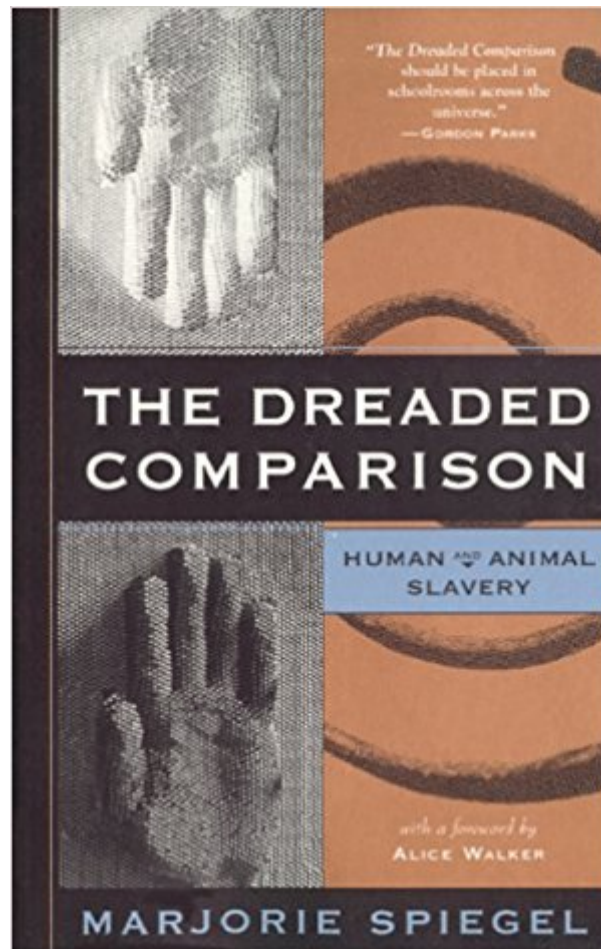




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# The Dreaded Comparison: Human And Animal Slavery



## Synopsis

Considered a seminal book in the fields of Bioethics and Human-Animal Studies, and a classic in the field of humane thought, Marjorie Spiegel's *The Dreaded Comparison* makes a significant contribution to our efforts to understand the roots of individual and societal violence, tying current cultural practices to the legacy of human bondage, and introducing new and diverse audiences to the history of slavery and institutionalized racism in the United States. Spanning history, psychology, and current events-- and ground-breaking for its thesis which presents the first in-depth exploration of the similarities between the violence humans have wrought against other humans, and our culture's treatment of non-human animals-- *The Dreaded Comparison* has contributed to subsequent explorations by other scholars, historians, legal scholars, law professors and educators in diverse fields to view and further define the modern system of animal exploitation in terms of the model and legacy of human slavery. *The Dreaded Comparison* also contributed substantially to broadening the philosophical foundation of the modern discourse about animals beyond its traditionally more limited scope, instilling a far more inclusive and historically-grounded understanding of the critical issues Spiegel sensitively explores in this book. Highly acclaimed and widely reviewed-- Gordon Parks declared that "*The Dreaded Comparison* should be placed in schoolrooms across the universe," and civil rights attorney William Kunstler wrote that he "was heavily influenced by Marjorie Spiegel's powerful tour de force" -- *The Dreaded Comparison* has been adopted as required reading in colleges, universities, law curriculum, and high schools throughout the nation. Now in its third edition, *The Dreaded Comparison* has also been excerpted in college textbooks in the fields of Philosophy and Human-Animal Studies, and excerpted as a cover story in national journals.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Spiegel, executive director of the Institute for the Development of Earth Awareness, has revised her 1989 book to present an in-depth exploration of the similarities between the violence humans have wrought against other humans and our culture's treatment of animals. Using considerable scholarship, she makes a strong case for links between white oppression of black slaves and human oppression of animals. Her thesis is not that the oppressions suffered by black people and animals have taken identical forms but that they share the same relationship between the oppressor and the oppressed. These comparisons include the brandings and auctions of both slaves and animals, the hideous means of transport (slave ships, truckloads of cattle), and the tearing of offspring from their mothers. Her illustrative juxtapositions are graphic, e.g., a photograph of a chimpanzee in a syphilis experiment beside a photo of a black man in the Tuskegee Syphilis Study. As Alice Walker writes in the preface, "This powerful book...will take a lifetime to forget." Chilling yet enlightening, this provocative book is vitally important in our efforts to understand the roots of individual and societal violence. It belongs in all libraries. [The book received a special award from The International Society for Animal Rights. Ed.] Eva Lautemann, DeKalb Coll. Lib., Clarkston, Ga.-Eva Lautemann, DeKalb Coll. Lib., Clarkston, Ga. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc.

"Fascinating..." The New York Review of Books "An extremely important book honest and fearless...Marjorie Spiegel has said the single most important thing there is to say about animals. I love this book." Elizabeth Marshall Thomas, Author of *The Hidden Life Of Dogs* "This powerful book will take a lifetime to forget." Alice Walker, Author of *The Color Purple*, from her foreword to "The Dreaded Comparison" "This book belongs in all libraries." Library Journal "THE DREADED COMPARISON: HUMAN AND ANIMAL SLAVERY by Marjorie Spiegel...executive director of the Institute for the Development of Earth Awareness compares the exploitation of human slaves and of animals, as well as explores the putative justifications of those who profit." Publishers Weekly "Marjorie Spiegel ...has written a deeply provocative book." David Brion Davis, Sterling Professor of History, Yale University "THE DREADED COMPARISON is a wonderful and important book...I loved it. I urge everyone to read it." Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson, Author, *When Elephants Weep* THE

DREADED COMPARISON should be placed in schoolrooms across the universe. Gordon Parks, Photographer and Author Spiegel's book is a powerful and important statement about oppression and violence in Western culture. The author writes "To those who would be master, what matters is not so much who their slaves will be, but that there are slaves to be had". This work is accessible to all adult audiences, and would be suitable for college courses at any level in sociology, philosophy, or peace studies, or examining issues of oppression in contemporary animal issues. Multicultural Review "...eerie parallels between slavery and dominance over animals are well described in this provocative book. We know that slaves have been treated like animals; Spiegel asks us to consider why we treat animals like slaves." Tom Hayden, California State Senator "...Fascinating and beautifully concise." James Merrill, Author, The Changing Light at Sandover "...this book is all the more powerful for the testimony of slaves and descendants of slaves who have voiced their empathy strongly with the rest of oppressed creation..." The New Scientist "[An] invaluable contribution...Marjorie Spiegel's extraordinary book, The Dreaded Comparison, with its judiciously chosen quotations and stunningly juxtaposed illustrations...packs a huge punch." Boston Book Review "[A] gem..." Choice THE DREADED COMPARISON is essentially a consciousness-raising exercise..." The Womens Review of Books -- Book Review

I really liked this book. It's short, with concise chapters. It will be very useful for me as I advocate between animal rights and other social justice groups. I loved the text on p. 30, "For when we prioritize [the victims] we are in effect becoming one with the "master." We are deciding that one individual or group is more important than another, deciding that one individual's pain is less important than that of the next." This clarified for me the position I run up against all the time among people actively working for social justice for humans. In talking to someone else (a vegan social activist) who suggested some might find this book offensive, I realized that anyone who tries not to be racist but is speciesist (which is almost everyone) will assume the book is racist. Because if animals are less valued than humans (speciesism) and a group of people is compared to animals (this book), then logically that group must be lower than human (racism). The book explains itself, but if we start talking about the book to others without first explaining speciesism, we will have a problem. After agreeing with pretty much everything Ms. Spiegel said, things fell apart in the last chapter on Power. I'm not sure I can agree that the original master is metaphorically diminished when the victim turns on a lower victim. It seems more like the original victim is soothed (unhealthily) by exerting the dominance he could not have in the original relationship. Nitpicking perhaps, and I may be wrong, but it came up a lot and made the chapter difficult for me to follow.

Also I don't believe she proved her assertion that all vivisectionists are sadists. I suspect they see animals as objects, handy clockwork tools, and if they think of the suffering at all rationalize it rather than relish it. I also think it would be useful to title this chapter "Control" rather than "Power." Miki Kashtan in her book *Spinning Threads of Radical Aliveness - Transcending the Legacy of Separation in our Individual Lives*, suggests that we are told we can't have power and so we substitute the much less satisfying control. It seems to me that control always has a winner and a loser - the two ends of the shotgun or whip are not alike. I am trying to think of a truly positive example of control. But power can be very positive, win-win. Think of the power of Martin Luther King or Frederick Douglas. This isn't a criticism of Spiegel, just a thoughtful offering.

Reading this book now and I think it is great! I would definitely recommend it to anyone who wants to broaden their perspective and are open to getting a better understanding with this type of comparison which is not favorable to many opinions but I find it interesting and moving. Once again, a great read!

The author makes an excellent case for comparing human and animal slavery as the title suggests. The roots of our problems as a society stick deep and the solution will be more inclusive than merely expanded human rights. As humans we are part of the earth, not above it.

Nothing better than this to make you realize that the way we treat animals today is exactly the same way that we used to treat people at time of slavery. We have banned slavery (that kind at least), but this book will show you that we can't continue treating animals in such horrible conditions if we can't treat humans like we did over a century ago. A great book for schools to show kids and young adults what we have done, that we have then banned and what we still do today. The last chapter says it clearly: If we are to succeed in stemming our destructiveness and learning to once again live sustainably and harmoniously with the earth and all of its inhabitants, it is the urge to commit violence that must be addressed - both on a societal level, and, perhaps most importantly, in ourselves and individuals. Teachers, grab this book and bring it to the classroom.

Great info. Well written.

This book compares human and animal slavery in a way you can never ever forget. The words and pictures are unforgettable. You will feel the feelings of those humans and those animals who are

used (and being used now) as slaves. Read this book, and change your life! (it really helps) Many thanks to .com for recommending this book to me...

This is a great book! The first book in years that's I've actually finished. The comparison is both supported by facts and argued philosophically, I think it's convincing. I already agreed with the idea of the book, but I learned things I didn't know about both human and animal slavery.

Marjorie Spiegel has captured the essence of violence - domination and control. She presents an accurate portrayal and case that violence towards non-human animals holds the key and ultimate solution to the creation of a violencefree society. Her ideas and images run deep and should be required reading in our schools and homes. This brief, but to the point manuscript speaks volumes to the pain and suffering we have created as a result of so called human progress.

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