Speciesism in Childhood: An Exploration of Children's Attitudes Toward Nonhuman Animals

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SPECIESISM IN CHILDHOOD: AN EXPLORATION OF CHILDREN’S ATTITUDES TOWARD NONHUMAN ANIMALS

By

Hannah Knotts

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Honors Interdisciplinary Thesis Program in Sociology in the College of Sciences and in the Burnett Honors College at The University of Central Florida Orlando, Florida

Spring Term, 2023

Thesis Chair: Elizabeth Grauerholz, Ph.D.
ABSTRACT

Humans objectify or designate certain animals to specific roles. These roles are often learned in childhood and followed into adulthood. Though there is more literature on the nonhuman animal industries nowadays than ever, there are still gaps in knowledge and work to be done concerning childhood speciesism. This qualitative study aims to reveal how childhood perspectives toward nonhuman animals are established. The study's findings indicate speciesism may develop in early age children due to parental and environmental influences. Parents were found to influence speciesism in children through teaching the distinct roles animals play in our society. As adults, parents were aware of the health, environmental, and ethical issues regarding animal and animal products, yet encouraged their children's consumption of animals or animal products. Parents were found to use euphemisms, or indirect language, to intentionally shield their children from understanding farm animals as food. However, parents were also found to be open-minded and willing to accommodate a vegan/vegetarian diet upon their child's request. The study introduced the idea of children favoring animals to which they could relate. The findings also revealed that children respond negatively to animals used as educational tools, such as animals in zoological facilities, household pets, and classroom pets. This paper explores the development of the child-animal paradox: speciesism in childhood.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my deepest gratitude to my thesis chair, Dr. Elizabeth Grauerholz, who gave me this opportunity to develop research and contribute to the literature.

I also wish to thank my committee member, Dr. Jonathan Beever, who always offered me great advice in writing this thesis.

Lastly, I wish to thank my parents, my boyfriend, and my family for always supporting me throughout this journey. It is their love, support, and encouragement that motivate me every day to do what I love.

Thank you.
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INTRODUCTION

Child-animal relationships are normalized in society but rarely acknowledged in social science. This study seeks to improve our understanding of how speciesism develops during childhood. Speciesism is known as the “prejudice or attitude of bias in favor of the interests of members of one’s own species and against those of members of other species” (Singer, 2009, p. 35). This study explores how children relate to animals and parents’ role in influencing child-animal relationships. A better understanding of how children relate to animals illuminates the importance of child-animal and human-nonhuman relationships for further study. This study seeks to provide insight into the sociology of childhood and human-animal studies. By identifying factors influencing childhood speciesism, we can identify how to move forward efficiently toward the broader goal of reducing speciesism within society. This study examines two primary research questions:

1. How do children report their relationship with nonhuman animals?
2. What information can interview data between parents and their children offer about how speciesism is influenced among children?
EXPLORING SPECIESISM TOWARDS NONHUMAN ANIMALS

BACKGROUND

Among most societies, discrimination is often subjected to humans and is a well-known term frequently frowned upon and sought to be eliminated. However, nonhuman animals are discriminated against daily on a global scale. This is referred to as ‘speciesism.’ Speciesism is the prejudice or discrimination against certain species of nonhuman animals (McGuire et al., 2022). The term ‘speciesism’ was created in response to a testament against animals used in research in the 1970s (Ryder, 1975). The term is now popularly used in debates surrounding the ethics and philosophy of animal rights to describe the practice of treating or objecting to one species as morally more important than others. For decades, humans have mentally separated certain animals into specific categories, intensely caring for some and supporting the maltreatment of others (McGuire et al., 2022).

This mental separation can be learned in childhood. Myers (2007) studied the connection between children and animals and found that child-animal interactions contribute to childhood development, such as interactive skills, behavior, and compassion. Furthermore, children often learn at different rates based on their environmental and intellectual abilities. Learning starts from the time of birth and is heightened within the first five years (Liquin and Gopnik, 2022). Liquin and Gopnik (2022) draw two conclusions from their study. First, early aged children are more likely to learn and explore throughout their daily routine than adults, which in turn helps them learn the environment and belief systems around them. Secondly, they found that early age exploration and learning are correlated. Children are often educated on nonhuman animals
during the early development stages to enhance cognitive learning and sustain childhood
development (Cole and Stewart, 2016). By understanding speciesism or objectification within
early aged children, it may be possible to reduce objectification or speciesism in adulthood.

**SPECIESISM**

As noted earlier, Singer (2009) defines speciesism as, “the prejudice or attitude of bias in
favor of the interests of members of one’s own species and against those of members of other
species” (p. 35). Speciesism is widely used to designate specific roles to certain animals, such as
domesticated animals, wild animals, or animals used for food. There is also a disconnection
between certain animals and their roles. For example, farm animals and animals used for food
are often seen as unrelated (Bastian and Loughnan, 2016). Speciesism is noted when animals
with similar traits and tendencies (intelligence, sentience, etc.) are separated based on their
designated obligation to humans (Clement, 2011).

Speciesism is often seen as a paradoxical relationship. Speciesism can be seen as
objectifying animals and loving some animals and not others. A study by Christou and Nikiforou
(2021) found that many people will endorse welfare campaigns for endangered animals in the
wild but will attend zoological facilities that use animals held captive as an educational tool and
entertainment. Another example is how many people enjoy the activity of visiting petting zoos of
farm animals but will readily justify the factory farm industry. Cole and Stewart (2016) examine
matters further when illuminating that wild, undomesticated animals are often used for
conservation donations, but farm animals are objectified as food. In addition, parents often see
companion animals as the perfect opportunity for children to learn and practice taking
responsibility, with no mention of learning love and companionship (Melson, 2003). This perplexing ideology creates double standards for one species over another with no moral reasoning or justification. Although children strongly engage with farm animals, many often do not correlate the idea of the animal being a friend and food (Bastian and Loughnan, 2016).

**CHILDREN AND ANIMALS**

Although animals are prominent in early childhood settings and society has recently become increasingly aware of the objectification of non-human animals, few studies have yet to be conducted with younger children and their attitudes towards nonhuman animals (Jane et al., 2013). Previous studies on childhood development often focus on human-human relationships rather than human-nonhuman-animal relationships. Cole and Stewart (2016) found that animal interactions within childhood significantly contribute to the perspective and attitudes of animals in adulthood. Today, mainstream representations of animals in children's culture are quite common and may play a significant role in child development. Jane et al. (2013) acknowledges the importance of nonhuman animals in a child's social world, even recognizing them as a 'fourth educator' (Jane et al., 2013). Children are often educated on pets and farm animals during the early development stage to enhance cognitive learning and environmental awareness. For example, pets are used in various pedagogical relationships, such as children's books, movies, and educational systems. Often animals in these roles, like dogs and cats, are seen as companions. However, farm animals are also in children's books, movies, and educational systems but are rarely acknowledged as companion animals (Jane et al., 2013). Farm animals, such as cows, pigs, and chickens, are well-known in children's educational systems in books,
movies, and farms but are also a direct food source. However, this is also rarely acknowledged within these systems. This suggests a starting point where a child can become disconnected from comprehending farm and food.

In support of Liquin and Gopnik (2022), Ascione (2005) suggests that a child as young as two years old is capable of experiencing emotional connection and behaviors. A study by Muldoon et al. (2019) found that as children age, their emotional connection to animals slowly decreases. Crain (2014) takes matters further when he explains that children do not initially separate themselves from nature, but it is a learned characteristic. In other words, children do not often put themselves above animals in terms of sociological hierarchy, and that sociological hierarchy, or seeing oneself as better than another, is a taught skill. Oliver (2009) found that society has used animals as "a means to promote human superiority." Cultural norms and societal structures teach children to disconnect themselves to devalue animals.

Previous research suggests that speciesism is learned with age (McGuire et al., 2022), while interest in animals decreases with age (Borgi and Cirulli, 2015) and exploration decreases with age (Liquin and Gopnik, 2022). McGuire et al. (2022) draw two conclusions from their study. First, children differ from adults when categorizing animals, whereas young adults tend to categorize animals similarly to adults. Young children tend not to view animals as food, as young adults and adults do. This could be due to children becoming disinterested in animals with increased age. Secondly, children tend to favor animals based on their physical and mental traits, such as behavior, similarity to humans, gender, and aesthetics. In addition, animals recognized for their benefits were found to be more favorable to humans (Borgi and Cirulli, 2015).
This suggests that children are initially taught to value certain animals differently. For example, children learn to recognize certain animals, such as farm animals, as food instead of a companion or friend, as they often view a dog or cat (Jane et al., 2013).

A growing amount of research suggests that children should have the right to make their own decisions about their diet regarding animals and animal products (Jane et al., 2013). McGuire et al. (2022) found that it is with age that children begin to reconcile their eating habits. Many parents often tend to blur their boundaries regarding animals as food to deter their children from refusing to eat animals or animal products. Adults were found to accept societal food production systems, therefore endorsing the system to their children (Borgi and Cirulli, 2015). In addition, families are more likely to follow the same diet as well. Bastian and Loughnan (2016) found that families following the same diet are often due to convenience or habit. This may suggest that when children observe their parents eating animals or animal products, they will engage in the behavior too. However, young children eating animals or animal products does not reflect speciesism based on moral judgment. (McGuire et al., 2022). Instead, young children engage in the diet due to parental influence.
SUMMARY

Cole and Stewart (2016) emphasize that "academic research has tended to ignore the role that relationships between humans and nonhuman animals have on the lives of the latter, rather than the lives of the children" (p. 63). A better understanding of how speciesism is influenced in childhood can illuminate the importance of child-animal and human-animal relationships for future studies. There are knowledge gaps in children's development of speciesism at an early age and how speciesism is influenced. This study seeks to provide insights into child-animal relationships and the development of speciesism at an early age by identifying significant influences towards childhood speciesism.
METHODS

DATA AND PARTICIPANTS

The methodology used in this study was a qualitative design. Interviews were conducted in early 2020 by Dr. Elizabeth Grauerholz, Ph.D. Interviews were recorded on an MP3 and transcribed manually by both Dr. Grauerholz and myself. The UCF (University of Central Florida) Institutional Review Board approved the original study and later a modification of this study to allow me to transcribe de-identified data (see Appendix A and B). The interview audio recordings were stored in a password-protected account to keep the data confidential. All participants were able to withdraw from the interview at any time. Pseudonyms were used to protect participants' privacy. Participants were recruited through public events and open recruitment.

Five families volunteered to be interviewed about their families' relationships with nonhuman animals. The study interviewed six parents and seven children. The children were ages 3 to 11 years old (see Figure 1). Interviews were conducted in person or over Zoom, allowing participants to be comfortable in their own homes to express their opinions freely. Children were interviewed with their parents present. Children were asked a series of questions, specific to their age, regarding their relationships, thoughts, and ideas on nonhuman animals. Appendix C presents the range of questions asked to children. Parents were asked a series of questions regarding their role in shaping their child's views relating to nonhuman animals. Appendix D presents the range of questions asked to parents. All adult participants gave their
written consent to have their children participate and were treated in accordance with the Ethical Principles of Sociology and Code of Conduct of the American Sociological Association (1999).

![Family Tree](image)

Figure 1: Family Tree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Smith Family</th>
<th>Jones Family</th>
<th>Johnson Family</th>
<th>Rush Family</th>
<th>Miller Family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rapunzel, age 3</td>
<td>April, age 3</td>
<td>Gabe, age 4</td>
<td>Robert, age 7</td>
<td>Jason, age 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evelyn, Mom</td>
<td>Jean, Mom</td>
<td>Ron, age 4</td>
<td>Mary, Mom</td>
<td>Mason, age 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jennifer, Mom</td>
<td>Sam, Dad</td>
<td>Sarah, Mom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This figure identifies the family members interviewed in this study.

**DATA ANALYSIS (PROCEDURES)**

Initial coding was first utilized to summarize each interview. All the thematic analysis was conducted by myself, in consultation with Dr. Grauerholz. After initial coding, focused coding was utilized to raise codes to tentative categories to develop and conceptualize. From here, patterns in the data were revealed, and themes were developed. Memo writing was utilized throughout the interactive process to define and compare themes (see Figures 2 and 3).
Figure 2: Methodology

This figure identifies the methodology procedure timeline used in this study.

Figure 3: Themed Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEMED DATA</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FAVORITE ANIMAL</td>
<td>Children favor animals they relate to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOUSEHOLD PET</td>
<td>Children may have adverse effects toward animals, such as household pets, that are used as educational tools or to teach responsibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARM VS FOOD</td>
<td>Farm animals objectified as animals and as food can lead to childhood speciesism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOOD LANGUAGE</td>
<td>Parental influence towards speciesism related to farm animals objectified as animals and as food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXPOSURE</td>
<td>Children may have adverse effects toward animals that are objectified to certain roles.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This figure identifies the five themes found within all the interviews conducted and a brief description.
FINDINGS

FAVORITE ANIMAL

Previous research by Borgi and Cirulli (2015) found that children favor certain animals based on the animal's personality traits, their similarity to humans, aesthetics, and size. The present study's interview data found that children tend to favor animals that demonstrate the child's personality traits and behavior. In other words, children gravitate to animals they feel connected to or related to. For example, Jason, age 11, reported his favorite animal as a turtle and stated, "I can relate to turtles because I am slow in some cases and fast in others." Also referring to his twin brother, Mason, age 11, stating, "I am the shell. He is the turtle. Basically, we are opposites, so if you put two and two together, you get a turtle." Mason, age 11, reports his favorite animal as Winnie the Pooh; though fictional, Mason shares many personality traits with the character. Mason's mother, Sarah, reports Mason as "empathetic, having a huge heart and caring a lot about all living creatures." April, age 3, favors monkeys, elephants, bears, and lions. April's mom, Jean, refers to April as having a" strong personality," and references to her child being "wild" occurred throughout the interview. Robert, age 7, favored turtles and sharks, and Robert's mom, Mary, reports Robert as "more self-centered and independent." The findings suggest that children favor certain animals based on their own personality traits rather than the animal's traits. This result may be due to selective exposure to certain animals.

Interview data found no preference or favor towards farm animals within this study. Children were found to favor wild animals (see Figure 4). April, age 3, and Mason, age 11, favored fictional animals, while Rapunzel, age 3, Gabe and Ron, age 4, Robert, age 7, and Jason,
age 11, favored wild, predator-style animals. It could be possible that most children choose to favor wild animals over farm animals or household pets due to a desire to relate to being a robust and dominant individual. In addition, the reputation of farm animals and household pets are often correlated to being prey rather than a predator.

Figure 4: Children's Favorite Animal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FAMILY</th>
<th>CHILD</th>
<th>FAVORITE ANIMAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smith's</td>
<td>Rapunzel, age 3</td>
<td>Monkeys, Elephants, Bears and Lions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jones’s</td>
<td>April, age 3</td>
<td>Unicorn and Mermaid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson’s</td>
<td>Gabe, age 4</td>
<td>Foxes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ron, age 4</td>
<td>King Cobra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rush’s</td>
<td>Robert, age 7</td>
<td>Turtles and sharks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miller’s</td>
<td>Jason, age 11</td>
<td>Turtle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mason, age 11</td>
<td>Winnie the Pooh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This figure identifies each child’s favorite animal.
HOUSEHOLD PET

The interview data reveals the significance of children relating to their household pets. All families had either cats or dogs as pets, except for the Miller Family, which had no pets throughout the children’s lives. All families with pets expressed that the pet was considered equal to a family member. Some children even recognize their pets as siblings. For example, April, age 3, views the household dog as her "sister dog." Also, Rapunzel's mom, Evelyn, reports Rapunzel, age 3, having a "pseudo-sibling relationship" with their household cat.

However, the study found that having a household pet does not automatically increase a child's interest in animals. All children who have pets responded with negative attributes when asked about them. Gabe and Ron, age 4, and Rapunzel, age 3, initially reported that their pet often bites them, and Robert, age 7, reports disinterest in hanging out with his two dogs. Robert states, "I do not really hang out with them because there is more (better) stuff for me to do." However, Mason and Jason Miller, age 11, who do not have pets, were the only children to respond positively when asked about animals as pets. For example, Mason, age 11, reports his interest in petting dogs at the park, and both children expressed respect for pet boundaries. Mason, age 11, states, "I feel pretty comfortable going up to people and asking to pet their dog. Only the ones without service vests on." Both children also expressed their connection with animals. For example, Mason and Jason named a wild turtle that roamed in their backyard and expressed their interest in the turtle while emphasizing the importance of keeping the animal free. Mason, age 11, states, "We would not take it from the wild." Data shows that parental influence is a main factor in a child’s interest and level of education toward animals, as the
Miller family is the only family without animals. However, they were the only children who expressed a personal interest in animals at an early age.

In addition, no child with household pets expressed 'empathy' or 'love' for their pets, only responsibility. In other words, most families with household pets utilized their household pets' day-to-day tasks to teach their child(ren) responsibility, such as daily feeding, walking, and playing with the animal. The findings show that this is where the lines between companions, family members, and chores become blurred, and speciesism can occur. When prompted if their children relate to their pets, most parents correlated relating to animals to daily responsibilities rather than love or companionship, while their child shared similar views. Jennifer Johnson reports, "The boys love to go feed them and interact with them." Sarah Rush reports, "I think our animals mostly have been part of the family, so they feed them when they choose to and try to be kind to them and respect them." Their children also relate their pets to their daily responsibilities instead of their love or companionship. Gabe and Ron Johnson, age 4, state, "We play with her. We give her food." April Rush, age 3, reports, "I like to play with her. I like to walk her," Rapunzel, age 3, states, "I take walks with them. Sometimes feed them." This finding suggests that having pets in the household does not increase a child's compassion toward animals. The pattern of families relating their pets to their daily responsibilities rather than their companionship suggests that children can also objectify household pets. The distinction between seeing a pet as a companion or family member and using them as educational tools must be established for future research.
FARM VS FOOD

There is little research involving children's understanding of food production and the food industry. The present study aimed to determine themes in the data related to childhood speciesism towards farm animals objectified as animals and as food. All families interviewed participated in a meat-eating diet. All seven children who consume animal products were asked if they eat animals, and four responded no. Mason and Jason, age 11, and Robert, age 7, responded yes. When asked if he eats animals, Robert, age 7, responds, "I eat pepperoni." Furthermore, Rapunzel and April, age 3, and Gabe and Ron, age 4, responded no. Rapunzel and April were both highly disinterested in eating animals. Rapunzel reported, “No. I do not eat any animals!” However, Gabe reported, "No, I just choose not to eat animals," and later stated his favorite food as 'bacon.' This suggests a disconnection in understanding the difference between farm animals and food among younger children. Later findings reveal that the parents of the children who responded negatively often use euphemisms regarding farm animals and food.

In addition, most parents, who have taught their child(ren) about the realities of their food, reported their children feeling shocked or having a challenging time with the discovery. For example, Jennifer Johnson (whose grandmother raised backyard chickens) reported her children having difficulty connecting live chicken and chicken nuggets and eggs as food.

My mom took them out to pick up the eggs from the chicken that had just laid and so they brought them in and they cooked them, and the boys recognized the connection between an egg and a chicken. We often offer them chicken nuggets and they said, ‘Wait, this is a chicken nugget? Was it an egg? Do chickens make these?’ They were very taken
aback and neither of them wanted anything to do with it for two months or so. I think it was shocking to make the connection between something that they had interacted with alive and had knowledge of and appreciated and then not being aware or not having given consent to eat it.

However, Mary Rush (who raised backyard chickens) recalled Robert’s, age 7, first encounter with questioning eating animals stating, "Robert was eating chicken, and he asked, 'what is this?' and I responded, 'chicken,' and there was a chicken around and he looked at the chicken, looked at the chicken on the fork and still ate it."

To further investigate the objectification of farm animals among children, five of seven children, whose ages range from 3-10, were shown Google stock photos of a cow, pig, chicken, and fish. Results showed all children referenced cows and chickens to their products, such as milk and eggs, whereas pigs and fish were described as their behaviors, such as rolling in the mud and swimming. For example, Rapunzel and April, age 3, and Ron and Gabe, age 4, classified cows' primary role as "giving milk to people." This revealed that children only expressed that cow's milk is for human consumption, not for the cow's babies. Rapunzel, age 3, and Gabe and Ron, age 4, classified chickens' primary role as "laying eggs for people." All children classified at least one farm animal as their product and only referenced the product for human use. This is another supporting factor that could suggest speciesism among children. This finding is relevant to understanding the development of early age speciesism, or objectification, towards animals. Findings aligned with McGuire et al. (2022) that young children are more likely to be significantly less permissible than young adults and adults eating animals or animal
products. There is little difference between young adults and adults' views regarding eating animals or animal products.

Most parents and children also reported personally objectifying farm animals as food, acknowledging the disconnection between them. Most children reported speciesism to farm animals. Jason, age 11, expresses, "I just think I am eating chicken as a meal, not as an animal. It’s just something you put in your stomach." He later states, "some animals are not on Earth to feed humans, and some are." Jennifer Johnson states, "I put them (animals) in a different rung in my brain. I put chickens in a different mental category," while later expressing how it is "really weird how society assigns some animals to be edible and others not to be."
FOOD LANGUAGE

Previous research found that children show less speciesism than adults but increase speciesism as they age (McGuire et al., 2022). This study supports previous findings and expands on this research by introducing parents' role in influencing speciesism at an early age. The study found that speciesism is influenced by parental figures or guardians, often starting in the kitchen. Most families in this study agreed that eating animal products is normalized in their communities. For example, Evelyn Smith states, "We grew up this way; it is our culture."

Parents were found to use euphemisms around foods involving animals to deter children from linking farm animals to food. For example, Jean Jones reported using terms such as "crispy nuggets" instead of "chicken nuggets."

Most parents also expressed that they would shield their child from certain truths of the food industry until an appropriate age to avoid the inconvenience of the child refusing certain foods or having limited food choices. Evelyn Smith shares, "if Rapunzel asks about farming when she is pretty young, I will probably shield her from the reality of how poorly we treat our animals." Previous research (McGuire et al., 2022) highlights children's ability to differentiate between farm animals, wild animals, food, or pets with increased age. All families, except for the Miller's, disagreed with the claim that parents should educate their child(ren) about their food origin at a young age. Based on intellectual development, all parents reported that age 6 to 7 years old is an appropriate time to teach their child(ren) about where their food originates. Evelyn Smith expresses, "I think we would be more comfortable with that topic in middle school. So, in elementary school, I will gloss over it." However, Sarah Miller introduced photos
of farm animals at the age of 2-3 to intentionally make correlations between food items and the farm animal.

When they were 2 to 3 years old, as soon as they could talk and comprehend, I would show them the pictures in the books we were reading at night that had farm animals in them, and I would make correlations between the two. I felt it was important to explain to them what they were eating, and even though it came from a grocery store, there was a live animal behind it somewhere along the way.

Results found that Mason and Jason Miller, age 11, were the only children to demonstrate compassion towards animals. This is suspected not to be influenced by age, but by parental guidance, as the Miller family was the only family to educate their children about farm and food at an early age. This suggests that children who are exposed to the truths of speciesism can overcome or avoid it in adulthood. Earlier, they were found to be the only children who responded positively to household pets. In addition, Mason also expressed his willingness to "eat plants that can regrow easily rather than living, breathing animals." He admits his understanding of factory farming and expresses his interest in meat alternatives. Furthermore, this result supports Borgi and Cirulli (2015) that attitudes toward animals may begin during early childhood, which can change with age, experience, and parental influence.

Interview data revealed that all parents reported eating animal and animal products is unnecessary regarding their child(ren's) health and wellness. Jennifer Johnson reports, "I would say they do not need it in their diet because so many cultures do not eat meat. The kids are
perfectly healthy and fine, but you need some knowledge on how to feed your children." Mary Rush states, "It is suggested, but not necessary." Jean Jones adds to the argument further, stating, "It is not necessarily that she has to have meat, it is that she must have protein." Furthermore, all parents stated they would help accommodate alternative, plant-based meals if their child requested when older. As Jennifer Johnson states,

I think there are many opportunities for us parents as adults to have those experiences with our kids that help shape how we interact with animals when they grow up, how they view animals, and what categories they fit into.
EXPOSURE

Parents often engage in recreational activities with their children, such as parks and zoos, to familiarize and expose children to wild animals. Previous research by Christou & Nikiforou suggests that zoo visitors often express concern for the animals kept in captivity yet will continue to visit the zoo for recreational purposes. Rates of exposure varied among children. However, this study adds to previous research by Christou & Nikiforou and suggests that early exposure to animal industries, such as zoos, sanctuaries, and farms, may also influence speciesism among children and can arouse an adverse reaction. Findings reveal children also are concerned for the well-being of the animals found behind cages in zoos and sanctuaries. The Johnson and Miller families reported that their child(ren) had negative experiences while attending a local zoo and an animal sanctuary. The Johnson family found animal sanctuaries to be upsetting due to the condition of the neglected animals. Furthermore, Sarah Miller reported that her children dislike viewing animals in cages and would rather see them in nature. Miller reported, "The boys did not really care for the zoo, especially did not like the animals being in captivity. They probably felt the energy in the room." Johnson stated, "I think animal sanctuaries were sad for them because the animals there mostly had problems." Evelyn Smith also expressed deep concern about using zoological facilities for educational purposes, "I have mixed feelings about zoos, and I have not been to SeaWorld in years. We will have a conversation one day about why we do not attend circuses."

Animals are also used as educational tools at schools, often termed 'classroom pets.' Three parents report that their child's school purposely chose animals with short life cycles to use
as real-life examples of death in hopes of teaching them this process. One parent said her child's school had a class pet in every classroom. Similar to household pets, utilizing class pets to teach children about real-world applications, such as death and responsibility, can also have adverse effects on children because it introduces the idea of the animal being used for human purposes. This finding suggests speciesism is not entirely influenced by parents but also within educational systems, such as schools and zoological facilities, which incorporate nonhuman animals as learning tools.
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study's research was intended to extend current knowledge about children's relationships with nonhuman animals and enhance understanding of how childhood speciesism is influenced. The interview data suggests that parental beliefs and educational programs could be major contributors to influencing speciesism. Findings suggested that parents are aware of their role in educating their children about the origin of their food. However, all but one family expressed that they will ignore the topic until their child is older. The results of this study support previous literature on the adverse effects animals used for entertainment or educational purposes may have on children. The results also suggest that household pets do not increase compassion among most children, and the role of responsibility must be studied in the direction of child-animal relationships. Interview data with parents and their children also revealed that children tend to favor or choose animals they can relate to most. In conclusion, the study found that childhood speciesism is present in early aged children. This study reaffirms the importance of recognizing the sociology of childhood and children’s ability to have moral judgment and understand social problems. At young ages, children learn to understand and think critically about the complexities of the social world around them. In other words, our early age experiences shape our belief systems in adulthood. We must not ignore the sociology of childhood, as the healthy development of children is pivotal to the future well-being of society.
LIMITATIONS

This study has two main limitations. The first limitation is the limited number of participants in the study, making it more difficult to generalize findings to a larger population. The second limitation is the lack of vegan/vegetarian participants. All participants in this study participated in a meat-eating diet, thus making it difficult to rule out other possible external influences on childhood speciesism involving diet.

FUTURE RESEARCH

The present study is a promising starting point for future research regarding childhood speciesism. Future research is needed to understand why farm animals are often ignored as favored animals, and if they were viewed as favored, would the child opt out of eating the animal or animal products, and why does the child relate to the animal? Additionally, further research is needed to compare vegan/vegetarian families with meat-eating families to understand how diet affects a child's relationships with nonhuman animals. Furthermore, this study found that all parents were open to accommodating their child if they eliminated animal products from their diet; a future study is necessary to see if accommodation is met upon the child's request.

This study suggests that most parents are comfortable explaining to their children the reality of farm vs. food around 7 years old. Previous research suggests that children are more likely to objectify animals when they are relatively older. However, I suspect speciesism is learned when the child is taught about and interested in nonhuman animals. Future research is needed to evaluate childhood understanding of farm vs. food, specifically studying children under the age of 7.
APPENDIX A: IRB ORIGINAL FORM OF APPROVAL
APPENDIX A: IRB ORIGINAL FORM OF APPROVAL

This appendix contains the Institutional Review Board (IRB) Original Form of Approval for Dr. Elizabeth Grauerholz, Ph.D.

PROTOCOL TITLE:

Relating to Animals: Children’s Connections to Other Animals

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:

Elizabeth Grauerholz
Sociology
407-583-9761
Elizabeth.grauerholz@ucf.edu

VERSION NUMBER/DATE:

V1. 5/10/2019
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1. Study Summary

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<td>Study Design</td>
<td>In-depth interviews with parents of children, brief interviews with children of these parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Objective</td>
<td>To explore the connections between children and other animals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Objective(s)</td>
<td>To better understand how non-humans may play a role in children’s socialization. To explore the process of learning to detach from certain animals, to see them merely as “food,” while still remaining deeply attached to “animals.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Research Intervention(s)/Investigational Agent(s) | • In-depth interviews with parents of children ages 3-17. These interviews will focus on their children’s preferences and connections to animals (real, fictional, abstract, imaginary), on ways in which parents guide their children’s food choices (especially surrounding meat eating), and recollections of conversations or interactions that focused on the role of animals in humans’ lives and specifically as food.  
• Interviews with children of these parents, if parents and children consent, in the parents’ presence if children prefer. These interviews will explore the child’s relationship and connection to various animals such as pets, animal characters in books or movies, etc. Children will also be asked if they eat meat. The point of these discussions is to listen to the ways in which children narrate their relationship to and with animals. |
| IND/IDE #                   | NA                                                          |
| Study Population            | Parents of children ages 3-17, children ages 3-17.           |
| Sample Size                 | Up to 30 parents, 90 children.                              |
| Study Duration for individual participants | 45-minute interviews of parents, 20-minute conversation with children. |
| Study Specific Abbreviations/Definitions | NA                                                          |
2. Objectives*
   a. The purpose of this study is to explore the role of nonhuman animals in children’s lives, both as “friends” or “companions” and as food.
   b. This is a qualitative constructive grounded theory study so no predetermined hypotheses are being tested. The research questions that guide this study are:
      ▪ What role do parents play in shaping children’s food choices, especially surrounding meat-eating?
      ▪ What role do nonhuman animals (fictional and real) play in the lives of young children? How do children narrate these relationships?

3. Background*

3.1 Children’s lives in the United States are saturated with animals. Their material culture consists of stuffed animal toys, children’s media (cartoons, books, movies, songs, fairy tales), “chicken” nuggets, costumes, and so on. Studies also show that many children are deeply attached to animals (especially pets) from early ages, and these attachments enhance children’s development and well-being (see, e.g., Melson’s Why the Wild Things Are, Oxford University Press). During this same period, however, most children also learn to detach from certain animals, mainly those used for food consumption. In short, children transition from mimicking animals sounds on Old MacDonald’s Farm to consuming them on their plates.

This process of detachment is seen as natural and normative. As a culture, consumption of animals as food is considered normal and is typically unquestioned, and most children are raised in households that consume animals as food and are taught that doing so is natural. But all cultural practices and ideologies are learned, including practices and ideas surrounding which foods are desirable, healthy, taboo, “fancy,” etc. These cultural practices and ideologies are reinforced by cultural representations of animal food products intended to disguise and transform animals into meat (see, e.g., Grauerholz’s “Cute Enough to Eat: The transformation of animals into meat for human consumption”). It is this process of learning how to detach from certain animals, to see them merely as “food” while still remaining deeply attached to “animals,” that I will explore for this project. While some scholars have provided theoretical account of the process by which nonhuman animals are culturally constructed as meat throughout childhood (see Cole and Stewart, Our Children and Other Animals), no major study to date has empirically examined this process. This study seeks to fill this gap.

3.2 My own recent research (IRB #: SBE-18-14132) has documented detachment from food-animals among college students. Students surveyed report being strongly attached to pets (67% claim to be “very connected” to pets) but neutral towards or disconnected from domesticated farmed animals such as cows, pigs and chickens (just 10% claim to be “very connected” to these animals). This study did not explore the process by which this detachment from certain animals occurs. I am also engaged in a study (STUDY00000534)
that explores individuals’ food choices and transitions surrounding meat-eating. This research has revealed the social factors (e.g., family ties) that contribute to “backsliding” (e.g., going from vegan to vegetarian, or vegetarian to eating meat). This research suggests that others play a significant role in food choices, which indicates the importance of talking with parents of children.

3.3. As indicated above, no study has thoroughly examined the process by which children, paradoxically, intimately identify with certain animals yet learn to exploit and detach from others. This examination is critical given the consequences of such practices in modern society. Not only are such practices linked to nonhuman animal suffering, but also to highly destructive practices (factory farming of animals) that result in devastating environmental and human health outcomes; intersectional oppression of other groups including women, people of color, and low-wage/undocumented workers; human hunger, poverty, and displacement of indigenous peoples as plant-based crops are converted animal agriculture; and zoonotic diseases. The proposed study has implications for understanding, and hopefully diminishing, such outcomes by gaining insight into childhood socialization surrounding the social construction of animals-as-food.

4. Study Endpoints*
   a. NA (non-clinical study)
   b. NA (non-clinical study)

5. Study Intervention/Investigational Agent

   NA—no drugs or devices used.

6. Procedures Involved*
   a. The study design consists of two types of data collection: in-depth interviews with parents ages 3-17, and interviews/conversations with their children.

   • Recruitment:
     o Parents of young children will be recruited for interviews in person, through social media invitations, personal contacts, and snowball sampling. Once contact is made with a potential interviewee is made, I will provide my email address or request their email address, whichever the participant prefers, and follow up for an interview.
     o In scheduling the interviews with parents, I will inquire whether they would consent to have me also talk with their children. If parents agree, I will make arrangements to talk with the children (during the same visit to interview parents or later). If they do not agree to have their child(ren) participate, I will interview only the parent.
     o Parents and children will be asked if there is anyone else they think would be interested in participating in the study. I will provide a flyer and my email address and ask them to contact me.
• Consent:
  o Consent to interview parents will be obtained at the time of the interview. The researcher will explain the study, provide an Explanation of Research, and ask for verbal consent to continue.
  o Consent to talk with parents’ children will be first obtained by parents, then by children. Parents will be asked to sign a consent form, stating that understand the nature of the study and agree to have their children participate. Consent of the child(ren) will be obtained by explaining the study to them in simplified language, and providing a written Explanation of Research (if child(ren) can read). Verbal consent will be obtained from those who can read and understand the nature and terms of the study. For children who cannot read, consent will be obtained by showing them a sheet of paper with a “smiley” face and a “grumpy” face on it. Children will be instructed to point to the smiley face if they want to talk or the grumpy one if not. Only children who indicate consent (by pointing to smiley face) will be interviewed.

• Interviews:
  o In-person interview with parents: These will take place at an agreed upon time and location. These interviews will be audio-recorded, with participants’ consent. If consent to audio-record is not given, the researcher will take written notes. If no method of recording is consented to, the interview will not occur.
  o Children’s interviews: These will take place either during/immediately after the parents’ interviews or at another agreed upon time. Parents will be present during these conversations if the child(ren) prefer. These will be audio-recorded, with permission. If audio-recording is not desired, researcher will take notes. If no method of recording is consented to, no interview will occur.
    ▪ To facilitate conversation with young children (under age 8), a children’s book (e.g., *Always Be Kind*, by Beth Arnold, or a book about animals that the child prefers) may be read to them and the researcher will ask them how they feel about animals, and what they think about the messages in the book (in Arnold’s book, the messages about being kind to various animals such as rabbits, pigs, etc.)

• Ensuring Safety:
  o All interview participants will be instructed that they can cancel or terminate the interview at any time, with no penalty.
  o An encrypted file with interview participants’ names, emails, and pseudonyms will be stored on a password-protected computer. Names and emails will not be stored anywhere else or shared with anyone else in order to ensure participants’ privacy. Pseudonyms will be used in all transcriptions and all identifying information will be deleted/changed to protect their identities.
The study is likely to have minimal risk. All subjects will be informed that they may discontinue at any time. If a child who is being interviewed appears tired or bored, I will suggest taking a break or quitting the interview.

To facilitate conservation with young (under age 8), a book (e.g., Always Be Kind, by Beth Arnold, or another book of the child’s choice) may be read to the child(ren) and a conversation about the book will be recorded (with permission).

Source records include:
- Parent interview questions: ParentInterview.doc
- Child interview questions: ChildInterview.doc
- Consent form for adult (parents of children) interviews: HRP-502 - Grauerholz - Consent Document (Adult) Rev.docx(2)
- Consent form for parents giving permission for child(ren) to be interviewed: HRP-502b - Grauerholz- Consent Document (Parent for Child) Rev.docx (2)
- Script and assent for children who are not old enough to read: Assent for children who can’t read.doc
- Script and assent form for children who are old enough to read: Assent for children who can read.doc
- 1) Interviews with parents: Obtained face-to-face or through skype technology. 2) Interviews with children: Face-to-face.
- No long-term follow up planned.

7. Data and Specimen Banking*
   NA

8. Sharing of Results with Subjects*
   a. All participants will be informed that they may request a report of initial findings. Researcher’s email will be provided and participants may contact researcher for these results.

9. Study Timelines*
   a. Recruitment of interviewees will begin immediately upon approval from IRB. Two years will be devoted to conducting interviews with parents and their children. Only one interview is planned so duration for interviewees will be approximately 45 minutes. Child interviews will be approximately 20 minutes.

   Expected completion of study: December 2021.

10. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria*
   a. Individuals will be screened for eligibility by asking them if they fit the criteria listed below (age, parental status).
b. For parent interviews, individuals must be 18yrs or older and parents of a child between 3-17 years of age. Children interviewees must be between the ages of 3-17.
c. Individuals who are not yet adults (children, teenagers) will be included. Adults unable to consent and prisoners are not targeted in this study.

11. Vulnerable Populations*
a. This study involves no more than minimal risk to children. Safeguards in place to protect their rights and welfare include: 1) Consent by parents; 2) For child interviewees, parents may be present; 3) Any participant may discontinue their involvement at any time.

12. Local Number of Subjects
a. Up to 30 parents, up to 90 children.
b. NA

13. Recruitment Methods
a. Parents of young children will be recruited for interviews in person, through social media invitations, through personal contacts, and snowball sampling. Once contact is made, I will provide my email address or request their email address, whichever the participant prefers, and follow up for an interview. Parents and children will be asked if there is anyone else they think would be interested in participating in the study. I will provide a flyer and my email address and ask them to share with persons who might be interested. Those individuals will contact me via email.
b. Locating parents will also occur through personal contacts with parents of young children. Children will be related to the parents who are interviewed.
c. No specific methods will be used to identify potential subjects.
d. Social media posts (to recruit parents of children); flyers to be distributed at vegetarian-friendly events, and in snowball sampling.
e. No compensation will be offered. I will offer a vegan edible treat (e.g., cookies) or inexpensive toy (e.g., animal figurine) at the end of each interview as a “thank you.”

14. Withdrawal of Subjects*
a. There are no anticipated circumstances that participants will be withdrawn without their consent.
b. If participants choose to withdraw from the research—during the interview—the interview will terminate immediately. At that time, the researcher will ask if the participant is willing to have their data that have already been collected (if any) used in the study. If they say no, their data will be destroyed. If they say these data can be used or are unsure, the researcher will inform them that they may
contact the researcher by email at a later date to request that their data not be used, as long as the data have not been de-identified.

15. Risks to Subjects*
   a. Risks are likely to be minimal. There may be slight inconvenience to interviewees due to scheduling and participating in the interviews. The topics discussed, especially surrounding eating animals for food, may be uncomfortable for some participants. Such discomfort is likely to be temporary and minor, and if participants prefer not to discuss this (or any) topic, they can skip them.

16. Potential Benefits to Subjects*
   a. Adult interview participants may benefit from discussing an aspect of parenting with another adult; children may benefit from spending time talking with another adult. Such benefits are likely to be minimal and temporary.

17. Data Management* and Confidentiality
   a. Interview data will be uploaded to and transcribed using an online voice-recognition technology (Temi) and analyzed using a qualitative analytic strategy (constructivist grounded theory). Data will be analyzed using initial coding, in which data will be disaggregated and examined line-by-line; followed by focused coding, in which data will be analyzed in “chunks.” Higher-level coding will involve identifying categories and themes from these initial and focused codes. A computer-assisted qualitative analysis software such as NVivo may be used for analysis.

All identifying information will be deleted from the audio recordings before uploaded for transcription. Pseudonyms (chosen by participants) will replace all actual names. Transcribed interviews will be stored on a password-protected computer. De-identified transcribed interviews and signed parent for child consent forms will be retained until the research is completed, for a minimum of 5 years.

List of potential and actual participants and their emails will be stored in an encrypted file on a password-protected computer. Emails and names of interview participants will be stored until data analysis is complete. All identifiable information will be kept separate from the interview responses.

Audio recordings will be destroyed 12 months after transcription. Recordings will be kept for this extended period to allow for recoding, if needed, or to ensure inter-coder reliability at a later time.

Quality of data will be ensured by retaining audio recordings until transcription and preliminary analysis is completed. No identifying data will be associated with the transcriptions or survey results.
Audio recordings will be stored on a password-protected computer and accessible only to the principal researcher. Only the primary researcher (Grauerholz) will have access to these raw data (recordings). Transcriptions (de-identified) may be made available to student researchers. The primary researcher is solely responsible for receiving and transmitting the data.

18. Provisions to Monitor the Data to Ensure the Safety of Subjects*

NA: This research involves only minimal risk to subjects.

19. Provisions to Protect the Privacy Interests of Subjects
   a. Interviews will take place in a location of the participants’ choosing. Parents are encouraged to stay during interviews with their child.
   b. All participants will be informed that they may terminate the interview at any time, that they are free to take breaks as needed, or refuse to answer any question.
   c. Only the principal researcher will have access to information about the subjects.

20. Compensation for Research-Related Injury

NA: This research involves only minimal risk to subjects.

21. Economic Burden to Subjects

NA: there are no economic burdens to subjects.

22. Consent Process

Consent from parents for parental interview will be obtained at the time of the interview. A Consent form will be provided to each participant before the interview (a hard copy will be provided for face-to-face interviews or an electronic copy for Skype interviews) so that they have a copy for their records. Verbal consent will be obtained. I will remind them before being the interview that they can withdraw their participation at any time. Time will be taken at this time to address any questions or concerns.

In scheduling the interviews with parents, I will inquire whether they would consent to have me also talk with their children. If parents agree, I will make arrangements to talk with the children (during the same visit to interview parents or later). Written consent from parents to talk with their child(ren) will be requested after the parental interview has concluded. Consent from one parent/guardian will be obtained, even if another parent is alive. A signed copy will be given to the parent and the researcher will retain one signed copy.

With parent’s permission, child participants will be asked to provide assent by asking young children to color in a happy or unhappy face. If they color the happy face, the conversation will continue. For children who read, I will ask them to check Yes or No, to indicate consent. These
forms will have only the child(ren)’s initials to protect their privacy. I will stress to them that they can quit the conversation at any time.

Parental consent and children’s consent forms will be digitized immediately after the interviews and stored in an encrypted file on a password-protected computer. Hard copies of consent forms will be destroyed.

23. Process to Document Consent in Writing
   a. This study follows HRP-091 to obtain parental consent.

Verbal consent only will be obtained for the parent interviews. This portion of the study involves no more than minimal risk.

24. Setting
   a. Potential participants will be recruited at public food-oriented events such as VegFest. Other recruitment will occur using the researcher’s personal contacts and snowball sampling. The researcher will ask parents to distribute flyers to other parents who might be interested in the study.

Interviews with parents and conversations with children will occur in a mutually agreed upon location, most likely the participants’ homes.

25. Resources Available
   a. The researcher is an experienced qualitative researcher with decades of experience conducting interviews and analyzing qualitative data, as well as supervising student researchers.

The researcher is currently on sabbatical and has devoted the majority of time to this project. Thus, it is highly feasible that the data collection will be completed by June 2020, although data collection will continue until saturation is met (up to 30 parents).

26. Multi-Site Research*

NA
APPENDIX B: IRB MODIFICATION FORM AND APPROVAL
APPENDIX B: IRB MODIFICATION FORM AND APPROVAL

This appendix contains the Institutional Review Board (IRB) Modification Form and Letter of Approval.

Modification / Continuing Review / Study Closure

What is the purpose of this submission?
- Continuing Review
- Modification / Update
- Modification and Continuing Review

To change the PI, choose 'Other parts of the study/site' scope

Modification scope:
Study team member information

Modification Information

1. Study enrollment status:
- No subjects have been enrolled to date
- Subjects are currently enrolled
- Study is permanently closed to enrollment
- All subjects have completed all study-related interventions
- Collection of private identifiable information is complete

2. Notification of subjects: (check all that apply)
- Current subjects will be notified of these changes
- Former subjects will be notified of these changes

Attach files: If notifying subjects, add a description of how they will be notified to the Other attachments section of the Local Site Documents page.

3. * Summarize the modifications:
No changes to enrollment. I wish to add an additional member to the research team.
Local Study Team Members

1. Identify each additional person involved in the design, conduct, or reporting of the research:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Roles</th>
<th>Financial Interest</th>
<th>Involved in Consent</th>
<th>Access to Data</th>
<th>E-mail</th>
<th>Phone</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hannah Knotts</td>
<td>Research Assistant</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td><a href="mailto:hcknotts@knights.ucf.edu">hcknotts@knights.ucf.edu</a></td>
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2. External team member information:

- Name: Description
  - There are no items to display

Finalized Documents

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APPROVAL

January 17, 2023

Dear Liz Grauerholz:

On 1/17/2023, the IRB reviewed the following submission:

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<th>Type of Review</th>
<th>Modification / Update</th>
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<td>Title:</td>
<td>Relating to Animals: Children's Connections to Other Animals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investigator:</td>
<td>Liz Grauerholz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRB ID:</td>
<td>MOD00003611</td>
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<tr>
<td>Funding:</td>
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<tr>
<td>IND, IDE, or HDE:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Documents Reviewed:</td>
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The IRB approved the minor modification on 1/17/2023.

In conducting this protocol, you are required to follow the requirements listed in the Investigator Manual (HRP-103), which can be found by navigating to the IRB Library within the IRB system. Guidance on submitting Modifications and a Continuing Review or Administrative Check-in is detailed in the manual. If continuing review is required and approval is not granted before the expiration date, approval of this protocol expires on that date.

Use of the stamped version of the consent form is required.

When you have completed your research, please submit a Study Closure request so that IRB records will be accurate.

If you have any questions, please contact the UCF IRB at 407-823-2901 or irb@ucf.edu. Please include your project title and IRB number in all correspondence with this office.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Karilla C. Birkbeck
APPENDIX C: CHILDREN INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
APPENDIX C: CHILDREN INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

This appendix contains all the interview questions asked to children. Questions were chosen based on the age and verbal abilities of the children. Children were asked to present their favorite book for the interview. If they did not present a book, the child was presented with three different photos of farm animals for familiarity. All interview questions were chosen by Dr. Elizabeth Grauerholz, Ph.D.

Young children (approximately 3--8 years old) with book:

- Would you like to read this book?
- What did you think about the book?
- If you could be any type of animal, what would it be? Why?
- Do you have a favorite animal? What is it? Why do you like it?
- Do you have a favorite stuffed animal? Can you show it to me? What’s their name?
- What’s your favorite animal character in a movie or on TV?
- Do you have any pets? Who are they? What do you like to do with them?
- Do you ever play with animals?
- [show picture of cow—see below]: Do you know what this is? What do cows do? Have you ever seen a cow? Do you like cows?
- [show picture of pig]: Do you know what this is? What do pigs do? Have you ever seen a pig? Do you like pigs?
- [show a picture of a chicken]: Do you know what this is? What do chickens do? Have you ever seen a chicken? Do you like chickens?
- Do you eat any animals?

Young children (approximately 3--8 years old) without book:

- If you could be any type of animal, what would it be? Why?
- Do you have a favorite animal? What is it? Why do you like it?
- Do you have a favorite stuffed animal? Can you show it to me? What’s their name?
- What’s your favorite animal character in a movie or on TV?
- Do you have any pets? Who are they? What do you like to do with them?
- Do you ever play with animals?
- [show picture of cow—see below]: Do you know what this is? What do cows do? Have you ever seen a cow? Do you like cows?
- [show picture of pig]: Do you know what this is? What do pigs do? Have you ever seen a pig? Do you like pigs?
- [show a picture of a chicken]: Do you know what this is? What do chickens do? Have you ever seen a chicken? Do you like chickens?
• Do you eat any animals?

Middle aged children (approximately 9--12 years old):

• Do you have a favorite animal? What is it? Why do you like it?
• Do you have any pets? Who are they? What do you like to do with them?
• Do any of your favorite videos/shows have animals in them? What’s your favorite?
• Do any of the games you play have animals in them?
• Have you ever met a cow? A pig? A chicken? What was that like?
• Do you eat animals? Do your friends eat them?
• Have you ever thought about how we eat some animals and not others? What do you think about that?

Older children (approximately 13--17 years old):

• Do you have a favorite animal? If so, what, and why do you like them?
• What’s your least favorite animal?
• In general, how do you feel about animals?
• Have you ever visited a farm or sanctuary where you came up close to a cow, or pig, or chicken? What was that like?
• Do you eat beef, pork, or chicken? Why or why not?
• Have you always eaten/not eaten them?
• Are any of your friend's vegetarian (explain, if necessary)?
• Have you ever thought about how we eat some animals and not others? What do you think about that?
APPENDIX D: PARENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
APPENDIX D: PARENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

This appendix consists of the interview questions asked to the parents of the children interviewed. All interview questions were chosen by Dr. Elizabeth Grauerholz, Ph.D.

- How many children do you have? What are their ages? Sexes?
- Do you have any pets?
- How would you say your child relates (or feels) about animals?
  - Prompts: Do(es) your child(ren) love animals? Does your child(ren) have a favorite animal? Are there any animals he/she/they are particularly fond of? Any that they don’t like? Any characters from books, movies, or video games they especially like?
- Would you say animals play an important role in your child(ren)’s life? If yes, how so?
- Have you ever visited a zoo? An animal sanctuary? What was that like?
- What kinds of things have you tried to teach your child about relating to or caring for animals?
- Does/Do your child(ren) eat meat? Do they consume dairy?
  - If yes, when did you first introduce your child to dairy and meat? Do they like it?
  - If no, did they ever? If yes, why did their diets change?
- If raised without meat/dairy, how did you come to that decision? Do they ever want to consume meat/dairy?
- Have you told them why you don’t give them meat/dairy? What have you told them? How do they feel about it?
- What are the challenges you’ve faced raising your child/ren without meat/dairy?
- Do you recall if your child asked you about eating a cow, chicken, or pig? What was that conversation like?
- Has your child ever raised questions or concerns with you about eating any type of animals?
- Do you think it’s difficult for children who love animals to participate in eating certain animals like chickens or pigs?
- How do you think meat-eating becomes normalized for children? Can you think of examples from your own parenting?
- Do you think meat-eating/dairy consumption is healthy for children?
- Is there anything else you can think of that I should know about how your child(ren) relate to animals?
- Is there another parent you know that might be interested in talking about these issues with me?
REFERENCES


