facilitate efficient containment and movement, the tools involved in daily auction practices – these dimensions of the auction are central to an analysis of the nature of commodification of animal bodies and lives used in agriculture.¹³ Specifically, the auction informs an analysis of the cow as a ‘lively commodity,’ understood as “live commodities whose capitalist value is derived from their *status as living beings*” (Collard & Dempsey 2013: 2684).

Writing on auctions in general, Charles Smith theorizes that, “auctions are social processes capable of defining and resolving inherently ambiguous situations, especially questions of value and price,” (1989: 3). The price and value of farmed animals are highly variable, and auctions are places where the economic value of an animal is clearly defined by the auctioneer in conversation with the seller, resolving ambiguity for the buyer and seller in the process of exchange (Wilkie 2010). As such, auctions have an important economic function in the broader institution of animal agriculture and the commodification process (after all, the auction is the place where the body of each animal is literally assigned a price and value and the making of the body as a commodity is consummated in the purchase of the animal). But Smith writes that this encounter is not purely economic; the “economic component must be placed within a broader social setting that includes, among other things, noneconomic interests of

¹³ It is tempting to say that the moment of auction is when the fate of the animal is determined – whether she will be sold for meat (transported to the slaughterhouse) or for dairy production (transported back to the farm). But in reality, her fate is already determined long before she enters the auction pen. Whether she is sold for slaughter or for dairy production, whether she dies in transport or at the auction yard, she dies or is slaughtered as a result of excessive commodity production when her body is too worn out to produce. The auction is merely the space where this fate is laid bare in the fluorescent lighting of this space of commodification.

participants, social relationships among participants, social traditions, and norms” (1989: 3-4). Indeed, there are complex social relations enacted between human participants at the auction, but this is beyond the scope of this particular project. Instead, I am interested here in noting the auction’s positioning in the broader social setting of animal agriculture as a norm. As an institution imbued with complex cross-species power relations (of dominance and subordination, of violence, of resistance), animal agriculture (and its accompanying political-economic, ethical and social implications) is reproduced in the place of the auction.

Each ‘livestock’ auction is unique in its own way, but there are general characteristics that are familiar in each of the auction yards I attended. They are usually held in large buildings with a series of pens and chutes for containing the animals while they wait before or after the sale. At some auction yards, animals are unloaded at one end of the yard before the sale and loaded onto transport trailers at the other end of the yard, creating a flow of animals through the auction yard, by way of the auction ring. At others, the animals are unloaded and loaded in the same area, creating a flow of animals back and forth, in and out of the auction yard. The auction itself takes place in a hall with bleachers for buyers and spectators, a pen with doors wide enough to herd large animals through, and an elevated seat for the auctioneer. In the auction ring, animals are either auctioned off by the head (per whole animal) or by the pound (usually per hundred pounds of weight). Occasionally, they are sold in a group, in which case, the auctioneer will note that the buyer must purchase the whole lot at the per-head or pound price. At the beginning of each sale, the animal is herded into the

ring and the bidding begins. With a rod or paddle, the auction workers keep the animal moving in the ring, turning around and pacing back and forth so that the audience can view the animal from all angles as they bid. When each round of bidding is finished, the animal is herded out an exit door, where he/she steps onto a scale that displays the weight on a screen above the auctioneer. This calculates the total cost of the animal.



Figure 19: Cows awaiting auction in outdoor holding pen, WA auction yard; Photo source: Gillespie, 2012

The bidding for each animal is generally finished in less than a minute, resulting in somewhere between 50 and 60 sales per hour. Interestingly, this speed of sale has not

increased since the 1960s when 50 sales per hour (on average) were made in ‘livestock’ auctions in the United States (Cassady 1967). This stagnation in the speed with which animals are moved through the auction, in contrast to the extreme intensification of other aspects of animal agriculture since the 1960s, is likely due to the fact that “the time required to move animals through an auction slows down the operation, and the buyers, some of them ranchers to whom time is a more flexible element, tend to be more casual in their bidding” (Cassady 1967: 90). Thus, while other auctions not auctioning live animals may operate at more efficient speeds (e.g., tobacco, fish, produce), the speed at which it is possible to move animals through the auction is limited by the lively nature of the commodity being sold (the cow). There is something unique about the auction and the ethical implications of commodifying live and lively bodies in this place (for a discussion of lively commodities, see Collard & Dempsey 2013). An auction that sells inanimate objects differs in important ways from the commodification occurring in the auction of live animals. Certain aspects of the geography of the auction yard reveal the ways in which these lively bodies must be managed spatially.

Geographically, the auction yard is a place noteworthy for the tensions between containment and controlled mobility (see Figures 20, 21, 22, and 23). For auctions to facilitate the efficient sale of animals, it is crucial for animals to move smoothly through the network of pens and chutes and move quickly in and out of the auction ring during the sale. The places are designed with this need for controlled mobility in mind. Nearly every segment of fencing is hinged and moveable, so that together they can easily be arranged by one or two auction workers to create a place of containment (a pen) or a

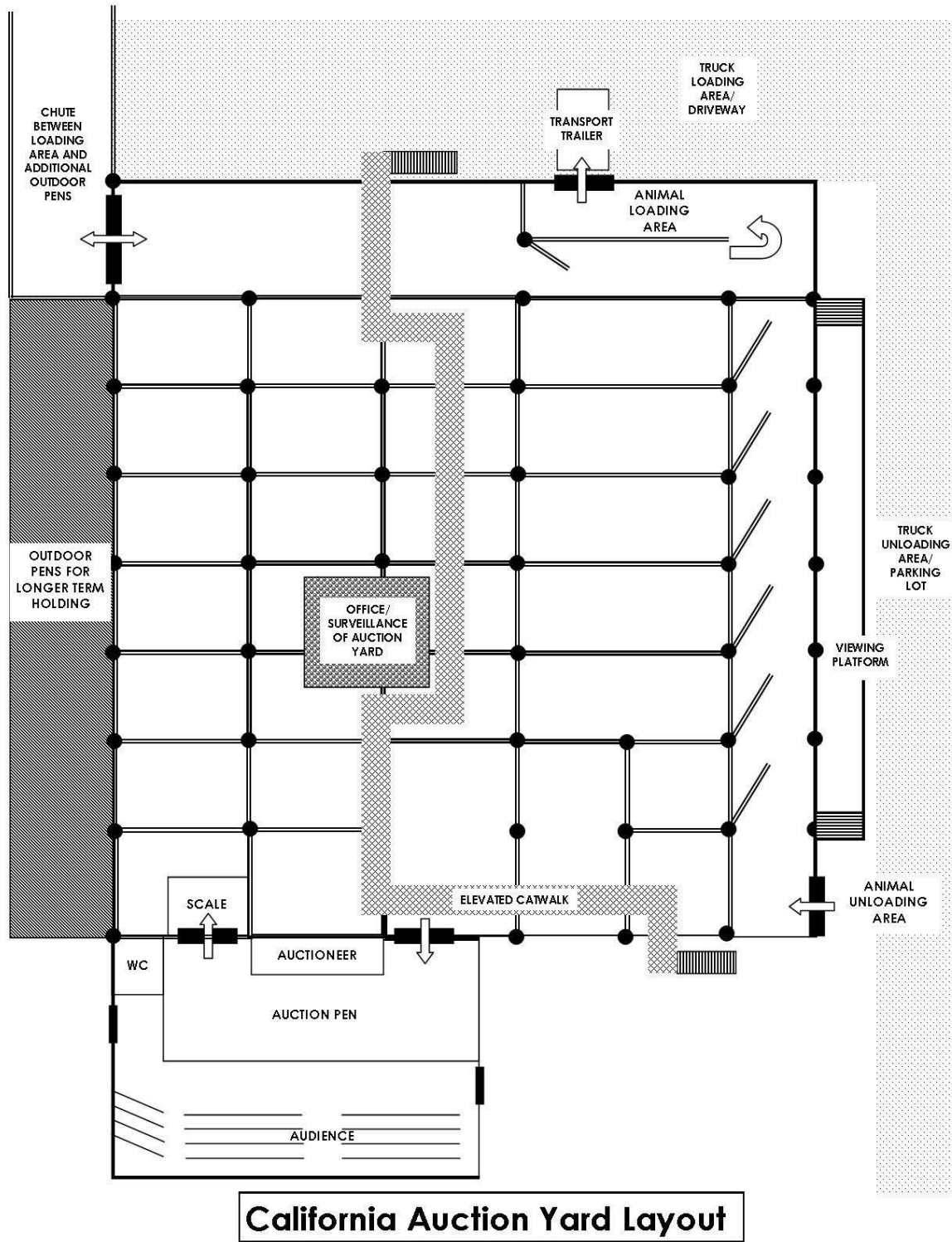
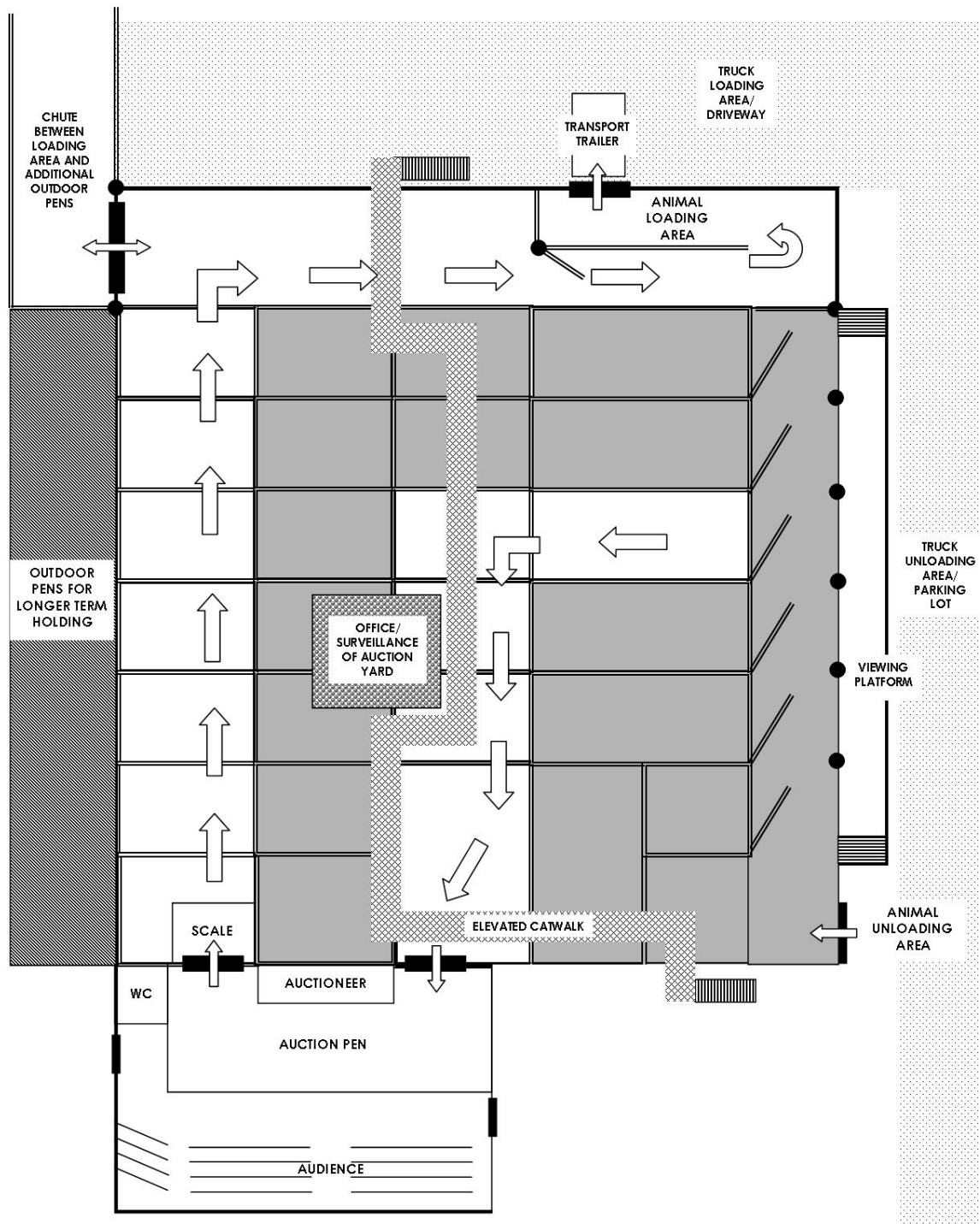


Figure 20: California auction yard layout; Figure source: Gillespie, 2014



Movement from holding pen through auction to exit

Figure 21: Movement through auction yard #1; Figure source: Gillespie, 2014

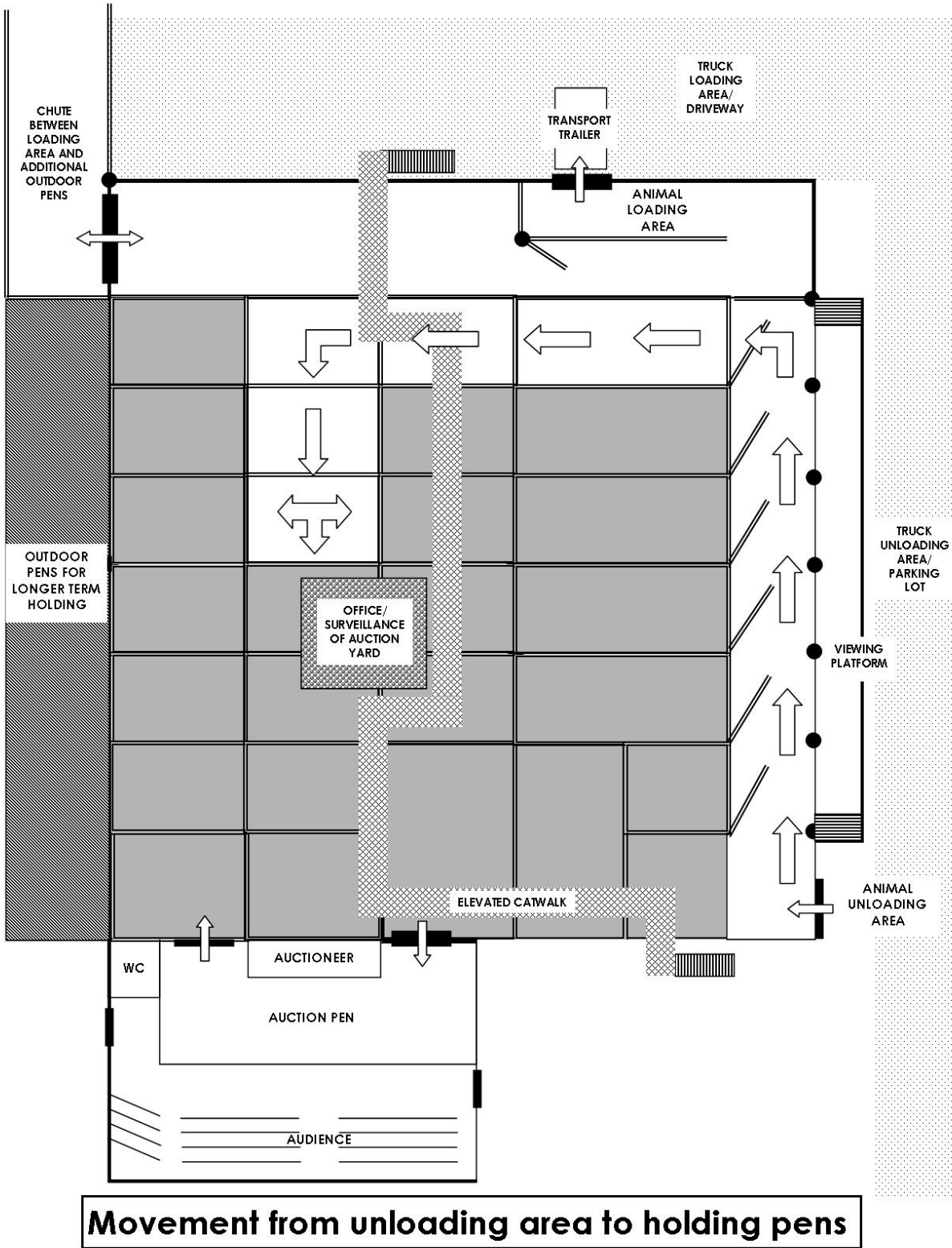
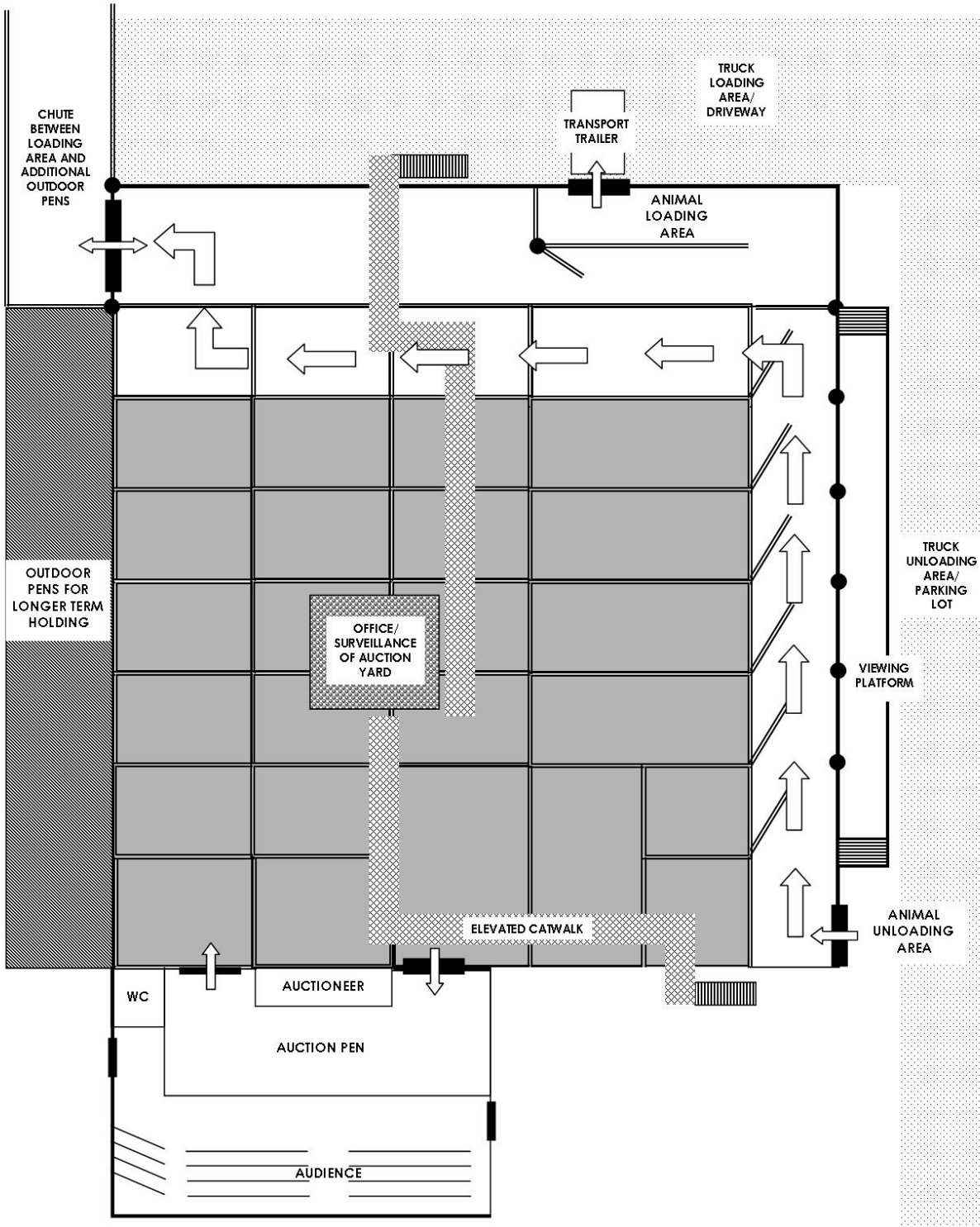


Figure 22: Movement through auction yard #2; Figure source: Gillespie, 2014



Movement from unloading area to long-term holding

Figure 23: Movement through auction yard #3; Figure source: Gillespie, 2014

place of movement (a chute). Auction workers are responsible for managing this place; in other words, they determine which segments of fencing are involved in containing the animals and which are not. With bovine animals, an auction worker's memory and awareness of the current layout of the auction yard is critical for worker and animal safety. An error in judgment that leads to a frightened 1200-pound animal barreling down a chute that a worker thought was a contained pen could lead to injury or death of workers or other animals. Similarly, a missing segment of fence in the wrong place could lead to animals escaping. Thus, the management and knowledge of each segment of fencing is important for the efficient containment and movement of the animals leading up to, during, and after, sale.

This efficient movement and subsequent sale is also reliant on the animals being in a condition that enables them to physically move through the auction. When an animal collapses or dies at auction, like the cow with ear tag #1389, this efficiency is jeopardized (though the hold-up is usually quickly overcome). In the case of the cow with ear tag #1389, her collapse in the pen caused a momentary pause in the auction before the workers realized that they could continue to auction other animals around her as she lay on the ground. When she died in the holding pens out back that night, auction workers had to deal with the disposal of her body by calling a 'deadstock' hauler to come and pick up her body and deliver her to a rendering facility.¹⁴ If an

¹⁴ Rendering facilities process animal bodies that are banned from going into the food supply, like the cow with ear tag #1389, and they process other dead animal bodies and animal parts (euthanized dogs and cats from shelters and veterinary offices, animals killed on roads, unusable parts of animals killed in slaughterhouses, etc. These bodies and fragments of bodies are rendered down and converted into usable products. Rendering is a fascinating and grossly understudied industry and this silence is particularly

animal is struggling to move through the auction, auction workers will usually do all they can to force her to move through the space. They have a vested interest in selling each animal and moving them out onto the transport trucks – both for financial reasons and because of the difficulty of dealing with an animal who collapses or dies at auction.

Tools are also integral to this management of animals as they move through the auction yard. Upon arriving at the auction, each animal receives an identifying sticker with auction number and barcode. This is used in tracking and selling the animal during the time leading up to, during, and after sale. A rod or paddle is common for driving animals through the chutes and urging them to turn around in circles in the auction ring. The rod is just what it sounds like: a metal or plastic rod that workers use to slap the rump, side, or face of the animal to keep her/him moving. The paddle is a rod with a plastic paddle attached to the end; these usually have rattles on the inside to startle the animals into moving forward. An electric prod (a wand that shocks the animals with an electric current) is often used to drive animals through the chutes and into the transport trailers; interestingly, I never saw the electric prod used in the auction ring in front of the audience, but it was used heavily in the rear holding pens and chutes. These technologies are used in the routine movement of animals through the auction yard. When an animal does not move through the space in a usual way – in other words, when an animal collapses or escapes – these devices are used in a different way. In the case of a collapsed animal, the electric prod or some other device that causes

odd considering how integral rendering is to the functioning of society. While there is a distinct lack of empirical fieldwork done on rendering, Nicole Shukin's *Animal Capital* (2009) provides an excellent discourse analysis and theoretical treatise on rendering.

pain will be used to try to force the animal up. In a case where the animal cannot rise, he/she will likely be shot. Firearms are used in extreme circumstances at the auction yard – either to shoot a non-ambulatory animal who is unable to get up or to shoot an animal who escapes. Now and then, an animal will escape the auction yard and be chased down and shot. In one case I witnessed, a steer escaped, ran down the country highway and was chased and shot by auction employees.

The farmed animal auction is a place where the commodification of the animal body is visible and obvious – it is, after all, the site where animals are bought and sold in a highly efficient capitalist system of sale. The animals are spray painted with symbols to indicate certain characteristics – whether an animal is sterile, whether a cow is pregnant, etc. Animals come to auction in all conditions and their value is set accordingly. A great number of “spent dairy cows” are sent to auction and are bought by meat buyers who send them to slaughter. Some are emaciated, their bones jutting out and udders dragging on the ground, red with mastitis, like the cow with ear tag #1389. Often, these cows don’t sell. Many are in better shape – their bodies looking more robust and selling for competitive prices. Some are sold as replacement cows for dairy herds. Some are pregnant and sold with the promise of the impending birth of a calf. Some are sold with their offspring as a cow/calf pair. And some calves are sold alone. Male calves born into the dairy industry have little economic value and are usually either slaughtered a few weeks after birth for cheap meat or they are sold to a veal producer immediately after birth. These day old calves are tiny and thin, enter the

auction pen, some with their umbilical cords still attached, and sell for as little as \$15 if they sell at all.

Auctions are places of both production and consumption. Animals come in as producers of commodity goods: either for their breeding or milking capacities or for their flesh as producers of meat. Auction yards are necessary stops along the production process: they facilitate the trade of animals when a particular producer has no use for them anymore and the sale facilitates the reenrollment of the animal in the production process. But auctions are also places of multilayered consumption of animals. 'Livestock' buyers are obviously involved in the consumption of live animals during the auction process when they make a purchase. Auctions are places where the consumption of animal products is visible as auction workers and attendees wear leather boots and belts and eat animals' flesh and reproductive outputs. Most auction yards have a restaurant that serves traditional 'American' fare: burgers, fries, pie, ribs, steak, biscuits and gravy, etc. At one Washington auction yard, the restaurant is called The Branding Iron, a direct reference to the branding process and a declaration of ownership and appropriation of animal bodies that is re-enacted in the consumption of animal bodies at meal time. Buyers arrive at auctions early to look at the animals and decide on their purchases and then will typically sit down for a meal with friends in the restaurant. At the same time, the interior of auction halls are wallpapered with advertisements for animal products. "Beef, it's what's for dinner" or ads promoting the health benefits of milk encourage the consumption of animals as a way to support local farms and communities. Thus, the consumption of animal products is part of the

auction experience – both as a social activity that supports the surrounding community and reproduces the everyday practices of animal agriculture.

My aim here is to lay bare the violence of the auction yard, a place generally characterized as a mundane geography of animal agriculture in order to understand the way places are engaged in the management and control over animal bodies. These places are the geographical enactment of structural processes of global political economy as they contribute to the commodification of the animal body. Therefore the auction is a site where the global and the intimate can be understood in a place-specific context. Animals are sold based on their physical characteristics; they are beaten, shocked, poked, prodded, and weighed; they are made to pace around on display; and they are sold separately from their families and other members of their social networks. These practices, in the context of animal agriculture, are typically not seen as noteworthy; they are not viewed as violence against, or as an appropriation of, the animal body precisely because of their sheer mundanity. And yet, it is specifically this kind of routine, mundane, invisible violence with which this project is concerned.

To return to the story of the cow with ear tag #1389, the mundane violence of animal agriculture is most easy to see at the site of the cull market auction. As I sat in the audience at the cull market sale, watching cow after cow move through the auction pen, this was where I was first struck by the stark bodily appropriation and commodification to which animals in the dairy industry are subjected. At other auctions – multispecies farmed animal auctions, auctions for replacement herds, and others where the animals are not immediately destined for slaughter – the auction is a highly

social place where parents will bring children to watch as a fun family outing and the bleachers are typically full. Buyers and spectators come early to enjoy a meal in the auction restaurant and some auctions have live music. These features detract from the violence occurring against the animals during the auction and a spectator has to work hard to see these violent features of the event. In contrast, there is something stark and stripped down at the cull market auction where the violence of the auction system and routine animal agricultural practices is laid bare in a profound and troubling way.

When the cow with ear tag #1389 collapsed in the pen, the conversations in the audience indicated that this was not altogether unusual. Her death at auction reflects just one of the potential routine realities for cows raised for dairy in the United States. Most animals in the dairy industry are transported to the slaughterhouse and are killed for cheap meat (ground beef, usually), and many die in transit to the slaughterhouse. The gendered commodification of animals in places of dairy production is visible and overt in the auction yard as read on the bodies of the animals. Attention to animal bodies at auction, like the cow with ear tag #1389, allows us to see the intimate effects of global political-economic processes of commodification in which violence is made mundane with profound implications for rethinking human-animal relations.

To return to the role of the auction in my overarching intellectual argument here, the auction is a place where the embodied animal is both visible and obscured in the commodification process of the auction yard. The efficient movement of animals in, through, and out of, the auction yard works to momentarily capitalize on their singularity before their embodiment blurs with the other animals coming before and

after them. Thus, the auction offers a more complex conceptualization of the individual/population debate in animal geography as it informs the particular ways in which the commodification process itself impacts our ability to focus on the singular animal.

The lens of the global and the intimate helps us to understand the condition of the cow with ear tag #1389, as she illustrates the violent, intimate effects of political economy on animal lives and the way places, like the auction yard, are enrolled in this appropriative commodification process. Featuring the auction yard as a place of commodification of the intimate animal also works to extend feminist global intimate analyses to nonhuman animals and the distinctly geographical dimensions of this set of social relations. Animal auctions are unique because farmed animal bodies are currently bought and sold with little fanfare or concern over what it means to enroll a live animal in the commodity circuit.

Farmed animals' inherent commodifiability and the reproduction of this status at auction helps us to understand how geography – how *place* – is central in maintaining and reproducing a hierarchy of human-farmed animal relations. It is *through* places like the auction yard that social relations are enacted – in the configuration of the auction yard as a simultaneous space of containment and mobility, in the tools used to keep animals moving through the pens and chutes, and in the system of capitalist exchange visible in the auction pen. The auction yard, in effect, is just one place, among many others (e.g., the dairy farm, the breeding farm, the veal farm, the transport truck, the slaughterhouse, the rendering plant), that keeps animals in their place of subordination

in relation to humans. The auction is a place where this human-animal hierarchy is materially reproduced through direct contact with, and management of, animal bodies, but the World Dairy Expo, explored in the next chapter illustrates how geographical places are also involved in the discursive reproduction of the institution of animal agriculture.

CHAPTER 8. Betsy **Industry Discourses of Gendered Commodification & Sexualized Violence at the** **World Dairy Expo**

Betsy lay in a stall filled with clean straw in one of the barns at the World Dairy Expo. Her black and white coat was shiny and spotless, her hooves were clean and polished, her nose and her udders were bright pink, and the light-colored hair at the end of her tail was brushed out and silky. She was, in every way, the picture-perfect Holstein, and the ribbons displayed on her stall confirmed that she was, indeed, a prize-winning representative of her breed. Expo attendees walked by and admired Betsy and the other cows in their stalls lining the barn.

Later that day, Betsy would compete in one of the dairy shows held in the main arena on the Expo grounds. There, she would compete against others of her breed and be assessed on her physical attributes and temperament; she would be led slowly in circles, she would stop and start again on command, and she would hold her body in a particular conformation. These shows displayed the best of the dominant dairy breeds in the United States and farmers travelled from near and far to show their animals. Some animals would be sold for breeding, whereas some of them would return to their home farms where they would continue a cycle of production and reproduction.

* * *

The World Dairy Expo is an international cattle and trade show with hundreds of vendors showcasing the latest dairy technologies and the top genetic heritage in

animals used for dairy (World Dairy Expo 2013). The Expo hosts a show for each of the seven nationally recognized dairy breeds (Holstein, Jersey, Brown Swiss, Guernsey, Red & White, Milking Shorthorn, and Ayrshire); each show chooses a grand champion and then those seven champions compete for two best-in-show spots for the year (World Dairy Expo 2013). In addition to these main show events, there are also youth events where children involved with 4-H and Future Farmers of America (FFA) compete for their own prizes. While these shows are going on throughout the week, the rest of the expo grounds are dedicated to the exhibitors who have come for the trade show.

The World Dairy Expo is a place where the institution of animal agriculture is discursively reproduced through industry marketing materials and advertisements for technological advancements in the commodification process. Except in places such as the barns and the show arenas, the real, embodied animal was absent from the Expo grounds. Instead, the Expo is filled with discursive and visual representations of cows and dairy production. This chapter is dedicated to understanding how industry discourses reveal the sexual violence and gendered commodification of the animal body for dairy production.

While Betsy was a named and beloved animal who maintained her singularity throughout the Expo, her role in this place was also as a representative of her breed and as an idolized vision of the 'dairy cow' more generally. In other words, she was special not because of who she was – her personality, her likes and dislikes, her social relationships, etc. – but because of her potential as an exceptional producer and because of what she represented in the future trajectory of selective breeding for better and

better dairy producers. Thus, like the auction yard, the World Dairy Expo helps animal geographers to understand the tensions between the specificity of the embodied animal and the abstraction of the population or breed in the context of commodity production. The show, in other words, simultaneously features the singular animal *and* it reproduces the conceptualization of the animal-as-commodity by focusing on their highly prized productive and reproductive features. Thus, an analysis of the Expo and the auction as places of commodification informs a more nuanced approach to thinking about the singular farmed animal and her positioning in broader human-farmed-animal social relations.

The discourses circulating through the Expo that I outline in this chapter also operate to reproduce and reveal the sexualized violence and gendered commodification of the animal body. For feminist geographers concerned with the intimate (and distinctly gendered) effects of global political economy on the body, these industry materials help us to understand how discourses (that are often focused on intimate bodies) operate to simultaneously conceal and make light of violent, everyday practices. These discourses tell stories about human-farmed animal relations that do powerful work to reproduce the hierarchy of human-farmed animal relations by naturalizing humans' use of animals in various ways outlined here and by joking about the violation of the male and female body.

Visiting the World Dairy Expo

I drove to the World Dairy in Madison from Minneapolis through a bucolic Midwestern countryside dotted with red barns and cows grazing. Arriving in Madison, the World Dairy Expo grounds were expansive with a number of large pavilion and arena buildings packed with hundreds of exhibitors. The vision of the countryside from the interstate was one of low-tech, minimal human interference and family farming. The Expo's vision of dairy farming was a futuristic, technologically advanced model of efficiency and profitability. I entered the Expo grounds and immediately got swept up in the sea of people moving through the aisles of booths. The place was a maze of row upon row of exhibitors, sprawling through multiple buildings. I immediately realized I would have to be systematic to see everything. Row by row, and building by building, I stopped at every booth to see what products were being advertised. I watched public presentations about the latest technologies and I collected hundreds of pieces of free literature advertising the products on offer at the Expo. I chatted casually with exhibitors and listened as they explained the benefits of their products.

At one booth selling 'heat detection' stickers (stickers that determine when a heifer or cow is in estrus), I stopped to pick up some literature. There were two men tending the booth. Before they spoke, I could feel them watching me, looking me up and down, as I perused the literature on offer and tucked several leaflets into my bag. Their gaze made me feel self-conscious. There were sample stickers laid out on the table, some with color exposed to show how easy it would be to detect in a herd of cows. I asked about the stickers and how they worked. Both men cracked a smile and

one of them leaned in on the table, moving his face closer to mine. He picked up one of the stickers and, with an odd smile, he explained how when an animal mounted the heifer or cow, the friction would rub the sticker and expose the color beneath. They used the natural detection skills of other animals to signal when an animal was coming into estrus. While he explained, he made eye contact, glancing down only to indicate some quality of the sticker. At several other semen supply and reproductive technology booths, I had a similar experience with men leaning in close to me, confiding in me about the products, touching my shoulder, making sustained eye contact – qualities of an effective salesperson, but with an undertone of something else: a gaze that lingered too long as they looked me up and down – sexual tension, perhaps, and an odd half-smile as they explained enthusiastically, in explicit detail, the reproductive process. These interactions were gendered in an obvious way – it became clear immediately that it was unusual for a woman – a young woman or “city girl” as I was called on more than one occasion at the Expo – to be interested in the bull semen production process.

As I drove along the highway to Minneapolis after the Expo, I saw a sign on the road for a Laura Ingalls Wilder museum. As a child, I had read and loved Wilder’s books that recounted her life in the U.S. American West. The first book in the series, *Little House in the Big Woods*, described her early life living in a log cabin in the Wisconsin forest. On a whim, I took the detour to visit the museum and ended up in a tiny town, Pepin, Wisconsin. After visiting the museum, I drove just outside of Pepin to visit the site where the “Little House in the Big Woods” had stood. Now there is a replica cabin and the cabin stands, not in a forest, but on a hillside in the middle of

farmland. All around, acres and acres of corn grew and the landscape as far as the eye could see was farmland with only a few stands of trees remaining. I stood there on the hill by the Wilder cabin replica and thought about the development of the West, the wholesale clearing of land for ranching and farming and the role of the cow and the bull in how the land was transformed. The picturesque “American Dairyland” landscape with cows grazing and rolling hills of pasture erased and elided the violent appropriation first of the cow’s and bull’s bodies for use in agriculture and then their use in the displacement of native people and animals and the clearing of forests for farming. This picturesque landscape, in fact, was a testament to the historical colonization project and also its current deployment to erase the violence of dairy production. In spite of its peaceful veneer, this was a place of violence.

The reproduction of animal agriculture – motivated by the demand for dairy, meat and eggs, the demand for corn as feed for farmed animals, and cleared land for animal agriculture – is wholly dependent on the sexual reproductive process. In order to sustain and grow the current market for farmed animal products and the institution of farming animals at large, animals must reproduce. Cows must be impregnated on an annual schedule if they are going to continue to produce high volumes of milk for commodity sale. Animals must be bred, born, raised and slaughtered if the meat industry is to sustain itself. The reproductive politics of animal agriculture cannot be separated from its continued existence, and the discourses of reproduction and commodity production at the Expo emphasize this point.

The juxtaposition of the bucolic rural landscape of North-Midwestern farmland with the intensely capitalist place of the World Dairy Expo illustrates the tensions between the persistent public imaginary of U.S. American dairy farming and the economic logic of industry practices driven by commodity production. At the Expo, this economic logic structured around the reproductive process was readily visible in advertising materials, public presentations, and in conversations with industry representatives. Industry discourses, paired with the previously explored practices of dairy production, uncover the ways in which animals are subjects of gendered commodification and sexualized violence. This chapter explores the industry discourses related to female and male bovine body. The overwhelming majority of industry advertisements reveal discourses relevant to the female cow, but there is also a substantial amount of material about male animals in the industry.

Industry discourses of gendered commodification

Because the production of dairy is largely dependent on the fertility and milk production of the cow, it makes sense to begin with discourses about fertility. Fertility in cows used for dairy is exclusively tied to commodity production. A cow's continued survival, in fact, is primarily dependent on her fertility; when her fertility declines, or if she is sterile to begin with, she is slaughtered. Because cows must give birth to calves at regular intervals in order to produce milk, their production of milk as a commodity good hinges on their fertility. As such, industry discourses about fertility overwhelmingly link fertility to profit for the farmer.

Estrumate® (2014), manufactured by Merck Animal Health, is a product that represents the economic logic and importance of fertility in the dairy industry. The product slogan is “Heat That Can’t Be Ignored...Control Your Bovine’s Estrous Cycle.” The product manipulates the estrous cycle of cows and can also “terminate pregnancies resulting from mismating.” “Estrumate® is a proven tool that manipulates the bovine estrous cycle to better fit your management practices.” The cow’s estrous cycle is easily manipulated using this product to align with the economic interests of the farmers and their preferred schedule of management of the herd’s fertility. Farmers, in effect, can control when a cow comes into estrous and when (or if) the cow will be impregnated. Because this product is effective at aborting unwanted-by-the-farmer fetuses, product warnings state that, “Women of childbearing age... should exercise extreme caution when handling this product. In the early stages, women may be unaware of their pregnancies. Estrumate® is readily absorbed through the skin and may cause abortion and/or bronchospasms.” This reveals a sensitivity to the fertility and potential pregnancies of *human* women, even as it is designed to control *animal* fertility and pregnancy under the cold logic of capitalist efficiency and business management. Further, it is worth noting the gendered dimension of these advertisements: when a farmer is pictured in Merck Animal Health’s marketing materials, he is usually male. Implicit in both the advertisements for this product and the warnings for human women, though, is the insertion of male decision-making in the reproductive process, reminiscent of the ongoing debate over abortion and the politics of women’s health care.

ESTRU\$ ALERT® (2014) is a company that makes rub-off heat detection stickers. These stickers are used for a program to detect when an animal is in heat and at the prime stage for insemination. The sticker is placed on the animal's back, just above the tail and when other animals try to mount her, the heat from the friction reveals color. Depending on the number of times mounted, the sticker will reveal varying amounts of color. Based on the amount of color revealed, the farmer knows the best time (based on the progression through the heat) to artificially inseminate the cow. It should not be overlooked that 'ESTRU\$' in the company name includes a dollar sign - laying bare the connection between estrus management and profitability.

To aid in the reproductive management program on the farm, the SmartDairy® Activity Module by BouMatic (2014) tracks individual cows in a herd. This tracking technology attached to individual cows enables farmers to track sick cows, cows in various stages of pregnancy and those who are ready to be impregnated. A BouMatic ad says, "Find them. Breed them. Improve your profitability." Again, this links breeding and fertility to profit and reveals the economic priorities of the industry. DSM's Rovimix® (2014) Beta-Carotene cow fertility solution promises to increase farmers' profitability, emphasizing that "cow fertility problems are one of the costliest production issues in dairy farming." The slogan for this product is "We've conceived a better way to fertility." This statement acknowledges humans' involvement in the reproductive process - in fact, so much so that it suggests a kind of 'playing God' scenario. This company has transcended the base, mundane path to fertility; they have "*conceived a better way to fertility*" (emphasis added). This cooptation of fertility and the

reproductive process of cows and the interrelationship between fertility and profit link intimate, body politics of reproduction with the logic of the global flow of capital and economic efficiency. The fertility of the cow literally becomes tied to the fertility of the farm as a business. The ad promises that the product can “enhance your business growth.” Seen as a form of fertility, the economic growth of the business is dependent on the cow’s biological fertility and the growth and delivery of the fetus. The reproduction of capital in dairy production is tied closely to the reproduction of the cow.

Another tracking system – Semex® -- helps in tracking sick cows and maintaining an insemination schedule. With the slogan, “Listen to your cows and take control of your herd,” Semex® (n.d.) promises “reduced labor, drug and semen costs; increased pregnancy rates; more of herd confirmed pregnant; less time spent in headlocks, more time making milk; quick return on investment.” The emphasis here is on control, efficiency, and profitability. The slogan’s advice that the farmer “listen to [their] cows” suggests that this management and control of the cow’s body is related to a close relationship between the cow and the farmer – that the farmer *listens to the cow’s needs*. This suggests that the cow is an active agent in the process, that she is listened to, that she and the farmer, perhaps, have a ‘heart-to-heart’ in which she confides that she’s not quite ready to get pregnant again and maybe they ought to wait until next month. Echoing this suggestion that animal has a choice in the matter, one Cargill® (2012) advertisement states, “She’s in it to make milk. You’re in it to make a living. We’re in it to help.” The cow, though, is not involved in the decision making process – she does not

consent to being inseminated, she does not consent to having her calf taken away, or her milk diverted from her calf into the commodity market. In fact, the logic of the industry is such that practices involving the management of the cow's reproductive cycle are driven by the most basic biological capacities. If a cow *can* get pregnant, then she will be inseminated, and her consent or agency does not enter the equation.

And indeed, this logic of the cow's reproductive capacities dictating the process is affirmed in stark terms in a series of advertisements for Bovi-Shield Gold® (2012) by Pfizer, a viral combination vaccine. The various ads in the series pose the question, "If she can't stay pregnant, what will she do?" Each ad pictures a Holstein cow doing something 'unbelievable': sitting in the passenger seat of a fire engine, standing next to a hunter with a dead pheasant in her mouth, and being ridden with a saddle by a child. These imagines work to remind us that, of course, a cow is not a human, she is not a dog, and she is not a horse. Further, the ad reminds us that the absent referents here – the fire fighter, the dog, and the horse – and certainly the cow, whose job it is to 'stay pregnant' – are each here to perform a service to the human viewer. The ad continues, "Keep your cows pregnant and on the job [...] Ask your veterinarian or Pfizer Animal Health representative how to protect her pregnancy, your reproductive program and your bottom line." The suggestion that the cow would have nothing to do if she did not stay pregnant calls up the hegemonic social norms that a woman's job is to have children and reflects the pervasive discomfort about women who choose not to have children. But this ad also reveals the bizarre logic of the dairy industry – normally, a woman who gives birth to a child would never be expected to 'stay pregnant.' If we are

following the patriarchal line of thought wherein women's role is and should be 'mother,' a woman would have plenty to do as a mother rearing her children. However, the logic of the dairy industry is such that a cow's calf is removed immediately after birth, so she does not engage in the work of parenting, thus reinforcing the claim that if she can't stay pregnant, she will have nothing to do. The product she is responsible for producing is, first and foremost, milk and so the pregnancy (rather than the resulting calf) is her job, not the care of offspring. These ads, then, reinforce norms about female reproduction (for both humans and animals) and they also reinforce the 'absurdity' of an animal doing anything other than servicing humans in their predetermined way. The ad reminds us that it is ridiculous to imagine a cow doing anything other than producing milk. She is not just a cow, but a *dairy* cow and her job is unequivocally to stay "pregnant and on the job."

Another product, Excenel® RTU (2011) by Pfizer, is used to treat metritis, an infection of the uterus, common in the postpartum transition period. "Metritis is typically the result of a transition failure, and looking at incidence rates can provide insight into performance of a dairy's transition program. Incidence rates for metritis and subclinical endometritis often range from 10 percent to 30 percent. Most often diagnosed within the first 10 days after calving, clinical metritis is a uterine infection accompanied by inflammation involving all layers of the uterus." The product slogan is: "Metritis: A foul disease with financial consequences." The cow's continued fertility and her ability to remain productive and viable for insemination, pregnancy and milking, is dependent on her recuperating quickly and without infections like metritis

after calving. The treatment of this disease is couched in terms of the financial consequences of not providing treatment. The cow is seen as a unit of production. In the fine print on this advertisement, one of the symptoms listed for metritis is depression – an odd and out-of-place acknowledgement of the cow’s emotional life. In the postpartum period, the ad acknowledges that cows may experience depression not as a result of the trauma of having their calves taken away at birth, of course, but as a result of this ‘foul disease,’ metritis.

The welfare of cows in the industry is discursively linked to their profitability as milk producers, and there are a range of products designed to improve the welfare of cows specifically as a way to improve and maintain their productivity. The FutureCow® (2012) Prep System promises “Happier Cows. Healthier Cows. More Productive Cows.” Udder Relief spray and lotion ‘soothes and softens udders’ and, “offered at a lower cost than competitors, Udder Relief delivers quick results with no milk withdrawal.” DeLaval (2012), the company that produces the Swinging Cow Brush, asks, “Have you ever seen a cow smile?” The brush is specifically designed to “improve cow health, comfort and welfare [...] With DeLaval swinging cow brush, every cow in your herd can groom herself all around.” Mattress systems are sold as a welfare-improved alternative to cement floors in barn stalls. “The Cozy Cow® Mattress System: Setting a Higher Standard in Cow Comfort” states that, “Optimum milk production is the key to a successful dairy operation, and your cow’s comfort plays an essential part in that success.” North Brook’s SuperStall™ (2012) also makes cow mattresses and their motto is, “We have a soft spot for cows. No mattress works harder

to stay softer than SuperStall™.” They say, “Your cows need hock and knee cushioning every time they lie down, for maximum nutrient utilization and milk production. SuperStall™ encourages lying time with body-hugging memory foam designed to remain ‘permanently soft’ hour after hour, year after year.” Agric-Trac™ (n.d.) mills safer flooring for dairies in order to prevent cows from slipping, falling and injuring themselves on slick cement “Traction milling, safety and profitability since 1997”. Similarly, another lameness prevention strategy is to apply blocks to cows’ hoofs to protect them against hoof diseases. Bovi-Bond™ (2011) Block Adhesive is a glue designed to attach hoof blocks. Their advertising slogan is “Block more cows in less time!” Animal welfare is promoted only in the event that it improves the potential for increased efficiency and profits.

There are the occasional advertisements that do not explicitly connect humane treatment and animal welfare to profit. An example is SHOOF (n.d.) International’s line of products – the Daisy-Lifter Cowsling and Bovine Orthopedic Splints as ways of managing lameness and ‘downer’ cows. The splint “is quick and easy to apply and can give immediate mobility to a disabled cow.” Though it is not explicitly stated, the splint does, in fact, border on a profit-protecting agenda. Presumably the splint improves the welfare of the cow, but it also prevents the farm from having to deal with a ‘downer,’ which, as I explored in the previous chapter, is an automatic burden and loss of income for the farmer. For ‘downer’ cows, like the cow with #743 at auction who could not make it to her feet, the Daisy-Lifter Cowsling is a way to “safely and humanely lift sick or injured animals. Particularly useful for cases of post-calving paralysis or trauma.”

The sling is used in conjunction with a tractor to move an immobile cow. This product is more likely a response to public concerns about animal welfare and human health relating to ‘downer’ cows. The sling provides an alternative way of moving a downed animal (a more typical – and more obviously painful and cruel – method of moving a downed cow is to push or lift the animal with a forklift or backhoe as was the case with the cow who Amy Meyer filmed).

Select Sires (2012), a semen supply company, sells semen from animals categorized as Superior Settlers™. Superior Settler™ semen provides “fertility without compromise.” “Turn to Select Sires for fertility without compromise – because you *deserve* more than *just* a pregnancy” (emphasis original). This statement illuminates several implications about the attitude toward animals in the industry – first, it suggests that humans *deserve* to use animals for dairy production – that we are entitled to co-opt animals’ bodies in these and other ways. Second, the statement that the farmer ‘deserves more than *just* a pregnancy’ reveals the way that each pregnancy is taken for granted, that there must be something exceptional (profit, genetic stock, etc.) about the pregnancy to meet the high standards that the farmer expectations.

The gendered dimensions of this statement are also not to be ignored. In the majority of the marketing materials for the industry, farmers are referred to as “dairymen,” a distinctly masculine-gendered reference. Thus, to suggest that the farmer (a man) *deserves* more than *just* a pregnancy is odd both because a man does not experience pregnancy for himself, and also because the use of the word ‘just’ works to denigrate the experience of pregnancy and the importance of that pregnancy (and

ultimately, the resulting calf) to the cow. In fact, this diminishment of the importance of the pregnancy for the cow is essential because, just a day after she gives birth, her calf is taken from her. If it was not *just* a pregnancy to her and the farmer, then the calf's removal might be revealed to be an ethically questionable practice. Further, the same advertisement states, "While the greatest variables affecting pregnancy rates are accuracy of heat detection, inseminator technique and other management factors, looking at *all* available fertility values of individual sires can help." This statement acknowledges that the process of impregnating cows has not much to do with the cow herself; in fact each of these factors has to do with the human involvement (with some help, of course, from a bull who provides the necessary semen). Necessarily then, this focus on human involvement and the fact that the farmer "*deserves* more than *just* a pregnancy" focuses on the farmer's experience of, and role in, bovine reproduction and distracts from the fact that the pregnancy is really the cow's. The cow, then, even as she is present in many of the semen catalog's imagery, is an absent referent in these discourses about her pregnancy. Her pregnancy is tightly managed by human 'dairymen' who want more out of her life than *just* a mundane pregnancy.

The name of this Select Sires (2012) semen collection (comprised of 22 'elite sires') - Superior Settler™ - also calls up settler-colonial histories. For one, the images in this particular advertisement show Holstein cows in the foreground, in front of western United States landscapes as backdrops. In one, we see a mountain range in the distance behind the cow, and in others, there is pasture and fencing in the background. These images call up the 'settling' of the West - both in the prominence of distinctly western

landscapes and in the vestiges of settler colonization: the fences, the pasture cleared of trees, and the cow herself. Historically, fencing, land-clearing, and farmed animals (as integral tools of ranchers' colonial project) were engaged to displace indigenous humans and animals from the land (Anderson 2006) even as the farmed animals themselves were subjects of colonization. Thus, Superior Settler™ semen unintentionally gestures to the colonization of humans and animals under capitalist agricultural systems. More likely, though, the motivation behind calling up the settler narrative in this advertisement was to recall a less critical version of U.S. American history. Settlers moving west are seen by many as part of a distinctly *American* historical narrative. For many farmers, in fact, their historical lineage is linked back across generations to the original settler-colonizers, and this is a source of deep pride.

The series of advertisements from Bovi-Shield Gold® by Pfizer described earlier calls up a certain kind of U.S. American patriotism and the role of the animal in this patriotism. The image of the cow being ridden by a young child is reminiscent of settler era horseback riding and, in fact, the cow is wearing a western style saddle, cushioned by a Native American printed blanket (a proud display of western settler history *and* the traces of the colonization of indigenous culture) (See Figure 24). The fact that the cow is being ridden by a child assures us that calling up this history is a harmless, unproblematic and apolitical enactment of American patriotism. Similarly, the version of the ad (See Figure 24) where the cow stands behind a hunter holding a dead pheasant in her mouth also reminds us of a distinct kind of American patriotism and western

settler/rancher culture – namely, that a hunter and his dog (in this case, cow) are a particular manifestation of cross-generational American masculinity (Luke 2007).



If she can't stay pregnant, what else will she do?

Keep your cows pregnant and on the job. Bovi-Shield GOLD FP[®] 5 L5 HB^{*} is the only viral combination vaccine to prevent Lepto hardjo-bovis for a full 365 days. Ask your veterinarian or Pfizer Animal Health representative how to protect her pregnancy, your reproductive program and your bottom line.

**Bovi-Shield
GOLD.HB**

*Do not use in pregnant cattle (abortions can result) unless they were vaccinated, according to label directions, with any Bovi-Shield GOLD FP[®] or PregGuard GOLD FP vaccine prebreeding initially and within 12 months thereafter. Do not use in calves nursing pregnant cows unless their dams were vaccinated within the past 12 months as described above. To help ensure safety in pregnant cattle, heifers must receive at least 2 doses of any Bovi-Shield GOLD FP or PregGuard GOLD FP product with the second dose administered approximately 30 days prebreeding.

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Dairy Wellness Makes a Difference[™] 

Figure 24: Bovi-Shield Ad #1; Source: Bovi-Shield Gold®



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Dairy Wellness Makes a Difference  Animal Health

Figure 25: Bovi-Shield Ad #2; Source: Bovi-Shield Gold®

In this scenario, even though the purpose of the ad is to show the absurdity of trying to use a cow for anything other than dairy, it is revealing of the ongoing settler colonization narrative in that the cow is again enlisted in the colonization of 'wild' animal species. The story is further complicated, though, because the common pheasant was native to Asia and introduced in the United States for hunting, and the common pheasant is now one of the most hunted birds in the world (Robertson 1997). The pheasant is yet another colonized body, displaced from their native land and introduced as a now-somewhat-'wild' animal, and then killed in the sport of hunting in which the cow is enlisted to help. The absurdity of the cow with the pheasant in her mouth, and the hunter smilingly assuredly, use humor to avoid taking seriously the violence against the dead pheasants and histories of bodily appropriation.

Hunting and western horseback riding call up a particular kind of Americanism, just as the cow-as-firefighter version of the ad calls up the familiar American heroism of the firefighter figure. Particularly in the post-9/11 climate, the fire fighter, who may always have been a local heroic figure rescuing children and puppies from burning buildings and acting as first-responders for daily emergencies, has reached a new, elevated status as hero. The fire-fighter-as-patriot here recalls in the U.S. American imaginary those who lost their lives in the rescue efforts in the aftermath of the World Trade Center attacks and the zealous patriotism that emerged in that political climate.

Similarly, another advertisement – this one for a dewormer called Cydectin® (2012) – connects the production of dairy and the care of the dairy herd to the Wounded Warrior Project. “Our troops deserve the very best this country has to offer. Thanks to

your purchase, Cydectin®, the #1 pour-on cattle dewormer, is able to support the Wounded Warrior Project®, and show our heroes how much we appreciate their service.” Calling up military service and the service of fire fighters, and the overt discourses of heroism attached to these figures, implicitly links the ‘American farmer’ figure to this performance of patriotic service. Particularly in the post-9/11 political climate, discourses of soldiers protecting ‘American freedom’ abroad circulate to justify continued occupation in distant places around the globe and the firefighter protecting, rescuing and serving the U.S. American public at home helps to maintain a narrative of heroic service and patriotism. The farmer and the deworming company supporting the Wounded Warriors Project position themselves as patriotic allies on the home front. In fact, the cow herself is a patriotic ally, providing her dutiful service as part of the home front forces. The cow pictured in every one of the Bovi-Shield Gold® ads is a Holstein – the distinctly black and white U.S. American breed and an iconic symbol of American dairy reverberating through children’s books, dairy product packaging and the U.S. American imaginary. Dairy production and, importantly, dairy *consumption* are constructed as integral to what it means to be ‘American.’ Indeed, when I attended the World Dairy Expo in Madison, WI, I stayed overnight in a Madison motel and at several restaurants and coffee shops, I asked for soy milk (instead of cow’s milk) in my coffee and no cheese on my meals. At more than one place, I received a look of disbelief and a friendly-but-bewildered “What is *wrong* with you, girl?!” Not only was abstaining from cheese and dairy outside the norm in Wisconsin – in ‘America’s Dairyland’ – abstaining from these products felt practically *un-American* in this context.

Industry discourses of sexualized violence

Nowhere are the discourses at work in the dairy industry more readily available than at the World Dairy Expo where advertising materials express the gendered commodification and sexual appropriation of the animal and the connections between the embodied animal and global processes of political economy. The bull is visible most commonly at the Expo in advertising materials for various semen suppliers. These booths provide semen catalogs and other materials showcasing the companies' offerings.

Explicitly sexualized discourse relating to the female cow's body can be found in the colloquial use of the term 'rape rack' in the industry to describe the device that holds the cow while she is artificially inseminated. The term 'rape rack', in relation to the artificial insemination of animals, originated with Harry Harlow in the mid-twentieth century during his laboratory experiments with mother and infant monkeys (Gruen 1993, 68-69). Harlow is well known for his outrageous and unconventional language as well as for his unethical experiments on animals in laboratory. 'Rape rack' has since been used widely in various arenas of forced animal reproduction, including the dairy industry. The colloquial use of 'rape rack' by industry workers is a site where the sexualized violence at work in forced artificial insemination and pregnancy can be better understood (Adams 1990; Gruen 1993). Adams (1990, 53-54) explores the way in which using rape as a metaphor recalls women's experience of rape, but not women themselves. In the use of the term, 'rape rack', women are an absent referent, to borrow from Adams (1990), and the term relies on the shock value of recalling women's

experience of rape without connecting completely with what rape means for women who have experienced it. The use of the term by industry workers works to conceal the violence against the animal precisely through the shock value and twisted humor associated with using the term to describe the device. Furthermore, it relies on an implicit understanding that to use 'rape' to describe a process happening to an animal is, of course, not serious. After all, she is 'only an animal'. But in fact, 'rape rack' is not at all a metaphor in this scenario where the cows are, literally, raped (i.e., they are forced to have intercourse and forcibly impregnated). Thus, rather than deflecting attention from the process with an unsavory joke, the misogyny of the system is, instead, revealed, and industry workers themselves unwittingly acknowledge that artificial insemination is a violation of the cow. The use of the term 'rape rack' to understand the context for artificial insemination calls up Haraway's (1989, 238) statement about misogyny in laboratory research – namely, that 'misogyny is built into the objects of everyday life [. . .] including the bodies of the animals, the jokes in the publications, and the shape of the equipment'. Nowhere is this misogyny more clearly seen in the dairy industry than in the discourse of rape and the actual process of artificial insemination.

The discourses in semen catalogs reveal certain industry attitudes toward both male and female animals. Bulls are commodified based on their genetic makeup, the quality and virility of their semen, their appearance and their reproductive potential. And bulls are also made to take responsibility both for the production of genetically

superior female dairy producers and for any subsequent violation of these female bodies.

Select Sires (2012) sells semen from show-quality bulls and their catalogs exhibit a range of attitudes about bulls and cows/heifers. In one catalog (*Select Sires* 2012), a bull named Alexander (see Figure 26) “puts the stamp of dairyness on his daughters like no other” and Sanchez (see Figure 27) “makes them special – tall, dairy and strong with beautiful udders.”

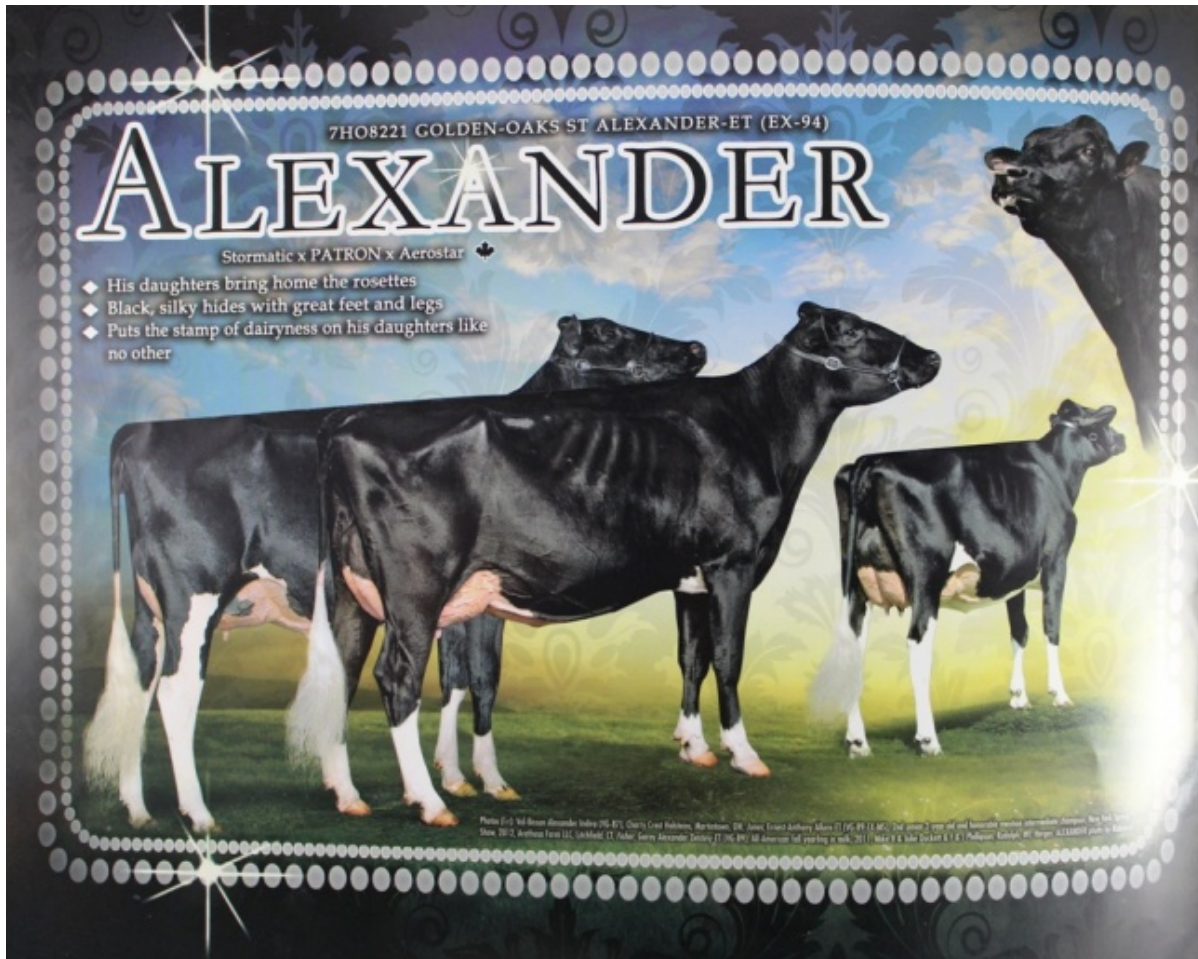


Figure 26: “Alexander” in *Select Sires* Catalog; Source: *Select Sires*, 2012



Figure 27: "Sanchez" in Select Sires Catalog; Source: Select Sires 2012

GW Atwood (see Figure 28) is "the hottest bull to hit the type market in years [...] he makes the kind you can have fun with" and Java breeds cows with "great rear udders and attractive rumps."



Figure 28: "G.W. Atwood" in Select Sires Catalog; Source: Select Sires, 2012

Governor (see Figure 28), who has “greatness in his genes,” produces daughters with “youthful mammary systems that catch the eye and stand the test of time.” These advertising discourses suggest that the bulls are virile and masculine – not only capable of prolific reproduction, but capable of breeding exceptional (attractive and productive) females.

Alexander putting “the stamp of dairyness on his daughters like no other” indicates a sense of ownership over the females. The “stamp of dairyness” calls up the practice of branding, whereby a literal mark of ownership is burned (usually with a hot iron) into the animal’s flesh. It also calls up the practice by certain animals of ‘marking’ – the way dogs and cats mark territory with their urine. Alexander’s daughters are, of course, literally owned by the farmer that bred them, but in this advertisement, the responsibility for the ownership (and all the violence that comes with being ‘property’¹⁵) is shifted to Alexander, who gave them “the stamp of dairyness” in the first place.

Sanchez, GW Atwood, Java and Governor are all enrolled in the reproduction of attractive and sexy females – from these bulls’ genes, a farmer can expect to get ‘beautiful udders,’ ‘attractive rumps,’ and ‘eye-catching youthful mammary systems’ – the kind of cow ‘you can have fun with.’ This language fetishizes the female body and calls up the cultural preoccupation with ‘tits and ass’ and eternally youthful feminine bodies. The implicit discourse here, too, is that these bulls are gifting the farmer with the cows of their dreams – a gift, from one ‘man’ to another – not unlike the long

¹⁵ see Gary Francione’s work (2008, 1995) for a discussion of the effects of animals’ property status.

institutionalized practice of father's 'giving away' their daughters to future husbands (either for payment or as part of an ingrained cultural tradition) – an odd connection given the involvement of the farmers in the reproductive process (described in Chapters 4 and 5).

Reference to 'daughters' also potentially calls up a sentimental imaginary of the father-daughter relationship – of bulls (and by implicit reference, farmers, too) as fathers and family men. And yet, we know from the nature of the semen industry and the commodification of male body in that industry that the bull will never meet his offspring. His daughters and sons will be born as a result of artificial insemination on distant farms. The cows impregnated with his semen might never see their offspring beyond their first few days of birth. The subtle reference to family through the father-daughter relationship is out of place in the dairy industry where bovine family structures are fractured and animals are alienated from one another.

An emphasis on the udders and mammary systems as a fetishized trait of commodity production is expressed in these same catalog images of cows with engorged udders and tails pushed aside to display prominently the cow's vagina (see Figure 29 for an example). Images like this one emphasize the promise of excessive commodity production (after all, big udders are suggestive of high milk production). However, the images of the udders also call up the popular fetishizing of large-breasted women, and the advertisements are reminiscent of familiar popular sexualized discourses about women. "Youthful mammary systems that catch the eye and stand the



Figure 29: “Governor” in Select Sires Catalog; Source: Select Sires, 2012

test of time,” calls up a cultural preoccupation with perky breasts and eternally youthful female bodies – bodies that can maintain an attractive, youthful appearance while at the same time being productive milk-bearing mothers. “Great rear udders and attractive rumps” is reminiscent of the fetishization of women’s “tits and ass” in popular culture. The image of the cow’s exposed vagina is meant to show that her vagina is open and ready for business, similar to the way in which pornographic images showing women’s genitalia are suggestive of this same message¹⁶. And finally, GW Atwood making “the kind you can have fun with” promises that these cows are more than productive machines, they are attractive, well-endowed, promiscuous, fun-loving

¹⁶ Carol Adams’ *Sexual Politics of Meat* (1990) theorizes these connections in greater detail in addition to detailing many examples of the connections between women and animals and sexualized imagery/discourses.

females ready for whatever might be in store for them. These images and discourses call up Carol Adams' now-classic feminist analyses of the sexual politics of meat (1990) as they do the work of sexualizing the gendered commodification of the animal body.

Male bovine bodies in the semen industry are fetishized as sexy icons of virility and masculinity. Some semen catalogs show portraits of bulls that emphasize their physical characteristics – height, stature, and, most notably, their highly visible genitalia (e.g., TAG 2012). These images show visible penises and large testicles as commodified



Figure 30: "Arrival" in TAG Catalog; Source: Trans-America Genetics, 2012

means of production in the sale and extraction of semen (See Figure 30). The commodification of these body parts linked to the animal's sexual experience and

reproductive capabilities echoes the commodification of the cows' udders and vaginas as selling points. These pictures recall the important reproductive function of these parts in commodity production (milk, calves, semen). Also similar to the exaggerated visibility of cows' engorged udders and exposed vaginas, the bull's penis and testicles are reminiscent of pornographic images of the human male erection and sexualized imagery fetishizing the body. Research on masculinity and the male body (e.g., Bordo 1999; Dutton 1994) informs how gendered norms of a muscular physique and large genitalia get projected onto the bull's body and produce the bull as a virile and masculine subject – his masculinity explicitly tied to his reproductive capacity.

Some discourses present in the semen supply industry use sexual humor to obscure what seems to be a discomfort with the work of semen extraction and artificial insemination. Universal Semen Sales is an online semen supplier that also sells merchandise to advertise its products and services. Their mascot is a cartoon bull, named Sammy Semen, who walks on his hind legs and carries a small suitcase, labeled "A.I." (Universal Semen Sales 2012). The company sells boxer shorts with a large white cartoon smiling sperm cell and the words "SAMMY SEMEN" across the back. One t-shirt for sale has the large cartoon smiling sperm cell and beneath it, the text, www.universalsemensales.cum (emphasis added). A mug for sale has the company's Sammy Semen logo on one side and the words, "Collection Cup," on the other.

Each of these products brings humor to the practice of semen production, but one t-shirt in particular is worth analyzing in some detail (see Figure 31).



Figure 31: “Sammy Semen” T-Shirt; Source: Universal Semen Sales, 1994

The shirt shows Sammy Semen in the foreground, walking on his hind legs and carrying his AI case. He is sauntering up behind two smiling cows wearing bright red lipstick and with large udders and backsides angled at Sammy (Universal Semen Sales 1994). The cows are eager; they are thrilled to see Sammy and his A.I. case. The implication is that artificial insemination is pleasurable – like good sex – and the cows want it. The company’s slogan frames the cartoon scene: “We stand behind every cow we service: Universal Semen Sales.” The slogan serves two important purposes. Primarily, it reassures the buyer that the semen is high quality and that the company

stands behind the quality of their product. But the second purpose of the slogan is its undercurrent of sexual humor. In a practical sense, the farmer stands behind the cow as he inserts one hand into her rectum and the other into her vagina to perform the artificial insemination. The use of the word “service” intentionally calls up the colloquial use of the term “service” in a sexual context, which is to perform a sexual act for their express pleasure. Again, the cartoon and slogan suggest that cows want sex. Interestingly, it suggests that artificial insemination is an act of sex and, even as the responsibility is shifted to Sammy, we all know that it is the farmers (or at least their hands and arms) who engage in this act of sex with the cows, a point which is particularly noteworthy in the context of cultural discomfort with bestiality (see Brown and Rasmussen 2010). This characterization of artificial insemination as a sex act is particularly odd considering efforts in other agricultural reproductive industries to characterize the artificial insemination as a purely scientific practice (see Rasmussen 2012 for discussion of this tension in the context of artificial insemination in pigs).

And yet, this t-shirt also reveals industry discomfort with interspecies sex acts. Positioning Sammy Semen in the cartoon, holding the case, works to shift the responsibility of the violation of the cow away from the humans involved. It attempts to naturalize the process of reproduction and reassure us that cows are eager and excited about it. We are encouraged through this vision of artificial insemination to ignore the decidedly unnatural characteristics of industry procedure (e.g., human involvement in semen extraction and artificial insemination, the fact that the bull and the cow are no longer typically housed on the same farm, etc.). The joke of this cartoon is that bulls do

not actually walk on two legs and carry the tools for artificial insemination. This image is humorous specifically because of its absurdity. But it also reveals the absent referent of the human farmer – the bull walking upright on two legs and carrying the AI case – these are distinctly human characteristics in this context. Even as the human involvement is revealed, the cartoon jokingly deflects the responsibility to Sammy. His presence there is essential to the fictional narrative because it is reassuring to think about the bull and cow as engaged in a ‘natural’ process – and this is not entirely fictional: after all, it is *his* semen being used in the reproductive process.

It is also worth thinking about the target audience for this merchandise. Presumably the t-shirt was designed for farmers (primarily men) involved in daily practices of semen production and artificial insemination. This t-shirt was likely not designed with the general public in mind. Thus, customers who would buy this shirt and find it funny would already know the realities of the reproductive process in the semen, dairy and beef industries. They would know the absurdity of the image of Sammy Semen with the AI case. There is something nostalgic about the insertion of Sammy into this fictional scenario – there is a certain comfort in the imaginary of a different time and place where bulls and cows actually engaged in sex to reproduce.

Read as an acknowledgement of a nostalgic narrative (albeit a fictional one) of dairy production, this image of the cartoon cows in the field and Sammy in the foreground recalls the idyllic vision of dairy farming described at the beginning of this chapter. There is something romantic about envisioning cows on pasture in the rolling hills of the U.S. American West and the imaginary of cow families living together in

these places, involved in a 'natural' cycle of reproduction whereby cows willingly share a portion of their milk with the farmer and, eventually, the consumer.

Even as the dairy industry is connected to global circuits of agricultural capital – through semen trade, milk sales, breeding, machine manufacturing, etc. – the discourses of sexualized violence and gendered commodification reveal the intimacy of industry impacts on the animal. In addition to the impacts of the actual practices involved in dairy production, these sexually violent and fetishized discourses work to further reproduce the system and deflect attention away from the human violence (on the part of the farmer and consumer) against the animal. Reading these discourses and their relation to industry practices ultimately helps us to see the violence of the global flow of capital for animals and others as well. Further, discourses of gendered commodification – relating to fertility, welfare, profit, and patriotism – work to reproduce the place of the animal in the broader political economic context of dairy production. The economic logic of commodity production is revealed in industry discourses, and also in the lived experience of the cow in the industry. The purpose of looking at the actual practices of the industry, in conjunction with the industry discourses about these practices, is to understand the economic logic of the industry and the visceral impacts of discourse on real, living animals.

The marketing materials and advertisements outlined here are just a few examples of how industry discourses work to reproduce the institution of animal agriculture. In these materials, the singular animal is often visible – Alexander, G.W. Atwood, Sanchez, and certainly Sammy Semen – but these animals are decidedly

disconnected from real, embodied animals. Sammy Semen, of course, is entirely fictional, a cartoon caricature of a bull getting ready to inseminate sexy caricatures of two cows. The photographs of Alexander, G.W. Atwood and Sanchez are photo-shopped and edited to accentuate their physical characteristics and, in doing so, work to disconnect the viewer/buyer from the experience of the real bulls laboring on breeding farms around the country. Alexander, G.W. Atwood, and Sanchez are absent from the Expo except in this catalog representation. Even Betsy, a real, embodied cow present at the Expo becomes a caricature of herself – prized not for her own inner life, but for her reproductive potential and her bodily characteristics that make her a prize-winning representative of her breed. These ambivalent enactments of the embodied animal work to abstract from their experiences and animal geographers can learn much from analyzing the discursive representations of animals in places of commodification, like the Expo, alongside the lived conditions of animals in places like the auction.

Betsy, then, in how she functions as an embodied animal in this place, could not be more different from the cow with ear tag #1389. Betsy was meticulously cared for – the condition of her body was not only important for her reproductive potential, but it was also important for her commodification in the show ring and her role in reproducing an idyllic vision of farming in which animals’ bodily conditions reflect the deepest ethic of care. Betsy is an embodied figure representing the power of discourse – the glossy veneer that makes industry practices palatable – and the importance of discourse in shaping material practices. The cow with ear tag #1389, on the other hand, embodies the plain material practices of the industry whereby animals’ value is

inextricably tied to their productive and reproductive potential, and the plummeting value of an animal with no more productive potential. That the Expo is located in an urban area, in a clean and sanitized environment where animals are present only as immaculate show subjects replicates the way industry discourses operate to put forth a palatable interpretation of animal commodification. By contrast, the auction is a place where the material commodification is visible in all its gritty, manure-covered, mundane detail.

PART 4: EDUCATIONAL PARADIGMS OF HUMAN-FARMED ANIMAL RELATIONS

CHAPTER 9. Daisy and Daniel Teaching Children to Farm

Daisy and Daniel stood at the edge of the 4-H dairy show ring at the Washington State Fair in Puyallup. Daisy was a small Jersey heifer, her creamy brown coat immaculately clean and shiny. Daniel was an eight-year-old boy participating in 4-H and had raised Daisy to show at the fair. They were part of the next show group and, as they waited at the edge of the ring, Daniel continuously petted and kissed Daisy. He caressed her face with his small hands and kissed her on the nose, on the side of her face, and on her ears. Daisy licked Daniel each time his face came close to hers. An adult walked by and handed him an ear wipe and he gently wiped out Daisy's ears to make sure they were spotless. Then he leaned against Daisy's side and rested his head on the side of her neck until it was time for their show.

When it was their turn, Daniel held Daisy's lead tightly and led her out into the ring with the others. The children were all dressed in white jeans with crisp, white button-down shirts and polished black boots. The boys had their hair combed back neatly with gel, and the girls had their hair plaited in French braids. Daniel stood up straight and led Daisy around the ring, stopping periodically and turning in accordance with the guidelines of the show. Several times, Daisy tried to turn to nuzzle Daniel and lick his face. He struggled to keep her facing forward; her focus was on him and not on walking in line with the other contestants. When it was time for the scoring, Daniel and

Daisy did not score highly in comparison to the others. As they left the ring, Daniel patted and kissed Daisy again.

* * *

4-H is an educational model in the United States dedicated to training a new generation of children to farm. 4-H is unique because it teaches children an intimate kind of animal agriculture – one where they bond closely with a single animal at a time and they learn how to give that animal excellent care. Daniel focused all of his time and energy on caring for Daisy. She had a name, she was loved, and she was treated well. But 4-H is also a particular kind of emotional education in human-farmed animals as well. Children learn in 4-H that a cow’s role in society is to be bred, to produce calves, to be milked, and, eventually, to be slaughtered. Thus, while 4-H features the embodied animal as a way to educate children about farming, it is important for the child to detach emotionally from what that embodiment means as a necessary step in the commodification process.

This chapter analyzes 4-H as a way to understand one educational system involved in the reproduction of animal agriculture as an institution. I have chosen 4-H here because of the intimate encounters children have with animals in this form of education. The bonding between Daisy and Daniel in the vignette above illustrates how 4-H teaches children to see the animal as an embodied, singular being. Daniel was taught to be attentive to Daisy’s individual needs and the unique requirements of her body to maximize her productive potential. In this way, Daisy, as conceptualized as part of 4-H, was an embodiment of the global and the intimate – one where Daniel

learned to understand the connection between her care and the political economy of dairy production. He was taught that Daisy's health and wellbeing was integral for the health of the herd, and ultimately for his family's livelihood. This economic logic, though it does connect the child to the individual animal, promotes an ambivalent relationship of care between the child and animal (and, eventually, the farmer and his herd). To illustrate the ambivalent human-farmed animal relations in 4-H, I interviewed several adults who had participated in 4-H as children.

Allie Novak and I sat opposite each other in a coffee shop sipping some tea while she reflected on her experience as a child in 4-H. Raised in North Dakota, Novak participated in 4-H along with most of the other children she knew. She recalled that her older sister raised a steer named Teddy and, after they had sold Teddy for slaughter, her mother had said, "We're never doing that again." For Novak's family, raising steers for 4-H was difficult – the relationship was too close, they connected with Teddy, and steers were somehow "too much of an animal."

Novak raised her first 4-H animal at eight years old – a lamb she named Skittles. Novak and Skittles bonded closely over the summer they spent together. Skittles was housed at a nearby farm and Novak would visit her daily, care for her and take her for walks. Skittles followed Novak everywhere during these visits and she remembers that she liked to show off how much Skittles loved her. At the 4-H shows at the end of the summer, Novak would take naps in the barn with Skittles. That first year in 4-H, Novak did not know what was coming at the end of the fair. As the summer's end neared, her parents realized how much she had bonded with Skittles and sat down with her to

discuss different options. They considered giving Skittles to the local zoo, but the zoo said that they would eventually feed her to the lions and so they decided against that option. Ultimately, they decided that Skittles would be auctioned with the other 4-H farmed animals on Achievement Day (the last day of the fair when children auction their own animals). These auctions were social events and a way for the community to come together to support the children's 4-H projects. Novak told me that if a cute little girl was auctioning off an animal, the audience would intentionally bid up the animal so that the little girl would get a good price for the animal she raised.

Novak's eyes filled with tears as she told me about leading Skittles into the auction ring. She remembers it as an out-of-body experience; those moments in the pen were her last with her lamb and they were a public spectacle. She remembers vividly the details of Skittles in the auction pen with the purple ribbon over her back, the steel gates of the pen, the cold grey day. She did not cry at the auction; she was very contained as she stood there selling her lamb. When she walked out of the pen, she had to hand Skittles off to a stranger and they did not see each other again. Novak looked down into her tea cup and, when she looked back up at me, said, "We were bonded. And I betrayed that...I betrayed that."

The lesson Novak learned that first time in 4-H was that "you don't get close to your animal" and she said that this "happens to most kids the first time...but you learn, and you don't make that relationship again." In that sense, Novak reflected, "4-H is a lesson in the proper emotional relationship between humans and animals." Through doing 4-H, she gained a "sense of interdependency and felt like she was connected to

other beings, but at the end of the day [she] learned the appropriate relationship.” This disciplining of her emotional attachment did not change the way she physically cared for her future 4-H animals (she continued to give them excellent physical care), but it radically changed her emotional relationships with them.

Novak was ambivalent about the value of 4-H. In her words, people who do 4-H are generally “good folks and very ethical [...] they are responsible, caring, self-aware and responsible to others.” On one hand, the experience teaches you that the animal has a face and that there is an ethic of care involved in farming animals in this way. But this is eclipsed by another kind of teaching – an education that reinforces the human-animal divide. On one hand, 4-H is “an anachronistic education – you’re being taught a form of farming that doesn’t exist anymore,” and the nostalgia for a different time and mode of farming is what keeps 4-H going. And as a young child, it was particularly this nostalgic ‘salt of the earth’ appeal that attracted Novak (and many of her peers) to 4-H; in Novak’s words, 4-H made her feel like she was doing something real and important.

Historically, 4-H emerged in a climate of shifting rural-urban social relations. In the late 1800s, young people from agricultural families were leaving rural areas to seek employment in urban areas. The growth of cities at the turn of the century, paired with the declining appeal of a lifetime of farm labor, caused great concern for the health and vitality of rural communities and agricultural futures. Additionally, older farmers at this time were resistant to adopting new technologies from university agricultural science programs and youth were targeted as a way to help introduce new agricultural technologies to farmers across the country (4-H 2013a). Youth were taught about new

technologies and, in turn, taught those technologies to their older family members who may have been more open to learning about them from their own children or grandchildren.

At the same time, in 1902, after-school clubs were formed in public education to teach children practical, “hands on” skills, many of which were related to agricultural science and technologies (4-H 2013a). In 1914, the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) was formed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and nationalized 4-H (4-H 2013a). In 2009, CSREES was reorganized into the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) whose mission “is to lead food and agricultural sciences to create a better future for the Nation and the world by supporting research, education and extension programs in the Land-Grant University System and other partner organizations” (NIFA 2012). 4-H is currently administered under NIFA and more than 6.5 million children are involved with 4-H in the United States today.

As the largest youth development organization in the country, the four Hs of 4-H are head (managing, thinking), heart (relating, caring), hands (giving, working), and health (being, living) (4-H 2013a). With these personal development goals, 4-H trains children in science, citizenship and healthy living. Within these categories, science includes programs on environmental science and alternative energy; engineering and technology; plant and animal science, as well as a 4-H National Youth Science Day (4-H 2013b). Citizenship includes programs on leadership and personal development; community action; and communication and expressive arts (4-H 2013b). Healthy living

addresses topics relating to ‘nutrition and physical fitness; substance abuse; safety; and social and emotional wellness’ (4-H 2013b).

While acknowledging that 4-H has grown to be much more than an education in farming, I focus here on their animal science programs, particularly their curriculum on cows used for dairy. The dairy curriculum is divided into three age groups – the ‘Cowabunga!’ curriculum is appropriate for grades 3 to 5, ‘Mooving Ahead’ is designed for grades 6 through 8 and ‘Rising to the Top’ is targeted at grades 9 through 12. In the ‘Cowabunga!’ curriculum, children are taught to identify dairy breeds, select a 4-H dairy calf, identify body parts, explore grooming and showmanship techniques, and learn about other basics of the anatomy and care of calves, heifers, and cows (4-H 2013c). In the ‘Mooving Ahead’ curriculum, youth are trained in judging and identifying show qualities in cows used for dairy, they are exposed to different career options related to dairy production, they are taught to engage in ethical decision making and they learn the details of animal care in the dairy industry, including food, housing, parasite prevention and treatment, milking, food safety (4-H 2013c). ‘Rising to the Top’ is the advanced program of dairy education for youth and involves learning detection and treatment for mastitis, detecting pregnancy and delivering calves, balancing food rations, selecting calves through records, promoting dairy products for sale, and exploring career options in greater depth (4-H 2013c).

In an *All About Dairy Cows* activity book for the ‘Cowabunga!’ curriculum, students are asked “What kinds of cows make milk?” (Richardson 2003: 6). The answer is a page of full-color photographs of the most common breeds of cows used for dairy:

Holstein, Jersey, Brown Swiss, Milking Shorthorn, Guernsey, and Ayrshire. Of course, the intention of the lesson here is to teach about common dairy breeds and how to identify them. However, the way in which this question is posed suggests that not all cows produce milk – and that these particular breeds’ inherent purpose is to make milk. Indeed, these breeds have been developed over generations to produce high volumes of milk that is extracted for commodity sale, but this question erases the complexities of the process of commodity milk production. One common myth about dairy that I heard throughout my research was that cows just ‘make milk.’ In casual conversations, I encountered numerous consumers of milk who were unaware that cows have to have recently given birth to produce milk and that the body produces that milk *for the calf*. While this is odd, considering that healthy mammalian bodies that have recently given birth produce milk, the question “What kinds of cows make milk?” reinforces this misconception about *how* and *why* milk is ‘made’. The more accurate and relevant question for 4-H students would have been ‘What kinds of cows produce the best milk for commodity sale?’

Other aspects of this same activity book gesture toward the commodification of the cow in less subtle ways. Children are asked “How much milk does a cow produce?” and are taught that “the average cow produces [...] 2,305 gallons of milk a year or about 8 gallons of milk every day of her milking period. That’s enough for 128 people to have a glass of milk every day!” (Richardson 2003: 10). These statistics on the productivity of the cow continue: “Each day the dairy cow can produce up to: 64 quarts of milk (256 glasses) or, 14 pounds of cheese or, 5 gallons ice cream or, 6 pounds of butter”

(Richardson 2003: 11) The way milk is conceptualized as being measured in glasses of milk, pounds of cheese, gallons of ice cream and pounds of butter reinforces the status of milk as an inherently commodified product and works to fetishize the commodity. Further, in conjunction with these discourses that reveal the commodification of the animal, the body mutilations cows experience are made to seem benign: the page “Why do some cows look like they have earrings?” explains the utility of ear tags for cows and closes by asking the child, “Do you have pierced ears?” as a way to reassure the child that this process is benign – and connect it to the experience of getting pierced ears as a child (an experience that for many children is associated with excitement and a happy rite of passage) (Richardson 2003: 19). Ultimately, these discourses and their role in the education of a new generation of potential dairy farmers, work to naturalize the use of the cow, the commodification of milk, and the augmentation of the cow’s body for dairy commodity production.

One of the educational aspects of the second phase of the dairy curriculum, ‘Mooving Ahead,’ is a focus on developing ethical relationships with animals.

Publically, farmed animal shows have received some negative publicity over practices that constitute animal abuse – such as infusing udders with isobutane gas to make them look fuller and more engorged for show purposes (Jersey Journal 2000). Other common practices include injecting vegetable oil under the skin of the animal to give her a fuller appearance, or the use of clenbuterol which causes weight gain in muscle rather than fat and is banned for use in farmed animals in the United States because it causes lung and heart problems in animals (Connors and Dever 2005; Goodwin 2001). Exhibitors have

been caught abusing animals, too, in order to enhance their appeal in the show ring. A graduate student in Oklahoma was caught beating a lamb to encourage swelling to give the lamb a firm feel to the judge's touch and a pig was drowned to death by an exhibitor forcing the animal to drink water with a hose to meet the minimum weight requirements for a show (Connors and Dever 2005). These extreme examples are outnumbered by more common practices, like withholding food to lower weight prior to a show (Connors and Dever 2005). Quality assurance programs and curricula involving ethical training are meant to improve these problems.

This education is framed by a concern about the public image of animal agriculture: "With the passing of every show season such incidents [of animal abuse] cause animal agriculture to resonate more negatively in the eyes of the public. Perhaps the most serious consequence in the public arena has been decreased consumer confidence in the safety of dairy beef and milk" (Jersey Journal 2000: 1). Of particular interest here is the focus on improving public perception and consumer confidence in the industry; in other words, the focus is not primarily on the animal's welfare for the animal's sake. Animal welfare is a way to improve the marketability of the animal as a commodity and as a way to garner positive public consumer support. This language then explicitly ties the motivation for paying attention to the well-being of the animal to their value as a commodity producer. An ethic of care, then, gets attached to an economic logic of commodity production and how the consumer perceives that production (see Green and Lawson 2011 for a discussion on the commodification of care in the human context). The message that children are taught in this ethical education is

that animals should be treated well not because they matter inherently as subjects of their own lives, but because their treatment dictates their value as commodities. This is not to say that farmers, educators and 4-Hers do not care about the animals they raise; on the contrary, Novak's story illustrates the complex relationship of care involved in raising an animal for 4-H and the broader enactments of care in farming communities. What this illustrates is that this care and the animal's welfare are tangled up with an economic logic of commodification where welfare is conceptualized in terms of the animal's productivity (and reproductivity).

Among the lessons in the third curriculum, 'Rising to the Top,' historical notes on farming bovine animals as a tradition dating back thousands of years work to naturalize the use of animals in agriculture. In the introduction to a lesson on why cows can digest grass, this history is outlined:

Throughout the history of man, cattle have played an important role in supplying meat and milk as well as numerous other uses to benefit humans. Pictures in Egyptian tombs depict cattle being milked, consumed for meat and pulling wagons. The word cattle seems to have the same origin as *chattle* which means possession. Throughout history, men's wealth was often computed in terms of his cattle possessions, from the days of the Roman Empire to the "Cattle Baron" days of the 1880's in the United States to current primitive tribes in Africa and Asia. Cattle have always held a place of high esteem and symbolized wealth as evidenced by the fact that the earliest known coins depict the head of an ox (Nichols 2000: 3).

In fact, the term 'cattle' does not *seem* to have the same root as 'chattel,' cattle *does* have its etymological roots in chattel – using this term literally labels these animals as property and calls up chattel slavery where humans were owned as property. However, this educational text calls up the property status of animals not to critically engage with

this set of social relations, but to reinforce animals' status as property through its historical reproduction. The continued use of animals in agriculture is based on a conception of history as stagnant and unwilling to evolve – it is based on an antiquated (and survivalist) notion of killing animals for food that was rooted in a different place and time. Further, justifying humans' use of bovine animals as being natural because of its connection to the practices of the Ancient Egyptians is odd, considering that other practices taken from the Egyptians are now understood to be unethical and inhumane (human slavery, for one).

Using history as a way to train a new generation in a set of practices, like animal agriculture, is a powerful method of education. The fact that animals have been used in agriculture for thousands of years, and the story of that history, acts as a reassurance that this practice is important and morally justified. Further, the use of animals in agriculture connects us – as eaters and farmers – to family traditions that make us feel like we're part of a family and a community. Eating animal products and raising animals for food may be intimately tied up in our own identities – as individuals, as members of a family or a social group, as members of a particular race and ethnicity. These connections and associations with animals as food get reproduced when we eat meat, dairy or eggs, or when we participate in raising animals for food (as in the case of 4-H). And why would we question this relationship? Certainly, we benefit from it in many ways: our use of animals benefits us economically, we may like the taste of animal flesh and animals' reproductive outputs (milk and eggs), and it may connect us to multi-generational traditions of eating and raising animals for food.

Teaching children to farm animals is an essential part of reproducing these historical, traditional, and economic relations between humans and animals. If we are interested in interrogating ethical relations between humans and animals that are not guided by the hegemonic tenets of animal use, we will need to disentangle our ethical commitments from the economic logics that guide contemporary social relations. Divorcing these ethical considerations from the economic benefit obtained from farming animals and imagining new alternatives is important because children are being trained that animals are essential to the continued success of the United States economy:

The cattle industry in the United States has played an integral role in our country's growth and economic well-being. Cattle represent the largest segment of American agriculture and the beef business is conducted in an open and free market system. The sale of cattle and calves totals over \$158 billion, representing almost one fourth of all cash receipts from farm markets in the U.S (Nichols 2000: 3).

This economic logic that ties the use of animals to economic well-being of the nation eclipses the ethical relations between humans and animals. It is this economic logic that is taught in these 4-H curricula where children are taught to maximize the value of the animal-as-commodity through increased knowledge, responsibility and care.

The role of raising 4-H animals as a youth development project is met with both support and antagonism from the public. There are two popular discourses about 4-H and its role in youth development. The dominant, hegemonic discourse about 4-H is that it is training a new generation of children in animal husbandry. But there is also a counter narrative about 4-H coming mainly from the animal rights community - namely, that 4-H 'desensitizes children to the suffering of animals' (Henderson 2011).

Agricultural and animal rights interests are often at odds and these communities regularly fundamentally disagree about the role and treatment of farmed animals in society. PETA and the Cattlemen's Associations represent very different perspectives on the nature of the 4-H education. PETA, of course, argues that the 4-H education is wholly sinister – that it is training children to participate in, and be desensitized to animal suffering. Cattlemen's Associations and the greater agricultural community views 4-H as an education in ethics, responsibility, and usable skills.

To cite an example of the polarity of these different perceptions of 4-H, in 2011 People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA)¹⁷ applied to staff a booth with activists handing out literature and showing films about animal suffering at the Texas State Fair. Not surprisingly, they were denied access to the fair as exhibitors and this sparked a public debate about the role of 4-H. Often involved in inflammatory methods of activism, PETA argued that the four Hs of the program should really be “hellish for animals,” “hazardous to the environment,” “heart attack-inducing” and “hypocritical for teaching kids to care about only certain animals and disregard others” (PETA 2011). In the ongoing debate, Executive Director of the Kansas Cattlemen's Association Brandy Carter said,

PETA intentionally displays graphic material to get a rise out of people. The State Fair is a family event. PETA's content will likely be graphic, inappropriate and not suitable for children. This group is not going to the fair to provide factual information. It's promoting its own anti-meat, anti-dairy agenda with attempts to exploit the innocence of children. How ethical is that? Fair officials should be

¹⁷ PETA, in many ways, is a highly problematic organization – one that has been criticized for its shock tactics to promote its message and for its use of women and nudity to promote the liberation of animals. I am not interested in exploring the effectiveness or the ethics of PETA here – rather, PETA and the 4-H debate is merely a productive example of clashing perspectives and the potential for tunnel vision on issues relating to human-animal relations.

commended for their judgment to protect fair goers. The State Fair is an event that showcases agriculture. It is disturbing when animal rights groups invade our community, distort the truth, and misrepresent our industry (Radke 2012).

On both sides of the debate the nuance of the arguments against and in favor of 4-H is lost. PETA denies the very real value of children learning responsibility and a certain kind of ethic of care with regard to others through 4-H – the interconnectedness that Novak spoke about. Cattlemen’s Associations and agricultural communities in support of 4-H do not recognize the violence involved in teaching children to commodify animals, which Novak also spoke about in terms of the emotional education she received. Carter’s statement represents an effort to protect agricultural interests, tradition, and the status quo, and an effort to reproduce this status quo in a new generation of children. PETA’s efforts are often characterized as slanderous and as exposing wholesome children to a false view of farming and its impact on animals. Farmers and 4-H educators are framed by PETA as sinister indoctrinators of children into unethical farming practices. PETA is viewed as a group trying to exploit the innocence of children through promoting an anti-meat, anti-dairy agenda. Both views on the part of PETA and 4-H supporters involve factually incorrect assumptions about the other. Much of the information PETA distributes is factual and well-researched – outlining real industry practices and exposing actual instances of animal cruelty in the food industry. At the same time, children do experience lasting benefits from learning a certain kind of responsibility and ethic of care while participating in 4-H.

The topic of the innocence of children is an interesting one for Brandy Carter to bring up because of the kind of emotional education children undergo in 4-H. Carter states that PETA is “promoting its own anti-meat, anti-dairy agenda with attempts to exploit the innocence of children,” which implies that there is something vulnerable about children – that there is some sensibility in children that can be appealed to by an animal rights perspective. This hints at the vulnerability present in relationship that Novak described between children and their first 4-H animal, and the tenderness visible between Daniel and Daisy – namely, that most children bond very closely with that first animal, and that many children have an affinity with animals. This bonding happens before they learn the emotional lesson that 4-H teaches. Carter’s statement reveals that another ethic (the ‘animal rights’ ethic) will play on children’s emotions and that activists might get to children and influence them before they know better. This statement acknowledges that children need to be taught to conceptualize animals as ‘food,’ that there is something about this knowledge that is not innately ingrained in us. And indeed, the question of how to deal with the meat/animal connection is often a troubling part of parenting urban children as well (Luke 2007) as there comes a point when they learn that the chicken on their plate is actually *a chicken*. Children raised on small family farms, in particular, “still have face-to-face contact with their stock. [...] Farmers are thus very aware of the need to help their children curtail potentially disruptive sympathies” (Luke 2007: 46).

In this chapter, I have analyzed 4-H as one method of education involved in the reproduction and maintenance of animal agriculture as an institution. I chose an

educational model focused on children, in particular, because of the importance of educating across generations in order to maintain farming animals as the status quo. 4-H is also a place where the global and the intimate is visible in human-farmed animal relations as children learn to recognize the animal as embodied, after which they learn to deny certain important implications of this embodiment in the commodification process, and as they learn that the health of their livelihood is dependent on the health of their herd. Thinking critically about this enactment of centering the animal is one way for animal geographers to understand the complex and ambivalent relationship between the individual, the population, and political economic structures of commodification. In other words, like industry discourses visible at the World Dairy Expo, simply centering the embodied animal does not always translate to recognizing the violence of commodification. This is where feminist global intimate analysis becomes necessary as it attends to the gendered impacts of political economic process of commodity production on intimate lives and bodies. The global intimate, then, helps us to see mundane agricultural practices reproduced through educational systems like 4-H as violence.

Education is an important part of social reproduction – passing material practices and ethical values down through new generations in order to maintain dominant practices like the farming of animals. Programs like 4-H (and Future Farmers of America, among others) have been involved in the social reproduction of the institution of animal agriculture across many generations. More informal forms of education where elders have passed down knowledge to new generations on farms have existed

throughout history to reproduce animal agriculture. Increasingly, university agricultural science programs are involved in educating a new generation of 'agribusinessmen' and a particular set of practices characterized by larger scale, more intensive production practices. While a more extensive analysis of these and other forms of agricultural education is beyond the scope of this project, I have used 4-H here as an example of one educational program involved in the reproduction of the institution of animal agriculture. In spite of my critical approach, it is not my intention in this chapter to present these agricultural education programs in a sinister light. Rather, it is my aim to explore the way the social relations between humans and animals are reproduced through educational programs. Through this analysis, I have tried to make legible the way education works to reproduce the everyday violence of animal agriculture, even as this violence may not be readily visible because of the way it has been normalized.

CHAPTER 11. A Cow, Her Calf, and Maggie Lake Redefining Education in Human-Farmed Animal Relations

The cow had dystocia – she was having trouble giving birth. Her calf was stuck, and Maggie Lake had to reach in and help to deliver the calf. Once Lake helped to maneuver the calf’s body through the obstruction, he tumbled out in a cascade of amniotic fluid. When the calf stood up, he was taken away from the cow. The cow bellowed repeatedly; the calf’s higher-pitched call answered back. They did not see each other again.

Before coming to work for Animal Haven, Lake earned a degree in animal science from a large university agricultural animal science program. She entered the program because she had always loved animals and wanted to figure out a way to work closely with them. In particular, she wanted to work with farmed animals, so she sought out an animal science program where she could study large animal care and management. Lake recalled the moment of delivering the calf, a moment that changed her perspective on the form of education she was receiving. As she assisted the cow in giving birth, she was struck by her involvement in an intimate kind of violence against the cow and the calf:

It’s so funny because they tell you, they tell you everything there, you know, you learn all about debeaking and confinement systems and it’s made to seem very normal and the way it should be and these professors have thirty plus years of experience and so you trust them. And so you know that the dairy calves are taken away right after birth... You know it objectively and rationally, but then when you see it it’s a whole different ball game. When you see the cow when she... I was actually the one who got to pull the calf out. [The cow] had dystocia – she was having trouble giving birth – and when they took [her calf] away, oh my god, she stood up and I had never heard an animal cry like that but

you could feel it shake your bones. It was very powerful. And the calf started crying and it was just awful. And I went vegan because there was my glass of milk right there and it was very disheartening to see that connection (Lake, personal communication, 2012).

As a result of this experience, while Lake was still in the animal science program, she began to start advocating for farmed animals:

I saw how rough they [farmed animals] had it and how we're teaching our future generation—I mean we had 3000 students and I was the only vegetarian and, you know, we're teaching them to be desensitized and detached from these really intelligent, emotional animals and I didn't want to be a part of that anymore (Lake, personal communication, 2012).

At the time, there weren't many sanctuaries for farmed animals, but she found Animal Haven and began volunteering and was eventually hired to do animal care. This evolved into a position in education and outreach.

* * *

In contrast to the way 4-H and university agricultural science programs reproduce the hegemonic system of farming animals, the sanctuary is an educational place that actively challenges this dominant system. At the sanctuary, animals are conceptualized as embodied, unique beings; they have names, stories, likes and dislikes, and human labor at the sanctuary is dedicated to animals living lives not dependent on commodity production. The sanctuary, then, is a place where scholars can learn much about the power of centering the embodied animal. Calling the animals by name, sharing their stories with the visitors, attending to their physical and emotional needs –

these are all acts that make a political statement about the place of animals in society. This politicization of the animal's life and body is a way for animal geographers to critically analyze the ethical implications of farming animals. Feminists theorizing the global and the intimate are concerned with the ways in which the intimate body and global structures of political economy are co-constituted. The sanctuary is a place that makes room for understanding this co-constitution and it is a place where this co-constitution is critically analyzed and actively re-imagined. Sanctuaries make visitors keenly aware of the way the embodied animals living there have been violently impacted by political economic processes of commodification. Sanctuaries educate the public about the importance of creating a place where animals' lives are not dependent on commodity production, and they attend to the ways in which each person can challenge this hegemonic relationship of human-animal hierarchy.

There are a number of different types of animal sanctuaries: sanctuaries for companion animals, sanctuaries for wild animals, species-specific sanctuaries (like The Elephant Sanctuary in Hohenwald, Tennessee or Pigs Peace Sanctuary in Stanwood, Washington), sanctuaries for marine life, and sanctuaries for formerly farmed animals. Sanctuaries are involved in the rescue and rehabilitation of animals; some are involved in adopting out animals to homes after the rehabilitation process, but the majority of sanctuaries aim to provide a permanent home to the animals they rescue¹⁸. Sanctuaries

¹⁸ I use the term 'rescue' here because it is what is common in the animal advocacy community, but I want to note the problematic nature of this term. Rescue implies a victim/savior relationship whereby animals' agency is obscured. The power relations at work in 'rescuing' or 'saving' someone are uneven and problematic sites of negotiation and when we reproduce the discourse that humans are 'rescuing' animals, we reproduce a hierarchy of powerful and powerless, dominant and subordinate.

are typically run as nonprofit organizations and are funded by donations. Thus, the sanctuary model is reliant on a constant influx of funds from individual donors and grantors and, as such, is a precarious organizational model. Some sanctuaries are run by one or two people and volunteers; others have a large staff and management structure with a staff person dedicated explicitly to fundraising.

Farmed animal sanctuaries are a radically understudied area of academic research. The majority of writings on farmed animal sanctuaries that do exist are memoir-type manuscripts, which frame the sanctuary as a place where humans and animals can live in relative harmony and animals can express their species-specific behavior and live in community with one another (e.g., Brown 2013; Baur 2008). While it is true that sanctuaries do provide an alternative life for animals who would otherwise be farmed or slaughtered, it is important to avoid romanticizing the sanctuary.

First, all sanctuaries are not “good” sanctuaries; by this I mean that some sanctuaries keep animals in sub-standard conditions and do not provide the necessary care, space and medical treatment that the animals need. This is generally due to one of several factors. Sanctuaries are not regulated by any certification process that oversees the care of animals and so there is no set of standards for how sanctuaries should operate. Sanctuaries can get into financial trouble if their expenses exceed the donations they receive and make it impossible to afford basic necessities for the animals.

Sanctuaries can also take on too many animals for the space they have; in the animal rescue world, where there is *always* an urgent case of an animal in need, this is an easy

trap to fall into. Finally, mental illness is not uncommon in animal rescue work and 'hording' is frequently not malicious in nature, but is, instead, the result of someone who cares deeply for animals, but is also profoundly mentally ill. For these and other reasons, the sanctuary is not always a place where animals are well cared for.

Second, each sanctuary I encountered prevents the reproduction of animals who live there. They do this for practical reasons: they do not want to contribute to increasing the population of animals who are already suffering in the millions and billions each year. Preventing reproduction at the sanctuary has the outcome of making more room for animals who are already born and are in need of sanctuary. In spite of this practical justification for sterilizing animals at the sanctuary, each sanctuary employee I interviewed expressed the ethical ambiguity of intervening in animals' reproductive lives. They are well aware of the ways in which animals' reproductive lives are controlled in the dairy, milk and egg industries and they are wary of replicating similar management of animal bodies and the reproductive process. All employees I interviewed stated that, for them, the rescues they loved the most were ones where they could take in a cow and calf together, or a pregnant cow who gave birth to a healthy calf at the sanctuary. This was partly about a discomfort with controlling animals' reproduction at the sanctuary; adopting a cow and calf together, or a pregnant cow, created space for those animals to live in community with their

offspring.¹⁹ Importantly, for sanctuary employees, this was an experience that many of these animals would never have had in the dairy industry and creating that space for these intra-species relationships to flourish was an important political statement that rejected the commodification of the reproductive process.

Third, many sanctuaries are involved in a not-so-obvious kind of commodification of the animal: not of their lives and bodies in the way that occurs in the dairy and meat industries, but in a way that involves the commodification of their stories. Nowhere is the power of the animal's story more keenly understood as in the world of animal advocacy. For many sanctuary workers and animal advocates in general, it was one animal who catalyzed their own political and ethical transformation (like Maggie Lake and the cow giving birth to the calf). Stories of animals offer powerful entry into understanding the political and ethical implications of humans' use of animals and sanctuaries know this. As such, sanctuaries feature rescue stories of animals in their appeals for donations and rely on the affective nature of these stories to garner financial support for the sanctuary.

Some sanctuaries take this commodification a step further by having 'adopt-an-animal' programs where you can sponsor (not physically adopt) an animal living at the sanctuary. When you 'adopt' the animal by sending in your donation, you are sent an 'adoption' certificate, a photograph of the animal, and accompanying story complete with the animal's likes and dislikes. While I was in the midst of writing this text, in fact,

¹⁹ This was also partly about allowing familial social relations to flourish at the sanctuary; more than one sanctuary staff person said that it was just as good to see siblings come to the sanctuary together and get to grow up together.

my partner 'adopted' a young steer named Phoebus from Farm Sanctuary (2013) as a gift for me. Phoebus, a Jersey, was rescued as a young calf from the dairy industry. On his adoption certificate, his personality is listed as happy and cheerful, his favorite food is apples, and I am listed as the 'proud parent.' These 'adopt an animal' programs are highly effective for garnering financial support for the sanctuary and as a means of connecting with the stories of real, embodied animals. Indeed, years ago, I 'adopted' a chicken for my mother as a Mother's Day gift. The hen's name was Jane and my mother, delighted, read her story aloud to me over the phone. She brought Jane's photo to her work office and propped it up on her desk. A few months later, she received a letter in the mail saying that Jane had recently died of ovarian cancer (not uncommon in hens bred for egg laying) and the sanctuary transferred her 'adoption' to a new chicken, named Fiesta, whose story, photo and adoption certificate were included. As my mother read this heartfelt letter aloud to me on the phone, we both cried. Now, my mother has both Jane's and Fiesta's photographs on her desk at work. In addition to being generally good nonprofit stewardship practice, this was also an emotionally effective way to draw supporters in more deeply and to ask them to feel keenly the loss of the animal who died.

The commodification of singular animals' stories in order to appeal to donors is an effective and, perhaps, necessary practice for sustaining the costly care of animals living at the sanctuary. Likely, the benefits for the animals of this commodification outweigh the potentially exploitative nature of this kind of storytelling (after all, the animals are not physically harmed by this practice). But it is worth noting nonetheless,

and this is, indeed, something I have reflected on relating to my own research. The nature of the research process is such that I went out “into the field” and collected data about animals in the industry; in many cases, this involved collecting stories and photographs – the traces of animals suffering, living and dying in the industry. While my motivation for doing this project was, like the sanctuaries, to educate and reconceptualize how we treat nonhuman animals, these stories and the animals who inhabit them, are instrumental in my own self-interested professional advancement (as a step in obtaining the PhD, as a subject on which to publish in academic journals, as a kind of currency on the job market, etc.). Admittedly, my commodification of the animals’ stories here is likely more problematic than the sanctuary’s. At the end of the day, the animals whose stories are being, in effect, sold by the sanctuary are safe and cared for in a place dedicated to their wellbeing; I, on the other hand, bore witness to a great amount of animal suffering during the research process and walked away from every animal I encountered, leaving them to be bred, milked, sold, and slaughtered. This ethical ambiguity of how to use singular stories from marginalized populations is one that deserves more extensive thinking-through elsewhere, but for the purposes of this chapter, is one aspect relevant to thinking about the politics of sanctuaries.

Sanctuaries are also not places where animals go to live lives free from suffering. Many of the animals who come to sanctuaries suffer as a result of their previous treatment and commodification, and as a result of their breeding. Sophie, for instance, had chronic pain from her broken leg and hip, she suffered from the mastitis infection that was difficult to treat because of its advancement, and she suffered emotionally

from the trauma and fear she experienced in her encounters with humans prior to arriving at the sanctuary. These parts of her history lingered even after she had been living at the sanctuary for nearly a decade. Issues arising from breeding practices in animal agriculture are one of the most common ailments among animals living in sanctuaries. At Sanctuary for Farm Animals, for instance, sanctuary workers explained on more than one occasion the difficulty of caring for turkeys whose genetic makeup (through selective breeding) made it so that they were unable to stand, so weighed down were they by the excessive growth of their bodies for meat production.

Sanctuaries see the consequences of breeding programs in animal agriculture: animals whose bodies cannot sustain their rapid growth, who are predisposed to lameness, and so on. Sanctuaries, in contrast to farms, see animals *age* and deal with the day-to-day realities of the aging body. Thus, much of the work of sanctuaries is to try to minimize animals' suffering as much as possible and they will make the difficult decision to euthanize an animal whose suffering cannot be mitigated.

In spite of these complexities and my critiques of sanctuaries, my fieldwork revealed that the farmed animal sanctuary is a site where human-farmed animal relations are being actively redefined. Farmed animal sanctuaries are places of resistance, mourning, possibility, and hope. Sanctuaries are intentional communities, populated by humans who are trying to live the future they want with respect to human-animal relations (Kristy Weir, personal communication, 2012). I have visited a number of sanctuaries throughout the Western United States, but focused my research on two California sanctuaries where cows formerly used in the dairy industry reside:

Animal Haven and Sanctuary for Farm Animals. Thus, I will draw from my fieldwork at these two places to understand the role of the sanctuary in redefining human-farmed animal relations.

Farmed animal sanctuaries are commonly dedicated to a three-fold mission: 1) rescue, 2) education, and 3) advocacy. Larger sanctuaries, like Animal Haven and Sanctuary for Farm Animals, have internship programs where interns can live at the sanctuary for an extended period of time (usually more than 1-2 months) and volunteer in animal care, education or outreach/advocacy. This is an important part of the mission of sanctuaries – to train a new generation of animal advocates in sanctuary work both for the expansion of sanctuary efforts and for the longevity and sustainability of the sanctuary itself.

Before embarking on research about sanctuaries, I believed that sanctuaries' primary mission was the rescue and rehabilitation of animals in need. Certainly, there are some sanctuaries where this is the case – sanctuaries where education and advocacy are either not part of their mission, or where these are a more secondary focus. At Animal Haven and Sanctuary for Farm Animals, however, rescue was only part of the equation. Staff from each place acknowledged the centrality of the animals' care and the importance of creating a safe space for the animals who lived there. However, they also stated quite explicitly that they understood that they were not going to be able to significantly impact the plight of animals through rescue:

There are simply too many animals to ever believe we could rescue them all from the food industry. Rescuing individuals doesn't make a drop in the bucket in terms of the larger problem. But it makes a difference for the individual animals

we take in and they become ambassadors for their species – for all the others who don't make it to sanctuary (Alec Thompson, personal communication, 2012).

This is an interesting perspective on the individual/population dichotomy, whereby sanctuaries understand the importance of the singular animal, but also are well aware of the scale of suffering at the level of the population. Unlike animal geographers who abstract from the experience of the animal in population-based analyses, however, sanctuary workers (because of their focus on the care of individuals) are able to understand populations as being comprised of millions of suffering individuals. It is precisely because of this level of awareness that they take a pragmatic approach (of caring for the individuals who make it to sanctuary *and* of recognizing that the broader plight of animals will not be changed one at a time). All this to say that the mission of these two sanctuaries could not be only animal rescue:

Honestly, it would be irresponsible if we dedicated all of our time and energy to animal care when there is so much more work to be done on the bigger picture. *Of course* we take excellent care of the animals here and we work hard to ensure that they have the best life we can give them, with as little suffering as possible. But we also recognize that this is not enough if we want to make any real change in the structures that cause this suffering to begin with. (Anne Reeder, personal communication, 2012).

This pragmatism is rooted in an understanding of the scale of animal agriculture and the limited resources (space, money, etc.) of sanctuaries, and a fairly sophisticated embodiment of a global intimate analysis. In other words, the sanctuary acknowledges the importance of both a focus on the intimate, and a focus on changing the global structures impacting the lived experience of millions.

The conceptualization of animals in sanctuaries as ambassadors for their species, as Alec Thompson mentions above, is one I have heard on more than one occasion and is important as it links up with the mission of education. Before turning to education, though, it is interesting to note that treating an animal as an ambassador for their species is admittedly odd. The practical function of this idea is that humans, who may have never met a cow, pig or chicken face-to-face, can visit the sanctuary and encounter an embodied animal in a way that helps them to understand that species. What is odd about this is to think about a human being an ambassador for our species; we readily acknowledge that humans are singular, unique beings with distinct personalities and ways of being in the world. Could one human, or even five, be representative of the species? Similarly, farmed animals are distinct beings; to treat an animal as an ambassador for their species is a crude approach to coming to understand what it means to be a cow or pig or chicken. Of course, this is reflective of a larger trend to abstract animals into species as we do when we ask questions like, “Do you like dogs?” in spite of the fact that many of us have interpersonal relationships with dogs and understand their distinct personalities. This is a problem implicit in my work in this text as well – the (perhaps unavoidable) tendency to use a singular animal as a lens through which to understand the plight of animals in the dairy industry more broadly.

Education is a central mission for both Animal Haven and Sanctuary for Farm Animals. Educational efforts include informing the public about factory farming and small-scale farming practices through producing educational literature, doing community outreach in the form of tabling or leafleting, visiting schools and other

organizations, and offering tours of the sanctuary. Sanctuary for Farm Animals has replicas of some of the devices common in industrialized animal agriculture: a gestation crate for sows, a battery cage for laying hens, and a veal crate. These physical replicas help visitors visualize how much space a hen would have in a battery cage and empathize with the animals' experience of these common industry practices.

Sanctuaries also educate the public on the emotional and intellectual lives of farmed animals as a means to dispel misconceptions about these species. Animal Haven, for instance, teaches visitors that cows are not docile, sluggish animals. They share anecdotes about cows at the sanctuary exhibiting complex emotions, including grieving for a dying member of their herd, holding grudges against humans and other animals, and forming cliques with certain members of their herd. They also draw on the latest research on animal behavior and ethology; for example, they share that cows have a 'eureka!' moment when they solve a puzzle. According to Alec Thompson at Sanctuary for Farm Animals, "these kinds of details about animal life help visitors learn about other species, and they help people empathize with species they'd otherwise ignore" (personal communication, 2012).

A core dimension of education at sanctuaries is vegan outreach. Veganism at its most basic level is the practice of abstaining from consuming all animal products, including meat, dairy, eggs and those products derived from animal bodies (e.g., gelatin) (Cherry 2006) and many will abstain from wearing clothing made from animals and using products (household, skin and body care, etc.) that have been tested on animals or contain animal-derived ingredients. Many vegans adopt this lifestyle as an

enactment of a politically and ethically motivated rejection of the “normative practice and ideology of human dominance over animals” (McDonald 2000). Thus, veganism is more than a dietary choice for many; at its best, it is a political statement aimed at redefining human-animal encounters and the violent power relations that currently characterize many of these cross-species social relations. There are a number of reasons why people choose to adopt a vegan lifestyle beyond animal ethics, namely for human health (e.g., Fuhrman 2011; Campbell & Campbell 2006) and environmental reasons (e.g., Robbins 1998). These are the dominant narratives for why one would go vegan: “for animals, for your health, for the environment.” But a vegan diet is also an important practice as a way for many to enact a decolonial diet and return to indigenous food ways (e.g., Decolonial Food for Thought 2014; Harper 2010; see also the work of Claudia Serrato). Veganism is also a key feature in some interpretations of anarchist theory as a way to reject hierarchy and structures of power and domination (e.g., Torres 2007).

The promotion of veganism by sanctuaries is focused on becoming vegan for the animals, and sanctuaries aim to provide the catalytic or epiphanic moment that drives many people to adopt a vegan politics and lifestyle (Cherry 2006; McDonald 2000). Sanctuaries count on that moment of coming face-to-face with an animal being a powerful catalyst for changing how people think about animals raised for food. This, paired with the other educational materials, opens the space for tour guides and sanctuary literature to broach the subject of veganism. Sanctuary workers I spoke with

overwhelmingly stated that they wanted people visiting the sanctuary to have a positive experience:

We don't want people to feel like we're bashing them over the head with horrific information or being aggressive in our 'go vegan' message. Most people don't respond well to that. Instead, we try to weave the animals' stories of joy, suffering and hope in with factual information about how animals are raised for food, and how choosing to abstain from these foods is a powerful way to show your compassion for all creatures. Another way we do this is to talk about the sanctuary itself and how it is a dedicated vegan space (Anne Reeder, personal communication, 2012).

Kristy Weir also explained that Sanctuary for Farm Animals uses Melanie Joy's (2011) theory of carnism to help visitors reconceptualize how they think about veganism.

According to Joy (2011), veganism is viewed as a counter-culture belief system, and the dominant cultural practice of eating animal products is not viewed as reflecting a belief system precisely because it is the norm. In fact, Joy argues, systems like farming animals are the result of deeply rooted and powerful beliefs about human-animal relations. That this belief system goes unnamed gives it power by making it invisible. She names the belief system that 'conditions people to eat certain animals' carnism (Joy 2011). Weir explained that giving people a name for their current belief system, and asking them to reflect on their own beliefs about animals, is a powerful catalyst for change, particularly after they have been introduced to some of the real, embodied animals around whom these belief systems are formed. Thus, the sanctuary is a place where structures of human-animal power and privilege are challenged.

Related to these structural concerns, the third mission of many sanctuaries is advocacy. Sanctuary for Farm Animals, for instance, has been actively involved in

pushing forward legislation and regulations that would improve the living conditions of animals in the food industry. These legal and regulatory actions are generally focused on making incremental changes in animal agriculture industries that would lessen the suffering of farmed animals. These include such efforts (usually at the state level) as working to institute a ban on gestation crates for pigs, ending tail docking in cows used for dairy, and increasing cage sizes for laying hens. Additionally, sanctuaries oppose ag-gag laws and work for the passage of federal farmed animal protection laws. Sanctuaries typically work together with groups like the Humane Society of United States and other organizations dedicated to working with industry to get animal protection initiatives passed.

Sanctuary staff members recognize that they are involved in two at-times-conflicting agendas. The long term goal of sanctuaries is to end the institution of animal agriculture; in fact, one sanctuary worker stated plainly that her dream was to make sanctuaries obsolete. The short term goal of sanctuaries is to lessen the suffering of animals who are currently living and dying in the food system. As such, they work for incremental changes – a few more inches of cage space, the elimination of tail docking, etc. – that ultimately do not challenge the institution of animal agriculture, but make life marginally better for animals. These dual advocacy agendas represent the tension between the abolitionist approach (those who advocate the wholesale abolition of animal use; see Francione 2008) and the welfarist approach (those who advocate the regulation of animal use; see HSUS 2014) to animal ethics. Generally, these two perspectives are at odds, and abolitionists argue that welfare-improving regulation only

makes animal use more palatable for consumers by giving the impression that animals' lives are improving in the industry. Abolitionists argue that a welfarist approach does not challenge the fundamental domination of animals by humans (Torres 2007). The welfarist critique of the abolitionist approach is that, in theory, it is a powerful statement, but while abolitionists are busy advocating 'liberation without compromise,' real animals continue to suffer. Sanctuary for Farm Animals and Animal Haven do not see their dual advocacy agendas as conflicting; instead, they see working for regulatory and legal improvements as a pragmatic action that can be done now for animals while working toward the longer-term goal of ending animal exploitation entirely (Anne Reeder, personal communication, 2012).

Animal rescue, education and advocacy operate as the primary missions of farmed animal sanctuaries and work to redefine human-farmed animal relations. So far, I have explored how the sanctuary operates to re-imagine social relations between humans and animals, but I have said nothing of how sanctuaries envision the future of farming. Animal Haven, for instance, operates on the belief that animals cannot be a part of agricultural practice without being exploited – for their labor, their reproductive outputs, their flesh (Maggie Lake, personal communication, 2012). Animal Haven runs a small 2.8 acre vegan organic farm (termed 'veganic'; see VAN 2014) where they grow abundant produce without the use of animal products, chemicals or pesticides. Though the animals at the sanctuary produce a significant amount of manure, this is composted separately at the sanctuary and not used in the veganic farm. Lake explained that she did not have any ethical qualms about using the manure of the animals living at the

sanctuary, but it was important for them to show the practical viability of veganic farming as a path forward in agriculture. The sanctuary farm produces enough to feed the staff and volunteers living at the sanctuary as well as to run a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) program where local consumers can pay for an annual share in the farm's harvest (see Jarosz 2011 for work on CSAs). At Animal Haven, interns can focus their volunteer activities on the farm and learn veganic farming practices. In this way, interns are involved in a different kind of farm education than 4-H – one where healthy, organic plant-based food is produced without commodifying animals for its production. Veganic farming is in its infancy, particularly as a way to feed large populations, but the possibilities for this form of agriculture are promising as a potential alternative. As the impacts of climate change escalate and the environmental impacts of animal agriculture are more widely recognized (Weis 2013; Jarosz 2009b), models of farming like veganic agriculture may become increasingly important as an environmentally low-impact method of food production.²⁰

Geographically, the sanctuary is a place dedicated to both envisioning and enacting a different vision of human-farmed animal relations and farming. Farmed animal sanctuaries operate as intentional communities where shared values about human-animal relations can be enacted through living in community with animals, educating the public, working for legal and regulatory change, maintaining a vegan lifestyle, practicing animal-free agriculture, and through envisioning a future that

²⁰ While a more in-depth exploration of veganic agriculture is beyond the scope of this particular project, this would be an important site for future research to more accurately assess the possibilities and limitations of this agricultural model.

embodies these values. These intentional communities offer sanctuary to animals who have been subjected to the violence of commodity production and make efforts to maintain conditions whereby animals can live out their lives in community with others of their species. Animals who have health and medical issues are given veterinary attention and ongoing care, they receive species-appropriate food, and they are housed in community with others. Sanctuaries educate the public about the lives of animals in the food system, the intellectual and emotional worlds of farmed animals, and the ways that each person can become active to re-envision human-farmed animal relations. Farmed animal sanctuaries carve out a geographical place where shared values are enacted through vegan living and many sanctuaries have a sign at the front gate stating that you are entering a vegan-dedicated space. Sanctuaries are not isolated from the surrounding world, and an important part of the sanctuary model is reaching out to the community through education in surrounding communities and through advocating for legal and regulatory change. Thus, the hope of sanctuary workers is that the imagined borders surrounding the sanctuary as a protected place expand in an effort to enact broad-sweeping legal and social change.

The sanctuary and the people who live and work there are keenly aware of the effects of the global intimate and the way intimate bodies and global political economy are co-constituted. The framework of the global and the intimate is visible in the impacts of commodity production driven by capitalist economic logics on the animals living at the sanctuary. This framework is also visible in the way animals and humans at the sanctuary resist these dominant logics: animals live lives not dependent on

commodity production, embodying an important alternative ethic of human-animal relations; humans resist these economic logics in their creation of the sanctuary as a protected place for animals and in their outreach, which actively works to educate, legislate and regulate for alternatives to these systems of commodification. The sanctuary also foregrounds the intimate, embodied animal as a way in to understanding the intimate effects of political economy and commodity production in the meat, dairy and egg industries. Animal geographers could learn much by studying how the sanctuary is a place attending to the interconnections among the individual, the population and broader structures of political economy. My intention with this project has been to reflect the sanctuary's method of conceptualizing the animal – not as an individual *or* as a population, but instead to understand the way a focus on the embodied animal is a way into 'scaling up' to see the impacts of global structures on the population as a collection of individuals.

The sanctuary, in all its imperfections and contingencies, maintains a geographical place – a physical, grounded, bordered place – where an imagined alternative to the normative paradigm of human dominance over animals flourishes. Drawing together the perspectives about sanctuaries from my observations and interviews, sanctuary workers characterize the sanctuary as a dynamic place. According to this research, then, the sanctuary is a place of resistance, involved in the active, daily rejection of this logic of dominance. The sanctuary is a place of mourning, where animal deaths are grieved by human and nonhuman members of the sanctuary community, and where humans engage in perpetual mourning for those animals who will never

make it to sanctuary. Finally, the sanctuary is a place of possibility and hope, a suggestion that a nonhierarchical set of social relations between humans and animals may be possible, even as the material enactments of these social relations may be flawed by practical realities of funding constraints, reproductive politics, and daily management practices.

CHAPTER 12. A Steer at Auction Conclusions: On Mourning

The Holstein steer, contained in an outdoor holding pen at the Washington auction yard, leapt the 6-foot fence and trotted down the auction yard driveway out toward the country highway. Auction workers shouted and started running after the steer. A pair of auction workers grabbed their rifles, ran to the parking area and jumped in two pickup trucks to follow the steer. The men chasing the steer on foot frightened him, making him gallop faster down the country highway. The pickup trucks stopped momentarily to pick up the men on foot and then continued in pursuit of the steer. One pickup truck sped ahead of the steer, cutting him off and, as the steer tried to turn and run the other way, the second pickup truck blocked his path. One of the men fired the rifle at the moving steer, only wounding him in the side. The steer limped along and the men were able to get closer. They fired several shots into the steer's head, killing him.

* * *

I remember being slightly irritated that the auction was starting behind schedule; I had a two hour drive home (with no traffic) and the later the auction went, the further into rush hour my commute would be. I tapped my foot and looked around impatiently. Finally, a woman I had seen talking with the auction employees earlier in the afternoon came and sat in the bleachers next to me. I leaned over and asked her about the delay. Nonchalantly, she said, "Oh, a steer escaped and they had to chase him

down and shoot him.” When I looked surprised, she explained in detail what had happened. My eyes filled with tears and I looked away, embarrassed that I was displaying such an emotional response in this place. A few minutes later, the auction began.

* * *

Farming animals is a hegemonic practice, reproduced by its long history and the way violence against the animal is made routine. In addition to daily industry practices, animal agriculture is reproduced through material and discursive places of commodification (like the auction yard or the World Dairy Expo), through the political and legal mechanisms governing animal use and humans’ access to places of animal use, and through the educational mechanisms (like 4-H) that work to reproduce these practices across generations. Because of these powerful mechanisms of social reproduction, along with others that work to reproduce animal agriculture, humans do not tend to understand the practice of farming animals as a form of oppression. I have tried in this text to lay bare and to challenge these dominant paradigms that commodify the animal body. My aim has been to understand not just the routine practices of the industry as violent appropriations of other species, but to understand some of the structural conditions that work to reproduce animal agriculture as a dominant institution.

Oppression, in the human context, is defined as,

Prejudice and discrimination directed toward whole socially recognized groups of people and promoted by the ideologies and practices of all social institutions. The critical elements differentiating oppression from simple prejudice and discrimination are that it is a group phenomenon and that institutional power and authority are used to support prejudices and enforce discriminatory behaviors in systematic ways. Everyone is socialized to participate in oppressive practices, either as direct and indirect perpetrators or passive beneficiaries (Kirk & Okazawa-Rey 2007: G4.)

Expanding this definition to include animals lays bare the ways in which prejudicial ideologies and practices involving animals are woven into the very fabric of our social structures and institutions. Humans have appropriated animals for their benefit in nearly every aspect of life: humans use animals to advance human medical research and test the safety of household products; humans use animals for military experiments; and humans violate animal bodies for their own sexual gratification. Humans appropriate animal bodies in a range of normalized everyday ways as well: for clothing (to make leather, fur, wool, silk, feathers), for entertainment purposes (in circuses, aquatic parks, zoos, rodeos, fairs, etc.), for food (dairy, milk, meat, eggs, honey, etc.) and for companionship (as pets, as 'service' animals, etc.).

Institutional power and authority are actively involved in maintaining and reproducing the appropriation of animal bodies. Access-limiting agricultural policies are central to maintaining institutional power and authority over the reproduction of animal agriculture (see chapter 2); and animal welfare legislation aimed at improving the conditions of animals in agriculture is notoriously lax and insufficiently enforced and works to obscure the violence against the animal (see chapter 3). I have explored

here the ways in which institutional practices of dairy production subject bovine animals to a gendered commodification which is often sexually violent (see Chapter 4 on the cow, Chapter 5 on the bull, and Chapter 6 on the calf). I have emphasized the ways in which geographical places are involved in the commodification of animals in material (see chapter 7 on the auction yard) and discursive ways (see chapter 8 on the World Dairy Expo). Finally, I have featured 4-H programs as an example of the educational reproduction of animal agriculture (see chapter 9) and the sanctuary as a place where human-farmed animal relations are being actively redefined (see chapter 10). My analysis of these various dimensions and places of the reproduction of animal agriculture work to politicize the practice of farming animals and lay bare the violence of commodification.

Even if not directly or peripherally involved in the commodification process, humans are passive beneficiaries of practices involving animal use. As such, our positionality as humans is a form of pervasive and under-recognized privilege. A more widely theorized form of privilege is whiteness, and writings on white privilege can help us to understand the way *human* privilege functions: “Whiteness does not acknowledge either its own privilege or the material and sociocultural mechanisms by which that privilege is protected. White privilege itself becomes invisible” (Flagg 2005: 6). Similarly, human privilege is made invisible and is propped up by material and socio-cultural mechanisms in ways I have illustrated throughout this text (through legal, political and education institutions and through the routine practices of animal use). White privilege is notoriously under-recognized and, for those who are active and

passive beneficiaries of white privilege, it is an uncomfortable and difficult thing to acknowledge (McIntosh 1989). In spite of this discomfort – or maybe especially *because of this discomfort* – it is important to recognize and challenge the ways in which we are privileged (Kemmerer 2011). It is only in this careful and critical self-reflexivity that we can recognize these insidious forms of power and dominance for what they are.

This analysis of how animal agriculture functions as a normative institution actively involved in normalizing the commodification of animal bodies has been one of the primary contributions of this text. Following from this analysis, this text also contributes to the animal geographies literature and the feminist geographical literature of the global and the intimate. Importantly, an analysis of animal agriculture as an institution that oppresses animals would have been incomplete without a consideration of the animals who suffer as a result of these structures of power and privilege. For this reason, I have opened each chapter with the story of an animal as a way to meaningfully link the intimate animal (human and nonhuman) with structures of global political economy and commodity production.

Animal geographers tend to obscure the impacts of commodity production on the animal body and, as such, have amassed a body of literature that rarely attends to the ethical and political implications for animals' lives in a nuanced way. In response, I have tried here to advance animal geographies by contextualizing real, embodied animals within an economic logic of commodity production. In this way, I have responded to Bear's (2011) call for more geographies of the individual animal; at the same time, I have used the global and the intimate to argue that the individual cannot

be divorced from the global structures in which she is embedded. Thus, I suggest a path forward which advances Bear's call for individual animal geographies and specifies that these stories are important partly because they can help us to understand more systemic enactments of power and privilege. In feminist tradition, I have aimed to employ the power of the singular story, not suspended in isolation, but read together with other stories as entry into understanding more political processes (and as a way to make the personal political).

The global and the intimate have so far only theorized the human in the relationship between global political economy and the intimate body. My work considers the animal as a way to advance this framework. Animals are intricately embedded in global political economic processes of commodification, production, and consumption. Further, the legal, political, and educational reproduction of animal agriculture as an institution is reliant on individuals (together with institutional mechanisms) to shape and maintain these processes. Extending the global and the intimate to include animals is important because animals themselves matter as subjects of violence and bodily appropriation embedded in global processes. But this is also important because studying the commodification of animals helps us to understand the consequences of commodification and economic logics that govern animal, human and environmental conditions more generally.

To summarize, this text offers three primary intellectual contributions. First, I have illustrated how the stories of animals in the dairy industry are a lens through which to understand political and social mechanisms involved in reproducing

hegemonic institutions of animal use, like animal agriculture. Second, I have provided an analysis which fills a gap in animal geographies – namely, a politicized account of embodied animals as embedded in political economies of commodification. And third, I have pushed the feminist literature on the global intimate to include a consideration of animal bodies as an important site of academic inquiry.

A theory of multispecies grievability

Over the last two years of researching for, and writing, this text, I have felt a deep and abiding sense of grief for the animals whose lives I have encountered. In order to continue functioning and working on this subject, I have often pushed this grief aside and focused on the details of the work – the interview transcriptions, reading the literature, the writing process. As I sat in the bleachers at the auction after the woman told me that the steer had been shot, I took note of the fact that grief was a radically out-of-place emotion in places of agricultural production – auctions, farms, expos, fairs – where the focus was sale, productivity, and show. These were places of humor and sociability, of laughter and conversation; these were not places of grief. Animal lives in these places were not meant to be grievable.

It is now increasingly widely recognized that animals have rich emotional lives. Animals love in intra- and inter-species relations of care. Animals have a sense of humor and they play (Bekoff 2007; Bekoff & Byers 1998); they suffer, they grieve. Grief and other emotions in farmed animals, compared to other animals, are not widely studied (King 2013b), but anecdotal accounts of emotion among farmed animals are

plentiful within animal rescue communities (Hatkoff 2009; Masson 2004). It is not surprising that farmed animal emotion is not well researched; this gap reflects what Gary Francione (2008) terms our 'moral schizophrenia' relating to animals (the cognitive dissonance that allows us to love some animals and eat others). There are profound implications of recognizing emotion in farmed animals; learning that chickens have been known to die of grief at the loss of a companion, or that a cow deeply mourns the loss of her calf may have the effect of making us empathize with them. When we recognize that they may have the same kinds of emotional lives that we readily acknowledge in the dogs and cats with whom we share our homes, we destabilize the socially constructed hierarchies we have created to categorize animals and we open a pathway for a more nuanced and deeply considerate form of cross-species care. "Care ethics begin from the deeply social character of our existence and the ways that caring relations of dependency, frailty, grief and love all shape the ways we reason and act in the world" (Lawson 2009: 210). Lawson is writing here on human forms of sociality and care, but this is profoundly relevant for understanding the need for greater enactments of interspecies care ethics, where these motivations and ways of being in the world are legible, familiar and meaningful (even across species lines).

As I neared the end of the writing process, I found it increasingly important to recognize my own grief and the grief of the animals I did and did not encounter in order to give these experiences power – not in order to sensationalize the violence or its emotional impact, but as a way to politicize and take seriously the lives and deaths of animals in the dairy industry. Butler (2004) writes, "Some lives are grievable, and others

are not; the differential allocation of grievability that decides what kind of subject is and must be grieved, and which kind of subject must not, operates to produce and maintain certain exclusionary conceptions of [...] what counts as a livable life and a grievable death" (xiv-xv). Here, Butler is talking about which *human* lives count as livable and which *human* deaths count as grievable in her critique of perpetual war. Stanescu's (2012) work extends Butler's concepts of grievability and livability to animal lives. He describes the experience of shopping at a grocery store and, upon passing through the meat section, he is struck with a profound sense of grief over the violence and slaughter involved in the dismembered animal bodies neatly packaged in the cold cases. Stanescu writes about the process of mourning in these places where violence against the animal is rendered utterly invisible through the sheer mundanity and everydayness of animal use. Mourning the animal in these places - 'feeling that moment of tearing up, of having trouble functioning, of feeling a moment of utter suffocation - is something rendered completely socially unintelligible' (Stanescu 2012: 568). He continues, "mourning is always a political act. Although it is frequently viewed as a private experience, indeed, an experience that flirts with solipsism, mourning is all about ethical, political, and ontological connections" (2012: 568). This is perhaps why grief was an out-of-place emotion in the places of agricultural production I visited. Grief and mourning are deeply political and, as I have explored in this text, industry interests are at work in these places to radically depoliticize the use of animals in agriculture. Mourning, then, is an act of intentional resistance against the normalization of violence against the animal.

This is why I write about my experience of grief and mourning here – not as a solipsistic reflection on my own emotional experience, but as a political statement that (echoing some of Butler’s questions about human social relations) foregrounds important questions about interspecies social relations. Whose lives are grievable and why? Whose lives count as livable and whose deaths count as grievable? How do the erasures and elisions of the importance of these lives and bodies occur? How can we intentionally turn grief into a political act? Acknowledging multispecies grievability in order to politicize animal lives and deaths resists perpetuating hegemonic hierarchies of human exceptionalism in our lives and research. Scholars motivated by ethical and political convictions about other humans, animals and environments may, then, consider multispecies grievability as a path forward for noting the political function of emotion as part of a transformative interspecies politics.

Future directions and limitations of this project

The scholarly tradition of humans studying animals in a way that takes seriously their lives, emotions and different ways of being in the world is still in its infancy, particularly when compared with work on human individuals and populations. Admittedly, geography has not been at the forefront of this research, shying away from studies that interrogate the intellectual and emotional lives of animals as the field of ethology does (Bear 2011) or attempting to define a tradition of multispecies ethnography as anthropology has just begun to do (Kirksey & Helmreich 2010). Indigenous and postcolonial perspectives suggest an innovative and productive path

forward for research on multispecies politics of power, difference and privilege (see, for example, Gaard 2013; García 2013; Huggan & Tiffin 2010; Ahuja 2009; Goldberg-Hiller & Silva 2007). Ecofeminists have long understood the intersections of human and animal struggles and the way the domination of animals and the environment is closely intertwined with the domination of women and other marginalized human populations (e.g., Adams & Gruen 2014; Warren 1997; Gaard 1993). Critical animal studies scholarship takes as its starting point a rejection of hierarchy and advances an intersectional theory of confronting multispecies forms of oppression (e.g., Nocella et al 2014; Taylor & White 2014; McCance 2013; Twine 2010). Drawing on these traditions suggests innovative pathways forward for multispecies research and a range of theoretical perspectives from which to build a more robust and interdisciplinary study of nonhuman animals.

With these pathways in mind, I have identified a number of limitations of my project. There are empirical and theoretical subjects I have not addressed because of space and time constraints, but which are important to the further development of this work. Empirically, further research is needed on the peripheral-yet-related industries to dairy: semen, veal, and rendering, primarily. The semen production industry is fascinating and, through my discursive analysis, I have only scratched the surface. Ethnographic fieldwork in the semen industry, with a particular attention to encounters between humans (primarily men) and bulls, is needed. Similarly, I would like to do more in-depth research on the veal industry and the shifting landscape to 'ethical veal.'

Rendering is a surprisingly understudied industry considering its absolute centrality to the smooth functioning of society in its management of waste.

My research on the auction yard and the Washington State Fair revealed intertwined histories of human and animal oppression. The history of the auction yard, for instance, cannot be separated from human auctions where enslaved humans were often sold alongside farmed animals in the antebellum South. Primary records documenting the reality of 'slave' auctions, read alongside contemporary 'livestock' auctions may inform a more nuanced understanding of the commodification of life and the way places are enrolled in this commodification and management of bodies. The Washington State Fair also illustrates the way places of control and containment get reproduced across time. The Fair is currently a place in part dedicated to the management and control of animal bodies, but during World War II the fairgrounds were used as a temporary internment camp for Japanese Americans. Thus, a more in-depth exploration of the geography of these kinds of power relations would be an interesting project.

Reflecting on the research process informs other ways of theorizing the data I have collected here. The history of the cow as a tool of colonization in the 'settling' of the U.S. American West could be illuminated by an engagement with postcolonial theory. I am interested not only in the way the cow was used as a tool of colonization in the murder and displacement of indigenous human and animal communities (Anderson 2006), but also in the way that cows themselves were colonized in the

domestication process. This history, then, links up to contemporary agricultural practices, which can be read in a colonial context.

Animal resistance is also a subject not explored in this text, but a potentially fruitful site for research on nonhuman animals. Animals, like the steer described at the beginning of this chapter, engage in resistant behavior. Although these actions are not typically read as resistance, reading these and other accounts of animals through the literatures on human resistance and social movements may be one way to politicize the use of animals in agriculture and other realms of commodification.

Finally, a more thorough analysis of geographies of care is needed in relation to the commodification of the animal body. Green and Lawson (2011) write on the commodification of care in human contexts about the implications of practices of care entering the circuit of neoliberal political economy. Care as an action and an ethic is compromised when it is brought into the realm of political economy (Green and Lawson 2011). This concern about the commodification of care is, of course, relevant for the commodification of animal care in an analysis of animal welfare discourses and practices as marketing tactics. The trend in industry practices to improve animal welfare as a way to gain public support for the commodities animals produce denies important features of an ethic of care in cross-species relationships. By contrast, an ethic of care informs new relationships and institutions with a deeper ethic – one motivated not by economic interests, but by mutuality, respect and co-constitutive ways of being in the world (Lawson 2007). A cross-species ethic of care between humans and farmed animals, then, requires a radical revisioning of farmed animals role in human society

and the uneven power dynamics to which animals are subjected. Because of this important distinction between care-as-welfare and care-as-radical-revisioning, further work on how we conceptualize care in these interspecies relationships is needed.

These and other subjects arose as footnoted concerns in my research and are potentially productive pathways for further exploration on the subject of animals in the dairy industry and human-animal relations more broadly. My primary concern with the analysis I performed, though, is how the animals are represented here. I have claimed to feature the embodied animals as my unit of analysis in the context of political economic processes of commodification, and I am not entirely confident that I have done this well. Because of the legal and institutional constraints of the research process (outlined in chapter 1), my ability to access in-depth ethnographic information about each animal was limited. For many, the animals at auction and on the farm especially, I was there to witness only mere moments of their lives, resulting in a collection of partial stories. Throughout the research and writing process I have wrestled with how to remedy the incompleteness of these narratives and the question of how to know an animal from witnessing a moment in her life. I have yet to encounter a possible alternative methodology that would be more effective than what I have done here *and* would be aligned with an ethically and politically attuned way of encountering the animal.

To illustrate this problem, Peter Lovenheim's popular account of the lives of a young Holstein steer and heifer in *Portrait of a Burger as a Young Calf* (2002) follows their journey from birth through the commodification process. Lovenheim purchases the two animals shortly after birth and follows them through their lives as they are raised for

dairy and beef. They undergo all of the typical processes outlined in this text, but as they near the point of slaughter, Lovenheim has second thoughts about sending them to slaughter. Instead, he arranges for them to live out their lives at Farm Sanctuary and they are spared. Reading Lovenheim's book, I saw the benefits of his approach for understanding the commodification of an animal over time. And yet, purchasing two animals just to understand the production process of meat and dairy denies something important about the animals – namely, that *animals themselves matter* and that, as researchers, we have a responsibility to consider the ethical and political implications of our interactions with other species. The purchase of these animals not only contributed to the larger institution of treating animals as property, it also maintained a hierarchy of human interests in knowledge production over the well-being of the animals involved. That Lovenheim arranged their transfer to a sanctuary offered them a different kind of life after a certain point, but it did not mitigate the violence he was complicit in when he followed them through the commodification process.

This example relates to a source of ethical ambiguity I encountered through my research process – my own complicity in the continued commodification of the animals whose lives I was witnessing. Witnessing violence and injustice has a long history as an important political act, and I went into the auction yard, the farm, the fair, and the World Dairy Expo with this in mind: I went with the goal of witnessing. As a witness, I figured that I would not contribute actively to the violence that was occurring; I would merely watch, take notes and photographs, and bring that information back to use in critiquing the structural conditions that produced this violence to begin with. As I sat

there in the audience at the auction yard, watching animals be sold, watching animals collapse, and watching them be shocked with electric prods, I began to question the role of witnessing. While I am not prepared to say that we should not engage in bearing witness (there is a long legacy of this as a critical dimension of social change), I am committed to drawing attention to the ethically problematic dimensions of witnessing in this context. Witnessing, in many ways, is a passive act; although it can inspire future action. And the implications of this passivity are laid bare, for example, in my watching the cow with ear tag #1389 collapse in the auction ring, knowing that I could have bought her and sought the medical care she needed, knowing that I could have found her a place in a sanctuary and she could have had a radically different future than dying at the auction yard that night. Witnessing, while it may have the potential to change future conditions for other animals, does nothing for the embodied animals who are the subjects of the witness's gaze. This question of witnessing is one I would like to explore further in the context of witnessing animal suffering or environmental degradation and put this into conversation with literature on human witnessing.

Thus, in the context of the research I have conducted here, I am, perhaps more so now than when I embarked on this research process, plagued by the question of how to study the nonhuman in ethical ways. This problem suggests a need for greater oversight and guidance from institutional ethics review boards dedicated to thoughtful and careful consideration of how to study animals in ways that challenge their normative positioning in hierarchical relationship to humans. How do we come to know other species in ways that attend to important species differences and take

seriously other ways of being in the world? How can a theory of multispecies grievability politicize work that might otherwise be divorced from considering the real, embodied impacts of global political economic processes? While I hope to have contributed to thinking through these and other questions through the course of this project, these are fundamental questions that should continue to drive a politically and ethically engaged multispecies research program.

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