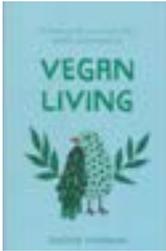


## BOOK REVIEW



### *Vegan Living*

Ondine Sherman (2020).  
Pantera Press, 277 pages

### Graeme Perry

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***Vegan Living* is a visually appealing recent publication (2020), with creative colour graphics, engaging thought bubbles, and cameo statements that stimulate and maintain interest. With extensive factual text, including recipes and guides it forms a simple but vibrant explanation, based on compassion and conviction, advocating a personally chosen, adapted and adopted vegan lifestyle.**

After sharing its main goals to:

- understand what is happening to animals, climate and the environment,
- start your vegan journey in the healthiest way possible,
- handle shade from your family, friends and the pesky person at the BBQ,

it expounds a vegan apologetic to the 'vegan-curious'. In six chapters it addresses: *currency*—The time is now; *credibility*—Why vegan?, Health and food; *acceptability*—Fashion, lifestyle and advocacy; *place*—Your community; and consequences—The future.

Enhanced attention and readability for the text is achieved by grouping the resources list, and full endnotes for each chapter at the back of the volume. It culminates with acknowledgments and a short author biography. An index is a missing element that would be useful. But, this is intended as a 'good read' rather than a reference work.

Ondine Sherman traces her personal journey from age 7 when she first became aware her food was 'dead animals', recalling that at aged 11 she placed an animal activism poster on her wall that asserted, "The chicken in your freezer has more room now than when it was alive."

Ondine, a co-founder of *Voicelless* (the animal protection institute) with father Brian Sherman, offers an explanation of a vegan lifestyle unashamedly based on animal rights (not animal welfare, p. 41). She claims 74% of Americans consider themselves animal lovers yet they set food animals uniquely apart from pets.

Because animals are bred for our food, we can treat them worse which is a justification that enables us

to kill billions of one kind while cuddling millions of the other. When you pick this belief system apart, the logic doesn't hold. It becomes clear it is cognitive dissonance, a mental block of our own making. (p. 36)

The work is heavily annotated quoting celebrities, scientists, the experienced vegans and some progressing lifestyle adopters. Martina Navratilova shares, "I did it for the animals. How can you have one animal as a pet and eat another one for lunch?" (p. 36). Michael Kirby (Australia's longest serving judge) asserts, "There is nothing so powerful in the world as an idea whose time has come and animal protection is just such an idea" (p. 1).

Ondine's approach is moderate, "Do not let anyone tell you how vegan you should become ... there is a huge spectrum where this could take you. (p. 16). "Today I am not a perfect vegan and don't know whether I ever will be. But I am trying ... that, I believe, is the best anyone can do" (p. 12).

This work is a useful resource for teachers within several Australian Curriculum areas including: Science, Humanities and Social Sciences; Technologies and Health and Physical Education, since it informs nutrition, sustainability, cultural values, discrimination and isolation, food production systems, health and wellbeing. More specifically it can support the *NESA Food Technology 7-10 aim*— "enabling them to evaluate the relationships between food, technology, nutritional status and the quality of life," informs a *cross cultural priority*—sustainability, and develops *general capabilities*—critical and creative thinking, ethical understanding, intercultural understanding, personal and social capability.

Though awareness for the wellbeing of a student who is struggling with social difficulties because of their unique attitudes and behaviours in food choices might be assisted by sharing this work, a more proactive approach, with broader social benefits, might be the incorporation of an understanding of minority groups through an inclusion of discussions of veganism as an example integrated across curriculum boundaries.

This work is recommended as it provides a updated view of a food movement with a long history and also since its plant base perspectives synchronise with significant contemporary investments being made in the "meatless" protein food industry (Vuppuluri, 2020; Waters, 2021). This trend should be represented as part of any curriculum addressing students "present" experience.

“  
Do not let anyone tell you how vegan you should become ... Today I am not a perfect vegan and don't know whether I ever will be. But I am trying ... that, I believe, is the best anyone can do.”

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# Reflections, Impressions & Experiences

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## References

Vuppuluri, P. (2020, November 2). *The race for the alternative protein market: Five investment areas to watch*. Forbes Finance Council. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesfinancecouncil/2020/11/02/the-race-for-the-alternative-protein-market-five-investment-areas-to-watch/?sh=12a3d5c36c6d>

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