

were here. Before the pen of Jefferson etched the majestic words of the Declaration of Independence across the pages of history, we were here. For more than two centuries our forebears labored in this country without wages; they made cotton king; they built the homes of their masters while suffering gross injustice and shameful humiliation—and yet out of a bottomless vitality they continued to thrive and develop. If the inexpressible cruelties of slavery could not stop us, the opposition we now face will surely fail. We will win our freedom because the sacred heritage of our nation and the eternal will of God are embodied in our echoing demands.

46 Before closing I feel impelled to mention one other point in your statement that has troubled me profoundly. You warmly commended the Birmingham police force for keeping “order” and “preventing violence.” I doubt that you would have so warmly commended the police force if you had seen its dogs sinking their teeth into unarmed, nonviolent Negroes. I doubt that you would so quickly commend the policemen if you were to observe their ugly and inhumane treatment of Negroes here in the city jail; if you were to watch them push and curse old Negro women and young Negro girls; if you were to see them slap and kick old Negro men and young boys; if you were to observe them, as they did on two occasions, refuse to give us food because we wanted to sing our grace together. I cannot join you in your praise of the Birmingham police department.

47 It is true that the police have exercised a degree of discipline in handling the demonstrators. In this sense they have conducted themselves rather “non-violently” in public. But for what purpose? To preserve the evil system of segregation. Over the past few years I have consistently preached that nonviolence demands that the means we use must be as pure as the ends we seek. I have tried to make clear that it is wrong to use immoral means to attain moral ends. But now I must affirm that it is just as wrong, or perhaps even more so, to use moral means to preserve immoral ends. Perhaps Mr. Connor and his policemen have been rather nonviolent in public, as was Chief Pritchett in Albany, Georgia, but they have used the moral means of nonviolence to maintain the immoral end of racial injustice. As T. S. Eliot has said: “The last temptation is the greatest treason: To do the right deed for the wrong reason.”

48 I wish you had commended the Negro sit-inners and demonstrators of Birmingham for their sublime courage, their willingness to suffer and their amazing discipline in the midst of great provocation. One day the South will recognize its real heroes. They will be the James Merediths, with the noble sense of purpose that enables them to face jeering and hostile mobs, and with the agonizing loneliness that characterizes the life of the pioneer. They will be old, oppressed, battered Negro women, symbolized in a seventy-two-year-old woman in Montgomery, Alabama, who rose up with a sense of dignity and with her people decided not to ride segregated buses, and who responded with ungrammatical profundity to one who inquired about her weariness: “My feet

is tired, but my soul is at rest.” They will be the young high school and college students, the young ministers of the gospel and a host of their elders, courageously and nonviolently sitting in at lunch counters and willingly going to jail for conscience’ sake. One day the South will know that when these disinherited children of God sat down at lunch counters, they were in reality standing up for what is best in the American dream and for the most sacred values in our Judaeo-Christian heritage, thereby bringing our nation back to those great wells of democracy which were dug deep by the founding fathers in their formulation of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence.

Never before have I written so long a letter. I’m afraid it is much too long 49 to take your precious time. I can assure you that it would have been much shorter if I had been writing from a comfortable desk, but what else can one do when he is alone in a narrow jail cell, other than write long letters, think long thoughts and pray long prayers?

If I have said anything in this letter that overstates the truth and indicates 50 an unreasonable impatience, I beg you to forgive me. If I have said anything that understates the truth and indicates my having a patience that allows me to settle for anything less than brotherhood, I beg God to forgive me.

I hope this letter finds you strong in the faith. I also hope that circum- 51 stances will soon make it possible for me to meet each of you, not as an integrationist or a civil-rights leader but as a fellow clergyman and a Christian brother. Let us all hope that the dark clouds of racial prejudice will soon pass away and the deep fog of misunderstanding will be lifted from our fear-drenched communities, and in some not too distant tomorrow the radiant stars of love and brotherhood will shine over our great nation with all their scintillating beauty.

Yours for the cause of Peace and Brotherhood, 52
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Patricia Curtis

The Argument Against Animal Experimentation

In 1978, Patricia Curtis shocked many readers of the *New York Times* with her graphic depiction of the world of animal experimentation. Today the animal rights movement is well known, and many of the practices Cur-

tis describes have been banned. Now an author of children's books on animals, Curtis's most recent book is *Animals You Never Even Heard Of*.

- 1 THE PROFESSOR WAS LATE LEAVING THE MEDICAL SCHOOL because he'd had to review papers by his third-year students in experimental surgery. It was well after 11 when he wearily drove his car into the garage. The house was dark except for a hall light left on for him. His wife and youngsters were already asleep, he realized, and the professor suddenly felt lonely as he fit his key in the lock. But even as he pushed open the door, Sabrina was there to welcome him. She was always waiting for him, lying on the rug just inside the door.
- 2 The little dog leaped up ecstatically, wagging her tail and licking the professor's hand. The professor stroked her affectionately. She flopped on her back and grinned at him as he tickled her chest and belly; then she jumped to her feet and danced around his legs as he walked into the kitchen to get something to eat. Sabrina's exuberant joy at his return never failed to cheer him.
- 3 Early next morning, the professor drove back to the medical school and entered the laboratory. He noticed that a dog on which one of his students had operated the previous afternoon still had an endotracheal tube in its throat and obviously had not received pain medication. He must be more strict in his orders, he thought to himself. Another dog had bled through its bandages and lay silently in a pool of blood. Sloppy work, the professor thought—must speak to that student. None of the dogs made any sounds, because new arrivals at the laboratory were always subjected to an operation called a ventriculocordectomy that destroyed their vocal cords so that no barks or howls disturbed people in the medical school and surrounding buildings.
- 4 The professor looked over the animals that would be used that day by his surgery students. He came across a new female dog that had just been delivered by the dealer. Badly frightened, she whined and wagged her tail ingratiatingly as he paused in front of her cage. The professor felt a stab. The small dog bore an amazing resemblance to Sabrina. Quickly he walked away. Nevertheless, he made a note to remind himself to give orders for her vocal cords to be destroyed and for her to be conditioned for experimental surgery.
- 5 American researchers sacrifice approximately 64 million animals annually. Some 400,000 dogs, 200,000 cats, 33,000 apes and monkeys, thousands of horses, ponies, calves, sheep, goats and pigs, and millions of rabbits, hamsters, guinea pigs, birds, rats and mice are used every year in experiments that often involve intense suffering. The research establishment has generally insisted that live animals provide the only reliable tests for drugs, chemicals and cosmetics that will be used by people. Researchers also believe that animal experiments are necessary in the search for cures for human illnesses and defects.

There is no question that many important medical discoveries, from polio vaccine to the physiology of the stress response, have indeed been made through the use of animals. Thus universities, medical and scientific institutions, pharmaceutical companies, cosmetics manufacturers and the military have always taken for granted their right to use animals in almost any way they see fit.

But increasing numbers of scientists are beginning to ask themselves some hard ethical questions and to re-evaluate their routine use of painful testing tools such as electric shock, stomach tubes, hot plates, restraining boxes and radiation devices. A new debate has arisen over whether all such experiments are worth the suffering they entail.

Strongly opposing curtailment of animal experimentation are groups such as the National Society for Medical Research, which insists that any such reduction would jeopardize public safety and scientific progress. The N.S.M.R. was formed to resist what it considers the threat of Government regulation of animal research and to refute the charges of humane societies. Many scientists, however, although they firmly believe that some animal research is necessary, no longer endorse such an absolutist approach to the issue.

"Some knowledge can be obtained at too high a price," writes British physiologist Dr. D. H. Smyth in his recent book *Alternatives to Animal Experiments*.

"The lives and suffering of animals must surely count for something," says Jeremy J. Stone, director of the Washington-based Federation of American Scientists, which has devoted an entire newsletter to a discussion of the rights of animals.

According to physiologist Dr. F. Barbara Orlans of the National Institutes of Health, "Within the scientific community there's a growing concern for animals that has not yet had a forum." Dr. Orlans is president of the newly formed Scientists' Center for Animal Welfare, which hopes to raise the level of awareness on the part of fellow scientists and the public about avoidable suffering inflicted on lab animals, wildlife, and animals raised for meat. "We will try to be a voice of reason. We can perhaps be a link between scientists and the humane organizations," Dr. Orlans explains. "We hope also to provide solid factual data on which animal-protection decisions can be based."

Another link between researchers and humane organizations is a new committee comprising more than 400 doctors and scientists that has been formed by Friends of Animals, a national animal-welfare group. Headed by eight M.D.s, the committee is making a survey of Federally funded animal-research projects. Friends of Animals hopes that the study will expose not only needless atrocities performed on animals, but also boondoggles involving taxpayers' money.

One reason scientists are no longer so indifferent to the suffering they inflict on animals is the discoveries that science itself has made. We now know that many animals feel, think, reason, communicate, have sophisticated social

systems, and even, on occasion, behave altruistically toward each other. Communication by sign language with higher primates, demonstrations of the intelligence of dolphins and whales, observations of the complex societies of wolves and other animals, and many other investigations have narrowed the gap between ourselves and the rest of the animal kingdom, making it more difficult to rationalize inhumane experiments. Dr. Dallas Pratt, author of *Painful Experiments on Animals*, points out that "among the rats and mice, the computers and oscilloscopes, there is Koko"—referring to the young gorilla whom a California primatologist has taught a working vocabulary of 375 words and concepts in sign language and who has even learned to take snapshots with a Polaroid camera. It's hard not to feel squeamish about subjecting animals to inhumane experiments when they possess almost-human intelligence.

13 The thinking of researchers is also beginning to be affected by the growing movement for animal rights. The rising concern for the welfare of animals is seen by some people as a natural extension of contemporary movements promoting civil rights, women's rights, homosexual rights, human rights, and children's rights. Public interest in preserving endangered species is based first on an increasing awareness of the complexity and fragility of ecosystems, and second on the notion, still much debated, that any species of plant or animal, from the lowly snail darter to the blue whale, has the right to continue to exist. From here it is only a short logical step to the belief that animals have the right to exist without suffering unnecessarily.

14 Near the top of the list of animal-welfare activists' causes is putting an end to inhumane experiments on laboratory animals. In Great Britain, where a vigorous antivivisection movement has existed for more than a century, a clandestine group called the Animal Liberation Front conducts commando-style raids on laboratories, liberating animals and sabotaging research equipment. A.L.F. members have also been known to slash tires and pour sugar in the gas tanks of trucks used by animal dealers who supply labs. To be sure, this group of zealots hasn't made much of a dent in England's vast research community, but it does appeal to a gut reaction on the part of many Britons against animal research.

15 Animal-rights activists are not merely sentimental do-gooders and pet-lovers. They have mounted a philosophical attack on the traditional Western attitude toward animals, branding it as "speciesist" (like racist or sexist), a term derived from the word "speciesism," coined by psychologist and author Dr. Richard Ryder. The Australian philosopher Peter Singer, in his influential 1975 book *Animal Liberation*, argued that the "speciesist" rationalization, "Human beings come first," is usually used by people who do nothing for either human or nonhuman animals. And he pointed out the parallels between the oppression of blacks, women, and animals: Such oppression is usually rationalized on the grounds that the oppressed group is inferior.

In 1977, when outraged antivivisectionists heard about some highly unpleasant electric-shock and burn experiments conducted on young pigs in Denmark, they wasted no time in pointing out the irony that the tests were being conducted by Amnesty International, the human-rights organization. Amnesty International was attempting to prove that human prisoners could be tortured without leaving any marks, and pigs were used because of the similarity of their skin to ours. (The tests were subsequently discontinued.)

Paradoxically, the public tends to be "speciesist" in its reaction to animal experimentation: For many people, a test is permissible when it inflicts pain on a "lower" animal like a hamster, but not when the victim is a dog. When it was discovered in the summer of 1976 that the American Museum of Natural History was damaging the brains of cats and running painful sex experiments on them, hundreds of people picketed in protest. The museum's Animal Behavior Department defended itself on the grounds that the research was intended to gain a better understanding of human sexual responses. Animal-rights groups, scientists among them, were not convinced of the necessity of the tests, which came to an end only when the chief researcher retired. But the protesters made no stir about the pigeons, doves, and rats that suffered in the same laboratory.

If United States Army researchers had used guinea pigs instead of beagles when they tried out a poison gas, they probably would not have provoked the public outcry that resulted in the curtailment of their funding in 1974. When a few Avon saleswomen quit their jobs last spring after reading about painful eye-makeup tests the company conducts on rabbits, they did not complain about the thousands of guinea pigs and rats Avon routinely puts to death in acute-toxicity tests.

It is not known whether any single vertebrate species is more or less immune to pain than another. A neat line cannot be drawn across the evolutionary scale dividing the sensitive from the insensitive. Yet the suffering of laboratory rats and mice is regarded as trivial by scientists and the public alike. These rodents have the dubious honor of being our No. 1 experimental animals, composing possibly 75 percent of America's total lab-animal population. As Russell Baker once wrote, "This is no time to be a mouse."

Rats and mice are specifically excluded from a Federal law designed to give some protection to laboratory animals. The Animal Welfare Act, passed in 1966 and amended in 1970, is administered by the Department of Agriculture and covers only about 4 percent of laboratory animals. Animal advocates worked hard for the bill, which sets some standards for the housing of animals in laboratories and at the dealers' facilities from which many of them are obtained. But the law places no restrictions on the kinds of experiments to which animals may be subjected. It does indicate that pain-relieving drugs should be used on the few types of animals it covers—but it includes a loop-

hole so as not to inhibit researchers unduly. If a scientist claims that pain is a necessary part of an experiment, anesthetics or analgesics may be withheld.

21 One standard test conducted on rats by drug companies is called the "writhing test" because of the agonized way the animals react to irritants injected into their abdomens. Paradoxically, this test assesses the efficacy of pain-killers, which are administered only after the rats show signs of acute suffering.

22 Equally common are psychological experiments in "learned helplessness" that have been conducted on rats, dogs, and other kinds of animals. In some of these tests, caged animals are given painful electric shocks until they learn certain maneuvers to obtain their food. As they become adept at avoiding the shocks, the researchers keep changing the rules so that the animals have to keep learning more and more ways to avoid shocks. Ultimately no way remains to escape, and the animals simply give up and lie on the floors of their cages, passively receiving shock after shock. Researchers have attempted to draw parallels between "learned helplessness" and depression in human beings, but some critics have difficulty perceiving their necessity. "What more are we going to learn about human depression by continuing to produce immobility in animals?" asks former animal experimenter Dr. Roger Ulrich, now a research professor of psychology at Western Michigan University.

23 Electric shock is widely used on many different kinds of animals in various types of research. In one experiment typical of a series that has been under way since 1966 at the Armed Forces Radiobiology Research Institute in Bethesda, Md., 10 rhesus monkeys were starved for 18 hours and then "encouraged" with electric prods to run rapidly on treadmills. This went on for several weeks before the monkeys were subjected to 4,600 rads of gamma-neutron radiation. Then they were retested on the treadmills for six hours, and subsequently for two hours each day until they died. Mean survival time for the vomiting, incapacitated monkeys was recorded in A.F.R.R.I.'s report as 37 hours. Dogs have been used in similar experiments, whose purpose is to get an idea of the effects of radiation on human endurance.

24 Now A.F.R.R.I. and other American research facilities are having to look for new sources of monkeys. In March 1978, the Government of India banned further export of rhesus monkeys to the United States. The native population was dwindling and Prime Minister Morarji R. Desai cited violations of a previous agreement that restricted the use of rhesus monkeys to medical research under humane conditions. "There is no difference between cruelty to animals and cruelty to human beings," the ascetic Prime Minister stated. The International Primate Protection League, a four-year-old watchdog group whose members include many scientists and especially primatologists (Jane Goodall, for one), had spread word in the Indian press that American scientists were using rhesus monkeys in grisly trauma experiments. According to the Primate

Protection League, these tests included dipping monkeys in boiling water at the University of Kansas, shooting them in the face with high-powered rifles at the University of Chicago, and slamming them in the stomach with a cannon-impactor traveling at a speed of 70 miles per hour at the University of Michigan.

"I feel justified in stating that fully 80 percent of the experiments involving rhesus monkeys are either unnecessary, represent useless duplication of previous work, or could utilize nonanimal alternatives," wrote Illinois Wesleyan University biologist Dr. John E. McArdle, a specialist in primate functional anatomy, in a letter to Prime Minister Desai, who so far has held firm despite pressure from the American scientific community to rescind the ban. In the meantime, researchers are making do with non-Indian rhesus monkeys and a close relative, the crab-eating macaque.

One of the arguments in favor of animal tests is that under the controlled 26 circumstances of the experimental laboratory they are likely to be objective and consistent. But the results of the same tests conducted on the same kinds of animals often differ from one laboratory to the next. When 25 cooperating companies, including Avon, Revlon, and American Cyanamid, conducted a comprehensive study of eye- and skin-irritation tests using rabbits, the results varied widely. The study concluded that these tests "should not be recommended as standard procedures in any new regulations" because they yielded "unreliable results."

One of these tests, the Draize Ophthalmic Irritancy Test, is used to evaluate 27 the effect upon the eyes of household and aerosol products, shampoos, and eye makeup. Rabbits are used because their eyes do not have effective tear glands and thus cannot easily flush away or dissolve irritants. The animals are pinioned in stocks and their eyes are exposed to a substance until inflammation, ulceration, or gross damage occurs.

Many investigators concede that the data provided by such experiments 28 are often inconsistent and that the stresses caused by crowded cages, callous treatment, pain, and fear can affect animals' metabolisms and thus confuse test results. "Since there is hardly a single organ or biochemical system in the body that is not affected by stress," says Dr. Harold Hillman, a British physiologist, "it is almost certainly the main reason for the wide variation reported among animals on whom painful experiments have been done."

Very often, different species respond differently to substances or situa- 29 tions. The rationale for many animal tests is that they predict human reactions, but thalidomide, for example, did not produce deformities in the fetuses of dogs, cats, monkeys, and hamsters. On the other hand, insulin has been proved harmful to rabbits and mice although it saves human lives.

Researchers are becoming increasingly dubious about the efficacy of the 30 LD/50, a test for acute toxicity that consists of force-feeding a group of ani-

mals a specific substance until half of them die, ostensibly providing a quantitative measure of how poisonous the substance is. In *Painful Experiments on Animals*, Dr. Pratt asks what we learn from forcing hair dye or face powder into a dog or rat through a stomach tube until its internal organs rupture.

- 31 One small victory for animal-welfare activists that was hailed by many American scientists was the 1975 Canadian ban on the use of vertebrate animals by students participating in science fairs. Children had been awarded prizes for attempting heart-transplant surgery on unanesthetized rabbits, amputating the feet of lizards, performing Caesarean operations on pregnant mice, bleeding dogs into a state of shock and blinding pigeons. Remarking that such "experiments" were a distortion of the spirit of research, science fair officials ruled out all such projects except observations of the normal living patterns of wild or domestic animals.
- 32 In this country, the search for adequate substitutes for laboratory animals was officially launched last summer when the year-old American Fund for Alternatives to Animal Research made its first grant—\$12,500 to a biology professor at Whitman College in Walla Walla, Wash. The award to Dr. Earl William Fleck will help finance his development of a test substituting one-celled organisms called tetrahymena for animals in screening substances for teratogens, agents that can cause birth defects. It is expected that the test, if and when perfected, will be cheaper, quicker, more accurate, and certainly more humane than putting thousands of pregnant animals to death.
- 33 According to veterinarian Thurman Grafton, executive director of the National Society for Medical Research, people who talk about alternatives to animals are creating false hopes. "These new technologies can only be adjuncts to the use of animals," he claims. "While they serve a purpose in furnishing clues as to what direction a type of research might take, you will always ultimately need an intact animal with all its living complications and interchanging biochemical functions to properly assay a drug."
- 34 "Not so," says Ethel Thurston, administrator of the American Fund for Alternatives. "Enough progress has already been made to indicate that certain techniques can completely replace animals."
- 35 Several of these techniques have been developed over the last five years in Great Britain, where the Lord Dowding Fund for Humane Research has given grants totaling more than \$400,000 to dozens of scientists engaged in research aimed at finding experimental substitutes for animals. Dowding is currently financing several developmental studies of the Ames Test, a promising technique invented by a Berkeley biochemistry professor, Dr. Bruce Ames, that uses salmonella bacteria rather than animals to determine the carcinogenic properties of chemicals. (It was the Ames Test that recently revealed the possible carcinogenic dangers of certain hair dyes.) Another Dowding Fund re-

ipient, research physician Dr. John C. Petricciani, now with the Food and Drug Administration, has devised a method of assessing how tumors grow by inoculating the tumor cells into skin from 9-day-old chicken embryos instead of into living animals.

Animal tests are frequently replaced by other methods discovered and developed by scientists like Dr. Ames who are not trying to avoid the use of animals per se but are simply searching for simpler and more cost-efficient ways to achieve their goals. Dr. Hans Stich, a Canadian cancer researcher, for example, has devised a new test for detecting carcinogenicity in chemicals; it uses human cells, takes one week and costs only about \$260. The traditional method, using rats and mice, takes three years and costs approximately \$150,000.

In addition to egg embryos, bacteria, and simple organisms, possible substitutes for animals include tissue cultures, human and other mammal cells grown in test tubes, and organ banks. Preserved human corneas, for instance, might be used to spare rabbits the agony of the Draize test. Computers could also play a role if researchers used them fully to analyze experimental data, predict the properties of new drugs, and test theoretical data. Computers can even be programmed to simulate living processes. Mechanical models and audio-visual aids can and do substitute for animals as teaching instruments. Simulated human models could provide valid information in car-crash tests.

Last winter, Representative Robert F. Drinan, Democrat of Massachusetts, introduced a bill authorizing the Department of Health, Education and Welfare to fund projects aimed at discovering research methods that would reduce both the numbers of animals used in laboratories and the suffering to which they are subjected.

Meanwhile, medical and military research and an unending stream of new pharmaceutical, cosmetic, and household products are resulting in an ever-increasing use of animals in the laboratory.

The most recent and thorough exploration of alternatives is Dr. D. H. Smyth's book *Alternatives to Animal Experiments*, which examines every option and weighs its pros and cons. He concludes that there is certainly reason to hope that the numbers of laboratory animals can be drastically reduced, but also warns that it is unlikely a complete phasing out of animal experimentation will happen soon. "By the time we can produce complete alternatives to living tissue," Dr. Smyth writes, "we will not need those alternatives because we will already understand how living tissues work."

Still, Dr. Smyth asks, "Does this mean we can perpetrate any cruelty on animals to satisfy scientific curiosity in the hope that it will one day be useful? To me it certainly does not. . . . Everyone has a right to decide that certain procedures are unacceptable."

Richard Ryder calls animal experimenters to task for trying to have it both

ways: Researchers defend their work scientifically on the basis of the *similarities* between human beings and animals, but defend it morally on the basis of the *differences*.

- 43 And there's the rub: The differences aren't as reassuringly clearcut as they once were. We now know that some animals have a more highly developed intelligence than some human beings—infants, for example, or the retarded and the senile. Dr. Ryder asks, "If we were to be discovered by some more intelligent creatures in the universe, would they be justified in experimenting on us?"

Stephen Rose

Proud to be Speciesist

The animal rights movement has had a powerful impact on scientific research in the academic community. While philosophers like Tom Regan were carefully crafting bulletproof arguments for animal rights, biologists, biochemists, neuroscientists, and psychologists were busily carrying on their research in the same manner they had for decades, largely ignoring the efforts of what they thought to be a few eccentric radicals. Then college administrators started listening to these "radicals," and animal research laboratories began closing. Now scientists are beginning to respond to the animal rights movement, and they are doing it with the same bulletproof logic so adeptly used against them by the philosophers. Stephen Rose, a professor of biology at Open University in England, is one of the scientists who is beginning to fight back. "Proud to Be Speciesist" takes a term near to the heart of many animal rights activists—"speciesism"—and turns it around, using it to make his own case for using animals in research.

- 1 I RESEARCH ON ANIMALS. I STUDY THE INTIMATE CHEMICAL and electrical processes that are the brain's mechanisms for storing information, for learning and memory. To discover those mechanisms, I analyze the cellular changes that occur when young chicks learn and remember simple tasks. An antivivisectionist once asked me whether my research didn't make me feel rather like Dr. Mengele. No, it doesn't, though I can't resist pointing out that the only country ever to have moved to ban animal experimentation was Germany in the Nazi 1930s, showing a sensitivity that certainly didn't extend to those categories of humans regarded as "lives not worth living."
- 2 I won't cheapen the justification for my work by claiming that it will have *immediate* health benefits in helping children with learning problems or in treating the devastating consequences of Alzheimer's disease, though the fundamental biological mechanisms I am uncovering are certainly of relevance to

ity for the consequences of their experiments. But if I believed for one moment that my chicks were mere clockwork, I might as well stop working with them at all, and go play with computers instead.

7 Unless, of course, I experimented on humans. And this, the privileging of humans, is the nub of the question. Just because we are humans, any discussion of rights must begin with human rights. How far are those rights to be extended—does it even make sense to talk of extending them—to the “animal kingdom”? The animal kingdom isn’t composed only of cats and dogs, mice and monkeys. It includes slugs and lice, wasps and mosquitoes. How far can the concept of right be extended—to not swatting a mosquito that is sucking your blood? To prevent your cat from hunting and killing a rat? Does an ant have as many rights as a gorilla?

8 Most people would say no—though I have met one activist who argued that even viruses had souls! I think most animal righters are really arguing that the closer animals are to humans, biologically speaking—that is, evolutionarily speaking—the more rights they should have. So where does the cut-off come? Primates? Mammals? Vertebrates? The moment one concedes that question, it is clear that the decision is arbitrary—that it is *we*, as humans, who are conferring rights on animals—not the animals themselves.

9 Put like this, the spurious nature of the term *speciesism* becomes apparent. It was coined to make the claim that the issue of animal rights is on a par with the struggles for women’s rights, or black people’s rights, or civil rights. But these human struggles are those in which the oppressed themselves rise up to demand justice and equality, to insist that they are not the objects but the subjects of history.

10 Non-human animals cannot conceive or make such a claim, and to insist the terms are parallel is profoundly offensive, the lazy thinking of a privileged group.

11 Indeed, it is sometimes hard to avoid the impression that, for some among the animal rights movement, non-human animals take precedence over humans. The movement’s absolutism and its seeming openness to members of extreme right-wing groups, reinforce the view that, for many of its activists, there is no automatic relationship between a concern for animal rights and one for human rights. Among others, there is an air of sanctimonious hypocrisy. They may, if they wish, refuse insulin if they are diabetic, L-dopa if they have Parkinsonism, antibiotics or surgical procedures that have been validated on animals before being used with humans—but I deny them any right to impose their personal morality on the rest of suffering humanity.

12 Nonetheless, it is essential to listen to the message that the movement carries. Its strength, despite its inchoate ideology, is, I believe, in part a response to the arrogant claim to the domination of nature that western scientific culture drew from its scriptural roots. The animal rights movement is part of a widespread romantic reaction to the seemingly cold rationality of science. Sci-

entists who ignore the strength of this reaction do so at their peril—which is why this week sees the launch, by the British Association for the Advancement of Science of a “Declaration on Animals in Medical Research” signed by more than 800 doctors and scientists, defending the controlled use of animals.

The argument about how non-human animals should be treated is at root 13 about how we as humans should behave. It is here that the biological discontinuities between humans and other animals become important. Our concern about how we treat other species springs out of our very humanness, as biologically and socially constructed creatures. We do not expect cats to debate the rights of mice. The issue is not really about animal rights at all, but about the *duties* that we have just because we are human.

And I am sure that we do have such duties, to behave kindly to other animals, with the minimum of violence and cruelty, not to damage or take their lives insofar as it can be avoided, just as we have duties to the planet’s ecology in general. But those duties are limited by an overriding duty to other humans. I have a much-loved and exceedingly beautiful cat. But if I had to choose between saving her life and that of any human child, I would unhesitatingly choose the child. But I would save my cat at the expense of a fish. And so would the vast majority of people. That is species loyalty—speciesism if you like—and I am proud to be a speciesist. 14

Linda Hasselstrom

The Cow versus the Animal Rights Activist

People often ask Linda Hasselstrom (b. 1943) why she doesn’t devote herself full-time to either writing or ranching, although she’s been quite successful doing both. Her response is characteristically down-to-earth: “I’m often tired, but never bored. When I’m confronted with a job I detest, six other jobs I prefer can delay it another day.” Her writings often focus on her own connection to the land and the lessons she has learned from that association. While the result, in less apt hands, would soon devolve into dogmatic drivel, Hasselstrom somehow strikes the right balance—she rarely sounds like she’s preaching. In this excerpt from *Land Circle*, Hasselstrom again uses her own experience as a rancher to dispute animal rights activists’ claims that raising and killing animals for food is immoral.

I’M A RANCHER; BEEF CATTLE PROVIDE MOST OF MY MONEY and food. I *like* cows; 1
I’ve had a warm partnership with them for thirty-five years. I admire a cow’s instincts, and suspect her of having a sense of humor, as well as of knowing

more than we think. I envy her adaptation to the arid plains, and her apparent serenity in emergencies.

2 I also love to cut into a tender sirloin steak with a hint of pink in the center, and dip each bite into the luscious brown juice surrounding the potatoes on my plate. I relish each mouthful, thinking dreamily of the cow whose flesh I'm eating; I remember when she was born, how she became crippled so that her destiny became the dark freezer in my basement rather than the meat department of a brightly lighted supermarket. I have always considered that the relationship between me and my cattle was a little like a good marriage, with good days and bad days, but considerable satisfaction on both sides.

3 Suddenly my personal paradox has frightening possibilities, because animal rights activists are declaring in sizeable headlines that it is not possible to love animals and also kill them. Anyone who says so, they declare, is vicious, sadistic, and untrustworthy. Some extremists declare that doing anything at all with an animal but letting it follow its normal patterns is immoral, and others declare that we have no right to experiment with animals even to save human lives. Ranchers are targets because we confine cattle in pastures, brand them with hot irons, and cut sections out of their ears to show ownership. Those, say the activists, are the actions of exploiters, unfit to be environmentalists or associate with your daughter. Activists have destroyed research labs to free the animals, sometimes loosing dangerous bacteria. Some deer and bison lovers follow hunters into the woods, shouting to frighten the game. One screaming activist repeatedly whacked and poked a bison hunter with the point of a ski pole; the hunter, a model of nonviolence, neither screamed back nor made threatening gestures with his Rolling Block .45-70, capable of decimating an activist with one shot. In a middle-sized town near our ranch, activists scream obscenities and spit on women in fur coats. At a National Cattlemen's Association meeting, a speaker warned ranchers that new employees may work undercover for animal rights groups. An auction yard in Dixon, California, and a meatpacking plant in San Jose were torched by arsonists, and an unlit Molotov cocktail lobbed into the offices of the California Cattlemen's Association. A popular country singer, k.d. lang, was part of a "Meat Stinks" campaign supported by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, a group that opposes using animals "other than for companionship." Radio and television stations in beef-producing areas, including South Dakota, promptly stopped playing all of lang's records. I was disappointed; watching lang croon sweet nothings into the ear of a dairy cow—in no danger of being eaten because she is too valuable as a milk factory, and tough as guitar strings—was the highlight of my television watching.

4 Her problem, and the difficulty of the ski pole-wielding activist confronting the bison hunter, is lack of information. The beef cattle industry has three major phases. First, farmers and ranchers own basic herds and

produce breeding cattle, or yearlings sold as feeders. They keep the breeding cattle, and sell the yearlings at a sale market where the price is determined by supply and demand, and by bidders. When the ranchers sell, they have no opportunity to add costs of materials to the product, passing expenses on to the consumer as most businesses do. Ranchers take the price offered on sale day, or take the cattle home—where they will require more care, more expense.

5 The second phase of the beef cattle industry consists of stocker operators whose pastures put additional weight on feeder cattle before they enter feedlots, the third phase. Confined in muddy, stinking feedlots, cattle consume huge quantities of pesticide-laced grain designed to make the meat fat enough for consumer preference, and produce immense amounts of polluted runoff. The dangers posed to humans by the chemicals in both the meat and runoff have drawn environmentalists' attention to the cattle industry—but they are attacking the wrong end of production. Feedlots are generally operated by corporations that control feeding, butchering, and in some cases supermarket sales of meat, grain, and associated products. In 1988, three companies—Iowa Beef Packing (IBP, owned by Occidental Petroleum), ConAgra, and Excel (Cargill)—accounted for 70 percent of all fed cattle slaughtered in the United States. These monopolies, which also control a considerable amount of the nation's grain, flour, pork, egg, and poultry production, do pass costs to the consumers, hiking prices far above what ranchers get for their labor. But enormous corporations are tough to find and difficult to move; it's easier to attack individual hunters and ranchers.

6 I'm afraid that one day I'll be sweating and swearing in the corral, struggling to brand calves twice my weight, and suddenly find I'm surrounded by people with no sense of humor who have come to "liberate" my cows.

7 I'd like to discourage that kind of behavior, partly because some ranchers are impatient and armed, and partly because it's based on lack of information. Unchecked ignorance and paranoia can escalate misunderstandings to bloodshed. And some of my cows, unaccustomed to noise and rudeness, might kick the strangers, who would sue me, not the cows.

8 I recognize the difficulty many people face in reconciling their love of animals with their love of meat, but I believe the problem is increasing because we are getting further from the realities of human existence. As we developed our large brain, we also built a complicated set of desires that seems to imply that enough wealth will allow us to sit still. We want our food to be easily obtainable; now that we no longer have to run it down and beat it to death, many of us buy it precooked. When someone markets predigested dinners, there will be buyers. But many of us will continue to wear leather shoes, lust after leather skirts and jackets and leather upholstery on our car seats, and relish a good steak or hamburger. As long as humans have such desires but re-

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main unwilling or unable to slaughter and skin the animals that can satisfy them, ranchers will be needed.

9 In defense, beef industry representatives say a pregnant woman produces four hundred thousand times as much estrogen every day as she would get from the average serving of beef injected with growth-inducing hormones. I've spent my life doing hard physical labor while eating organically raised cattle, so I understand the healthy properties of red meat, and I despair at the perception among many Americans that this tasty stuff isn't good for them. I am part of an industry that requires me to donate one dollar from each animal sold to the Beef Check-Off plan, which promotes the facts about eating beef and health—a group defense instituted, reluctantly, by cattle ranchers in response to misinformation spread by antibeef activists. In part, this idea comes from paranoia about cholesterol and growth hormones; in part, it's a result of government-subsidized campaigns by producers of other foods. In many countries, the beef I eat in a year would make a family wealthy, but I am frustrated by being unable to sell directly to consumers beef raised on grass that is the natural product of my land.

10 Like most ranchers, I work more closely with cows than any animal rights activist I've ever met. I kneel in steaming cow manure and hot urine while talking kindly to a cow and urging a calf from her birth canal. I must brand calves so they won't stray or be stolen; castrate bulls to make them edible steers and protect bloodlines. I've cut cows' throats, helped gut and skin them, and canned every edible part of them for my family's use; in the process I've gained a deep appreciation for what killing our own meat can mean to humans. Because of this close involvement with the lives of cows, I feel I have worked hard for the right to eat their flesh. My relationship with cows is intimate, balanced—the cow is capable of killing or injuring me—and demands the most complete responsibility from the human half of the equation. The relationship is reviewed by both parties almost daily, and its implications carefully considered at least by the human half. Who knows what the cows are thinking?

11 Animal rights activists seem to me guilty of simplistic thinking and tunnel vision, although I envy people who forswear *all* killing and eating of flesh; I believe they have an easier road than those of us who try to strike a balance between exploitation and love. Similarly, I don't consider strolling along behind a fur-wearing woman screaming epithets, or shooting a cow, or burning a packing plant, to be meaningful activism; such actions are too simplistic, and too close to terrorism. During the easy environmentalism of the 1960s, one could lie on the lawn smoking grass on "Gentle Thursdays," sing "We Shall Overcome" and shout "No More War," and go back to class, one's pacifist duty done for the week. During that period, a few hard-working environmentalists passed strict laws which gave us a sense of power, but were some-

times as narrow and poorly thought out as the actions behind the corporate greed that made them necessary.

All of us—ranchers, environmentalists, and animal rights activists—if we expect to be taken seriously, should put as much work into defining and achieving realistic, fair goals as ranchers spend trying to keep cows alive. Few of us are born with that kind of dedication; we have to develop an interest in detail, a respect for our fellow animals—even Democrats, feminists, and snail darters—and an understanding of our responsibilities to the whole spectrum of life on the planet. What E. B. White wrote nearly sixty years ago is still true:

Before you can be an internationalist you have first to be a naturalist and feel the ground under you making a whole circle. It is easier for a man to be loyal to his club than to his planet; the by-laws are shorter, and he is personally acquainted with the other members. 13

The effect of any organization of a social and brotherly nature is to strengthen rather than to diminish the lines which divide people into classes; the effect of states and nations is the same, and eventually these lines will have to be softened, these powers will have to be generalized. It is written on the wall that this is so. I'm not inventing it, I'm just copying it off the wall. 14

Statistics from a few years ago declared that the average American ate 15 fourteen cows in a lifetime, but consumption will drop to a twenty-five-year low in 1990 as hysterical and ill-informed folks screech about the dangers of beef. I've eaten more than my share in an effort to make up for vegetarian relatives and friends. When I calculated this my own family consisted of my parents, and my husband and me; we would butcher two animals, usually heifers, per year. Assuming each of us ate about one-fourth of each animal, I was eating an entire cow every four years, which means I've gobbled upwards of ten so far. If I live to be eighty, as I hope to do, I'll have eaten at least twenty of my own herd, not to mention the beef I eat in restaurants when I'm upholding the honor and economy of ranchers while surrounded by midwesterners lying about how good the frozen fish tastes. I am willing to take responsibility for the deaths of those twenty bovines, because I've saved the lives of many more than that.

Vegetarians may whittle the number of beefeaters down, but I'm confident 16 beef will remain part of the American diet. Ranchers are learning to produce lean meat; I believe we will soon begin to move away from the dangerous chemicals and growth hormones we've been talked into using in order to raise productivity above sensible limits. At the same time, we are becoming aware of growing criticism of the damage cattle do to public lands by poorly controlled grazing. Little has been done, however, to control the meat and grain

monopolies which will eventually control our food supplies and determine grocery prices.

17 It's a popular pastime now to debunk the myth of the independent cowboy and the cattle baron, and rightly so in many ways. Although there's truth to the legends, they were popularized and distorted by dime novels and bad movies; and some cow folk even bought their own advertising campaign or fantasy, and played their roles more eagerly than pulp heroes. They deserve to be reminded of reality.

18 But simply pronouncing the death of the age of the cattle baron and cowboy is too simple. Sure, those men—and their womenfolk—treated the West as if it was their kingdom. They battled its hardships, “civilized” it as they thought best—because they were given a challenge to do so by the wisest spirits of their age. Where I live was “the Great American Desert,” shunned by all but the hardest explorers. Later, the thinkers in their comfy New England offices decided that “rain follows the plow,” and all that was needed to make the desert bloom were a few hardy souls to build claim shanties and plow to the horizon. The New England philosophers had no idea what difficult conditions westerners faced, but the westerners went right on working until they controlled everything but the weather.

19 We now see their errors, but we might have been guilty of the same actions, now seen as abuse, had we been cattle barons in those days. And some changes have been made not out of lack of concern, but through economic necessity. Cowboys, paid “forty a month and found,” used to ride the range constantly, moving cattle around so that grazing was spread evenly over a wide area. Today workers who might once have become cowboys and cowgirls are instead making big wages in a city, and many ranchers operate alone, or assisted only by their smaller number of children or seasonal help. They have tried to adapt the advice given to farmers by agricultural experts within the government to invest more money, get big, and become efficient, but it didn't work as well on mobile cattle as on rows of corn; it didn't work on corn either, but that's another story, and Wes Jackson is telling it in his sustainable agriculture research at The Land Institute.

20 This generation's heroes are people who work to save our environment: the dead Saint Ed Abbey, Wendell Berry, Wes Jackson, Annie Dillard, Ann Zwinger, Gary Snyder, Barry Lopez, Gretel Ehrlich, Bil Gilbert, Kim Stafford, and other writers who contemplate humanity and nature. Some have attained almost mythical stature themselves, and we all try to learn from and imitate them. We believe, fervently, that they are right; those old ranchers believed in Manifest Destiny and the American Way just as passionately. What if we're wrong again?

21 Instead of blaming ranchers and farmers for doing what they were told to do, environmentalists need to show us what's wrong with the way we graze cat-

tle, if they know. Most of the complainers have never been personally introduced to a cow, have no clear idea what's wrong with her grazing habits, and wouldn't know a good stand of native grass if they were lying in it reciting poetry or reading Abbey. They're willing to take someone else's word—just as the ranchers took the government's word for how to use the land. Too many environmentalists condemn without knowledge. None of the rhetoric changes the fact that the grasslands are in trouble, and only the people who own the land are likely to resolve the problems.

22 When I left the ranch, bound for a life of comfortable academic superiority in some ivory tower, I cared considerably less about cows than I do now, though I already knew more than the average American about the brutal facts of bovine life. Living beside a packing plant for a few months made a temporary vegetarian out of me. I saw cows unloaded daily, heard the thud as the knacker's maul struck their foreheads, the bawl of pain as they were swung, only stunned, off their hooves by a hook thrust into an ankle. Sometimes, I could hear the bubbling, choking screech cut short as a worker finally opened a steer's throat. My cat grew sleek dragging home fleshy bones larger than he was, and I watched smugly when a steer escaped and ran through the streets, ineffectually pursued by a police force with little experience in cattle management. But as soon as I moved back to South Dakota, where I look out on my walking larder through every window, I went back to eating meat without hesitation. I earn every mouthful. The outmoded butchering practices used in packing plants have been changed; animals are killed with a gun, rather than stunned, before butchering begins. Other changes in the beef industry show increased awareness of public scrutiny.

23 When I returned to the ranch, I had shed some of the narrow attitudes with which I grew up, and I became involved in the complicated process of keeping a cow alive. I've learned, but I've remained a part of a wider world. Critics think ranch men read only *Farm Journal* and their wives do nothing but cook and raise children, but many are college graduates, and even those who aren't read more widely than their ancestors did. They also watch television; the rest of the world is no longer distant and inaccessible to them. They are informed about conditions in the “outer” world, and aware that most consumers know little about ranching or the food processing industry. For example, while farmers and ranchers know a good deal about what happens to their products—meat, grains, hay—when these leave the land, many folks who buy those products or by-products neatly wrapped in polyethylene haven't a clue about their production, and don't want to. Knowing the origins of our food and frivolities helps us make sensible choices about what we really want; in some cases, the sacrifice is not worth the benefit. When I shop for groceries, I carry a booklet that categorizes products by how socially responsible the producer is. I avoid products if the Council on Economic Priorities re-

ports no reductions in animal testing by those companies, and no company contributions toward alternative research. On the other hand, I wouldn't hesitate to use any compatible animal heart to save the life of a child. But if the child was cocaine-addicted in the womb, and the operation was at taxpayers' expense, I could not support it.

24 Cattle have been domesticated for centuries, and belong in a separate category from animals bred for laboratory tests, and from wildlife; we are not likely to stop eating and managing cattle herds, nor should we. Wild cattle herds would be hardly more aesthetically satisfying than tame ones, as Indians have discovered while dodging sacred cows. A poorly managed herd of cattle can be as repugnant as Edward Abbey insisted, but that's the fault of the human manager, not the cows. With adequate feed and water and space to move while grazing selectively, a herd of cattle can be at least as acceptable in polite society as the average dog or child. Cattle do attract flies; before poisonous sprays and other costly forms of fly control existed, we built "oilers," slinging old feed sacks on a wire between two posts. We poured used crankcase oil on the cloth (recycling!) and cows rubbed oil on their bodies to discourage flies and lice. When the chemical companies noticed us using a product we didn't buy, they developed spray, injections, and fly-killing ear tags.

25 But most folks don't know this, because they spend more time with domesticated cats and dogs, and half-savage children, than with cows; and it is the activities that result from ignorance that bother me. Since I have become moderately well known as an articulate ranch woman, I've been questioned several times about animal rights.

26 What do I think of proposed laws to make branding illegal, for example? My reply: the folks who pass that law can find and return or replace the stolen cattle, catch and prosecute the thieves, and pay the costs of the confusion and crime. Branding does hurt, but it places a permanent mark on a cow, so even if she's illegally butchered, an owner has some chance of proving it. No other method is as useful, and I'll consider another method of marking my cattle when we stop licensing cars to identify them and prevent their theft. Every few years, someone suggests that acid brands are more merciful; I'd like that idea tested on the folks who suggest it: which hurts most, a burn with a hot iron, or an acid burn? Even if they are less painful, acid brands might not be enough; local old-timers talk about the days when government agencies used them. Enterprising cowboys sometimes roped the cows, smeared axle grease on the brands to neutralize the acid, turned the cows out until the hair grew back, and a few months later branded cows that appeared ownerless. Speaking of pain, what about breeds of dogs—Boxers, Doberman Pinschers, Schnauzers—not considered attractive unless their ears and tails are chopped off? Poodles, among the most widely popular dog breeds, just have their tails trimmed,

though dogs with extremities intact are now allowed in some shows. What about the thousands of pets killed each year because owners couldn't be bothered with them any longer? Is it more merciful to keep a wild predator like a cat confined to an apartment for its entire life than to brand a cow once? So-called "pet" cats slaughter wild songbirds by the millions in most cities, but few animal rights activists picket pet owners. Why do suburbanites let their dogs run loose to chase and kill wildlife and calves?

27 Today's cattle live very well compared to their ancestors, perhaps too well for the health of the species; some old breeds are dying out. We may need their genetic diversity in coming years, if we continue to breed cattle for beef and milk production instead of their ability to survive, coddling them with medications until they can no longer resist disease. The average calf is observed and protected from predators at birth, and quickly vaccinated against many diseases. When necessary operations like branding, ear-marking, castration, and dehorning occur, they are done with sterile equipment, supplemented with healing sprays to keep flies and maggots from the wounds. In the wild, only the fittest animals would survive a tough winter; modern cattle operators carefully control herd feed throughout the year for maximum gain, and maximum protection of pasture. Sick, weak, crippled, or otherwise unfit animals are culled from the herd, instead of being allowed to suffer and pass on their genes and illnesses. Ranchers who habitually abuse their cattle damage their own income and endanger themselves, both indirectly—by hurting their own profits—and directly; an abused or frightened cow can be a dangerous proposition.

28 As the rancher's awareness of chemical dangers increases, and as costs climb, some of us are realizing that we could raise organic, lean beef with less effort and expense, with the help of a real demand in the market from an informed public. Some ranchers already nervous about growth hormone implants would give them up if the steers didn't gain; heavier steers mean more income. As I write this, several tuna-packing companies have finally instituted policies that will make the killing of dolphins unprofitable. If the public demands chemical-free beef, it will be produced; ideally, South Dakota could encourage the sale of cattle straight from the organic grass of our pastures to the hungry customer—rather than selling the land for garbage dumps. I have heard of no state-sponsored efforts to keep native grass unplowed and grazed by cows for organic beef. If state officials put half the energy and cash spent on tourism into promoting the state's ranchers—whose product can keep the land relatively undamaged—we might discover a strong demand for grass-fed beef. And why not give tourists the chance to visit real, working ranches?

So if you like beef but don't like chemicals, cholesterol, or high food prices, get acquainted with a rancher who raises cattle on grass. Get a few

friends together, buy a fat young “beef,” and butcher it yourself—or ask a hunter to help. If one person does it, you’ll just be a well-fed oddity. If two people do it, or five, it might become a movement. Think of it! Ranchers and beef eaters, joining together to beat chemical companies and monopolies; why, it’s the stuff democracy is made of.

- 30 I’ll say it again: I love cows, and consider my care and understanding of them superior to the treatment they’d get at the hands of the average animal rights activist.

Jonathan Swift

A Modest Proposal

Jonathan Swift (1667–1745), Irish writer, poet, and clergyman, used his works as an opportunity to comment on the society he lived in. He is best known for his novel, *Gulliver’s Travels*, but “A Modest Proposal” is perhaps his most effective social commentary. At the time “A Modest Proposal” appeared, Ireland was afflicted by a great famine, made worse by the oppressive rule of England. Harsh taxation by the invading English made it difficult for all but a few to sustain themselves at a reasonable level. Master of satire, Swift offered his “Modest Proposal” as a means of solving the tremendous problems Ireland faced. If “A Modest Proposal” didn’t accomplish that, it has, for over two centuries, enlightened us all on the art of satire.

- 1 IT IS A MELANCHOLY OBJECT TO THOSE WHO WALK through this great town or travel in the country, when they see the streets, the roads, and cabin doors crowded with beggars of the female sex, followed by three, four, or six children, all in rags and importuning every passenger for an alms. These mothers, instead of being able to work for their honest livelihood, are forced to employ all their time in strolling to beg sustenance for their helpless infants, who, as they grow up, either turn thieves for want of work, or leave their dear native country to fight for the Pretender in Spain, or sell themselves to the Barbadoes.
- 2 I think it is agreed by all parties that this prodigious number of children in the arms, or on the backs, or at the heels of their mothers, and frequently of their fathers, is in the present deplorable state of the kingdom a very great additional grievance; and, therefore, whoever could find out a fair, cheap, and easy method of making these children sound, useful members of the commonwealth, would deserve so well of the public as to have his statue set up for a preserver of the nation.

nose towards the page, for my eyes unconsciously flick back and forth across the page, back to another page, forward to still another, as I try to see each evolving line in relation to every other line.

28 When does this process end? Most writers agree with the great Russian writer Tolstoy, who said, "I scarcely ever reread my published writing. If by chance I come across a page, it always strikes me: all this must be rewritten; this is how I should have written it."

29 The maker's eye is never satisfied, for each word has the potential to ignite new meaning. This article has been twice written all the way through the writing process, and it was published four years ago. Now it is to be republished in a book. The editors made a few small suggestions, and then I read it with my maker's eye. Now it has been re-edited, revised, re-read, re-re-edited, for each piece of writing is to the writer full of potential and alternatives.

30 A piece of writing is never finished. It is delivered to a deadline, torn out of the typewriter on demand, sent off with a sense of accomplishment and shame and pride and frustration. If only there were a couple more days, time for just another run at it, perhaps then . . .

Alleen Pace Nilsen

★ Sexism and Language

Profoundly affected by the overt sexism she saw during a stay in Afghanistan in 1967, Alleen Pace Nilsen has since built a career out of examining the subtle ways the English language responds to and defines sexual roles and stereotypes. She is now a professor at the University of Arizona, and continues her work studying gender and language as it applies to literature for young adults.

1 OVER THE LAST HUNDRED YEARS, American anthropologists have travelled to the corners of the earth to study primitive cultures. They either became linguists themselves or they took linguists with them to help in learning and analyzing languages. Even if the culture was one that no longer existed, they were interested in learning its language because besides being tools of communication, the vocabulary and structure of a language tell much about the values held by its speakers.

2 However, the culture need not be primitive, nor do the people making observations need to be anthropologists and linguists. Anyone living in the United States who listens with a keen ear or reads with a perceptive eye can

come up with startling new insights about the way American English reflects our values.

Animal Terms for People—Mirrors of the Double Standard

If we look at just one semantic area of English, that of animal terms in relation to people, we can uncover some interesting insights into how our culture views males and females. References to identical animals can have negative connotations when related to a female, but positive or neutral connotations when related to a male. For example, a *shrew* has come to mean "a scolding, nagging, evil-tempered woman," while *shrewd* means "keen-witted, clever, or sharp in practical affairs; astute . . . businessman, etc." (*Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language*, 1964).

A *lucky dog* or a *gay dog* may be a very interesting fellow, but when a woman is a *dog*, she is unattractive, and when she's a *bitch* she's the personification of whatever is undesirable in the mind of the speaker. When a man is self-confident, he may be described as *cocksure* or even *cocky*, but in a woman this same self-confidence is likely to result in her being called a *cocky bitch*, which is not only a mixed metaphor, but also probably the most insulting animal metaphor we have. *Bitch* has taken on such negative connotations—children are taught it is a swear word—that in everyday American English, speakers are hesitant to call a female dog a *bitch*. Most of us feel that we would be insulting the dog. When we want to insult a man by comparing him to a dog, we call him a *son of a bitch*, which quite literally is an insult to his mother rather than to him.

If the female is called a *vixen* (a female fox), the dictionary says this means she is "an ill-tempered, shrewish, or malicious woman." The female seems both to attract and to hold on longer to animal metaphors with negative connotations. A *vampire* was originally a corpse that came alive to suck the blood of living persons. The word acquired the general meaning of an unscrupulous person such as a blackmailer and then, the specialized meaning of "a beautiful but unscrupulous woman who seduces men and leads them to their ruin." From this latter meaning we get the word *vamp*. The popularity of this term and of the name *vampire bat* may contribute to the idea that a female being is referred to in a phrase such as *the old bat*.

Other animal metaphors do not have definitely derogatory connotations for the female, but they do seem to indicate frivolity or unimportance, as in *social butterfly* and *flapper*. Look at the differences between the connotations of participating in a *hen party* and in a *bull session*. Male metaphors, even when they are negative in connotation, still relate to strength and conquest. Metaphors related to aggressive sex roles, for example, *buck*, *stag*, *wolf*, and *stud*, will undoubtedly remain attached to males. Perhaps one of the reasons that in the late sixties it was so shocking to hear policemen called *pigs* was that the con-

notations of *pig* are very different from the other animal metaphors we usually apply to males.

7 When I was living in Afghanistan, I was surprised at the cruelty and unfairness of a proverb that said, "When you see an old man, sit down and take a lesson; when you see an old woman, throw a stone." In looking at Afghan folk literature, I found that young girls were pictured as delightful and enticing, middle-aged women were sometimes interesting but more often just tolerable, while old women were always grotesque and villainous. Probably the reason for the negative connotation of old age in women is that women are valued for their bodies while men are valued for their accomplishments and their wisdom. Bodies deteriorate with age but wisdom and accomplishments grow greater.

8 When we returned home from Afghanistan, I was shocked to discover that we have remnants of this same attitude in America. We see it in our animal metaphors. If both the animal and the woman are young, the connotation is positive, but if the animal and the woman are old, the connotation is negative. Hugh Hefner might never have made it to the big time if he had called his girls *rabbits* instead of *bunnies*. He probably chose *bunny* because he wanted something close to, but not quite so obvious as *kitten* or *cat*—the all-time winners for connoting female sexuality. Also *bunny*, as in the skiers' *snow bunny*, already had some of the connotations Hefner wanted. Compare the connotations of *filly* to *old nag*; *bird* to *old crow* or *old bat*; and *lamb* to *crone* (apparently related to the early modern Dutch *kronje*, *old ewe* but now *withered old woman*).

9 Probably the most striking examples of the contrast between young and old women are animal metaphors relating to cats and chickens. A young girl is encouraged to be *kittenish*, but not *catty*. And though most of us wouldn't mind living next door to a *sex kitten*, we wouldn't want to live next door to a *cat house*. Parents might name their daughter *Kitty* but not *Puss* or *Pussy*, which used to be a fairly common nickname for girls. It has now developed such sexual connotations that it is used mostly for humor, as in the James Bond movie featuring *Pussy Galore* and her flying felines.

10 In the chicken metaphors, a young girl is a *chick*. When she gets old enough she marries and soon begins feeling *cooped up*. To relieve the boredom she goes to *hen parties* and *cackles* with her friends. Eventually she has her *brood*, begins to *henpeck* her husband, and finally turns into an *old biddy*.

How English Glorifies Maleness

11 Throughout the ages physical strength has been very important, and because men are physically stronger than women, they have been valued more. Only now in the machine age, when the difference in strength between males and females pales into insignificance in comparison to the

strength of earth-moving machinery, airplanes, and guns, males no longer have such an inherent advantage. Today a man of intellect is more valued than a physical laborer, and since women can compete intellectually with men, their value is on the rise. But language lags far behind cultural changes, so the language still reflects this emphasis on the importance of being male. For example, when we want to compliment a male, all we need to do is stress the fact that he is male by saying he is a *he-man*, or he is *manly*, or he is *virile*. Both *virile* and *virtuous* come from the Latin *vir*, meaning *man*.

The command or encouragement that males receive in sentences like "Be a man!" implies that to *be a man* is to be honorable, strong, righteous, and whatever else the speaker thinks desirable. But in contrast to this, a girl is never told to be a *woman*. And when she is told to be a *lady*, she is simply being encouraged to "act feminine," which means sitting with her knees together, walking gracefully, and talking softly.

The armed forces, particularly the Marines, use the positive masculine connotation as part of their recruitment psychology. They promote the idea that to join the Marines (or the Army, Navy, or Air Force) guarantees that you will become a man. But this brings up a problem, because much of the work that is necessary to keep a large organization running is what is traditionally thought of as *women's work*. Now, how can the Marines ask someone who has signed up for a *man-sized job* to do *women's work*? Since they can't, they euphemize and give the jobs titles that either are more prestigious or, at least, don't make people think of females. Waitresses are called *orderlies*, secretaries are called *clerk-typists*, nurses are called *medics*, assistants are called *adjutants*, and cleaning up an area is called *policing* the area. The same kind of word glorification is used in civilian life to bolster a man's ego when he is doing such tasks as cooking and sewing. For example, a *chef* has higher prestige than a *cook* and a *tailor* has higher prestige than a *seamstress*.

Little girls learn early in life that the boy's role is one to be envied and emulated. Child psychologists have pointed out that experimenting with the role of the opposite sex is much more acceptable for little girls than it is for little boys. For example, girls are free to dress in boys' clothes, but certainly not the other way around. Most parents are amused if they have a daughter who is a *tomboy*, but they are genuinely distressed if they have a son who is a *sissy*. The names we give to young children reflect this same attitude. It is all right for girls to have boys' names, but pity the boy who has a girl's name! Because parents keep giving boys' names to girls, the number of acceptable boys' names keeps shrinking. Currently popular names for girls include *Jo*, *Kelly*, *Teri*, *Chris*, *Pat*, *Shawn*, *Toni*, and *Sam* (short for *Samantha*). *Evelyn*, *Carroll*, *Gayle*, *Hazel*, *Lynn*, *Beverley*, *Marion*, *Francis*, and *Shirley*

once were acceptable names for males. But as they were given to females, they became less and less acceptable. Today, men who are stuck with them self-consciously go by their initials or by abbreviated forms such as *Haze*, *Shirl*, *Frank*, or *Ev*. And they seldom pass these names on to their sons.

15 Many common words have come into the language from people's names. These lexical items again show the importance of maleness compared to the triviality of the feminine activities being described. Words derived from the names of women include *Melba toast*, named for the Australian singer Dame Nellie Melba; *Sally Lunn cakes*, named after an eighteenth-century woman who first made them; *pompadour*, a hair style named after Madame Pompadour; and the word *maudlin*, as in *maudlin sentiment*, from Mary Magdalene, who was often portrayed by artists as displaying exaggerated sorrow.

16 There are trivial items named after men—*teddy bear* after Theodore Roosevelt and *sideburns* after General Burnside—but most words that come from men's names relate to significant inventions or developments. These include *pasteurization* after Louis Pasteur, *sousaphone* after John Philip Sousa, *mason jar* after John L. Mason, *boysenberry* after Rudolph Boysen, *pullman car* after George M. Pullman, *braille* after Louis Braille, *franklin stove* after Benjamin Franklin, *diesel engine* after Rudolf Diesel, *ferris wheel* after George W. G. Ferris, and the verb *to lynch* after William Lynch, who was a vigilante captain in Virginia in 1780.

17 The latter is an example of a whole set of English words dealing with violence. These words have strongly negative connotations. From research using free association and semantic differentials, with university students as subjects, James Ney concluded that English reflects both an anti-male and an anti-female bias because these biases exist in the culture (*Etc.: A Review of General Semantics*, March 1976, pp. 67-76). The students consistently marked as masculine such words as *killer*, *murderer*, *robber*, *attacker*, *fighter*, *stabber*, *rapist*, *assassin*, *gang*, *hood*, *arsonist*, *criminal*, *hijacker*, *villain*, and *bully*, even though most of these words contain nothing to specify that they are masculine. An example of bias against males, Ney observed, is the absence in English of a pejorative term for women equivalent to *rapist*. Outcomes of his free association test indicated that if "English speakers want to call a man something bad, there seems to be a large vocabulary available to them but if they want to use a term which is good to describe a male, there is a small vocabulary available. The reverse is true for women."

18 Certainly we do not always think positively about males; witness such words as *jerk*, *creep*, *crumb*, *slob*, *fink*, and *jackass*. But much of what deter-

mines our positive and negative feelings relates to the roles people play. We have very negative feelings toward someone who is hurting us or threatening us or in some way making our lives miserable. To be able to do this, the person has to have power over us and this power usually belongs to males.

On the other hand, when someone helps us or makes our life more pleasant, we have positive feelings toward that person or that role. *Mother* is one of the positive female terms in English, and we see such extensions of it as *Mother Nature*, *Mother Earth*, *mother lode*, *mother superior*, etc. But even though a word like *mother* is positive, it is still not a word of power. In the minds of English speakers being female and being powerless or passive are so closely related that we use the terms *feminine* and *lady* either to mean female or to describe a certain kind of quiet and unobtrusive behavior.

Words Labeling Women as Things

20 Because of our expectations of passivity, we like to compare females to items that people acquire for their pleasure. For example, in a . . . commercial for the television show "Happy Days," one of the characters announced that in the coming season, they were going to have not only "cars, motorcycles, and girls," but also a band. Another example of this kind of thinking is the comparison of females to food since food is something we all enjoy, even though it is extremely passive. We describe females as such delectable morsels as a *dish*, a *cookie*, a *tart*, *cheesecake*, *sugar and spice*, a *cute tomato*, *honey*, a *sharp cookie*, and *sweetie pie*. We say a particular girl has a *peaches and cream complexion* or "she looks good enough to eat." And parents give their daughters such names as *Candy* and *Cherry*.

21 Other pleasurable items that we compare females to are toys. Young girls are called *little dolls* or *China dolls*, while older girls—if they are attractive—are simply called *dolls*. We might say about a woman, "She's pretty as a picture," or "She's a fashion plate." And we might compare a girl to a plant by saying she is a *clinging vine*, a *shrinking violet*, or a *wallflower*. And we might name our daughters after plants such as *Rose*, *Lily*, *Ivy*, *Daisy*, *Iris*, and *Petunia*. Compare these names to boys' names such as *Martin* which means warlike, *Ernest* which means resolute fighter, *Nicholas* which means victory, *Val* which means strong or valiant, and *Leo* which means lion. We would be very hesitant to give a boy the name of something as passive as a flower although we might say about a man that he is a *late-bloomer*. This is making a comparison between a man and the most active thing a plant can do, which is to bloom. The only other familiar plant metaphor used for a man is the insulting *pansy*, implying that he is like a woman.

lustration of this, I may tell here that I breathed sea-air on the Firth of Forth, in Scotland, while a boy; then was taken to Wisconsin, where I remained nineteen years; then, without in all this time having breathed one breath of the sea, I walked quietly, alone, from the middle of the Mississippi Valley to the Gulf of Mexico, on a botanical excursion, and while in Florida, far from the coast, my attention wholly bent on the splendid tropical vegetation about me, I suddenly recognized a sea-breeze, as it came sifting through the palmettos and blooming vine-tangles, which at once awakened and set free a thousand dormant associations, and made me a boy again in Scotland, as if all the intervening years had been annihilated.

16 Most people like to look at mountain rivers, and bear them in mind; but few care to look at the winds, though far more beautiful and sublime, and though they become at times about as visible as flowing water. When the north winds in winter are making upward sweeps over the curving summits of the High Sierra, the fact is sometimes published with flying snow-banners a mile long. Those portions of the winds thus embodied can scarce be wholly invisible, even to the darkest imagination. And when we look around over an agitated forest, we may see something of the wind that stirs it, by its effects upon the trees. Yonder it descends in a rush of water-like ripples, and sweeps over the bending pines from hill to hill. Nearer, we see detached plumes and leaves, now speeding by on level currents, now whirling in eddies, or, escaping over the edges of the whirls, soaring aloft on grand, upswelling domes of air, or tossing on flame-like crests. Smooth, deep currents, cascades, falls, and swirling eddies, sing around every tree and leaf, and over all the varied topography of the region with telling changes of form, like mountain rivers conforming to the features of their channels.

17 After tracing the Sierra streams from their fountains to the plains, marking where they bloom white in falls, glide in crystal plumes, surge gray and foam-filled in boulder-choked gorges, and slip through the woods in long, tranquil reaches—after thus learning their language and forms in detail, we may at length hear them chanting all together in one grand anthem, and comprehend them all in clear inner vision, covering the range like lace. But even this spectacle is far less sublime and not a whit more substantial than what we may behold of these storm-streams of air in the mountain woods.

18 We all travel the milky way together, trees and men; but it never occurred to me until this storm-day, while swinging in the wind, that trees are travelers, in the ordinary sense. They make many journeys, not extensive ones, it is true; but our own little journeys, away and back again, are only little more than tree-wavings—many of them not so much.

19 When the storm began to abate, I dismounted and sauntered down through the calming woods. The storm-tones died away, and, turning toward the east, I beheld the countless hosts of the forests hushed and tranquil, tow-

ering above one another on the slopes of the hills like a devout audience. The setting sun filled them with amber light, and seemed to say, while they listened, "My peace I give unto you."

As I gazed on the impressive scene, all the so-called ruin of the storm was forgotten, and never before did these noble woods appear so fresh, so joyous, so immortal.

Olive Schreiner

Sex-Parasitism

South African novelist Olive Schreiner was the daughter of a missionary father and a stern and rigid Victorian mother who believed in the superiority of the British over native black Africans and the Boers. Schreiner's parents met any show of sympathy for those two groups with severe punishment. Rather than adopt the same views, Schreiner resolved to spend her life defending the weak against the strong. In 1889 she met and married a cattle rancher, Samuel Cronwright, another anti-imperialist who, at her request, took her name when they married. The first novel Schreiner published, *The Story of an African Farm*, was an immediate best-seller. Her 1911 work *Women and Labour* is the volume from which this selection is taken. In this work Schreiner outlines the history and fate of any nation in which prosperity, because of the subjugation of a slavery class, leads to its women becoming useless except as vessels in which to breed the next generation.

THERE NEVER HAS BEEN, AND AS FAR AS CAN BE SEEN, there never will be, a time when the majority of the males in any society will be supported by the rest of the males in a condition of perfect mental and physical inactivity. "Find labour or die," is the choice ultimately put before the human male today, as in the past; and *this* constitutes his labour problem.

The labour of the man may not always be useful in the highest sense to his society, or it may even be distinctly harmful and antisocial, as in the case of the robber-barons of the Middle Ages, who lived by capturing and despoiling all who passed by their castles; or as in the case of the share speculators, stockjobbers, ring-and-corner capitalists, and monopolists of the present day, who feed upon the productive labours of society without contributing anything to its welfare. But even males so occupied are compelled to expend a vast amount of energy and even a low intelligence in their callings; and, however injurious to their societies, they run no personal risk of handing down effete and enervated constitutions to their race. Whether beneficially or unbeneficially, the human male must, generally speaking, employ his intellect, or his muscle, or die.

3 The position of the unemployed modern female is one wholly different. The choice before her, as her ancient fields of domestic labour slip from her, is not generally or often at the present day the choice between finding new fields of labour, or death; but one far more serious in its ultimate reaction on humanity as a whole—it is the choice between finding new forms of labour or sinking into a condition of more or less complete and passive *sex-parasitism!*

4 Again and again in the history of the past, when among human creatures a certain stage of material civilization has been reached, a curious tendency has manifested itself for the human female to become more or less parasitic; social conditions tend to rob her of all forms of active conscious social labour, and to reduce her, like the field-bug, to the passive exercise of her sex functions alone. And the result of this parasitism has invariably been the decay in vitality and intelligence of the female, followed after a longer or shorter period by that of her male descendants and her entire society.

5 Nevertheless, in the history of the past the dangers of the *sex-parasitism* have never threatened more than a small section of the females of the human race, those exclusively of some dominant race or class; the mass of women beneath them being still compelled to assume many forms of strenuous activity. It is at the present day, and under the peculiar conditions of our modern civilization, that for the first time *sex-parasitism* has become a danger, more or less remote, to the mass of civilized women, perhaps ultimately to all.

6 In the very early stages of human growth, the sexual parasitism and degeneration of the female formed no possible source of social danger. Where the conditions of life rendered it inevitable that all the labour of a community should be performed by the members of that community for themselves, without the assistance of slaves or machinery, the tendency has always been rather to throw an excessive amount of social labour on the female. Under no conditions, at no time, in no place, in the history of the world have the males of any period, of any nation, or of any class, shown the slightest inclination to allow their own females to become inactive or parasitic, so long as the actual muscular labour of feeding and clothing them would in that case have devolved upon *themselves!*

7 The parasitism of the human female becomes a possibility only when a point in civilization is reached (such as that which was attained in the ancient civilizations of Greece, Rome, Persia, Assyria, India, and such as today exists in many of the civilizations of the East, such as those of China and Turkey), when, owing to the extensive employment of the labour of slaves, or of subject races or classes, the dominant race or class has become so liberally supplied with the material goods of life that mere physical toil on the part of its own female members has become unnecessary.

8 It is when this point has been reached, and never before, that the symp-

toms of female parasitism have in the past almost invariably tended to manifest themselves, and have become a social danger. The males of the dominant class have almost always contrived to absorb to themselves the new intellectual occupations, which the absence of necessity for the old forms of physical toil made possible in their societies and the females of the dominant class or race, for whose muscular labours there was now also no longer any need, not succeeding grasping or attaining to these new forms of labour, have sunk into a state in which, performing no species of active social duty, they have existed through the passive performance of sexual functions alone, with how much or how little of discontent will now never be known, since no literary record has been made by the woman of the past, of her desires or sorrows. Then, in place of the active labouring woman, upholding society—by her toil, has come the effete wife, concubine or prostitute, clad in fine raiment, the work of others' fingers; fed on luxurious viands, the result of others' toil, waited on and tended by the labour of others. The need for her physical labour having gone, and mental industry not having taken its place, she bedecked and scented her person, or had it bedecked and scented for her, she lay upon her sofa, or drove or was carried out in her vehicle, and, loaded with jewels, she sought by dissipations and amusements to fill up the inordinate blank left by the lack of productive activity. And the hand whitened and frame softened, till, at last, the very duties of motherhood, which were all the constitution of her life left her, became distasteful, and, from the instant when her infant came damp from her womb, it passed into the hands of others, to be tended and reared by them; and from youth to age her offspring often owed nothing to her personal toil. In many cases so complete was her enervation, that at last the very joy of giving life, the glory and beatitude of a virile womanhood, became distasteful; and she sought to evade it, not because of its interference with more imperious duties to those already born of her, or to her society, but because her existence of inactivity had robbed her of all joy in strenuous exertion and endurance in any form. Finely clad, tenderly housed, life became for her merely the gratification of her own physical and sexual appetites, and the appetites of the male, through the stimulation of which she could maintain herself. And, whether as kept wife, kept mistress, or prostitute, she contributed nothing to the active and sustaining labours of her society. She had attained to the full development of that type which, whether in modern Paris or New York or London, or in ancient Greece, Assyria, or Rome, is essentially one in its features, its nature, and its results. She was the "fine lady," the human female parasite—the most deadly microbe which can make its appearance on the surface of any social organism.

Wherever in the history of the past this type has reached its full development and has comprised the bulk of the females belonging to any dominant

class or race, it has heralded its decay. In Assyria, Greece, Rome, Persia, as in Turkey today, the same material conditions have produced the same social disease among wealthy and dominant races and again and again when the nation so affected has come into contact with nations more healthily constituted, the diseased condition has contributed to its destruction.

Henry David Thoreau

An Immoral Law

Henry David Thoreau (1817–1862) was known in his time as an odd sort of educated vagrant, rarely employed, who mostly kept to himself. He wrote voraciously in his journals at the suggestion of his most notable friend, Ralph Waldo Emerson. Occasionally, to earn extra money, he lectured about life in the backwoods, peppering his rather dry talks with folksy anecdotes. The one exception was when he spoke or wrote about slavery, when his laconic wit became an intense fire of emotion. In his most significant book, *Walden*, he expresses his seemingly contradictory individualist philosophy of civil responsibility. The following selection, from his journal entry of June 16, 1854, is an application of the principles expressed in *Walden* to an event which deeply affected Thoreau's community—the enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Act by the forcible returning of a black man (possibly not even an escaped slave) to the South. The Fugitive Slave Act was never again enforced in Massachusetts.

- 1 THE EFFECT OF A GOOD GOVERNMENT IS TO MAKE LIFE MORE VALUABLE,—of a bad government, to make it less valuable. We can afford that railroad and all merely material stock should depreciate, for that only compels us to live more simply and economically; but suppose the value of life itself should be depreciated. Every man in New England capable of the sentiment of patriotism must have lived the last three weeks with the sense of having suffered a vast, indefinite loss. I had never respected this government, but I had foolishly thought that I might manage to live here, attending to my private affairs, and forget it. For my part, my old and worthiest pursuits have lost I cannot say how much of their attraction, and I feel that my investment in life here is worth many per cent, less since Massachusetts last deliberately and forcibly restored an innocent man, Anthony Burns, to slavery. I dwelt before in the illusion that my life passed somewhere only between heaven and hell, but now I cannot persuade myself that I do not dwell wholly within hell. The sight of that political organization called Massachusetts is to me morally covered with scoriae and volcanic cinders, such as Milton imagined. If there is any hell more unprincipled than our

Definition

1. **Use the type of definition that suits your purpose.** There are two types of definitions: concise "dictionary" or sentence definitions, and essay or extended definitions. Any essay may require a sentence definition if you introduce a specialized or technical term with which your readers may not be familiar. In those cases, simply define the word in a sentence or two and move on. This chapter mostly concerns itself with extended definitions, which not only provide a concise definition of a term or concept, but also build a fuller explanation of its object, using any of the other strategies in this book—example, description, analogy, and so on. When writing an extended definition, you may begin with dictionary definition, as D. H. Lawrence does in "Pornography," but the remainder of the essay should add something to, or even, as Lawrence does, completely contradict the standard definition.
2. **Select a writing strategy to develop your definition.** Depending on your purpose, any writing strategy can be effective in developing an extended definition. William Raspberry makes a powerful point about the word "black" by using examples. Margaret Atwood explains the term "pornography" largely by using narration. Because it can employ any writing strategy, definition is less of a strategy in itself than it is a goal. When writing an extended definition, you can use any strategy or combination of strategies to help you achieve your goal.
3. **Make your definition clear and unique.** Both dictionary and extended definitions must be clear enough for readers to understand, and precise enough to make a term or concept clearly different from all others. Defining "dog" as "an animal" is not unique because many other animals exist.
4. **Make sure your definition essay makes a point.** Like any other essay, definition essays should make a point. Usually this means you need a thesis sentence and a conclusion. For example, Marie Winn's point is that TV is as addictive as drugs or cigarettes, and Jason Gray suggests that intelligence is a complicated concept that can't be measured by a single number. Don't settle for the obvious definition of a term—that, after all, is what dictionaries are for.

D. H. Lawrence

Pornography

D. H. Lawrence (1885–1930) was a controversial figure in English literature because of the vivid descriptions of sex in his novels. His most famous work, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, was banned in both England and the United States when it was published in 1928. In fact, the version published in 1928 was actually toned down by Lawrence in an attempt to elude censorship. After a widely publicized trial in 1960, the work was finally allowed to be published in unexpurgated form. Though the passages in question are actually quite tame by today's standards, some have even credited the re-release of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* in 1961 with causing the "free-love" movement of the 1960s. Here Lawrence defends his work by constructing a definition of pornography which carefully excludes his novels.

WHAT IS PORNOGRAPHY TO ONE MAN is the laughter of genius to another. The word itself, we are told, means "pertaining to harlots"—the graph of the harlot. But nowadays, what is a harlot? If she was a woman who took money from a man in return for going to bed with him—really, most wives sold themselves, in the past, and plenty of harlots gave themselves, when they felt like it, for nothing. If a woman hasn't got a tiny streak of harlot in her, she's a dry stick as a rule. And probably most harlots had somewhere a streak of womanly generosity. Why be so cut and dried? The law is a dreary thing, and its judgments have nothing to do with life. . . .

One essay on pornography, I remember, comes to the conclusion that pornography in art is that which is calculated to arouse sexual desire, or sexual excitement. And stress is laid on the fact, whether the author or artist intended to arouse sexual feelings. It is the old vexed question of intention, become so dull today, when we know how strong and influential our unconscious intentions are. And why a man should be held guilty of his conscious intentions, and innocent of his unconscious intentions, I don't know, since every man is more made up of unconscious intentions than of conscious ones. I am what I am, not merely what I think I am.

However! We take it, I assume, that *pornography* is something base, something unpleasant. In short, we don't like it. And why don't we like it? Because it arouses sexual feelings?

I think not. No matter how hard we may pretend otherwise, most of us rather like a moderate rousing of our sex. It warms us, stimulates us like sunshine on a grey day. After a century or two of Puritanism, this is still true of most people. Only the mob-habit of condemning any form of sex is too strong to let us admit it naturally. And there are, of course, many people who are gen-

uinely repelled by the simplest and most natural stirrings of sexual feeling. But these people are perverts who have fallen into hatred of their fellow men; thwarted, disappointed, unfulfilled people, of whom, alas, our civilisation contains so many. And they nearly always enjoy some unsimple and unnatural form of sex excitement, secretly.

5 Even quite advanced art critics would try to make us believe that any picture or book which had "sex appeal" was *ipso facto* a bad book or picture. This is just canting hypocrisy. Half the great poems, pictures, music, stories, of the whole world are great by virtue of the beauty of their sex appeal. Titian or Renoir, the Song of Solomon or *Jane Eyre*, Mozart or "Annie Laurie," the loveliness is all interwoven with sex appeal, sex stimulus, call it what you will. Even Michelangelo, who rather hated sex, can't help filling the Cornucopia with phallic acorns. Sex is a very powerful, beneficial and necessary stimulus in human life, and we are all grateful when we feel its warm, natural flow through us, like a form of sunshine. . . .

6 Then what is pornography, after all this? It isn't sex appeal or sex stimulus in art. It isn't even a deliberate intention on the part of the artist to arouse or excite sexual feelings. There's nothing wrong with sexual feelings in themselves, so long as they are straightforward and not sneaking or sly. The right sort of sex stimulus is invaluable to human daily life. Without it the world grows grey. I would give everybody the gay Renaissance stories to read; they would help to shake off a lot of grey self-importance, which is our modern civilised disease.

7 But even I would censor genuine pornography, rigorously. It would not be very difficult. In the first place, genuine pornography is almost always underworld, it doesn't come into the open. In the second, you can recognise it by the insult it offers, invariably, to sex and to the human spirit.

8 Pornography is the attempt to insult sex, to do dirt on it. This is unpardonable. Take the very lowest instance, the picture postcard sold underhand, by the underworld, in most cities. What I have seen of them have been of an ugliness to make you cry. The insult to the human body, the insult to a vital human relationship! Ugly and cheap they make the human nudity, ugly and degraded they make the sexual act, trivial and cheap and nasty.

9 It is the same with the books they sell in the underworld. They are either so ugly they make you ill, or so fatuous you can't imagine anybody but a cretin or a moron reading them, or writing them.

10 It is the same with the dirty limericks that people tell after dinner, or the dirty stories one hears commercial travellers telling each other in a smoke-room. Occasionally there is a really funny one, that redeems a great deal. But usually they are just ugly and repellent, and the so-called "humour" is just a trick of doing dirt on sex.

11 Now the human nudity of a great many modern people is just ugly and de-

graded, and the sexual act between modern people is just the same, merely ugly and degrading. But this is nothing to be proud of. It is the catastrophe of our civilisation. I am sure no other civilisation, not even the Roman, has showed such a vast proportion of ignominious and degraded nudity, and ugly, squalid dirty sex. Because no other civilisation has given sex into the underworld, and nudity to the w.c.

The intelligent young, thank heaven, seem determined to alter in these two respects. They are rescuing their young nudity from the stuffy, pornographical hole-and-corner underworld of their elders, and they refuse to sneak about the sexual relation. This is a change the elderly grey ones of course deplore, but it is in fact a very great change for the better, and a real revolution.

But it is amazing how strong is the will in ordinary, vulgar people, to do dirt on sex. It was one of my fond illusions, when I was young, that the ordinary healthy-seeming sort of men in railway carriages, or the smoke-room of an hotel or a pullman, were healthy in their feelings and had a wholesome, rough devil-may-care attitude towards sex. All wrong! All wrong! Experience teaches that common individuals of this sort have a disgusting attitude towards sex, a disgusting contempt of it, a disgusting desire to insult it. If such fellows have intercourse with a woman, they triumphantly feel that they have done her dirt, and now she is lower, cheaper, more contemptible than she was before.

It is individuals of this sort that tell dirty stories, carry indecent picture postcards, and know the indecent books. This is the great pornographical class—the really common men-in-the-street and women-in-the-street. They have as great a hate and contempt of sex as the greyest Puritan, and when an appeal is made to them, they are always on the side of the angels. They insist that a film heroine shall be a neuter, a sexless thing of washed-out purity. They insist that real sex-feeling shall only be shown by the villain or villainess, low lust. They find a Titian or a Renoir really indecent, and they don't want their wives and daughters to see it.

Why? Because they have the grey disease of sex-hatred, coupled with the yellow disease of dirt-lust. The sex functions and the excrementory functions in the human body work so close together, yet they are, so to speak, utterly different in direction. Sex is a creative flow, the excrementory flow is towards dissolution, decreation, if we may use such a word. In the really healthy human being the distinction between the two is instant, our profoundest instincts are perhaps our instincts of opposition between the two flows. But in the degraded human being the deep instincts have gone dead, and then the two flows become identical. This is the secret of really vulgar and of pornographical people: the sex flow and the excrement flow is the same to them. It happens when the psyche deteriorates, and the profound controlling instincts col-

lapse. Then sex is dirt and dirt is sex, and sexual excitement becomes a playing with dirt, and any sign of sex in a woman becomes a show of her dirt. This is the condition of the common, vulgar human being whose name is legion, and who lifts his voice, and it is the *Vox populi, vox Dei*. And this is the source of all pornography.

Margaret Atwood

Pornography

Margaret Atwood (b. 1939), a novelist, poet, and essayist, is best known as the author of novels such as *The Handmaid's Tale* (1986) and *Cat's Eye* (1989). In this essay, Atwood clearly has a much narrower definition of pornography than D. H. Lawrence. Instead of merely defining pornography, however, she is more interested in determining how to regulate it. The issues she brings up are not without consequence: how can we balance the need for freedom of expression against the rights of potential victims of rape or incest? If pornography incites people to violence, shouldn't it be banned? Should we define a movie depicting the horrible consequences of rape as "pornography" or "education"?

- 1 WHEN I WAS IN FINLAND A FEW YEARS AGO for an international writers' conference, I had occasion to say a few paragraphs in public on the subject of pornography. The context was a discussion of political repression, and I was suggesting the possibility of a link between the two. The immediate result was that a male journalist took several large bites out of me. Prudery and pornography are two halves of the same coin, said he, and I was clearly a prude. What could you expect from an Anglo-Canadian? Afterward, a couple of pleasant Scandinavian men asked me what I had been so worked up about. All "pornography" means, they said, is graphic depictions of whores, and what was the harm in that?
- 2 Not until then did it strike me that the male journalist and I had two entirely different things in mind. By "pornography," he meant naked bodies and sex. I, on the other hand, had recently been doing the research for my novel *Bodily Harm*, and was still in a state of shock from some of the material I had seen, including the Ontario Board of Film Censors' "outtakes." By "pornography," I meant women getting their nipples snipped off with garden shears, having meat hooks stuck into their vaginas, being disemboweled; little girls being raped; men (yes, there are some men) being smashed to a pulp and forcibly sodomized. The cutting edge of pornography, as far as I could see, was

no longer simple old copulation, hanging from the chandelier or otherwise: it was death, messy, explicit and highly sadistic. I explained this to the nice Scandinavian men. "Oh, but that's just the United States," they said. "Everyone knows they're sick." In their country, they said, violent "pornography" of that kind was not permitted on television or in movies; indeed, excessive violence of any kind was not permitted. They had drawn a clear line between erotica, which earlier studies had shown did not incite men to more aggressive and brutal behavior toward women, and violence, which later studies indicated did.

Some time after that I was in Saskatchewan, where, because of the scenes in *Bodily Harm*, I found myself on an open-line radio show answering questions about "pornography." Almost no one who phoned in was in favor of it, but again they weren't talking about the same stuff I was, because they hadn't seen it. Some of them were all set to stamp out bathing suits and negligees, and, if possible, any depictions of the female body whatsoever. God, it was implied, did not approve of female bodies, and sex of any kind, including that practised by bumblebees, should be shoved back into the dark, where it belonged. I had more than a suspicion that *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Margaret Lawrence's *The Diviners*, and indeed most books by most serious modern authors would have ended up as confetti if left in the hands of these callers.

For me, these two experiences illustrate the two poles of the emotionally heated debate that is now thundering around this issue. They also underline the desirability and even the necessity of defining the terms. "Pornography" is now one of those catchalls, like "Marxism" and "feminism," that have become so broad they can mean almost anything, ranging from certain verses in the Bible, ads for skin lotion and sex tests for children to the contents of *Penthouse*, Naughty '90s postcards and films with titles containing the word *Nazi* that show vicious scenes of torture and killing. It's easy to say that sensible people can tell the difference. Unfortunately, opinions on what constitutes a sensible person vary.

But even sensible people tend to lose their cool when they start talking about this subject. They soon stop talking and start yelling, and the name calling begins. Those in favor of censorship (which may include groups not noticeably in agreement on other issues, such as some feminists and religious fundamentalists) accuse the others of exploiting women through the use of degrading images, contributing to the corruption of children, and adding to the general climate of violence and threat in which both women and children live in this society; or, though they may not give much of a hoot about actual women and children, they invoke moral standards and God's supposed aversion to "filth," "smut" and deviated *preversion*, which may mean ankles.

The camp in favor of total "freedom of expression" often comes out howling as loud as the Romans would have if told they could no longer have inno-

cent fun watching the lions eat up Christians. It too may include segments of the population who are not natural bedfellows: those who proclaim their God-given right to freedom, including the freedom to tote guns, drive when drunk, drool over chicken porn and get off on videotapes of women being raped and beaten, may be waving the same anticensorship banner as responsible liberals who fear the return of Mrs. Grundy, or gay groups for whom sexual emancipation involves the concept of "sexual theatre." *Whatever turns you on* is a handy motto, as is *A man's home is his castle* (and if it includes a dungeon with beautiful maidens strung up in chains and bleeding from every pore, that's his business).

7 Meanwhile, theoreticians theorize and speculators speculate. Is today's pornography yet another indication of the hatred of the body, the deep mind-body split, which is supposed to pervade Western Christian society? Is it a backlash against the women's movement by men who are threatened by uppity female behavior in real life, so like to fantasize about women done up like outsize parcels, being turned into hamburger, kneeling at their feet in slave-like adoration or sucking off guns? Is it a sign of collective impotence, of a generation of men who can't relate to real women at all but have to make do with bits of celluloid and paper? Is the current flood just a result of smart marketing and aggressive promotion by the money men in what has now become a multi-billion dollar industry? If they were selling movies about men getting their testicles stuck full of knitting needles by women with swastikas on their sleeves, would they do as well, or is this penchant somehow peculiarly male? If so, why? Is pornography a power trip rather than a sex one? Some say that those ropes, chains, muzzles and other restraining devices are an argument for the immense power female sexuality still wields in the male imagination: you don't put these things on dogs unless you're afraid of them. Others, more literary, wonder about the shift from the 19th-century Magic Woman or Femme Fatale image to the lollipop-licker, airhead or turkey-carcass treatment of women in porn today. The proporners don't care much about theory; they merely demand product. The antiporners don't care about it in the final analysis either; there's dirt on the street, and they want it cleaned up, now.

8 It seems to me that this conversation, with its *You're-a-prude/You're-a-pervert* dialectic, will never get anywhere as long as we continue to think of this material as just "entertainment." Possibly we're deluded by the packaging, the format: magazine, book, movie, theatrical presentation. We're used to thinking of these things as part of the "entertainment industry," and we're used to thinking of ourselves as free adult people who ought to be able to see any kind of "entertainment" we want to. That was what the First Choice pay-TV debate was all about. After all, it's only entertainment, right? Entertainment means fun, and only a killjoy would be antifun. What's the harm?

9 This is obviously the central question: *What's the harm?* If there isn't any

real harm to any real people, then the antiporners can tsk-tsk and/or throw up as much as they like, but they can't rightfully expect more legal controls or sanctions. However, the no harm position is far from being proven.

(For instance, there's a clear-cut case for banning—as the federal government has proposed—movies, photos and videos that depict children engaging in sex with adults: real children are used to make the movies, and hardly anybody thinks this is ethical. The possibilities for coercion are too great.)

To shift the viewpoint, I'd like to suggest three other models for looking at "pornography"—and here I mean the violent kind.

12 Those who find the idea of regulating pornographic materials repugnant because they think it's Fascist or Communist or otherwise not in accordance with the principles of an open democratic society should consider that Canada has made it illegal to disseminate material that may lead to hatred toward any group because of race or religion. I suggest that if pornography of the violent kind depicted these acts being done predominantly to Chinese, to blacks, to Catholics, it would be off the market immediately, under the present laws. Why is hate literature illegal? Because whoever made the law thought that such material might incite real people to do real awful things to other real people. The human brain is to a certain extent a computer: garbage in, garbage out. We only hear about the extreme cases (like that of American multimurderer Ted Bundy) in which pornography has contributed to the death and/or mutilation of women and/or men. Although pornography is not the only factor involved in the creation of such deviance, it certainly has upped the ante by suggesting both a variety of techniques and the social acceptability of such actions. Nobody knows yet what effect this stuff is having on the less psychotic.

13 Studies have shown that a large part of the market for all kinds of porn, soft and hard, is drawn from the 16-to-21-year-old population of young men. Boys used to learn about sex on the street, or (in Italy, according to Fellini movies) from friendly whores, or, in more genteel surroundings, from girls, their parents, or, once upon a time, in school, more or less. Now porn has been added, and sex education in the schools is rapidly being phased out. The buck has been passed, and boys are being taught that all women secretly like to be raped and that real men get high on scooping out women's digestive tracts.

14 Boys learn their concept of masculinity from other men: is this what most men want them to be learning? If word gets around that rapists are "normal" and even admirable men, will boys feel that in order to be normal, admirable and masculine they will have to be rapists? Human beings are enormously flexible, and how they turn out depends a lot on how they're educated, by the society in which they're immersed as well as by their teachers. In a society that advertises and glorifies rape or even implicitly condones it, more women get raped. It becomes socially acceptable. And at a time when men and the tradi-

tional male role have taken a lot of flak and men are confused and casting around for an acceptable way of being male (and, in some cases, not getting much comfort from women on that score), this must be at times a pleasing thought.

15 It would be naïve to think of violent pornography as just harmless entertainment. It's also an educational tool and a powerful propaganda device. What happens when boy educated on porn meets girl brought up on Harlequin romances? The clash of expectations can be heard around the block. She wants him to get down on his knees with a ring, he wants her to get down on all fours with a ring in her nose. Can this marriage be saved?

16 Pornography has certain things in common with such addictive substances as alcohol and drugs: for some, though by no means for all, it induces chemical changes in the body, which the user finds exciting and pleasurable. It also appears to attract a "hard core" of habitual users and a penumbra of those who use it occasionally but aren't dependent on it in any way. There are also significant numbers of men who aren't much interested in it, not because they're undersexed but because real life is satisfying their needs, which may not require as many appliances as those of users.

17 For the "hard core," pornography may function as alcohol does for the alcoholic: tolerance develops, and a little is no longer enough. This may account for the short viewing time and fast turnover in porn theatres. Mary Brown, chairwoman of the Ontario Board of Film Censors, estimates that for every one mainstream movie requesting entrance to Ontario, there is one porno flick. Not only the quantity consumed but the quality of explicitness must escalate, which may account for the growing violence: once the big deal was breasts, then it was genitals, then copulation, then that was no longer enough and the hard users had to have more. The ultimate kick is death, and after that, as the Marquis de Sade so boringly demonstrated, multiple death.

18 The existence of alcoholism has not led us to ban social drinking. On the other hand, we do have laws about drinking and driving, excessive drunkenness and other abuses of alcohol that may result in injury or death to others.

19 This leads us back to the key question: what's the harm? Nobody knows, but this society should find out fast, before the saturation point is reached. The Scandinavian studies that showed a connection between depictions of sexual violence and increased impulse toward it on the part of male viewers would be a starting point, but many more questions remain to be raised as well as answered. What, for instance, is the crucial difference between men who are users and men who are not? Does using affect a man's relationship with actual women, and, if so, adversely? Is there a clear line between erotica and violent pornography, or are they on an escalating continuum? Is this a "men versus women" issue, with all men secretly siding with the pro-

porners and all women secretly siding against? (I think not; there *are* lots of men who don't think that running their true love through the Cuisinart is the best way they can think of to spend a Saturday night, and they're just as nauseated by films of someone else doing it as women are.) Is pornography merely an expression of the sexual confusion of this age or an active contributor to it?

Nobody wants to go back to the age of official repression, when even piano legs were referred to as "limbs" and had to wear pantaloons to be decent. Neither do we want to end up in George Orwell's 1984, in which pornography is turned out by the State to keep the proles in a state of torpor, sex itself is considered dirty and the approved practise it only for reproduction. But Rome under the emperors isn't such a good model either.

If all men and women respected each other, if sex were considered joyful and life-enhancing instead of a wallow in germ-filled glop, if everyone were in love all the time, if, in other words, many people's lives were more satisfactory for them than they appear to be now, pornography might just go away on its own. But since this is obviously not happening, we as a society are going to have to make some informed and responsible decisions about how to deal with it.

Mark Gerzon

Manhood: The Elusive Goal

Mark Gerzon, journalist, activist, consultant, lecturer, and writer, has spent much of his life trying to reconcile differences between groups with different beliefs. His journey started with the publication in 1969 of *The Whole World is Watching: A Young Man Looks at Youth's Dissent*, which explored the conflict between the baby-boom generation and their parents' generation. He spent the seventies cofounding and editing *World-Paper*, a "global newspaper" with contributing editors from the cultures of four continents. In *A Choice of Heroes: The Changing Faces of American Manhood*, published in 1982, Gerzon tried to connect the feminist movement with the emerging men's movement. In this excerpt from *A Choice of Heroes*, Gerzon recounts an episode from his own youth and contrasts it with modern expectations for men.

There is no steady unretracing progress in this life. . . . Once gone through, we trace the round again; and are infants, boys, and men, and Ifs eternally.

HERMAN MELVILLE, *MOBY DICK*