

# ‘Bastard Science’ and the ‘War on the Butcher’s Knife’:

The Marginal Presence of  
Vegetarianism in Victorian  
Animal Welfare Rhetoric

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One evening in October 1871, a small party of reporters for the *Sphinx* newspaper was treated to a disturbingly irregular meal. Upon arriving at the Trevelyan Hotel for the London Vegetarian Society’s ‘unexpectedly popular’ annual banquet, the incredulous group partook of a bland ‘feast of reason’, consisting of cold potatoes, slices of hard-boiled egg, gherkin and parsley, to which, it was remarked, ‘there seemed a little turkey and sausages wanting’.<sup>1</sup> The serving of the customary preliminaries of tea, bread and butter *together* with the main meal provoked raised eyebrows and some unease, but the numerous speeches of the evening, intended to espouse the virtues of meat-free gastronomy to a curious public, were ultimately dismissed as mere ‘harmless imbecility,’ offering no further threat to the delicacy of those present.

At one point in the evening, however, boundaries were crossed and the journalists’ previous patois of gentle scorn was broken. The prospect of consuming potatoes *without* a commensurate portion of steak was received as an outrageous, if not genuinely unacceptable, proposition: ‘what on earth,’ asked the *Sphinx*, ‘is the meaning of all this rubbish?’<sup>2</sup> Perhaps unsurprisingly, the authors did not emerge from the dinner envisioning any subsequent personal flirtations with vegetarianism.<sup>3</sup> Rather, this dissatisfying encounter with the ‘new mania’ of dietetic reform (patronisingly referred to as a ‘war on the butcher’s knife’) prompted an emphatic rejection of the principles of the

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<sup>1</sup> ‘The Vegetarian Banquet,’ *The Sphinx*, 28 October 1871, 337.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 338.

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

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then-resurgent vegetarian movement and, perhaps more seriously, a dismissal of the Society as hypocritical for its consumption of milk, butter and eggs.<sup>4</sup>

When analysed closely, the cultural encounter reported in the *Sphinx's* satirical article reveals much about British society in the 1870s. Recent scholarship has argued that radical challenges to dietetic mores crystallised a host of Victorian tensions that ultimately transcended the dicta of table manners.<sup>5</sup> The offending Vegetarian Society can accordingly be seen as one of many organisations concerned either directly or tangentially with the broader status of the non-human inhabitants of the British Isles.<sup>6</sup> The Society's engagement with the public, and the print media's coverage of the movement – which *Punch* famously depicted as a group of vain, 'pudding-headed' walking turnips<sup>7</sup> – represents one under-explored axis of a broader debate regarding the status and treatment of animals in Victorian Britain.<sup>8</sup> This article is concerned with the uneasy place of vegetarian rhetoric in the broader 'animal welfare' milieu of the period.

It has been claimed that 'decades after the establishment of the Vegetarian Society, even the most heartfelt pleas against cruelty could avoid reference to vegetarianism'.<sup>9</sup> This article interrogates and complicates the nature of this 'avoidance'. It argues that the predominant silence of mainstream nineteenth century welfarist rhetoric regarding the consumption of meat was not due to a lack of awareness of vegetarianism. On the contrary, discussions of the ethical implications of an omnivorous diet pervaded humanitarian discourse to the extent that dietary reform was almost logically mandated by this rhetoric. It is suggested herein that the continued marginality of vegetarianism was due instead to the sheer *radicalism* of the proposed diet in a society that favoured predominantly animal-based staples.<sup>10</sup> Thus, socially, culturally and morally, vegetarianism was not invisible. It merely lay beyond the purview of acceptable Victorian practice.

Pro-vegetarian rhetoric is identified in two key events of the mid-1870s. The first is the turbulent intellectual climate surrounding the passage of the 1876 Cruelty to Animals Act, which regulated and tacitly sanctioned the polarising practice of vivisection.<sup>11</sup> The bitter controversy over this 'bastard science' placed animal welfare discourse at the forefront of mainstream debate.<sup>12</sup> As such, this emotive period provides a vivid point of entry into the complex Victorian imaginary.<sup>13</sup> Secondly, the meaningful silences in the rhetoric of Victorian anti-cruelty activism will be

4 Ibid. The *Sphinx's* hyperbolic notion of a 'war on the butcher's knife' is representative of one facet of the polarised rhetoric surrounding vegetarianism in late Victorian Britain. As outlined below, proponents of animal welfare posited equally astringent epithets in the opposite direction.

5 See, for example, Ian Miller, 'Evangelicalism and the Early Vegetarian Movement in Britain, c.1847-1860,' *Journal of Religious History*, Vol. 35, No. 2, (2011), 207.

6 Brian Harrison, 'Animals and the State in Nineteenth-Century England,' *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 88, No. 349, (1973), 804.

7 'The Vegetarian Movement,' *Punch*, 30 September 1848, 182.

8 James Turner, *Reckoning with the Beast: Animals, Pain and Humanity in the Victorian Mind*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), 60.

9 James Gregory, *Of Victorians and Vegetarians: The Vegetarian Movement in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, (London: Tauris, 2007), 94.

10 Ibid, 13. During the period in question, Britain was the heaviest consumer of meat in Europe. Theories even abounded about the relationship between the benefits of a protein-rich diet and an imperially dominant military.

11 Harriet Ritvo, *The Animal Estate: The English and Other Creatures in the Victorian Age*, (London: Harvard University Press, 1987), 60. Vivisection refers to the widespread practice of scientific experimentation upon animal subjects.

12 Richard D. French, *Antivivisection and Medical Science in Victorian Society*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), 6.

13 Gregory, *Of Victorians and Vegetarians*, 192.

examined by using Anna Sewell’s immensely popular, yet critically under-examined, 1877 ‘animal autobiography’ *Black Beauty* as a case study.<sup>14</sup>

The temporal proximity of each of these key events is likely not coincidental. Both emerged from the same cultural-ideological ‘moment’ in which ‘novel ideas about the nature of beasts meshed with new perspectives on human nature to force a reassessment of humanity’s relationship with animals’.<sup>15</sup> This reconceived milieu provided the intellectual and cultural backdrop for the vibrant animal welfare mood of the 1870s in which, as contended herein, a covert but surprisingly widespread engagement with vegetarianism can be gleaned. It is essential, therefore, to commence with a summary of this context.

### ‘Non-Humans’: Animals and Historiography

This article enjoins what Carol Freeman and Elizabeth Leane have described as an interdisciplinary ‘animal moment’ in the academy. Informed initially by a re-evaluation of the status of animals in light of such works as Frances Moore Lappé’s *Diet for a Small Planet* (1971), Peter Singer’s *Animal Liberation* (1975) and Jacques Derrida’s ‘post-human’ perspectives, historical scholarship on animals is now a nuanced field.<sup>16</sup> The critical and cultural turns of the 1980s engendered a historical discipline that seeks to elucidate the function of animals in the visual and material cultures of the past, the basic consensus being that animals are ‘good to think with’.<sup>17</sup> The common usage of the expression ‘non-human’ in recent historiography arguably emphasises a normative concern with animals as no longer fundamentally *other* to human experience.<sup>18</sup>

Harriet Ritvo’s widely-cited 1987 monograph, *The Animal Estate*, exemplifies this attempt to combine cultural history and non-human animals, fitting thematic discussions of Victorian society into a master rubric of ‘domination and exploitation’ of nature.<sup>19</sup> While later scholarship has largely eschewed the critical reductionism of Ritvo and contemporaries, her dual focus on animals as both ‘objects’ of human culture and sentient ‘captive’ beings has remained a central assumption of the ‘animal moment’.<sup>20</sup> Essentially, as Kathryn Miele has noted, animals have traditionally ‘served as surrogates for the discussion of human relationships.’ Thus, the ‘treatment of animals’ in the past can potentially reveal much about the society under consideration.<sup>21</sup>

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14 Gina Marlene Dorre, ‘Horses and Corsets: *Black Beauty*, Dress Reform, and the Refashioning of the Victorian Woman,’ *Victorian Literature and Culture*, Vol. 30, No. 1, (2002), 168.

15 Turner, *Reckoning with the Beast*, 60.

16 Carol Freeman and Elizabeth Leane, introduction to *Considering Animals: Contemporary Studies in Human-Animal Relations*, ed. Carol Freeman, Elizabeth Leane and Yvette Watt, (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2011), 1; and Kathleen Kete, ‘Animals and Ideology: The Politics of Animal Protection in Europe,’ in *Representing Animals*, ed. Nigel Rothfels, (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2002), 21.

17 Freeman and Leane, introduction to *Considering Animals*, 6.

18 Teresa Mangum, ‘Animal Angst: Victorians Memorialise Their Pets,’ in *Victorian Animal Dreams: Representations of Animals in Victorian Literature and Culture*, ed. Deborah Denenholz Morse and Martin A. Danahay, (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2007), 26.

19 Ritvo, *The Animal Estate*, 6.

20 Deborah Denenholz Morse and Martin A. Danahay, introduction to *Victorian Animal Dreams: Representations of Animals in Victorian Literature and Culture*, ed. Deborah Denenholz Morse and Martin A. Danahay, (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2007), 6.

21 Kathryn Miele, ‘Horse-Sense: Understanding the Working Horse in Victorian London,’ *Victorian Literature and Culture*, Vol. 37, (2009), 129.

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Erica Fudge has recently located animals within a wider historiographical shift from power to culture, arguing that animal histories take postcolonial emphases on subalternity 'to their logical terminus, [writing] the history of the most unnoticed of all: animals'.<sup>22</sup> In practice, most 'animal histories' are thus concerned with the powerful, revealing act of 'representation' as a historical phenomenon. Recent edited collections, such as Deborah Denenholz Morse and Martin A. Danahay's *Victorian Animal Dreams* (2007) and Nigel Rothfels's *Representing Animals* (2002), have thus engaged with subjects as diverse as Victorian beetle collection,<sup>23</sup> the representation of a 'racialised' crocodile in imperial propaganda,<sup>24</sup> and the poignant rituals of dog funerals.<sup>25</sup> It is with both the influence and the limits of these disciplinary interventions in mind that this article now outlines the societal backdrop to the controversial dietetic and welfarist debates of the 1870s.

### 'Modernity' and the Animal: Darwin, Christianity, and Animal Protection

Prior to discussions of vivisection, *Black Beauty* or vegetarianism, the mistreatment of domestic animals was a suggestive ideological battleground of nineteenth-century British culture.<sup>26</sup> As such, it forms the basic context for this study. The dominant narrative presents the moral realm of the nineteenth century as a progressive continuum, leading inexorably toward the institutionalisation and normalisation of 'modern' animal welfare perspectives.<sup>27</sup> Such statements are necessarily over-simplified, masking, for instance, regional authorities' inability to suppress the working-class practices of cockfighting and badger baiting on grounds of moral sensitivity.<sup>28</sup>

Richard Altick and Peter Bailey have demonstrated that such pre-modern 'survivals' were chiefly combated from the 'top' down in an era that also saw the increasing control of popular moralities through museums, 'self-help' literature, temperance and 'rational recreation'.<sup>29</sup> Germane to this discussion of the classed dimensions of Victorian morality was the simultaneous flourishing of a virulent aristocratic hunting 'cult' associated with upper-class leisure.<sup>30</sup> Such tensions between the social acceptability of different modes of animal use serve to underline the charged, heterogeneous nature of Victorian moralities, particularly in relation to animals.

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22 Erica Fudge, 'A Left-Handed Blow: Writing the History of Animals,' in *Representing Animals*, ed. Nigel Rothfels, (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2002), 4.

23 Cannon Schmitt, 'Victorian Beetlemania,' in *Victorian Animal Dreams: Representations of Animals in Victorian Literature and Culture*, ed. Deborah Denenholz Morse and Martin A. Danahay, (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2007), 37.

24 Mary Elizabeth Leighton and Lisa Surrige, 'The Empire Bites Back: The Racialised Crocodile of the Nineteenth Century,' in *Victorian Animal Dreams: Representations of Animals in Victorian Literature and Culture*, ed. Deborah Denenholz Morse and Martin A. Danahay, (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2007), 251.

25 Mangum, 'Animal Angst,' 31.

26 Dan Weinbren, 'Against All Cruelty: The Humanitarian League, 1891-1919,' *History Workshop*, Vol. 38, (1994), 90; and Zoe Jaques, review of *Talking Animals in British Children's Fiction, 1786-1914*, by Tess Cosslett, and *Victorian Fiction and the Cult of the Horse*, by Gina M. Dorre, *Journal of Victorian Culture*, Vol. 12, No. 2, (2007), 354.

27 Gordon Hughes and Claire Lawson, 'RSPCA and the Criminology of Social Control,' *Crime, Law and Social Change*, Vol. 55, (2011), 380.

28 Harrison, 'Animals and the State,' 789. These and other proscribed customs were seen as pre-modern and carnivalesque by Victorian middle-class reformers.

29 Richard D. Altick, *The Shows of London*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), 4; and Peter Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England: Rational Recreation and the Contest for Control, 1830-1885*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), 35.

30 John M. MacKenzie, *The Empire of Nature: Hunting, Conservation and British Imperialism*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), 26.

The status of working horses was one of the most topical facets of popular animal welfare discourse. In 1838, the *Weekly True Sun* tapped into the stirring ‘emancipation’ rhetoric of the burgeoning anti-slavery movement to elucidate the cruelty of the ‘bearing-rein,’ a controversial device that artificially held horses’ heads high so as to give the impression of anthropomorphic ‘nobility’. As Harriet Ritvo has argued, the success of the rein itself depended upon a sense of equivalence between human and animal. That a high-raised head evinced a sense of pride by human and not equine standards, was apparently not evident to those who restricted the respiration of their horses in such a manner.<sup>31</sup>

Interestingly, a parallel sense of human-animal equivalence was also employed to oppose the bearing-rein. According to the *Weekly True Sun*, the instrument was not only ‘injurious,’ but also apparently ‘embarrassing’ to the horse, whose feelings emphatically *mattered*.<sup>32</sup> A similar plea for a more ‘humane’ treatment of urban beasts could also be found in *Bell’s Life in London and Sporting Chronicle* in 1834: ‘the poor intelligent creature ... suddenly receives a heavy punishment which he does not comprehend.’<sup>33</sup>

Such commonplace appeals to humane sympathies depended on the existence of a world-view of sufficient sophistication to encompass an awareness of the subjective suffering of ‘the lower creation’.<sup>34</sup> It is conventional to assert that this moralism was ascriptive to a profoundly changing relationship to ‘nature’ at the time. A number of factors are frequently cited as relevant in this schema, including the world-shrinking processes of industrialisation, urbanisation and imperial expansion, and the rationalisation of the British workforce in line with the emergence of what Peter Bailey has termed the dicta of a ‘mature industrial society’.<sup>35</sup> A concomitant growth in real wages, literacy (after 1870) and ‘leisure’ time allowed for the development of an increasingly uniform, majority or ‘mass’ culture in Britain’s cities.<sup>36</sup>

By mid-century, a growing stratification between ‘natural’ and ‘urban’ allowed for a perceived cultural antagonism between ‘modern’ and ‘brutish’ tendencies in humanity to predominate.<sup>37</sup> This cultural shift was largely the result of the Enlightenment, which engendered a reconceptualisation of the world along more ‘rational’ lines.<sup>38</sup> To Nigel Rothfels, a ‘modern sensibility’ toward animals developed in this context, in which moralistic philosophies and theologies increasingly penetrated public discourse regarding natural history and zoology.<sup>39</sup> To Brian Harrison, however, the chief factor was demographic: congested urban life made the actual suffering of animals more ‘self-

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31 Ritvo, *The Animal Estate*, 19.

32 ‘Horse Emancipation,’ *The Weekly True Sun*, 18 November 1838, 2182.

33 ‘Treatment of Horses in England and on the Continent,’ *Bell’s Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 25 January 1834.

34 Morse and Danahay, introduction to *Victorian Animal Dreams*, 8.

35 Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England*, 4.

36 *Ibid.*, 11. Simultaneously, a new reading public consumed animal-related material, such as Thomas Bewick’s bestselling *General History of Quadrupeds*. See Nigel Rothfels, *Savages and Beasts: The Birth of the Modern Zoo*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 21.

37 Ritvo, *The Animal Estate*, 3.

38 Turner, *Reckoning With the Beast*, 13. This schema of ‘rationality’ does contain significant silences, however, particularly in relation to the vicissitudes of Imperial administration in the period.

39 Rothfels, *Savages and Beasts*, 21.

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evident to nineteenth-century observers' already well aware of, and likely to be morally invested in, the lives of animals, whether as pets or property.<sup>40</sup>

Darwinian cosmology also precipitated a popular reworking of the relationship between human and animal, encouraging closer affinity with the natural world.<sup>41</sup> In *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (1872), Charles Darwin located the ability to recognisably express subtle emotions in 'dumb' animals previously deemed incapable of such cognitive complexities.<sup>42</sup> The result was that the ancient discourse of animal 'sagacity' could intersect with the popular science of animal behaviourism in the public sphere without overt inconsistency.<sup>43</sup> Both approaches converged in the popular paintings of Sir Edwin Landseer, whose depictions of game animals were both anatomically precise and sentimentally imbued with anthropomorphic attributes.<sup>44</sup>

The first legislation regarding animal cruelty was enacted by Whitehall in this context. In 1822, Irish M.P. Richard Martin (disparagingly dubbed 'Humanity Dick' by King George IV) secured the passage of 'an Act to Prevent the Cruel and Improper Treatment of Cattle', creating the criminal offence of cruelty to animals. Further enactments in 1835 and 1849 extended the definition of 'cruelty' to domestic pets and banned animal fights at a time when other traditionally 'working-class' amusements were also increasingly controlled.<sup>45</sup>

Founded in 1824, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA, granted its 'Royal' prefix in 1840) was crucial in this narrative.<sup>46</sup> Arguably, the tone and character of mainstream animal protection was firmly established at the same time as the Society's association with the 'establishment' was entrenched in British culture.<sup>47</sup> In 1865, the Dean of Westminster described this moderate organisation as an 'educative and punitive agency' engaged in a moral crusade against the abuse of animals by human 'brutes'.<sup>48</sup> Generalised devotional rhetoric was central to the Society, which proclaimed in 1869 that 'humanity is unsectarian'.<sup>49</sup> Perhaps due to such efforts to not alienate potential constituents in an era of religious tensions, the RSPCA's profile grew considerably over the century. Working in concert with municipal police forces, its animal cruelty conviction rates doubled every decade from the 1830s onward, such that some 71,657 offenders were convicted in the 1890s.<sup>50</sup>

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40 Harrison, 'Animals and the State,' 786.

41 Morse and Danahay, introduction to *Victorian Animal Dreams*, 2.

42 Charles Darwin, *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*, (1872; repr., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 365.

43 Ritvo, *The Animal Estate*, 137; 'Sympathy in Cats and Dogs,' *Berrow's Worcester Journal*, 27 August 1887, 5; and 'Animal Sagacity,' *Boys' Herald*, 16 November 1878, 317.

44 Turner, *Reckoning with the Beast*, 60.

45 Ritvo, *The Animal Estate*, 128; and Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England*, 25.

46 Peter Hollindale, 'Plain Speaking: *Black Beauty* as a Quaker Text,' *Children's Literature*, Vol. 28, (2000), 110; and Hughes and Lawson, 'RSPCA and the Criminology of Social Control,' 382.

47 Chien-Hui Li, 'A Union of Christianity, Humanity, and Philanthropy: The Christian Tradition and the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in Nineteenth-Century England,' *Society & Animals*, Vol. 8, No. 3, (2000), 279.

48 Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, *The Creation of Man: A Sermon Preached in Whitehall Chapel on Fourth Day after Trinity, July 9th, 1865, on Behalf of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals*, (London: Messrs. Parker, 1865), 14; and Harrison, 'Animals and the State,' 805.

49 Li, 'A Union of Christianity, Humanity, and Philanthropy,' 277.

50 Harrison, 'Animals and the State,' 793.

The operations of the RSPCA were also widely canvassed in the sympathetic press, revealing widespread urban cruelty to animals. Offences as varied as butchering horses for meat,<sup>51</sup> starving cattle,<sup>52</sup> cutting off horses' tails,<sup>53</sup> skinning up to fifty live cats for their 'glossy' fur,<sup>54</sup> baiting an ageing show bear to death,<sup>55</sup> and even throwing a cat from a third-storey window as a 'missile' intended to harm a woman,<sup>56</sup> were each reported in the latter part of the century. The rhetoric of these bulletins was significant in inscribing both moral outrage against defendants, and sympathy for the abused animals. The sheer repetition of the emotive words 'shocking,' 'cruel' and 'torture' in these articles evinces a common code of civilised revulsion against animal abuse. In taking stock of such crimes, the Secretary for the Tottenham and East London Branch of the RSPCA noted simply that 'a great many people are very unkind to animals, simply because they do not think they suffer. They do not ... put themselves ... in the position of those suffering animals.'<sup>57</sup>

J. McGrigor Allan, an 'eminent physician' writing in *The English Leader* in 1866, similarly argued that humanity would not govern the animal world as a 'despotic sovereign' if the extent of human-animal similarities was truly appreciated.<sup>58</sup> This normative, 'admonitory role reversal' of human and animal was emblematic of Victorian animal welfare rhetoric.<sup>59</sup> Notably, however, the continued 'dominion' of humanity over non-human animals (a concept attributable to the Book of Genesis) was assumed in Allan's paradigm: it was acceptable to 'govern' as a 'sovereign,' just not a 'despotic' one.<sup>60</sup>

Author and intellectual Lewis Carroll, in an influential anti-vivisection essay outlined below, was equally comfortable in such a belief. He argued in 1875 that 'man [had] an *absolute* right to inflict death on animals,' provided that the death was painless.<sup>61</sup> This sense of hierarchy was made even more explicit in the RSPCA's *Animal World* journal. The organ's stated objective was 'to awaken in the minds of men a proper sense of the claims of creatures *placed under their dominion*'.<sup>62</sup> It was out of this decentralised activism that the Vegetarian Society, originally established in 1847, grew to occupy the unique rhetorical place with which this article is concerned.<sup>63</sup>

### **Western Vegetarianism: Simultaneously 'Modern' and 'Pre-Modern'**

The historiography of vegetarianism is surprisingly limited. Despite the voluminous non-historical literature on vegetarianism as an ethical movement, the first published history of the first Western vegetarian society was James Gregory's 2007 monograph, *Of Victorians and Vegetarians*. As

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51 'Beef, Sausages, and Mystery,' *Police & Public*, 26 October 1889, 3.

52 'Charge of Cruelty to Cattle,' *The People's Advocate*, 29 April 1876, 5.

53 'Cruel Horse "Docking": Severe Penalties,' *The Londoner*, 1 May 1896, 3.

54 'Shocking Cruelty: Skinning Cats Alive,' *The Cabinet Newspaper*, 14 May 1859, 4.

55 'The End of the Poor Old Bear,' *The Clarion*, 16 July 1892, 5.

56 'Shocking Cruelty to a Cat: Ugly Charge against a Young Wife,' *The Londoner*, 28 August 1896, 3.

57 Alice Bradfield Morris, 'The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals,' *The Londoner*, 24 January 1896, 6.

58 J. McGrigor Allan, 'Upper Class Cruelty to Animals,' *The English Leader*, 6 October 1866, 5.

59 Hollindale, 'Black Beauty as a Quaker Text,' 96.

60 Allan, 'Upper Class Cruelty,' 5; and MacKenzie, *The Empire of Nature*, 42.

61 Lewis Carroll, 'Some Popular Fallacies About Vivisection,' *Fortnightly Review*, Vol. 17, (1875), 848.

62 'Our Object,' *Animal World*, Vol. 1, No. 1, (1869), 8, quoted in Monica Flegel, "'How Does Your Collar Suit Me?": The Human Animal in the RSPCA's *Animal World* and *Band of Mercy*,' *Victorian Literature and Culture*, Vol. 40, (2012), 248. Emphasis added.

63 Gregory, *Of Victorians and Vegetarians*, 192.

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demonstrated by Gregory, the Vegetarian Society developed simultaneously with the legislative, legal and intellectual landmarks outlined above, although in a manner which emphasised the pre-Darwinian (often explicitly religious) origins of Victorian animal ethics. It is the unusual ideological status of this small and apparently minor organisation that ensures its status as a valuable micro-historical flashpoint.<sup>64</sup>

Despite some progressive connections, Gregory argues, the Vegetarian Society's morality was largely grounded in a traditionalist theology that also emphasised teetotal nonconformism.<sup>65</sup> For this reason, the Society was widely viewed as an 'ultra-temperance' cadre of puritanical reformists.<sup>66</sup> 136 of its 265 founding members actually belonged to the extreme Cowherdite sect, with a further forty identifying as White Quakers.<sup>67</sup> For these constituents, the avoidance of 'flesh meat' was as much about personal control as it was about ethics.<sup>68</sup> Much like the RSPCA, the Society attempted to remain predominantly moderate and secular in tone so as not to alienate its constituency, despite its frequent paradoxical invocation of a Biblical Eden as the model for its dietetic strictures.<sup>69</sup>

The Vegetarian Society presented no 'Meat Bill' and was not prominent beyond the realm of public debate. Nevertheless, it did boast some high-profile members, including Henry Salt, the founder of the radical Humanitarian League.<sup>70</sup> Its various events — such as the aforementioned annual banquet — were also well-attended by the end of the century.<sup>71</sup> By 1899, in an era offering a smorgasbord of voluntary associations aimed at 'social transformation' ranging from remedial reading to transcendental religion, the Society could boast some six thousand members nationally.<sup>72</sup>

As previously stated, it is the contention of this article that pro-vegetarian rhetoric was not as ephemeral or marginal to the discourse of animal rights as has been previously claimed. Rather, numerous sources evince the existence of a Victorian ethical imaginary in which vegetarianism was decidedly present, even if not necessarily acted upon. The surreptitious presence of the morality of physical puritanism was particularly clear in one of the most ferocious intellectual debates of the time, namely, the battle over the ethics of vivisection. It is to the rhetoric of the anti-vivisection movement that this article now turns.

### **'Dominion' Debated: Vegetarianism and Vivisection**

It is not an exaggeration to state that animal experimentation polarised British society in the final decades of the nineteenth century. The popular press published frequently on the topic, allowing a variety of prominent thinkers to express opinions on vivisection and its numerous ethical sequelae. Issues as far-ranging as religion, class privilege and the cultural status of 'science,' for instance,

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64 Ibid, 2.

65 Ibid, 4-5.

66 Brian Harrison, *Drink and the Victorians: The Temperance Question in England 1815-1872*, (London: Faber & Faber, 1971), 161.

67 Gregory, *Of Victorians and Vegetarians*, 101.

68 Miller, 'Evangelicalism and the Early Vegetarian Movement,' 210.

69 Gregory, *Of Victorians and Vegetarians*, 205.

70 Weinbren, 'Against All Cruelty,' 88.

71 Miller, 'Evangelicalism and the Early Vegetarian Movement,' 208.

72 M. J. D. Roberts, *Making English Morals: Voluntary Association and Moral Reform in England, 1787-1886*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 4.

were each drawn into the orbit of a fundamental controversy over the value of animal suffering.<sup>73</sup> Cardinal Manning, a prominent anti-vivisectionist and a member of the influential Victoria Street Society, once wryly asserted that the respective protagonists of the debate were engaged in a process of ‘vivisecting each other’.<sup>74</sup>

The controversy escalated following the passage of the Cruelty to Animals Act in 1876.<sup>75</sup> One notable casualty was John Ruskin, who resigned his Slade Professorship at Oxford University in 1885 after becoming aware that the University Senate had voted to fund a program of animal experimentation.<sup>76</sup> At the same time, vivisection stimulated a debate about Charles Darwin, who had by the 1870s become a cultural touchstone worthy of appropriation.<sup>77</sup> Recent scholarship has amended Richard French’s dominant 1975 characterisation of Darwin as an ambivalent but reluctant supporter of the physiologists’ case for vivisection, citing as evidence his uneasy personal relationship with both animals and the scientific establishment. This apparent ambiguity surrounding Darwin’s loyalty only complicated the debate, which raged on firmly in the public eye.<sup>78</sup>

In essence, the moral absolutism of the anti-vivisection movement revolved around the status of animals and the value of their suffering. ‘Philanthropos’, writing in support of the Physiological Society’s case for vegetarianism in 1883, asserted that:

We kill [animals] (without anaesthetic) not only that we may have food and clothing, but that the food may be varied and attractive, and the clothing rich and beautiful. We subject them to painful mutilations in order to make them more manageable for service, to improve the flavour of their flesh, and even to please our whimsical fancies. We imprison them in cages and Zoological Gardens, to improve our knowledge of Natural History, or merely to amuse ourselves by looking at them. It is abundantly clear that in all our customary dealings with animals we apply to them without scruple the law of sacrifice, and interpret it with a wide latitude in our favour.<sup>79</sup>

‘Philanthropos’ hinted that for the anti-vivisectionists to succeed in their political-cultural task, a dramatic reconceptualisation of the status of animals was required. Such a revision, however, was apparently beyond the purview of acceptability at the time.

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73 Jed Mayer, ‘The Nature of the Experimental Animal: Evolution, Vivisection, and the Victorian Environment,’ in *Considering Animals: Contemporary Studies in Human-Animal Relations*, ed. Carol Freeman, Elizabeth Leane and Yvette Watt, (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2011), 95.

74 Quoted in Hilda Kean, ‘The “Smooth Cool Men of Science”: The Feminist and Socialist Response to Vivisection,’ *History Workshop Journal*, Vol. 40, (1995), 24.

75 Richard D. French, *Antivivisection and Medical Science in Victorian Society*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), 6. By providing a regulatory framework for the practice, this act was seen as clarifying the legality of vivisection, rather than effectively limiting its practice.

76 Rod Preece, ‘Darwinism, Christianity, and the Great Vivisection Debate,’ *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 64, No. 3, (2003), 418.

77 Mayer, ‘The Nature of the Experimental Animal,’ 95. Frances Power Cobbe, for instance, famously rejected the amoral cosmology of Darwin’s *Descent of Man*.

78 David Allan Feller, ‘Dog Fight: Darwin as Animal Advocate in the Antivivisection Controversy of 1875,’ *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences*, Vol. 40, (2009), 270.

79 Quoted in Mayer, ‘The Nature of the Experimental Animal,’ 97.

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The tactic of exposing the hypocrisies inherent in the arguments of the humanitarian lobby was widespread in the ‘Great Vivisection Debate.’<sup>80</sup> In an 1892 issue of the *Contemporary Review*, Ernest Bell, a pro-vivisectionist, rebuffed the comments of a Dr. Ruffer by identifying a commonplace yet problematic ‘vegetarian argument’. To Bell, it was morally and logically inconsistent to both oppose vivisection and eat meat. While Bell himself could not decide on the ethics of dietetic reform, his response nevertheless underscored the marginality of the vegetarian movement of the era: ‘Even Dr. Ruffer will admit that the moral right and wrong of vivisection must not be made to depend on the diet of the Bishop of Manchester.’<sup>81</sup> In other words, vivisection and vegetarianism may have occupied the same *logical* universe — a position willingly conceded by Bell — but they certainly did not exist on a level *cultural* plane. Furthermore, the etiquette and cultural rituals surrounding the consumption of food ensured that the place of vegetarianism in the debate was essentially unimportant. Yet ‘vegetarianism’ was contemplated nonetheless, neither as a joke nor as a mere triviality. The very term ‘vegetarian’, coined by the fledgling Society in 1847, had clearly forced itself into sober debate.<sup>82</sup>

An 1874 *Fortnightly Review* article on the topic of ‘Field Sports and Vivisection’ similarly engaged with but cursorily dismissed vegetarianism. In this article, Edward A. Freeman, an intellectual who had published widely on the immorality of aristocratic hunting, assessed the similarities between vivisection and hunting, concluding uneasily in favour of vivisection. Freeman accepted that the vivisector must be on an identical moral level to that of the butcher, but stated that, ‘as I am not a vegetarian, I must hold that the butcher follows a perfectly lawful craft’. He therefore refused to condemn vivisection in the same way that he condemned hunting.<sup>83</sup> The use of the term ‘must’ is interesting here. To Freeman, who the *Pall Mall Gazette* described as a ‘controversialist,’ it was apparently more appropriate to accept vivisection by proxy than to embrace the radical ethical reductionism of vegetarianism.<sup>84</sup> The logical inconsistency of this argument was perhaps not even apprehended by its author.

Lewis Carroll, writing in response to Edward A. Freeman in the same journal and articulating a famously wide-ranging stance against vivisection, identified Ernest Bell’s ‘inconsistency’ argument as one of the ‘popular fallacies about vivisection’. His strategy, however, drew on the aforementioned Biblical rhetoric of ‘dominion’. ‘Any infliction of pain,’ wrote Carroll, ‘needs its special justification’, whereas the killing of an animal is entirely morally justifiable.<sup>85</sup> Vivisection and meat consumption, by implication, were acceptable if divorced from the infliction of pain.

This cosmology was reinforced by essayist, T. P. Smith, writing in direct opposition to the vegetarian movement in 1895:

When the vegetarian points to the suffering inflicted on slaughtering animals for food, he hits a grievous blot on our much-vaunted civilization. His allegations, however, tell not against the use of animal food, but against the ignorance, carelessness, and brutality too often displayed in the slaughterhouses.<sup>86</sup>

80 Preece, ‘Darwinism, Christianity, and the Great Vivisection Debate,’ 399-414.

81 Ernest Bell, ‘The Morality of Vivisection: Two Replies,’ *The Contemporary Review*, Vol. 62, (1892), 850.

82 Gregory, *Of Victorians and Vegetarians*, 6.

83 Edward A. Freeman, ‘Field Sports and Vivisection,’ *Fortnightly Review*, Vol. 15, (1874), 627.

84 ‘Vivisection and Sport,’ *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 13 February 1875, 10.

85 Carroll, ‘Some Popular Fallacies About Vivisection,’ 848. Original emphasis.

86 T.P. Smith, ‘Vegetarianism,’ *Fortnightly Review*, Vol. 58, No. 347, (1895), 760.

Here, far from being dismissed without justification, or ridiculed as idealistic and foolish – or even beset by foolish dancing vegetables as in *Punch*<sup>87</sup> – vegetarianism was seriously engaged with on an intellectual level, even though it was again ultimately dismissed.

Dissenting voices were also given column inches to reply to the pro-vivisectionists. Agnostic humanitarian (and famous vegetarian), Henry Salt, is a key example of a Victorian controversialist who eagerly engaged in the dietetic debates of his time. Salt’s arguably deontological response to arguments akin to those of Smith was that, rather than locating cruelty in the actions of an unsophisticated (working-class) meat industry alone, the consumption of meat itself inherently contributed to the cruel status quo to be combated. In following such a line, Salt mocked the professed ‘humanitarians’ who ‘by their own system[s] of diet ... are sanctioning and deliberately perpetrating the unspeakable horrors of the slaughter-house’.<sup>88</sup>

H. M. Hyndman of the Marxist Social Democratic Foundation once dismissed the anti-vivisection movement as a coalition of ‘humanitarians, vegetarians, anti-vivisectionists and anti-vaccinationists, arty-crafts and all the rest of them,’ seeing the fiercely polarised intellectual climate of the final decades of the nineteenth century as a catch-all battleground for extant eccentric and marginal bourgeois fads.<sup>89</sup> This conception, minus Hyndman’s scathing caricature, mirrors the focus of much contemporary historiography. The dominant formulation asserts that the anti-vivisection movement, prior to its decline in the early twentieth century, mobilised a multifarious body of radical movements, a close analysis of each of which is potentially fruitful for the cultural historian.<sup>90</sup>

As demonstrated above, pro-vegetarian rhetoric appears to have been more conspicuous in late Victorian society than has previously been suggested. This is especially true of the logic of the ‘Great Anti-vivisection Debate’ of the closing decades of the nineteenth century. It is notable, in this regard, that vegetarianism was employed as a rhetorical or logical device, even while adoption of the diet itself was situated well beyond the boundaries of Victorian progressive sensibilities.<sup>91</sup> An awareness of the claims of a nascent vegetarian movement thus dictated the tone of animal welfare discourse. The following section considers the wider field of popular literature as a valid site for the examination of parallel concerns.

### **The Emancipatory Horse: *Black Beauty* and Animal Welfare**

‘I have heard men say,’ recounts one of the most famous horses in English literature, ‘that seeing is believing; but I should say that *feeling* is believing; for much as I had seen before, I never knew till now the utter misery of a cab-horse’s life.’<sup>92</sup> This statement, made by the eponymous narrator of Anna Sewell’s 1877 novel *Black Beauty* (the sixth most popular book in the English language), perhaps sums up the rhetoric of late Victorian animal welfare in a sentence.<sup>93</sup> The text is a key

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87 ‘The Vegetarians,’ *Punch*, 30 September 1848, 40.

88 H. S. Salt, ‘Food Reform,’ *Westminster Review*, Vol. 126, No. 252, (1886), 487.

89 Quoted in Kean, ‘The “Smooth Cool Men of Science”’, 28.

90 Ritvo, *The Animal Estate*, 162.

91 See, for example, Smith, ‘Vegetarianism,’ 760.

92 Anna Sewell, *Black Beauty, His Grooms and Companions: The Autobiography of a Horse, Translated from the Original Equine by Anna Sewell*, (London: Jarrold & Sons, 1877), 233.

93 Dorre, ‘Horses and Corsets,’ 157; and Tess Cosslett, *Talking Animals in British Children’s Fiction, 1786-1914*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 63-66.

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primary source as its moralistic, consciousness-raising project has much in common with the RSPCA and the anti-vivisection movement.

‘Animal autobiographies’ (of which *Black Beauty* is an exemplar) typify the tactical reversal of human and non-human experience, which was common to Victorian animal welfare rhetoric.<sup>94</sup> Lewis Carroll’s famous 1875 anti-vivisection polemic notably ends with the grisly image of the reader being vivisected by the ‘grim spectre’ of science.<sup>95</sup> An 1891 news report on the conviction of a minister for torturing a horse, concludes with a similarly powerful image of the minister’s own torture in place of his animal’s.<sup>96</sup> An 1887 cartoon in the RSPCA’s *Animal World* even depicts a race between men whose necks are grotesquely contorted by bearing-reins.<sup>97</sup> Moreover, the common journalistic reference to abusers of non-human animals as ‘brutes’ or ‘beasts’ arguably served an identical purpose in this moralistic realm.<sup>98</sup>

As a text predominantly concerned with the simple moralism engendered by a horse’s perception of the cruelty perpetrated against working animals in an urban environment, Sewell’s *Black Beauty* can be clearly situated within this sympathetic realm. It has been asserted that *Black Beauty* is impenetrable without an awareness of the deep current of Quaker ethics contained therein.<sup>99</sup> This reading of the text becomes all the more persuasive when the ‘plain-speaking,’ almost Socratic, dialogue of the novel is contextualised with Anna Sewell’s background as the daughter of a Quaker tract-writer.<sup>100</sup> The text tellingly also contains elements of both pro-temperance<sup>101</sup> and pacifist rhetoric.<sup>102</sup>

Published into a moralistic animal welfare milieu by an author with a distinctly humanitarian purpose, *Black Beauty* was intended as a ‘cogent piece of social critique’. Its explicit purpose was to discourage the use of the aforementioned bearing-rein, described by the equine protagonist as ‘one of the wickedest things in the world’.<sup>103</sup> The novel was part of a wider groundswell calling for the abolition of the fashionable rein, which, as noted above, had begun in the 1840s with the publication of a pamphlet meaningfully entitled ‘Horse-Emancipation.’<sup>104</sup>

By the 1870s, the controversy was highly topical.<sup>105</sup> In 1873, the *Pall Mall Gazette* cited the bearing-rein as evidence of the cruelty of the ‘cultivated’ classes, demonstrating – as with the contemporaneous anti-vivisection movement – that cruelty to animals was no longer seen as the exclusive preserve of the ‘brutish’ poor.<sup>106</sup> Similarly, an 1876 *Punch* cartoon depicted Edmund Flower

94 Flegel, ‘How Does Your Collar Suit Me?’; 247.

95 Carroll, ‘Some Popular Fallacies about Vivisection,’ 854.

96 ‘Which Is the Brute?’, *The Clarion*, 26 December 1891, 4.

97 Flegel, ‘How Does Your Collar Suit Me?’; 250.

98 Turner, *Reckoning with the Beast*, 70.

99 Hollindale, ‘*Black Beauty* as a Quaker Text,’ 97.

100 Ibid.

101 Ibid, 108. Temperance currents are identifiable in Chapter Forty-two, when Beauty’s revered master, a teetotal London cabbie, refuses to take drunken fares, fearing that they will abuse his horses.

102 Sewell, *Black Beauty*, 167. In Chapter Thirty-Four, for example, Beauty’s friend Captain, a veteran of the Crimean War, claims ‘war has a very different look’ when the suffering of ‘thousands of good brave men *and* horses’ is properly accounted for.

103 Dorre, ‘Horses and Corsets,’ 168.

104 Robert Dingley, ‘A Horse of a Different Color: *Black Beauty* and the Pressures of Indebtedness,’ *Victorian Literature and Culture*, Vol. 25, No. 2, (1997), 248.

105 Ibid.

106 ‘Cruelty to Animals,’ *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 19 June 1873, 10.

(the author of a popular 1875 tract on the topic) presenting a picture of a suffering horse to a 'very pretty' yet unconcerned 'young lady of fashion'.<sup>107</sup> The cartoon's use of role-reversal rhetoric had a sinister effect, suggesting that the lady should be bound and gagged for the pain inflicted on her horses.<sup>108</sup> There is evidence that *Black Beauty* was intended to serve a similar function. For example, the RSPCA and its American counterpart distributed free copies of the text to cabmen on both sides of the Atlantic in the 1890s, in the apparent hope of raising consciousness regarding the pain of horses.<sup>109</sup>

How, however, did the clearly humanitarian novel approach pro-vegetarian rhetoric? Two passages are particularly revealing in this regard. The first is in relation to the subtly absolutist implications of the moral world created by Anna Sewell. In Chapter Six, with a voice emblematic of the emancipatory, anti-slavery tone of the text as a whole, Beauty yearns for 'freedom' in the strongest possible terms:

What more could I want? Why, liberty! For three years and a half of my life I had had all the liberty I could wish for; but now, week after week, month after month, and no doubt year after year, I must stand up in a stable night and day except when I am wanted ... Straps here and straps there, a bit in my mouth, and blinkers over my eyes. Now, I am not complaining, for *I know it must be so*.<sup>110</sup>

Beauty's surprising final submissiveness jars against his strident condemnation of captivity. The effect is both unsettling and unsettled, as the horse's strong yearning for 'liberty' must be seen as a deliberate authorial choice (Chapter Six is tellingly entitled 'Liberty' too).<sup>111</sup> This passage, despite its ambiguous ending, arguably exemplifies the emancipatory themes in *Black Beauty*. Particularly notable in this regard are the novel's stylistic similarities to early nineteenth-century anti-slavery literature.<sup>112</sup>

The undefined form of Beauty's idealised 'liberty,' however, remains problematic: presumably, his passionate invective demands a 'liberty' not just from the physical bounds of the stable. Sewell poses but does not answer the question: *what would a world of true animal 'liberty' look like?* Would a literal Hobbesian state of nature prevail? Or would a parallel government of horses emerge? Such unintended interrogation (not to mention the undeniably ludicrous answers posited) exposes the ultimate pointlessness of this thought-experiment. Indeed, given the dearth of authorial exegesis on the admittedly simplistic text, Anna Sewell's intentions are historically unverifiable. Beauty's 'liberty' remains, and perhaps was intended to be, ambiguous.

However, given the importance of this open-ended 'liberty' to the text, it is important to unpack the mandates of this meaning-rich passage. It is clear, for example, that Sewell's hero envisions a world in which animals are not employed to perform work for humans; or, if they are, that they are not to be subjected to painful mistreatments in the process.<sup>113</sup> It is perhaps not unreasonable to

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107 Dingley, 'A Horse of a Different Color,' 268.

108 'Mr. Punch to a Very Pretty Young Lady of Fashion,' *Punch*, 6 May 1876, 175.

109 Cosslett, *Talking Animals in British Children's Fiction*, 74.

110 Sewell, *Black Beauty*, 30. Emphasis added.

111 Ibid; and Dingley, 'A Horse of a Different Color,' 242.

112 Peter Stoneley, 'Sentimental Emasculations: *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and *Black Beauty*,' *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, Vol. 54, No. 1, (1999), 57; and Dingley, 'A Horse of a Different Color,' 250. The text was marketed as 'the *Uncle Tom's Cabin* of the horse' in the United States in 1890, the reference to Harriet Beecher Stowe's moralistic 1852 novel arguably being obvious to readers of the era.

113 Ibid, 244.

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likewise assume that animals would not be eaten for food in any free world proposed by Beauty either. Given that a discussion of the morality of meat consumption was clearly present (sometimes implicit, sometimes explicit) in the logical processes of 1870s animal welfare rhetoric, *Black Beauty* can arguably be seen to be part of the dietetic prism of the broader humanitarian mood of its era.

The second instance of possibly pro-vegetarian rhetoric in the text supports this conclusion. This occurrence lies in the suggestively unfavourable treatment of butchers in the text. In Chapter Forty-one, Beauty finds himself situated outside a butcher's shop, where he witnesses a 'strong rough boy' brutalising a delivery horse. The reflective Beauty is strongly moved by the event, ultimately blaming animal cruelty directly on the aristocracy's apparently insatiable demand for fashionable meat and describing both the butcher and his meat products with distaste in the process.<sup>114</sup>

While, again, the text does not directly advocate vegetarianism here, the cruelties attendant on meat production parallel those of the slaughterhouse considered by T. P. Smith, to whom food production rather than consumption constituted a 'grievous blot' on modern society, rendering a vegetarian response intelligible yet intangible.<sup>115</sup> When appropriately situated within the intellectual milieu of the 'Great Vivisection Debate,' the conclusion that Anna Sewell wrote *Black Beauty* in cognisance of a vegetarian movement, which partly constituted the humanitarian context out of which the text grew, is a decidedly reasonable one to draw. That Sewell couches her Quaker-influenced argument for equine 'liberty' in the rhetoric of emancipation, singling out butchers and the meat industry as the locus of cruel evils, makes this inference all the more tenable.

### Conclusion: Echoes of Vegetarianism

This article has been written as a contribution to the currently limited historiography of the emergence of vegetarianism as a 'modern' social movement nestled amongst a vibrant history of Victorian animal welfare covering the RSPCA, vivisection and popular literature. It complicates James Gregory's assertion that 'even the most heartfelt pleas' for animal welfare in the Victorian period could 'avoid' references to vegetarianism.<sup>116</sup> It has been demonstrated herein that the dictates of the traditionally marginalised Vegetarian Society were, in fact, rhetorically present in the anti-vivisection debates of the late nineteenth century. Not only was the word 'vegetarian' in common use in public discourse by the 1870s, but the implications of and arguments for the diet were also understood and were utilised in public debate, despite the fact that the adoption of the diet itself was rarely seriously considered.<sup>117</sup>

On a secondary level, it has been argued that Victorian vegetarianism was not inconsistent with the logical realm posited in *Black Beauty*. Anna Sewell's popular 1877 novel appropriates anti-slavery rhetoric in order to explore the morality of British society, using a talking horse as a 'ripe symbol for criticism' and bringing both animal suffering and meat consumption into an uneasy conversation.<sup>118</sup>

Ultimately, whether in intellectual discourse, popular satire or even sentimental fiction, vegetarianism was identifiable in Victorian society. Neither, too, was it the isolated instance of

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114 Sewell, *Black Beauty*, 202-203.

115 Smith, 'Vegetarianism,' 760.

116 Gregory, *Of Victorians and Vegetarians*, 94.

117 Ibid, 6.

118 Jaques, review of *Talking Animals in British Children's Fiction*, 357.

‘harmless imbecility’ posited by the unsatisfied and empty-stomached journalists of the *Sphinx* newspaper in 1871.<sup>119</sup> As such, the putative silence posited by James Gregory requires further nuancing.<sup>120</sup> Instead, vegetarianism can be seen as an invaluable context in understanding the relationship between Victorian animal rights rhetoric, mass dietary culture, and ethical thought at the close of the nineteenth century.

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119 ‘The Vegetarian Banquet,’ 337.

120 Gregory, *Of Victorians and Vegetarians*, 94.

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