



PARADOXICAL BURGERS FOR LUNCH ANYONE?

KINSHIP CIRCLE

Action Campaigns ▶ Literature ▶ Voice For Animals
info@kinshipcircle.org ▲ www.KinshipCircle.org

by Brenda Shoss

Felines beware: Laura Manning bakes cats. That's right. The Syracuse, NY woman is charged with felony aggravated cruelty for fatally roasting her kitten in an oven. Down the coast, Floridian Craig Parrish faces jail time for smashing his 8-week-old puppy against a wall. A Michigan teen who dismembered a stray Lab mix confronts prosecution as an adult. The pup's head was found in the Romulus High School toilet.

Gasp. May the jaws of Hell pulverize these slimeballs and spurt their pathetic remains into the frigid purgatorial flames. Additionally, may those who brutalize Snoopy and Garfield be "strung up by their tonsils and made to listen to Celine Dion techno remixes on infinite loop while slowly being eaten alive by rabid fire ants. And then I'd want them tortured," writes SF Gate

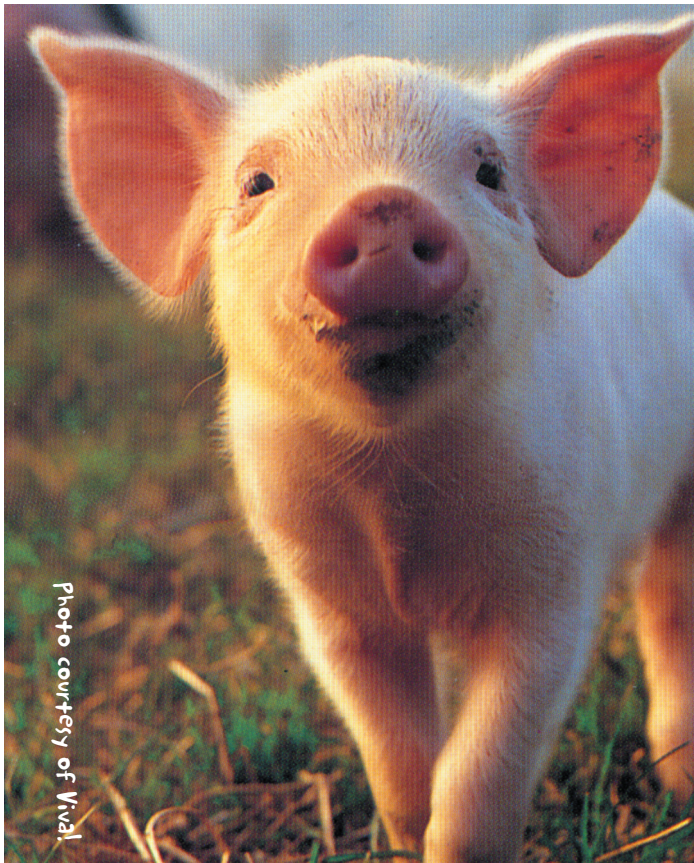


Photo courtesy of Vival

Columnist Mark Morford in *Barbecued Kitten Value Menu/Where unspeakable pet abuse meets the reconstituted liquid Chicken McNugget. Can you reconcile?*

Our pets are sacrosanct. But say you stumble upon a veal farm, where dewy-eyed calves no larger than Snoop stagger on rubbery legs inside 2-foot-wide crates, neck-chained from birth to death. Or suppose you bump into one of the crippled babe's moms, a



Photo courtesy of Vival

dairy cow artificially inseminated on a “rape rack” to lactate her way into the nation’s bottomless milk cup.

Oh well. By now, she’s meatloaf—a “super ovulated” spent cow slung by her feet for slaughterhouse workers to stick and skin. Never mind that her bewildered eyes still blink as they dismantle her. She’s cellophane-surprise, stamped with the meat industry’s pledge that you, gentle reader, will never hear her screams.

Are you mad? Do you feel the puppy/kitten reflex surging through your veins with ferocious indignation? Probably not. The arguably cute and equally trustful animals packaged inside the supermarket do not elicit the fury reserved for the likes of Charles C. Benoit, a.k.a. Missouri Kitten Griller, who pitched a fuzzy feline on to a barbecue grill last summer to amuse guests.

Morford, who collects pleading emails whenever he runs a pet-abuse story, believes consumers are bizarrely divorced from their food sources. “Unlike the starved dogs or roasted kittens appearing like painful reminders in the news, we have no true emotional connection to the animals that provide us meat and cheese and protein-injected taco filling.”

The puppy/kitten reflex merely underscores the stunning duplicity behind our cognitive ties to animals. Agribusiness giants tell us we are what we eat, as long as we don’t care where it came from. Thus, we don’t mind that the average meat eater is responsible for the deaths of some 2,400 animals during his or her lifetime (See *You’re an Environmentalist; Why Are You Still Eating Meat?* by Jim Motavalli, E Magazine).

We line-up for the McMuffinized remains of painfully debeaked hens stuffed into battery cages no larger than a folded newspaper and starved in 10-14 day cycles to bolster egg production before they dangle unanesthetized from a throat-slashing rail, alongside their genetically mutated “broiler bird” cousins.

We wish we were Oscar Mayor Wieners, despite knowing that relentlessly impregnated 600-pound sows are immobilized in gestation and farrowing crates, prior to their bloody finale beneath the killing blade.

Factory farms crowd animals in unnatural settings and overuse antibiotics to control disease. During the assembly-line slaughter, notoriously imprecise stunning devices leave animals alert as they are skinned and scalded. But by the time all that terror, pain, pus, excrement, hair, dirt, chemicals and hormones reaches the grocer’s freezer—we are disconnected. There is no puppy/kitten reflex.



Grief is bad for the mega-farm’s bottom line. “A common perception of livestock people is that animal rights activists don’t ‘get it’ because of their urban backgrounds. The activists do ‘get it,’ they know what is going on, and they don’t like it,” states Peter R. Cheeke, Ph.D., editor for Journal of Animal Science.

Get it or not, the powerful meat and dairy industries are inside the schools, government and media with milk mustaches and smiling cows, to assure us that yes, we ought to rampage against the puppy-killers but no, we need not mourn our meals.

Mmm. Paradoxical burgers for lunch anyone?

