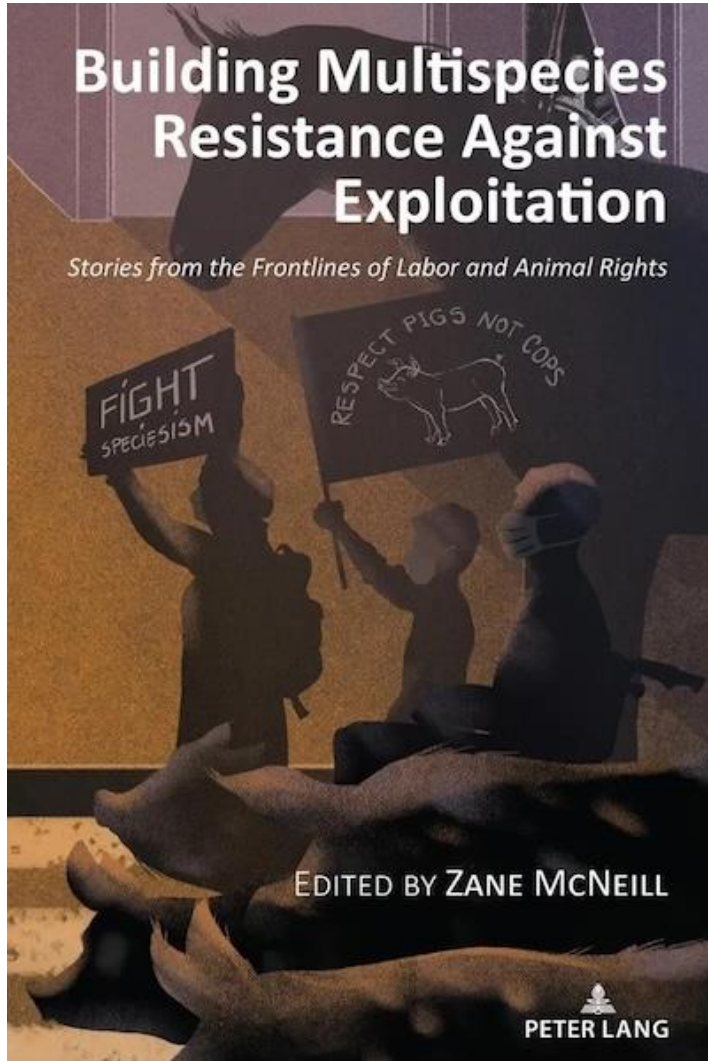


**Building Multispecies Resistance Against Exploitation** Edited by Zane McNeill  
Interviewed by [Kim Stall](#)  
May 2024

*This book illuminates the intersections of seemingly disconnected movements and offers concrete ways for us to disrupt and dismantle the systems of oppression that harm human and nonhuman animals.*



Buy on [Amazon](#)

*What led you to become involved with social justice? How do you describe yourself as a social justice advocate? And what are the issues that you're presently working on?*

I have been vegan since I was 14 (so for 15 years in August) for ethical reasons. For over a decade, I have labored in different roles in the animal advocacy nonprofit sector (AANS). This book is very much a guidebook I wish I had had when I was 16 and getting involved in the movement. I was so passionate about this movement and animal liberation, but that made me very exploitable.

When I was in high school, and then again in college, I started a ‘compassionate communities’ club which was affiliated with Farm Sanctuary. I then interned with Farm Sanctuary in upstate New York as an education intern and, in 2015, was part of the inaugural cohort of The Humane League’s ‘campus coordinator’ program.

After college, I interned in public policy and government relations near DC for the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and the ASPCA. This was right after [#metooAR](#) broke. After those externships, I got a job with the Animal Legal Defense Fund. However, because of [various labor issues](#) I experienced at the ALDF, as well as the other nonprofit organizations I had worked for previously, I left that position and began organizing with a labor advocacy group called Rights for Animal Rights Activists (RARA) and began doing DEI consulting.

During this time, I also did a lot of critical animal studies scholarship and published pieces in [Vegans on Speciesism and Ableism: Ecoability Voices for Disability and Animal Justice](#) (Peter Lang Publishing, 2022) and [Expanding the Critical Animal Studies Imagination: Essays on Solidarity and Total Liberation](#) (Peter Lang Publishing, 2024). I also co-edited a collection called [Queer and Trans Voices: Achieving Liberation Through Consistent Anti-Oppression](#) (Sanctuary Publishers, 2020) and published an anthology with Lantern Publishing & Media called [Vegan Entanglements: Dismantling Racial and Carceral Capitalism](#) (2022).

I also do a lot of work on issues that I see as intersecting with and imperative to nonhuman animal liberation, such as environmental justice, reproductive rights, and LGBTQ advocacy. I currently chair the National Lawyers Guild’s Animal Liberation committee and organize events where we are in conversation with these movements.

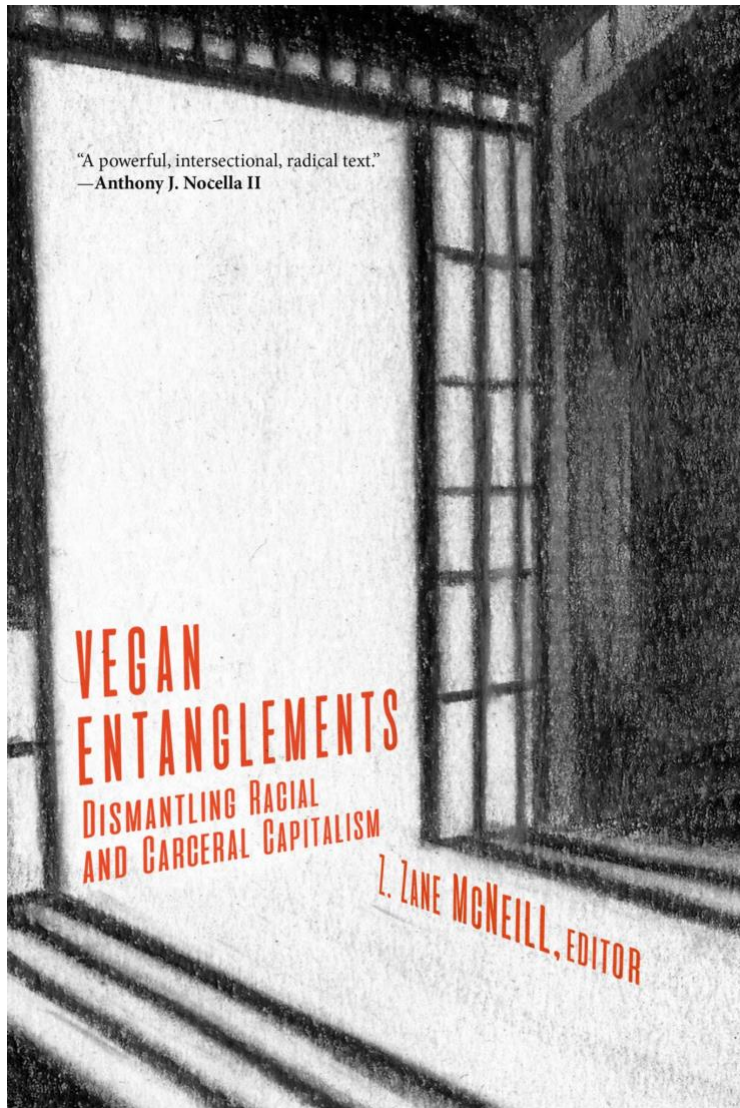
As part of this work, I have (co-)edited collections on queer liberation ([Y’all Means All: The Emerging Voices Queering Appalachia](#) and [Deviant Hollers: Queering Appalachian Ecologies for a Sustainable Future](#)) political protest and socially engaged art ([Politics as Public Art: The Aesthetics of Political Organizing and Social Movements](#)) and am currently working on law review articles on legal embodiment, privacy law, and freedom of the press.

***As the editor of [Building Multispecies Resistance Against Exploitation](#), what are you seeking to accomplish with this anthology?***

We often see issues as siloed, standalone problems—nonhuman animals suffer incredibly in factory farms and other institutions, low-income and immigrant workers experience high levels of exploitation, and nonprofit workers report high levels of [compassion fatigue](#) and [burnout](#). However, we often fail to consider all of these problems are all rooted in the same oppressive structures that exploit all of us and therefore should be addressed through a consistent anti-oppression framework.

We cannot work towards the liberation of one without working towards the liberation of all. As Hailey Huget points out in her chapter, “[T]he movement’s insistence on remaining a single-issue fight is a strategic disaster, one which prevents us from heeding lessons from other successful social movements, such as the labor movement, Civil Rights movement, and various antiwar movements... These lessons involve choosing our targets more carefully, giving more entry points into the movement, and expanding our menu of tactics.”

This book illuminates the intersections of these seemingly disconnected movements and offers concrete ways for us to disrupt and dismantle the systems of oppression that harm human and nonhuman animals.



"A powerful, intersectional, radical text."  
—Anthony J. Nocella II

**VEGAN  
ENTANGLEMENTS**  
DISMANTLING RACIAL  
AND CARCERAL CAPITALISM

L. ZANE MCNEILL, EDITOR

<https://all-creatures.org/book/r-vegan-entanglements.html>

*In the Introduction, you write about the “structures of violence and oppression experienced and shared by human and nonhuman laborers working and dying in necropolitical facilities.” Please explain to anyone who may not understand what this is referring to so that they will understand it. What is necropolitics and what are necropolitical facilities?*

The term “necropolitics” refers to the politics—that is, the use of social and political power—to decide who lives, who dies, and how someone should live or die. As described by Marek Muller, who builds on the work of political theorist Achille Mbembe, “The necropolitical refers to the state's potential to make certain bodies killable, such as naming enslaved bodies ‘chattel’ to deny them of their personhood and subsequently of their legal rights to life and liberty.”

So, ‘necropolitical’ facilities are spaces that render subjects killable. In this case, slaughterhouses and meatpacking plants are ‘necropolitical’ in that they literally kill and dismember nonhuman animals.

However, under racial and carceral capitalism, necropolitics renders not only nonhuman animals as “slaughter-able,” but [also the low-income workers who labor there](#).

Specifically, the meat-processing industry depends on carcerality in tandem with racial capitalism which evolved out of the convict leasing of the Jim Crow era, which itself evolved out of chattel slavery. This system transforms human and nonhuman bodies into [commodities](#) whose labor is consumed and capitalized upon by the elite class. Thus, this collection asserts that there is a shared exploitation between laborers—human and nonhuman alike—which is designed within and by a system built on carceral and racial capitalism.

The first section of the book, “The Necropolitics of Laboring in the Abattoir,” examines the labor landscape of animal work—specifically the labor of, and resistance to, killing and being killed in the slaughterhouse. The chapters in this section, “Unfulfilled Resistance: The Labor of Not Surviving” by Catherine Oliver and “Violence Begets Violence: The Necessity of Solidarity with U.S. Slaughterhouse Workers,” by Marek Muller explore the entanglements of class, labor, and resistance in human and nonhuman animal communities exploited by the industrial agriculture sector. Specifically, these chapters disrupt expectations about what constitutes labor and who has choice, autonomy, and recognition of rights under racial capitalism. These chapters posit, as described by Oliver, that “labor and work aren’t exclusively human, and the concept of animal rights has existed in some form for centuries, and nor is resistance solely a human activity.”

***The anthology makes links between animal exploitation and animal advocacy. How do you see these links manifesting themselves?***

At its heart, this book is a love letter to animal activists and to the movement. The contributors and I want to keep animal activists safe, push the movement to be accountable to its workers and the communities it has affected, and liberate nonhuman animals from exploitation.

The second section of the book, “The Animal Advocacy Nonprofit Sector and the Reification of Carceral and Racial Capitalism,” examines whether, and in which ways, the animal advocacy movement has upheld the systems embedded in and entangled with speciesism, white supremacy, carcerality, and racial capitalism. “Undercover Investigations and Carceral Veganism: The Limitations of ‘Removing the Veil’,” by Ellyse Winter and “Death or Deportation: A Nebraska-Based Study of the Exploitation of Immigrant Workers in Meatpacking Facilities and the Immigration Consequences of the Animal Protection Movement,” by Kelly Shanahan examine how the AANS has embedded itself in the prison- and immigration-industrial complexes and harmed migrant and low-wage workers by doing so.”

There is a huge problem in the movement that is accurately aware of. We have a [diversity](#) and [retention](#) problem—and why is that? Movement leaders have [sexually preyed](#) on young activists. As part of strategic goals, nonprofits have [aligned with police and prosecutors](#) to arrest low-labor workers and have endorsed and [financially support](#) carceral solutions to systemic animal exploitation. Animal rights organizations have propagated [racist](#) and [misogynistic](#) messaging, which has alienated Black, Indigenous, People of the Global Majority (BIPGM) animal advocates. Organization management has [retaliated](#) against its workers for labor advocacy and have attempted to [suppress](#) any union organizing.

***What actions should animal advocates take to challenge animal exploitation and injustice in the animal advocacy movement?***

All of these problems—which have led to a massive failure of the goals of the movement-- are because these nonprofits analogically are embedded in [neoliberal capitalist culture](#), thereby [centering white goals and interests](#) and reifying the hierarchies which the animal agriculture sector is similarly predicated on.

Because all of these problems are interconnected, the solutions are very easy to recognize and to enact organizationally movement wide. We must center, support, and enact labor protections to protect activists who have intersecting, marginalized identities, listen to and believe animal activist workers when they assert labor rights infringements occurred and hold perpetrators accountable, restructure our organizations outside of a nonprofit-industrial complex model (i.e. shift to worker ownership models or support union organizing) and build strategic alliances and coalitions between social movements to dismantle all forms of oppression.

The final section of this book, “Moving Towards Multispecies Liberation,” offers tangible ways to accomplish this. “Abolish the Meat Industry: A roadmap for Transforming Animal Liberation from a Single-Issue Cause into a Mass Movement,” by Hailey Huget, “Animal Liberation, Class and Direct Action for Total Liberation,” by Will Boisseau and “An Essay on Total Liberation: Marcusean Insights for Catalyzing Transformation,” by Dan Fischer posit that in order to achieve liberation for one marginalized political subject, we must liberate all political subjects oppressed by these entangled hierarchies. These chapters not only envision a world without these hierarchies but offer tangible steps the AANS can take to achieve liberation for human and nonhuman animals.