

# Dear Dairy: The True Cost of Milk

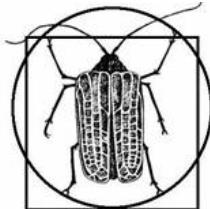
## Symposium Programme

Friday 21 July, 09:00 – 18:00, Otakaro 146 L1, Dovedale Campus  
Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha / University of Canterbury



刘强 Liu Qiang *29h59'59"* 2008.  
Photo by Ng Han Guan

***"The cost of a thing is the amount of what I will call life which is required to be exchanged for it, immediately or in the long run."***  
— Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*



Hosted by the New Zealand Centre for Human-Animal Studies (NZCHAS)  
[www.nzchas.canterbury.ac.nz](http://www.nzchas.canterbury.ac.nz)

Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha/ University of Canterbury  
Ōtautahi/ Christchurch,  
Aotearoa New Zealand.

Conference organizers: Kirsty Dunn and Annie Potts

## **Dear Dairy: The True Cost of Milk**

Friday 21 July, Otakaro 146 L1, Dovedale Campus, UC

### **Symposium Schedule at a Glance:**

**0900 - 0915** Registration, meet and greet

**0915 - 0930: Mihi whakatau** – Kirsty Dunn (Te Rarawa, Te Aupouri) and symposium welcome and opening – NZCHAS Co-Directors, Annie Potts and Philip Armstrong

**0930-1100**

**Panel 1: The Dairy Industry in Aotearoa New Zealand – Past, Present, Future**

Philip Armstrong, Rowan Taylor, Jasmijn DeBoo

**1100-1130:** Morning tea (provided)

**1130-1230**

**Panel 2: Bovine Welfare**

Alison Loveridge, Andrew Knight

**1230-1330**

**Keynote Presentation: lynn mowson – ‘beautiful little dead things and udder-matters’**

**1330-1430:** Lunch (vegan and gluten free lunch provided by Claude’s Kitchen, Ferrymead)

**1430-1600**

**Panel 3: Activism against Bovine Exploitation**

Kathryn Stringer, Lynley Tulloch, Yamini Narayanan

**1600-1630:** Afternoon tea (provided)

**1630-1730**

**Keynote Presentation: Tobias Linne and Iselin Gambert –**

**‘Got Mylk? Uncoupling the Exploitation of Milk’**

**1730-1800**

**Conference Close: Invited Guest Speaker Melissa Boyde - ‘Practising the Art of War’**

**1800: Farewell/Mihi (Kirsty Dunn)**

## **Dear Dairy: The True Cost of Milk**

### **Detailed symposium schedule with abstracts:**

**0900 - 0915** Registration, meet and greet

**0915 - 0930: Mihi whakatau** – Kirsty Dunn (Te Rarawa, Te Aupouri) and symposium welcome and opening – NZCHAS Co-Directors, Annie Potts and Philip Armstrong

**0930-1100**

#### **Panel 1: The Dairy Industry in Aotearoa New Zealand – Past, Present, Future**

Speakers: Philip Armstrong, Rowan Taylor, Jasmijn DeBoo

##### **'Welcome to the Milk Machine: Dairy Farming as New Zealand's Industrial Revolution'**

**A/Prof Philip Armstrong**, New Zealand Centre for Human-Animal Studies, University of Canterbury

Abstract: For the last century, New Zealanders have been thought of – and we have liked to think of ourselves – as inhabitants of an exceptional state: a non-industrialized, or even anti-industrial, sanctuary among the highly-industrialized nations whose company we like to keep (the UK, the USA, Australia, China). To put it another way, our preferred vision of New Zealand has long depended on images and narratives that imply the opposite of industrialization: rural rather than urban, reliant on agriculture rather than extractive enterprise or manufacture, nature-loving, ‘clean and green’, environmentally responsible. At the same time this fantasy has been used to sell New Zealand to a world increasingly exhausted and dismayed by the depredations of industry, it has allowed New Zealanders to believe that we have achieved, and can continue to achieve, the benefits of prosperous modernity without the costs of industrialization. Today this collective hallucination seems more threadbare than ever, even as our government continues to spin it out. In this paper, I want to focus on the history of dairying to demonstrate that, in reality, New Zealand has engaged in aggressive industrialization ever since the first years of Pākehā hegemony, and to explore some of the ways in which this form of industrialism has been able to co-exist with – indeed to exploit and depend on – a persistent anti-industrial fantasy.

##### **"Dire Dairy and the State of the Environment"**

**Rowan Taylor**, Environmental Scientist, Canterbury

Abstract: Grassland once covered just 5% of New Zealand, and forests 85%. Today grassland covers more than half the land and forests less than 30%. Two species - cattle and sheep – have supplanted rich ecosystems of native species. We have 5 million lactating dairy cows, 1.5 million heifers and 3.5 million beef cattle – 10 million in all. One pasture-fed cow excretes 16 times more manure than a human. To produce just one litre of milk requires many wasted litres of water, much of it lost as urine. Growing one litre of cow milk requires much more land than a litre of plant-based milk, and emits much more greenhouse gas. How do we turn this unsustainable juggernaut around?

Two broad paths are open to us: (1) reform the current model with technical improvements to lessen the impact per cow; or (2) progress to a whole new model, a post-dairy farming system based on diverse crops and smarter water use. Right now, most attention is focused on the first path, a path which will, at best, provide only marginal improvements. This paper explores the second option and proposes that the time has come to take the path less travelled – a path that is both more sustainable and humane.

### **'The Green Protein Revolution: Policy Solutions to Move Away From Dairy Farming'**

**Jasmijn DeBoo**, CEO of Save Animals from Exploitation (SAFE), New Zealand

**Abstract:** This presentation highlights the need to move away from dairy in New Zealand (and globally). Case studies of growth in plant-based milks and other vegan products will be presented, and policy solutions will be suggested to reduce animal suffering and improve the availability and affordability of plant-based products. A multi-disciplinary approach is required to change societal norms, encourage and persuade food business, and maintain a dialogue with government and industry to achieve a paradigm shift that will benefit other animals, the environment, public health, and the economy.

**1100-1130:** Morning tea (provided)

**1130-1230**

### **Panel 2: Bovine Welfare**

Speakers: Andrew Knight, Alison Loveridge

### **'Welfare Problems Experienced by Dairy Cows'**

**Professor Andrew Knight**, Director of the Centre for Animal Welfare, University of Winchester, and Director of Research and Education with SAFE

**Abstract:** Intensive selection for maximal productivity within dairy cows have increasingly diverted biological resources into milk and muscle production, with the result that less are available to support immune function, tissue repair, or to respond to stressors. Unsurprisingly, therefore, rates of some diseases appear to be rising with increased productivity, including reproductive problems (such as failure to conceive), mastitis (udder inflammation), lameness and metritis (uterine inflammation). These problems significantly affect both cows and farmers today, with the most highly productive breeds most affected. Some surveys indicate that annual culling rates for reproductive problems, mastitis and lameness are substantial. This presentation will review key welfare problems in dairy cattle internationally, such as lameness, mastitis, dehorning, tail-docking, branding, and the housing, diets, infectious diseases and behavioural deprivations experienced by those intensively confined.

### **'The Last Frontier: High Country Dairying and the Complexity of Welfare'**

**Dr Alison Loveridge**, Sociologist, Department of Anthropology and Sociology, University of Canterbury

Abstract: Factory farming hit the New Zealand headlines in 2009 with pictures of sows in stalls, then large scale dairying delivered pictures of dead and dying calves. Shortly afterwards, proposals to install close to 17,000 dairy cows in barns in the inter-montane Mackenzie Basin seemed to combine confinement and large scale farming with environmental pressure on a unique ecology. The **thought** of cows in the Mackenzie Basin created outrage, with 5,000 submissions lodged during the resource consent process, which was sent to a Government-appointed board of inquiry. While this particular development foundered, a prediction “New Zealanders would see it back on the agenda within two or three years” has proved prescient. Justification for keeping cows in sheds for long periods now includes ease of managing farm effluent to protect waterways from pollution – science has solutions to the environmental risks identified earlier. Bock and Buller (2013: 392) suggest that “animal welfare demonstrates how entering into dialogue with society ... alerts scientists of their own value laden framing of questions and broadens their view by getting insight in citizens’ concerns.”, which parallels the process with some environmental problems. This paper demonstrates how dairy farming in New Zealand’s most extreme environments tests and promotes this dialogue.

**1230-1330**

**Keynote Presentation: lynn mowson – ‘beautiful little dead things and udder-matters’**

**Dr Lynn Mowson**, Sculptor, Researcher for Human-Rights and Animal Ethics Research Network [HRAE], University of Melbourne, Vice-Chair of the Australasian Animal Studies Association.

Abstract: This paper explores how the ongoing traumatic knowledge of the lives and deaths of dairy cattle impacts on my sculptural practice. From the series *slink*, 2014 which responded to the slaughter of fetal calves and the use of their skins for the luxury leather, to my recent series *boobscapes*, 2016-17. *boobscapes* is a growth like amalgamation of mammarys; in which udders, teats, nipples, breasts merge and drip milk. The work emerged as a result of witnessing the lives of dairy cattle from the embodied perspective of a woman and a mother: it uses empathy, humour, abjection and transgression to blur the species boundaries. This paper considers how these artworks enact an empathy between fellow-creatures and challenges the normative languages of carnism.

**1330-1430:** Lunch (vegan and gluten free lunch provided by Claude’s Kitchen, Ferrymead)

**1430-1600**

**Panel 3: Activism against Bovine Exploitation**

Speakers: Kathryn Stringer, Lynley Tulloch, Yamini Narayanan

**‘Making the Connection About Cruelty: An Analysis of SAFE and Farmwatch’s (2015) “The Dark Side of Dairy” Campaign’**

**Kathryn Stringer**, English and Human-Animal Studies, University of Canterbury  
(*Winner of the 2017 NZCHAS Undergraduate Essay Prize in Human-Animal Studies*)

Abstract: Campaigning to raise awareness of the cruelty of the dairy industry is not a new endeavour for animal activists, but the campaign, “The Dark Side of Dairy” stands out for its well-planned strategy. Throughout 2015 and beyond New Zealand animal rights groups SAFE and Farmwatch effectively used the media to manipulate the field of vision, and raise public awareness of the cruelty of the dairy industry by making the absent referents of the milk producing process visible. The measurable outcomes of these actions may appear welfarist in nature: a filmed slaughterhouse worker was prosecuted, The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) announced they would review the regulations on the treatment of bobby calves, and SAFE met with MPI, Dairy New Zealand and Fonterra to discuss concerns and potential improvements. However, this paper will argue that the real goal of this campaign was not to slightly improve the animal welfare of bobby calves, but to educate and confront the public to make the connection between dairy consumption and the cruelty that is necessary to produce dairy products.

**‘The Story of the Starfish Bobby Calf Project: Activist Ethnography in the New Zealand Dairy Industry’**

**Dr Lynley Tulloch**, founder of the Starfish Bobby Calf Project

Abstract: This presentation examines the experiences of anti-dairy activism in the heart of the Waikato – a dairy farming region in New Zealand. Using autoethnographic methodology, I discuss the core strategies and tactics of Starfish Bobbycalf project, a grassroots activist group. Starfish has two broad aims that converge with those of the animal rights movement: gaining publicity and challenging conventional thinking about how we treat non-human animals. I discuss the deployment of key tactical mechanisms, including persuasion and protest. It is argued that the relationship between grass roots animal rights activism and social change is multifaceted and complex. I discuss the contextual factors – including the multiple and competing attitudes toward animals within rural communities in New Zealand. These dualistic attitudes create a political landscape that has proved difficult to navigate and has shaped the efficacy of our activist strategies.

**‘Dairy and Dharma: Milk and the Problematics of Cow Reverence in India’**

**Dr Yamini Narayanan**, Senior Research Fellow, Deakin University, Australia.

Abstract: The milk of the cow, especially the indigenous *bos Indicus* species, and its associated products – ghee and butter – have a core status in the Hindu belief system and rituals as birthing, purifying and sustaining the Universal order itself. Consumption and the prolific use of cow milk and its products in sacrifice is intimately intertwined with the idea of being Hindu. However important work in critical animal studies as well as animal advocacy increasingly point to the profuse and endemic violence to cows (and other milk animals) in commodifying animal bodies and animal lactation for human consumption. This paper problematises the core relationship of the Hindu with the cow, which is centrally based on

relating to her as a *lactating* mother. The paper returns to one of the greatest legends of Hindu scriptures depicting the gods and demon churning the Ocean of Milk to attain ambrosia and immortality. It excavates and analyses an extraordinary detail from the legend, hitherto almost entirely invisibilised from public theological and public discourse in India, to provoke the radical idea that the core of cow – and thereby milk – reverence in Hinduism is emphatically *vegan* and *plant-based*.

**1600-1630:** Afternoon tea (provided)

**1630-1730**

**Keynote Presentation: Tobias Linne and Iselin Gambert**

**'Got Mylk? Uncoupling the Exploitation of Milk'**

**A/Prof Tobias Linné**, Director of the Lund University Critical Animal Studies Network, Sweden, and **Professor Iselin Gambert**, Associate Director, Legal Research & Writing Program, The George Washington University Law School, USA:

**Abstract:**

Milk: it's one of the most widely consumed substances on the planet. The Oxford English Dictionary defines it as a fluid produced by "female mammals (including humans) for the nourishment of their young, and taken from cows, sheep, etc., as an article of the human diet." Put simply, the dominant definition of "milk" is both female and animal in nature, and bound up in exploitation.

This presentation will explore, from a feminist perspective, the cultural, political, and legal implications of the prevailing norms and definitions surrounding "milk," as well as the opportunities for the word "mylk" to disrupt the norms of exploitation inherent in the concept of milk and offer a new, subversive, and feminist framework through which to relate to this ubiquitous substance.

By examining the prevailing dictionary and legal definitions of "milk," all of which exclude substances created by male bodies or plants, we will unpack the ways that laws and norms surrounding the regulation, production, and distribution of milk impact - and exploit - female lives.

We will examine the history of plant milk production discussing the recent attempts by US lawmakers to prohibit plant milk companies from using the word "milk" on their packaging.

Finally, we will explore the concept of the term "mylk" as a disruptive milk, one that can uncouple milk from its problematic narrative as a pure, feminine, animal substance that is bound up in exploitation and oppression. We will explore the benefits and drawbacks of plant milk advocates adopting "mylk" in a climate where the dairy lobby is fighting to prevent plant milk from disrupting the power and allure of dairy milk in popular culture, and to delegitimize plant milk as "real" milk.

**1730-1800 Conference Close**

**Invited Speaker: Melissa Boyde**

**Practising the Art of War**

**Dr Melissa Boyde, Senior Research Fellow, School of Arts, English and Media, Wollongong University, Australia.**

In part, this paper responds to a question posed by a leading animal ethics philosopher seeking evidence to determine whether 'a cow has an interest in living another day'. To begin an answer to a question which I consider imbued with tensions and cracks I offer three stories.

These include responses to philosopher Vinciane Despret's considerations on animal work – particularly the aspects that follow sociologist Jocelyne Porcher's work on 'dairy' cows; my accounts of the cows and steers in the herd that I have lived alongside for almost 30 years, a kind of auto-ethnographic approach; and stories and a few facts about the dairy industry in Australia. My juxtaposition of these accounts is informed by another story, told by the feminist philosopher and writer Hélène Cixous.

Fault lines criss-cross these narratives about bovines. The desire of an animal to live another day is imbricated with the everyday desire of a human for a banquet of death, wrought – as Dinesh Wadiwel's recent work reveals – in the violence of a war against animals. One of my underlying interests in this paper is in the possibilities of narrative to disturb and disclose cultural secrets of systemic violence; secrets that lead us to a question that we must (unbelievably) take seriously: does a cow want to live another day?

**Presenters' Biographies**

**Philip Armstrong** is an Associate Professor of English at the University of Canterbury and the Co-Director of the New Zealand Centre for Human-Animals. He is the author of *What Animals Mean* (Routledge 2008) and *Sheep* (Reaktion 2016), the co-author, with Annie Potts and Deidre Brown, of *A New Zealand Book of Beasts* (AUP 2013), and the co-editor, with Laurence Simmons, of *Knowing Animals* (Brill, 2007).

**Melissa Boyde**, a Senior Research Fellow in the Faculty of Law, Humanities and the Arts at the University of Wollongong, works in the fields of modernist art and literature and animal studies. She is the founder and editor of the *Animal Studies Journal* and co-editor of the *Animal Publics* book series Sydney University Press. Her most recent curatorial projects include *Moya Dyring: An Australian Salon in Paris* at Heide Museum of Modern Art in Melbourne, *Travels with my Art: Moya Dyring and Margaret Olley* at the Margaret Olley Art Centre, and the *Animaladies* exhibition in Sydney, co-curated with Yvette Watt and Madeleine Boyd.

**Jasmijn de Boo** (MSc, DipEd, MRSB, MIoD), is CEO at SAFE For Animals. She has been an animal advocate since 1993. Following the completion of a Bachelor's and Master's degree in animal management, animal behaviour and welfare, she started work in animal protection in 1999 as co-ordinator of a campaign against abandoned and neglected sled

dogs in Greenland and Canada. Her various professional positions have involved travelling, giving presentations and organising animal protection workshops for educators around the world. Jasmijn established a political party for animals in the UK, which she led for four years until October 2010. She was the CEO of The Vegan Society in the UK for nearly five years until July 2016.

**Iselin Gambert** is Professor of Legal Writing at The George Washington University Law School, where she teaches courses in legal communication and rhetoric and runs the law school Writing Center. She is a contributor to the book *Letters to a New Vegan: Letters to Inform, Inspire, and Support a Vegan Lifestyle* (Lantern Books 2015) ([igambert@law.gwu.edu](mailto:igambert@law.gwu.edu)).

**Andrew Knight** (MANZCVS, DipECAWBM (AWSEL), DACAW, PhD, MRCVS, SFHEA) is Director of Research and Education with SAFE and a member of the NZ Centre for Human-Animal Studies at the University of Canterbury. He is also Professor of Animal Welfare and Ethics, and Director of the Centre for Animal Welfare, at the University of Winchester; a European and RCVS Veterinary Specialist in Animal Welfare Science, Ethics and Law; an American Veterinary Specialist in Animal Welfare; and a Senior Fellow of the UK Higher Education Academy. Andrew's publications have examined the contributions of the livestock sector to climate change, vegetarian companion animal diets, the animal welfare standards of veterinarians, and the latest evidence about animal cognitive and related abilities, and the resultant moral implications.

**Tobias Linné** is an Associate Professor at Lund University in Lund, Sweden, and co-founder of the Lund University Critical Animal Studies Network. His most recent publications include Linné, T. (2016) "Cows on Instagram: Engagement and Emotions in the Social Media Spaces of the Swedish Dairy Industry" in *Television & New Media* and Linné, T. (with Pedersen, H.) (2016) "With care for cows and a love for milk: Affect and performance in dairy industry marketing strategies" In Potts A. (ed.) *Meat Culture*. Leiden: Brill. ([tobias.linne@kom.lu.se](mailto:tobias.linne@kom.lu.se))

**Alison Loveridge** is a sociologist at the University of Canterbury. Her research interests are in rural change/innovation, rural autobiography and animal welfare, with a strong interest in sociological methodology. Current research concerns perceptions of animal welfare and farming in New Zealand. An interest in rural issues was developed through projects which focused on how people learn about innovation and work with the natural environment. One highlight was working in a bicultural team with owners of Maori land who were developing their land to increase employment within their families. Another was working on a survey of attitudes to animal welfare among people who work with animals on farms and members of the public. Alison's curiosity about the elements of New Zealand's culture that shaped people's varied answers to this questionnaire led to analysis of accounts of their relationship with animals people have provided in farming stories and autobiographies.

**lynn mowson** (PhD) is a sculptor whose practice is driven by the entangled relationships between human and non-human animals, in particular agricultural animals. Her sculptural research was featured the book *The Art of the Animal*, Lantern Press, 2015, and the exhibition *SPOM: Sexual Politics of Meat* at The Animal Museum, LA, in 2017. Her work has been included in the Minding Animals Exhibition forthcoming at the Museo de la

Cancilleria, Mexico in 2018. Lynn is a Research Assistant for the Human Rights and Animal Ethics Research Network [HRAE], University of Melbourne, and is on the Committee for HRAE and is Vice-Chair of the Australasian Animals Studies Association. [www.lynnmowson.com](http://www.lynnmowson.com)

**Yamini Narayanan** (PhD) is a Senior Lecturer in International and Community Development at Deakin University, Melbourne. Her work engages with one of the first-ever empirical investigations of India's cow protection discourse and politics from a critical animal ethics standpoint. Her work has been published in leading forums like *Environment and Planning D, Sustainable Development*, and *Society and Animals*. She was nominated lifelong Fellow of the Oxford Centre for Animal Ethics. Her book and documentary on India's cow protectionism is in progress.

**Kathryn Stringer** worked as a geologist in a previous life; she is now a secondary school teacher. For the last two years Kathryn has taught geography at Marian College. This year she followed her passion for literature and culture and is currently undertaking a Graduate Diploma in Arts, endorsed in English. Her symposium paper is based on an essay she wrote for the 300 level course "Reading Animals: Beast Fables to Graphic Novels", run by Associate Professor Annie Potts. The essay analysed how the 2015 SAFE/Farmwatch exposé "The Dark Side of Dairy" manipulated the field of visual culture. The campaign had a strong emotional effect on Kathryn, and she wanted to investigate the strategy behind its effectiveness. Kathryn is the 2017 recipient of NZCHAS' Annual Prize for Excellence in Human-Animal Studies.

**Rowan Taylor** is a Christchurch-based environmental policy analyst. He first realised the impacts of dairy and other pastoral farming when writing New Zealand's first national State of the Environment Report in 1997, an experience that ultimately led to him becoming vegan. The views expressed in this article are his own and are in no way attributable to his current employer.

**Lynley Tulloch** (PhD) is an independent researcher and writer on animal rights, environmental education and social justice. She believes in engaged scholarship and actively campaigns for the rights of animals as sentient beings to be recognized in our treatment of them. Lynley is the founder of the Starfish Bobby Calf Project.

#### **Conference Illustrator:**

**Prabha Mallya** is an illustrator and comics artist. She is greatly interested in the interactions between urban humans and non-human animals, and her work explores the grey areas in human/animal and other cultural binaries. Prabha has a multidisciplinary background with a BE (Hons) in Mechanical Engineering (BITS-Pilani, India), an M Des in Visual Communication (IIT Kanpur, India) and an MA in Illustration (SCAD, USA). She has illustrated for several books including *Beastly Tales from Here and There* (Penguin), *The Jungle Books* (Rupa), *The Wildings* and *The Hundred Names of Darkness* (Aleph). Her graphic short stories have appeared in The Hindu, Mint, Forbes Life, and Brainwave magazine, and anthologies like *SPRING Magazin #13, This Side That Side: Restorying Partition and the Obliterary Journal Vol II*. She was art director at Manta Ray Comics, and is now a recurring contributor

and art editor at *Current Conservation* magazine. Her first book, *The Alphabet of Animals and Birds* (Red Turtle) is a collection of illustrated collective nouns for children. *The Alphabet* has been awarded The Hindu Young World-Goodbooks Award 2016 for Best Picture Book – Illustrations.

Prabha lives in Christchurch, New Zealand, and is also frequently spotted in and around Bangalore, India.

NZCHAS, and especially symposium organizers Kirsty and Annie, give heartfelt thanks to all attendees for being part of this timely and important discussion about the place of the dairy industry in Aotearoa New Zealand and other parts of the world.

Image courtesy of SAFE NZ

