

Strategic Recommendations for Vegan Advocacy

From Dr. Carrie P. Freeman's 2014 book *Framing Farming: Communication Strategies for Animal Rights* (Rodopi Press, NY) www.framingfarming.com

This summarizes ideas for how animal rights advocates could practice “ideological authenticity” in designing advocacy campaigns promoting veganism by framing messages in ways that directly challenge speciesism (bias against nonhuman animals) yet appeal to values that resonate with a largely speciesist public.

The chart on the next page summarizes Freeman's recommendations for framing animal farming and fishing as a problem based on it being environmentally destructive and unfair to animals (with cruelty and suffering as a subcategory here). The blame for problems falls upon a speciesist society that enables a lucrative consumer market for animal products, which are provided by an exploitative animal agribusiness and fishing industry. Activists should engage the public as both consumers and citizens to explain everyone's culpability and capability toward individual and collective solutions. The solutions are to:



- 1) Appreciate the mutual subject status and sentience of all animals (including ourselves);
- 2) Eat a plant-based (animal-free) diet and make it widely accessible; and
- 3) Work collectively to create a less speciesist and more ecologically sustainable society that avoids exploitation and unnecessary violence.

Infused through all of this should be appeals to values such as: *fairness, respect, life, freedom, integrity, honesty, naturalness, vitality, responsibility, moderation, community, diversity, caring, compassion, peace, sharing, humility, accountability, making a difference, self-esteem, health, and personal growth/ development.*

Some tips to keep in mind:

- Steer the discourse toward questioning human entitlement to domesticate and *use* animals at all (and question our need to use them), rather than just continuing the centuries' old debate over preferable levels of 'humaneness' in the *treatment* of the animals we use.
- Don't compromise the value of animal life by suggesting people merely eat fewer animals or switch to "free range" farming. We should ask for more, and then it is up to them to decide if they want to do less. But do show some flexibility toward people's process of transitioning toward a plant-based diet in ways that work for them, understanding we can't be perfectly 'pure.'
- Following nature's example, an ethical goal is not to harm or hunt anyone unless it is necessary for sheer survival (killing only in self-defense), and never to farm anyone ever (avoid enslaving someone to be a food source).

- If any extremes are to be painted, it is the current level of callousness, injustice, cruelty, arrogance, and environmental irresponsibility (which is extremely out of sync with our human identity as smart, civil, moral beings). In contrast, veganism is radically kind and extremely sensible.

FRAMING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR VEGAN CAMPAIGNS

Carrie P. Freeman (2014) *Framing Farming: Communication Strategies for Animal Rights*. New York: Rodopi Press

(See the book for more nuance, detail, and ideas, as well as insights from prominent activists interviewed)

NOTE: This was written in an American context but hopefully can inspire adaptation to various cultures worldwide, as it is based on many values that are universal to humanity.

FRAMING PROBLEMS WITH ANIMAL-BASED FOODS	RESPECTIVE VALUES TO PROMOTE	SOME EXAMPLES
1. Injustice toward nonhuman animals through domestication, exploitation, and unnecessary killing caused by animal agribusiness and consumption of animal products	Justice Life Respect Naturalness Freedom Animal Dignity Integrity	“It’s not fair to farm anyone.” “You don’t see lions farming antelope. All animals deserve a chance. Just farm plants.” “Avoid stealing what belongs to animals. Eat vegan instead.” “Be a cereal killer not a serial killer. Eat animal-free foods.” “Flesh, eggs, and dairy are oppressing and depressing.”
2. Cruelty and suffering inherent in fishing or farming anyone, whether in a factory farm or smaller farm <i>[cruelty is a subset of the injustice frame above]</i>	Caring Life Fairness Empathy Compassion Peace	“Farming is (ab)using animals. Just eat plants.” “Don’t hire a hitman just to eat lunch – meat is murder on animals.” “Care for her. Don’t kill her.” “All beings tremble before violence. All fear death. All love life.” (<i>Buddha</i>) Images should focus on painful practices common to all farming (not solely factory farming): bloody butcher knives; fish gassing; artificial insemination or use of rape racks; separation of babies from mothers; painful ‘medical’ procedures; animals suffering and dying at hatcheries, stockyards, and in transport; animals protesting their treatment.
3. Destruction of the environment and harm to wildlife caused by raising animals for human food	Fairness Moderation Community Diversity Vitality Sustenance/Sustainability Responsibility Sharing Interdependence Naturalness Life	“Spare farmed animals and protect wild animals with every bite. Go vegan.” “Humans: We’re not the only species on the planet. We just <i>eat</i> like it... Just eat plants.” “Veggie meat saves lives.” “Eat veggie meat: its cool food for a cool planet.”

FRAMING CULPABLE PARTIES	RESPECTIVE VALUES TO PROMOTE	SOME EXAMPLES
1. Meat-eating individuals and a carnistic culture (speciesist society) 2. Animal agribusiness and fishing industries	Honesty Accountability Integrity Harmony Caring Peace (of mind) Self-Respect Self-Improvement	“It’s a filthy business. They couldn’t do it without you.” (<i>from FARM’s slaughterhouse poster</i>). “Veganism for peace (of mind).” “No animal deserves to die for your taste buds” (<i>From PETA</i>)
FRAMING SOLUTIONS	RESPECTIVE VALUES TO PROMOTE	SOME EXAMPLES
1. YOU AS A SENTIENT BEING (ANIMAL): Respecting the sentience and interests of fellow animals, and embracing our own animality	Respect Kinship Connection Diversity Fairness Empathy Humility Self-Esteem	Farm Sanctuary’s “Someone not Something” campaign. “Animals are friends not food.” “All animals (human and nonhuman) are more than just protein.” “I’m a friendly animal eating animal-friendly food.” “I’m a great ape, eating great vegan food.”
2. YOU AS A CONSUMER (HERBIVOROUS ANIMAL): Eating a plant-based, largely organic diet and supporting healthy, responsible food choices in the community	Health & Wellbeing Life Vitality Sharing Community Harmony Responsibility Belonging Satisfaction Choice Naturalness Making a difference/ Usefulness/ Importance	“Go veg for life” and “Veganism is good for your heart” (<i>a Farm Sanctuary campaign</i>). “End these atrocities by replacing meat, eggs, and dairy in your diet with a variety of ready-to-eat alternatives” (<i>From FARM</i>). “Healthy happy herbivore.” “I’m vegan by nature.” “Support a well fed world. Share the planet. Share vegan meals.” (<i>awfw.org</i>)
3. YOU AS A CITIZEN (POLITICAL ANIMAL): Working collectively to protect other animals and legally end institutionally-sanctioned exploitation. Create a less speciesist and more sustainable world – a just humanimity	Respect Responsibility Fairness Community Democracy Altruism Growth Integrity Faith/Hope Empowerment	“Animals are not ours to eat, wear, or experiment on.” (<i>PETA</i>). “Yesterday they made history [Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Rosa Parks]. Today we are choosing to respect all animals. Live vegan. Make History.” (<i>VeganPledge.com. UK Vegan Society</i>). “Celebrate civil rights. Eat civil foods.” “Form compassionate communities. Join team vegan. Be plant strong.” (<i>from Farm Sanctuary, and Rip Esselstyn</i>). “Co-create a just and sustainable humanimity.” “Celebrate life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness for all animals.”

See the website for the book: www.framingfarming.com

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