Humane Liberation: Incorporating Animal Rights into Critical Pedagogy

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Abstract
The field of higher education is one in which, historically, acts of progressive social change have been both initiated and supported. At the moment, many academics and student affairs professionals in colleges and universities across the United States are using their resources to help students understand social justice concepts utilizing the practice of Critical Pedagogy. While exploring power, privilege, and oppression related to human identities has resulted in overwhelming positive social change, there is a population that continues to suffer, largely without attention from scholars or other members of the academic community: animals. Some educators have asserted that the goal of Critical Pedagogy, which is to “help students develop consciousness of freedom, recognize authoritarian tendencies, and connect knowledge to power and the ability to take constructive action,” (Giroux, 2010, para. 1) is most effective when incorporating animal rights into educational curricula. This article is an exploration of animal rights issues, how animal exploitation affects humans, animals, and the environment, and how learning about animal rights can contribute positively to the goals of Critical Pedagogy.

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As a result, academic integrity policies with narrow definitions of plagiarism collude in assimilating students of color and international students into an educational environment that excludes their stories and alternative forms of expression. By integrating post-colonial theories with post-modern technological discourses of authorship, this article deconstructs the limitations of traditional institutional policies stressing academic integrity and explore the experiences of the students who are systematically disempowered in the practical implementation of this policy in the classroom. Animal rights is the idea in which some, or all, non-human animals are entitled to the possession of their own lives and that their most basic interests—such as the need to avoid suffering—should be afforded the same consideration as similar interests of human beings. Its advocates oppose the assignment of moral value and fundamental protections on the basis of species membership alone—an idea known since 1970 as speciesism, when the term was coined by Richard D. Ryder—arguing that it is a prejudice.