

Animal Husbandry as Sexual Slavery Human(e) Dairy in Speculative Vegan Fiction

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Human(e) Dairy

PROBLEMATIC

How does speculative (human-meat) fiction rethink agriculture from the vegan margins?

ARGUMENT

By exposing the discursive construction of the categories “human” and “animal,” vegan narratives dramatize the processes by which animal husbandry is an ontologizing process that creates as property the beings that it farms. The fictional strategy used is the simple substitution of humanized female characters for dairy cows. By removing the species barrier, these fictions also erase the distinction between “person” and “property” with implications for the current jurisprudential treatment of livestock.

METHOD

Theoretical approaches: ecofeminism (Adams, Gaard), vegan legal scholarship (Francione, Banwell), critiques of the dairy industry (April, Cusack, Davé, Desaulniers);

Literary corpus: Piers Anthony, "In the Barn" (1972), Joseph D'Lacey, *Meat* (2008), Sian Rose, *Farm* (2020).

Piers Anthony, "In the Barn" (1972)

Putting the Human" in Humane Farming: Torture "In the Barn"

- **Parallel-world device**: alternate Earth where humans are the livestock;
- **"humane" practices**: personal farmer oversight, named animals, outdoor yards, and efforts to keep "cows" comfortable;
- exposes how "humane" animal husbandry is torture when applied to humans;
- **"torture"**: intentional suffering to curtail autonomy of a non-consenting, defenseless person, aimed at breaking the victim's will (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2024);
- **international law** (e.g., UN Convention Against Torture) protects only "humans";
- **narrative structure** = two parts:
 - forced reproduction and sexual violence: insemination as rape,
 - birth and post-birth torture: denial of medical care, assault on maternity, mutilation.

Joseph D'Lacey, *Meat* (2008)

Animal Husbandry and Animal Husbands: Rape in Joseph D'Lacey's *Meat*

Dystopian western: corrupt small town dominated by an evil Meat Baron where humans are farmed as the “Chosen”;

dairy practices mirrored in forced reproduction, mutilation, eventual slaughter;

rape: non-consensual penetration of a person; activists apply this definition to human perpetrator rather than victim;

bestiality: punished by laws that exempt husbandry so farmers become “husbands” who decide when, how, and with whom animals mate, turning reproduction into biocapitalist production;

farming as the **ontologizing of animals**: e.g. “animal husband” Snipe;

“**husbandry**” disavows (in/visibilizes) the systematic rape and sexual assault of dairy cows

Sian Rose, *Farm* (2020)

War Against Animals, Crimes Against Humanity: Sian Rose's *Farm*

Rural Gothic + splatterpunk horror: office workers on retreat are abducted by a vegan group that farms humans for meat and dairy as revenge against carnists.; **Rome Statute's** categories of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and gender-based crimes apply only to "persons";

Agricultural violence maps onto these definitions: forced pregnancy, compulsory insemination, separation of mother and offspring, and systematic slaughter are framed as rape, sexual slavery, and torture; "**husbandry**" creates property ("farmable animals"), where feminized "animals" suffer both as "livestock" (property, forced labor) and as females (targeted reproductive violence).

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Conclusions

These speculative vegan fictions:

- dramatize metaphors reserved for critique of non-human animal agriculture;
- remove the discursive barriers between person/property and human/animal;
- expose the structural and discursive violence of contemporary animal husbandry;
- subvert the double standard that human suffering is more legitimate than animal suffering;
- perform the ontologizing processes of farming that create “animals”;
- offer a sociological “laboratory” to test vegan ethical theorizing and activist claims.