

## MARTI KHEEL: VEGETARIANISM AND ECOFEMINISM: TOPPLING PATRIARCHY WITH A FORK

- **Traditional Ethical Theories**

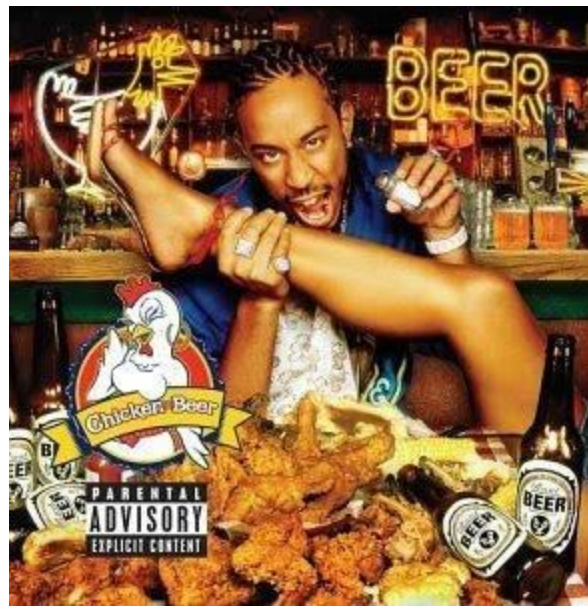
- Reason > Emotion
- Not the correct motivation
- **Feminism:**
  - Takes issue with hierarchy [patriarchy]
  - Expresses compassion for those who are subordinated
- **Ecofeminism:**
  - Takes the hierarchy between genders as analogous to that between “man” and “nature”
  - Criticisms [p. 328]
  - Based in care ethic [agent-based]

- **Invitational Approach**

- **Deconstructionism:**
  - NO universal norms, break down dominant norm [meat-eating]
  - Replace with invitation to become a vegetarian
- **Focus:** Meat-eating as a practice (moral ideal) > universal rules/principles
  - Shifting the focus of the conversation
  - Instead of positively arguing FOR vegetarianism
  - Provides a **negative** argument AGAINST eating meat

- **Compulsory Meat-eating**

- Norm: dominant, accepted without question



- Compulsory norm: “imposed, managed, organized, propagandized, and maintained by force” [p. 329]

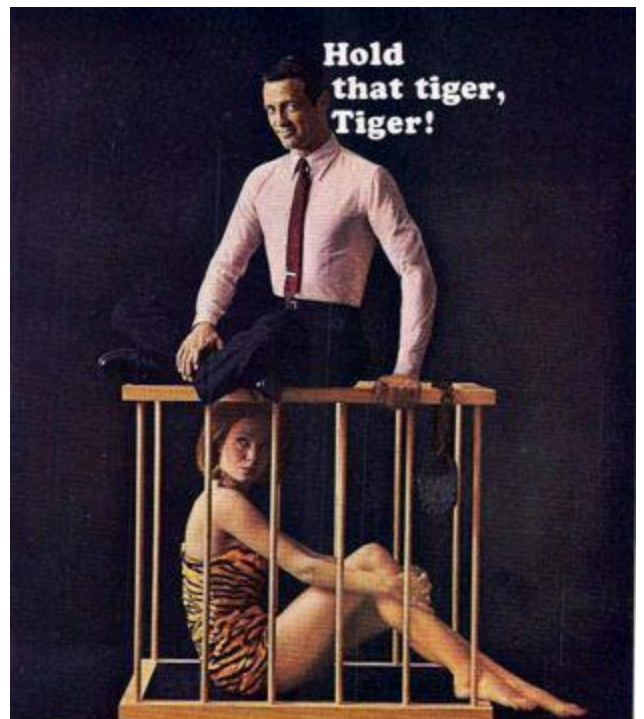
- **Analogy: Heterosexuality**

- Rightful access to – women :: animal flesh
- Obstacles without the norm:
  - Considered incomplete
  - Considered unfulfilled
  - Incomprehensible by those in the norm

- **Patriarchy & Meat-eating**

- Women and animals are tied together through religion, social structures, and animal husbandry

- Meat-eating =
  - Basis of relationships
  - Basis of hierarchy [power dynamics]
  - Basis of masculine self-identity
  - Associated w/ class, status, and gender



- Vegetarianism = spiritual purity [at best]
  - In a sexualized context
  - Overcoming that which is “irrational” for the service of the “rational”

- **Analogy: Marriage**

- Possession
- Obliteration of identity/independence
- Ownership

- Containment
- Control over reproduction
- Treated as objects
- Meant to be consumed
- Analysis of patriarchy and meat-eating does NOT provide a direct argument for vegetarianism
  - It does invite vegetarianism as a response
    - Act of empathy, resistance, and affirmation of interconnectedness
- **Contextual Moral Vegetarianism**
  - Concerns about charges that vegetarians seek to impose a white, privileged norm on others who eat animal flesh for sustenance or cultural reasons
  - How inviting vegetarianism is different from imposing a norm on others
  - How contextual moral vegetarian approaches sometime fail to consider issues of race, gender, and class
- **Cultural Insensitivity**
  - Is it somehow culturally insensitive for Western animal advocates to suggest vegetarianism?
  - What about all of the non-Western countries where vegetarianism is the norm?
- **Conclusion:** if you are "opposed to the domination of women" then you should "be more inclined to empathize with the plight of nonhuman animals"

