

SLAY

THE FILM THAT GETS UNDER
FASHION'S SKIN

ANIMALS
PLANET
PEOPLE

THE IMPACT OF FUR,
LEATHER AND WOOL

NEW MATERIALS AND FUTURE FASHION



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David Koma
Fall 2020 show,
London © SLAY

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A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

I started shooting SLAY without a script. It wasn't a conscious decision, but timing that pushed me to start right after deciding I'd make a film on animal skins in fashion.

Directing and producing an unscripted documentary was at times challenging and uncomfortable but it allowed for more authenticity.

Making SLAY has transformed me profoundly. It has been exhilarating, exciting, painful. Most of all, it has given me a sense of urgency to act.

We live in a world filled with both beauty and violence, and we are now facing up to the grimmer realities of the world we've created, with the climate crisis at the top of the list.

I believe the climate crisis is an ethical crisis: it is the reflection and consequence of how we treat life on this planet.

Today the fashion industry has an overproduction problem, with devastating consequences for fashion workers, wider populations, and our shared planet. Although the challenge of changing fashion for good is considerable, conversations are getting louder and many are taking steps to do better.

And yet, 2.5 billion animals are skinned for fashion each year, their plight practically unspoken of by industry and media alike. 2.5 billion individuals suffer a life designed for death, denied the most basic rights of life and body autonomy. And all the while their suffering is greenwashed into oblivion by those profiting.

We must reconcile ethics and sustainability as one and indissociable. We cannot accept complex equations for a definition of sustainability that omits the ethical treatment of living beings — humans and our fellow animals.

It's high time for a cultural shift beyond the view that the skins of animals are materials for our use. Skins are just that: skins. And we all deserve better, in 2022, than to design, produce and walk around in such an outdated idea of fashion.

The choice is up to us, and it is a reflection of the world we want to live in.

Rebecca Cappelli, director of SLAY

Rebecca Cappelli,
director of SLAY,
Paris 2020 © SLAY

ABOUT SLAY

Fashionista at
Paris Fashion
Week © SLAY

A WORD FROM THE PRODUCER

"I've been passionate about sustainability issues most of my life, so to be part of a film that exposes fashion's dirty secrets of greenwashing a bloody industry, is incredibly meaningful to me. I'm honoured to be an executive producer on such a critically important film."

Keegan Kuhn, award-winning director of *Cowspiracy* and *What The Health*, executive producer of SLAY

SLAY is a feature documentary film exploring the interwoven harms caused by fashion's use of fur, leather and wool.

Following investigative filmmaker Rebecca Cappelli as she travels the world uncovering some of fashion's best kept secrets, a harrowing story of greenwashing, cover-ups, environmental destruction, unjust treatment of workers, and of cruel animal exploitation unravels.

SLAY asks an important question to the public, and to the industry itself: is it acceptable to kill animals for fashion?

Featuring prominent thought leaders and experts across the fashion design, sustainability and animal protection spaces, SLAY's investigative work is woven with interviews from **Bandana Tewari** (former editor-at-large at *Vogue India*, sustainable fashion advocate), **Samata Pattinson** (CEO of Red Carpet Green Dress), **Dana Thomas** (Author of *Fashionopolis*), **Joshua Katcher** (Brave Gentleman designer, *Fashion Animals* Author), **Lucy Watson** (TV personality and influencer), **Ed Winters** (aka Earthling Ed, author and educator), **Dr Melanie Joy** (social psychologist and author), **Emma Håkansson** (Collective Fashion Justice founding director and author), **Pei Su** (Chinese sociologist and founder ACTAsia) **Alexi Lubomirski** (renowned international fashion photographer), **Will Potter** (investigative journalist and author) and other experts.

ABOUT COLLECTIVE FASHION JUSTICE



Emma Hakansson, founder of Collective Fashion Justice

Collective Fashion Justice is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to the creation of a total ethics fashion system; one that values the life and wellbeing of all animals; humans and non-humans, as well as our shared planet, before profit.

Involved in the research, consultation, interviews and Australian production of SLAY, Collective Fashion Justice works to change fashion at a citizen consumer, industry and political level.

Collective Fashion Justice's work has seen the passing of legislation improving the fashion industry, brands moving away from animal-derived materials to total ethics alternatives, reports and data released to inform best practice, and investigations to expose misleading advertising, environmental damage and cruelty.

Collaborating internationally with the likes of Fashion Revolution, Good On You, World Animal Protection, the Center for Biological Diversity, FOUR PAWS, Material Innovation Initiative, Global Fashion Exchange, Fashion Act Now and many more, Collective Fashion Justice's work is critical to the positive progression of fashion.

Our work is rooted in the recognition that collective liberation is the ultimate goal of work for a better planet – where not only the environment, but people and our fellow animals are inherently valued and not commodified. Fashion's use and exploitation of animals is antithetical to work for such a world, with a more genuinely just and sustainable fashion system beginning to bloom.



ABOUT WATERBEAR



Ellen Windemuth, Founder of WaterBear, the free streaming platform dedicated to the future of our planet.

“SLAY is a compelling film that contrasts the glamour of high fashion with the hidden world of animal suffering during the production of these desired pieces. It showcases practical solutions for us, the customers, to be more conscious and proactive with our fashion choices. As we embark on another year of fashion shows and events, the way we perceive each piece will be changed forever. At WaterBear, we believe in converting storytelling into action. It is vital to have powerful documentaries such as SLAY on our platform to engage customers and drive change in the fashion industry. Waterbear is free, and our members can take direct instant action to support NGOs around the world and shape a better future for our fragile planet. We will provide our SLAY viewers with direct links to Collective Fashion Justice, a strong NGO that is working on systemic change in the fashion industry, as well as to our wider network of NGO partners. Viewers will learn more about this important topic and be supported with the tools to take action”.



ABOUT WATERBEAR

WaterBear is a ground-breaking streaming platform showcasing award-winning documentaries as well as original content - spanning biodiversity, community, climate action and sustainable fashion. WaterBear members can stream videos at any time, and on any device, all for free, as well as take direct instant action to support NGOs around the world and shape a better future for our fragile planet. WaterBear is available in 194 countries. For more information about WaterBear and to sign up, please visit: www.waterbear.com

INTRODUCTION



Leather. Made in Italy.
Tuscan tannery © SLAY

The fashion industry of today is one that glorifies overconsumption, extraction and commodification at the expense of the planet, people and animals.

As the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warns that we must act 'now or never' to protect the future of this planet, it is clear not only that we must shift away from an endless growth and production mindset, and from the use of fossil-fuel derived, virgin synthetic materials, but too from animal-derived materials. Despite a recorded critical need to reduce methane by at least one third and to restore wild lands and biodiversity, the fashion industry is ignoring the role of its use of animal-derived materials in this crisis, and the plight of these animals as individuals.

Just as we cannot sustain environmental destruction any longer, we can no longer sustain the harms of a system which needlessly commodifies, exploits and kills animals for profit.

Inviting the fashion industry to evolve beyond cruelty and degradation, and to ethical, sustainable practices does not stifle its creativity and flare, in fact, it encourages innovation and new, exciting forms of design.

The future of fashion is coming, and it's one of total ethics - help us bring it in closer.

All information in this booklet is referenced, available through the QR codes at the back of the booklet.



FUR

It is always hard to get definite numbers in an industry that relies on the exploitation of animals who do not have barcodes. The last time the global fur industry's value was estimated by an International Fur Federation commissioned study was in 2014, with a worth of \$40 billion. More recently, the Chinese fur industry alone was valued at over \$60 billion, but is on the decline both in China and the West. Fur farming has been banned in Austria, Croatia, the Netherlands, Slovenia and the United Kingdom amongst others. Fur farms phase outs are taking place across Norway, Bosnia, Serbia, Slovakia, and many other nations, while a potential ban on all European fur farms and farmed fur product sales gains public and political support. Nearly 70% of the most profitable luxury fashion brands have banned fur, with the wider industry even further along in the progression away from fur.

It is clear fur will be the first animal 'material' to disappear from fashion, but it continues to be sold today, and often deceptively – even behind illegally misleading 'faux fur' labels.

Foxes and raccoon dogs in cages stare at the camera, Hebei, China © SLAY





ANIMALS

Around 100 million wild animals continue to be bred and killed on fur factory farms each year with many more caught and trapped in their natural habitat. As much as 95% of all fur comes from animals who are confined to factory farms for the entirety of their shortened, deprived lives. The most common species among them are mink, foxes, chinchillas and raccoon dogs – as well as raccoons, coyotes and beavers in the fur trapping trade.

Wild animals confined to wire cages are denied their most basic, natural instincts and as a result foxes and mink on farms express stereotypic signs of intense psychological distress: pacing endless circles in their cages and even self-mutilating. In their ecosystem, mink love to swim, diving as deep as 30 metres, while foxes roam far to follow their noses over their average 10 square kilometres of territory. In the fur industry, foxes receive 10 million times less space: a 1 square metre cage. Meanwhile, foxes, coyotes, beavers and other animals trapped and killed for their fur out in their natural environment suffer too, known to gnaw off their own limbs in desperate attempts to escape traps before they are crushed or shot. The standard killing methods on fur factory farms involve gassing animals to death or invasively electrocuting them with internal probes.

BY RICH HARDY, FORMER INVESTIGATOR AND AUTHOR OF NOT AS NATURE INTENDED

"I think about him everyday.

For six minutes I watched that raccoon desperately fight for his life, but the odds were stacked against him from the start. Beneath the water one of his paws was clamped firmly in the metal jaws of a leghold trap. Above the water's surface the trapper put all his power into slamming a wooden stick into his face and body to take his life, his pelt.

The raccoon grabbed the stick and held on, resisting the beating, as the trapper hurled abuse at him, but he could only last so long. The trapper's boot came down over his head, forcing him under water and against the sharp gravel of the river bed. He drowned.

He had seemed big while in the river, his fur puffed up in self defence, but lying on the snowy river bank, fur wet and hugging the skin, he was just a small, defenceless creature - no match for a big, cruel man. It was then I noticed he was missing a paw. Not from today, but he had been caught in a trap before. And just like many others had done before, he had chewed through the bone - amputated his own limb - to escape. Not this time, though.

I turned away to wipe a tear from my cheek, unseen. I pressed the stop button on the covert camera concealed in my shirt. I left, so I could give the recording - this evidence - to those who could help bring an end to the fur industry."

ENVIRONMENT

The fur industry has a negative impact not only on wild animals, but on wild places too. Ammonia and phosphorus emissions from fur farms – released due to faecal build up, pollute surrounding waterways, causing eutrophication, and in turn, dead zones where aquatic life struggles to survive.

The climatic impact of fur production is similarly harmful, with independent study finding even conventional, virgin synthetic faux fur coat making – while not being a solution either, to result in nearly 250kg less of carbon equivalent emissions than mink fur coat production.

With hazardous and even carcinogenic chemicals like chromium and formaldehyde used to 'dress' fur – processing it so the skin will not rot, even industry studies show that fashion's furs do not effectively biodegrade. In fact, a French advertisement in Vogue Paris referring to fur as 'natural' and 'eco-friendly' was banned by the French advertising authorities, found to be 'strongly misleading'.

PEOPLE

Unsurprisingly, an industry with such toxic production is harmful to its workers. The surfactants, solvents, acids, tannins, fungicides, dyes and bleaches used in fur dressing can cause both acute and chronic ailments for workers. These conditions range from skin complaints and eye irritation to cancer, and even death.

What's more, testing of fur sold across Europe revealed substantial contamination, with hazardous chemicals recorded at high levels which breach legal industry standards. This contamination can negatively impact fur wearers, with similar findings of carcinogenic and allergenic toxic residue on fur garments found across China.

Mink pelts at a
Parisian furrier © SLAY



TOTAL ETHICS ALTERNATIVES

GACHA®

The most exciting fur alternative available to date, GACHA is a bio-based faux fur that is uniquely 100% biodegradable, and commercially compostable in 180 days. With the right systems in place, this material is a circular solution.

RECYCLED FAUX FUR

While a move away from fossil fuel extraction is critical for sustainable fashion, using synthetics here today can reduce landfill and the need for further resource extraction. Recycled faux furs made from recovered ocean plastic are available today.

BIO-BASED FAUX FUR

Materials like Koba® from Ecopel are derived from vegetable crop oils rather than fossil fuels, resulting in 30% less energy use and 67% less production emissions than conventional faux furs, which already result in far less emissions than animal fur production systems.

RECYCLED DENIM FUR

Originally created by Ukrainian designers Tiziano Guardini and Ksenia Shnaider, repurposed denim diverted from landfill is frayed to produce a similarly furry texture that, while not exactly like animal fur, is chic, edgy and sustainable.

LEATHER

The global leather goods market was valued at a whopping \$394 billion in 2020, and this number is only growing. The leather industry often publicly claims to make use of a mere 'by-product', reducing meat and dairy production waste. In reality, industry-facing documentation refers to cattle skins as valuable 'co-products', and when skins don't sell due to decreased demand – even due to a rise in leather alternative popularity, slaughterhouses have reported multi-million dollar losses.

Currently, leather sales subsidise the environmental, animal and human harms caused by the cattle industry. As prices fall and leather alternatives become more affordable, producing non-leather shoes, bags and accessories responsibly becomes easier.



Cow hides drying in the suburb of Jajmau, Kanpur, India © SLAY



ANIMALS

Cows at the beginning of leather supply chains are sometimes invasively artificially inseminated. When calves are born, those in the dairy industry are separated for slaughter at a few days old if they are male. Separation is stressful and results in depression for newborn calves, who are considered worthless to the industry alive and unable to produce milk. Due to their young age, the skins of these calves are extremely soft, and thus considered 'extremely valuable', used by luxury fashion brands who are also known to buy skins from calves bred specifically for their skins.

Across standard leather supply chains, cattle are legally and painfully mutilated: their budding horns cut or burned off with sharp and hot tools. Cows are also branded and males are castrated, generally without any pain relief.

While calves are often killed by blunt-force trauma, 'best practice' for the slaughter of cattle is considered to be shooting a captive-bolt gun into an animal's head before slicing their throat to eventually bleed out.

A significant portion of leather comes from countries like Brazil, India and China, where there are poor or no animal welfare laws. However, even in countries with supposedly high welfare laws, cruelty occurs and stunning is regularly ineffective. Across many major leather production companies, cows are documented to be fully conscious while bleeding out.

The skins of calves and lambs, including those who are newborn or cut out of their pregnant mothers in the case of slink leather, are particularly sought after in the fashion industry due to their softness. In many cases, these profitable skins are the most valuable part of these slaughtered animals, for example in the case of male calves born in the dairy industry.



Cows on deforested land,
Amazon, Brazil © Lalo de Almeida,
Panos Pictures for SLAY

ENVIRONMENT

Rearing cattle for food and fashion is extremely inefficient, requiring massive amounts of native land be cleared and kept cleared. Many mainstream and luxury fashion brands are tied to Amazonian destruction through their leather collections, with one Brazilian leather bag equating to 1,000 square metres of cleared land.

While it's commonly cited that 80% of Amazon deforestation is due to the meat and leather industry, destruction of native flora is a major issue in many other leading leather production countries too.

Leather production also has a massive carbon and water footprint, with one pair of cow skin leather boots equating to 66kg of CO₂e and 12,370 litres of water. To produce enough leather for a single pair of shoes, equivalent to over 10 years worth of drinking water is required.

Even conventional synthetic alternatives – which are not the future of fashion either – are produced with over 56kg less CO₂e and over 14 times less water. Data shows newer innovations to be even more sustainable, and that animal leather production in some cases even requires more fossil fuels than synthetic production.

What's more, and contrary to greenwashing industry claims, tannery industry reporting shows that leather does not effectively biodegrade, even when vegetable tanned.



PEOPLE

90% of leather is tanned with chromium, and other carcinogenic substances like formaldehyde and arsenic are industry standard. These chemicals cause chronic coughing, skin ailments and diseases in tannery workers, who are more likely to suffer many forms of cancer due to their exposure to dangerous tanning chemicals.

Tannery workers working in unsafe conditions, Kolkata, India © SLAY



Young woman in Jajmau,
Kanpur, India © SLAY



Water contaminated with tannery
chemical waste flows into waterways,
Kanpur, India © SLAY

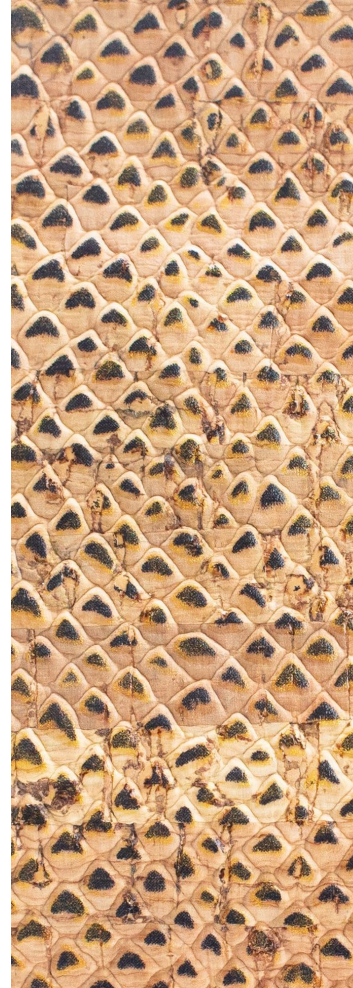
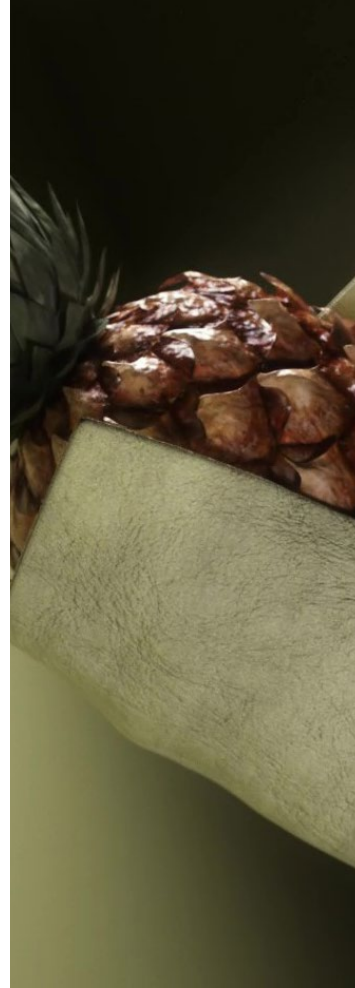
PEOPLE

Far more tanneries used to exist in the West but today, most leather tanning occurs in the Global South. Western brands profit from leather sales but are unwilling to bear the brunt of the environmental and health hazards caused by its production.

Farm workers across leather supply chains spanning multiple countries have been found to be forced into labour, even working in 'slave like conditions'. Meanwhile, slaughterhouse workers are known to face traumatic mental disorders due to their work, and communities surrounding many slaughterhouses see higher rates of violent crime.

Local populations in parts of Kanpur, India, face increased disease risks due to a lack of tannery waste water treatment, which sees chemical-heavy, polluted water flow through streets and into irrigation systems. Despite a lack of healthcare professionals able to diagnose many such diseases, SLAY filmmaker and crew met with numerous afflicted individuals, such as a crop farmer unable to work because of the severe damage to his hands from the contaminated water. His household now relies on his wife's monthly income of \$50, and they are unable to afford an education for their children.

Our filmmakers also met tannery workers in Italy who faced discrimination, ongoing health issues, and injury risks from operating heavy machinery.



TOTAL ETHICS ALTERNATIVES

MIRUM®

A completely plastic-free, USDA biopreferred approved material made with substances like FSC certified natural rubber, charcoal, clays, plant-based oils and waxes.

DESSERTO®

A partly bio-based leather alternative, Desserto saves over 1,800% of emissions compared to conventional leather production, reduces fossil fuel reliance, and requires no irrigation for harvest.

PIÑATEX®

A near 95% biodegradable material made largely from otherwise discarded pineapple plant leaves, this material is coated in a water-based resin and adds value for fruit farming communities.

CORK

Cork trees are harvested without harm to the tree, while aiding carbon sequestration. Able to be embossed, cork is completely natural and biodegradable, suitable for sturdier applications.

MYLO™

An up and coming material, Mylo is derived from mycelium - the root system below fungi. Grown in vertical indoor farms in a matter of days, Mylo is a future-thinking, low impact choice, debuted by the likes of Stella McCartney.

Other alternatives include recycled polyurethane, partly-bio based materials making use of agricultural waste like apple cores, mangoes and grape skins, washable paper, and Treekind.

WOOL

The wool industry is shrouded in mythology perpetuated by clever marketing which leads us to believe wool is and can be both sustainable and cruelty-free, even benefitting the planet, animals and people. In reality, the highly profitable wool industry is a slaughter industry responsible for major emissions, land degradation and biodiversity loss.

Despite making up just 11% of the global fibre market, a herd of nearly 1.18 billion sheep around the world graze on land they have been introduced to by the commercial wool and meat industries. Seen most often in overcoats, jackets, suits and knitwear, wool is increasingly used blended with other materials, and evades public criticism despite its harms.

Drone shot of sheep hurdled into a saleyard, Victoria, Australia © SLAY



ANIMALS

Sheep were bred to require shearing, while their ancestors, the mouflon, naturally shed their winter coat.

Sheep bred into the wool industry are slaughtered when it is most profitable. For some lambs, this means being shorn just before their slaughter at 9 months for the prime lamb meat market, for others it is after some years of shearing, when at 5 - 6 years old their wool brittles and thins just like our hair does, and is no longer as profitable. Then, halfway into their natural lifespan, sheep are killed, sometimes sent into live export. Buying wool is in effect the same as buying sheep skin.

This reality is little known, and lambs face many harms during their lives too. In major wool production country Australia, mulesing is still legal and involves slicing the skin around the backside of a lamb off. This, as well as tail-docking – often performed with hot knives, is largely legal without pain relief. Many lambs never survive long enough to face these mutilations. Up to 15 million lambs die in the first 48 hours of their lives each winter lambing season due to starvation, exposure and neglect, driven by wool industry selective breeding strategies prioritising high birth rates and profit over reducing suffering.

Lamb with struggling mother
ewe, Australia © SLAY

ENVIRONMENT

While wool as an unprocessed fibre is natural and biodegradable, the rearing of sheep for production and the process of turning wool into a fashion-ready material renders it contrastingly unsustainable. Sheep are ruminant animals and when they breathe and pass gas they release potent methane into the atmosphere. While different kinds of wool vary in their carbon equivalent footprint, some Australian wool has a footprint 27 times higher than that of Australian cotton, while some US produced wool releases 41kg of CO₂e for 1kg of wool produced.

What's more, wool is a land inefficient material, using 20% of all Australian agricultural land. One medium weight sweater made from such wool rather than Tencel lyocell requires nearly 3,674 more square metres of cleared land. Serious degradation and consequential biodiversity loss is documented across the global wool industry, in some areas contributing to species endangerment, as with koalas, wolves and other animals. Meanwhile, shifts away from grazing sheep have seen environments flourish.

Off farms and feedlots, shorn wool is processed, with as little as even 40% of the weight of wool being usable fibre, rather than suint, faeces, dirt or lanolin grease. An energy intensive process, wool scouring is highly polluting, with the (often difficult to biodegrade) effluent from the process largely being unrecoverable, with contaminants released as waste water, impacting aquatic ecosystems.

Wool scouring facility,
Victoria, Australia © SLAY





Lambskins processor,
Victoria, Australia © SLAY

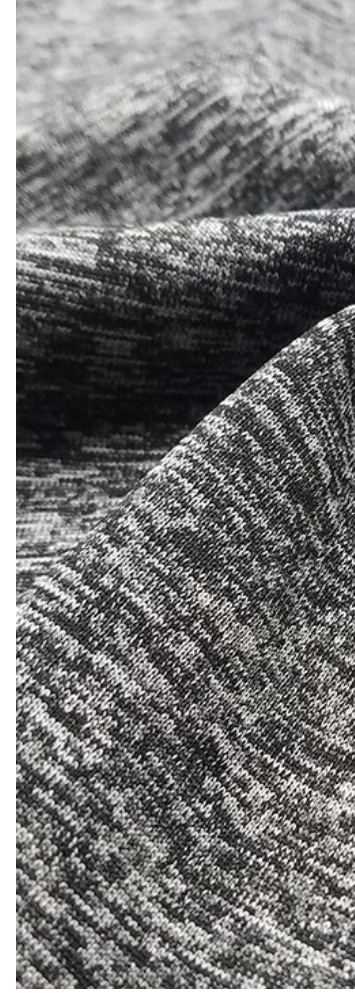
PEOPLE

While it's more commonly known that sheep often face extreme violence during the shearing process, shearers themselves are also frequently exploited. Shearers are paid per sheep shorn or by the weight of wool they shear rather than by the hour, incen-

tivising speed and endangering sheep and workers alike. Unions have reported shearers being paid in drugs, being denied access to safe working equipment, bathrooms and running water.

Meanwhile, ex-farm workers like Toni Gundry from Australia have shared their struggles working in an industry which is cruel by design: 'We are brought up with the death and abuse of animals... taught it's natural, it needs to be done. You did have

to block [your feelings] off. And if you speak up against it, especially being a girl, you are weak.' Similarly, people working in slaughterhouses killing recently shorn sheep, or sheep whose skins will be worn speak of extreme distress and trauma.



TOTAL ETHICS ALTERNATIVES

RESPONSIBLY SOURCED COTTON

Recycled, rain-fed, organic, fair trade and permaculture produced cotton can be sustainable, biodegradable and circular alternatives to wool used in knitwear production.

TENCEL

A biodegradable lyocell fabric made in a closed-loop system, Tencel is derived from sustainably sourced Eucalyptus wood pulp. It is thermo-regulating and moisture wicking like wool.

HEMP

A plant-based fibre suitable for knitwear, tweed and other wool-like applications, hemp is breathable, land-efficient and can be grown effectively without pesticides or water.

BAMBOO LYOCELL

Similar to Tencel, but sourced from fast growing bamboo, this material has a silky soft quality, and can be grown without either organic or synthetic inputs.

POST-CONSUMER RECYCLED SYNTHETICS

While washing these materials requires extra care to catch microfibres, collecting plastic from the ocean and other post-consumer waste streams to make knitwear reduces plastic pollution.

WEGANOOL

Made from a blend of wild harvested Calotropis fibres and sustainable cotton, this option is community supportive and even finer than merino wool.

OTHER ANIMAL-DERIVED MATERIALS

The fashion industry's seemingly endless desire for skins victimises countless animal species around the globe. These are just some of those other exploited animals.

EXOTIC SKINS

'Exotic skins' are any 'leathers' belonging to non-domesticated species, such as crocodiles, alligators, snakes, lizards, ostriches, kangaroos and so on. The wild capture and factory farming of native and wild animals is both a welfare and environmental crisis. Many innovative and partly bio-based leather alternatives can be embossed to replicate the textures and tactility of these skins.

CROCODILE SKIN

Saltwater crocodile skins are considered some of the most valuable in the fashion industry, with the majority coming from Australian factory farms, many of which are owned by the likes of Hermès and Louis Vuitton.

Native crocodiles hold significant value for Indigenous cultures and their ecosystem, yet today more of these reptiles live in cages and concrete pits than in their natural habitat. Despite a natural lifespan of 70 years, these crocodiles are brutally killed at just 2-3 years old, their brains scrambled. In farms across Asia, live skinning has been documented.

SNAKE SKIN

While snakes and lizards are sometimes farmed, many are captured from their natural habitat. At unsanitary slaughterhouses which pose zoonotic disease risks, little to no laws protect reptiles killed for fashion. Pythons have been documented being blown up like balloons with air pressure machines, hit with blunt force by hammer-like tools, their heads pierced through with sharp metal hooks.

The Indigenous communities tasked with taking wild snakes and killing them are often put at risk by this task, and are exploited by luxury brands which take up to 96% of the financial value of skins.

Crocodile Farm, Australia
Farm Transparency Project

KANGAROO SKIN

Used most frequently for boots, especially those used by football players, kangaroo skin leather comes from the largest commercial slaughter of land-dwelling wildlife worldwide. Across their native grasslands, well over 31 million kangaroos have been brutally killed in the last decade. Despite evidence of localised extinctions and scientific evidence warning of the dangers,

the Australian Government allows for the shooting of kangaroos, a totem animal to some Indigenous communities.

Some species of kangaroo have already become extinct or endangered, in some cases partly due to the fashion industry. Industry codes advise shooters to bludgeon joeys (baby kangaroos) to death.



OSTRICH FEATHERS

Despite their ability to run nearly 70km per hour through their native African grasslands, spending over seven hours each day on the move, ostriches in the fashion industry are confined to small and often barren feedlots. Across the industry, no to very limited welfare laws dictate how ostriches are treated, inevitably resulting in cruelty. Ostriches in the industry have been documented showing psychological distress symptoms, like chewing hard wire fencing endlessly.

Some investigations show ostriches plucked alive for their feathers, other ostriches have bags placed over their heads

while their feathers are cut, and most feathers are pulled from dead ostriches, killed for their skins when they are just a year into their natural lifespan of up to 40 years old.

Ostrich feathers are increasingly being used in place of fur by the fashion industry. But replacing the confinement and slaughter of one species for another is not more ethical. Ostrich farming remains intertwined with negative impacts for slaughterhouses, surrounding communities which can face pollution, inefficient use of land and precious natural resources.





DOWN

Ducks and geese in the global down industry live largely in countries with near to no animal protection laws and supply chain transparency. As live plucking can cause skin tears, dislocated and broken bones and even death, some brands promote their use of more 'responsibly sourced' down. However not only have some certified 'responsible' down suppliers been found to continue live plucking birds, non-live plucked down can come from birds force-fed and killed in the foie gras industry, and practically always comes from factory farms. Ducks and geese are aquatic birds, and denied water in factory farms, their

legs often struggle to hold their body weight, leaving birds disabled, unable to move.

Nutrient run-off from faeces in factory farms confining these birds can cause eutrophication and kill aquatic life, while slaughterhouses killing birds have been found to pose health risks to surrounding communities.

Able to live as long as over a decade, ducklings are killed at just a few weeks old, often with mechanical blades which slice their throats as they hang shackled upside down.

CASHMERE

Cashmere is the hairs from the coat of a specific breed of goat, almost entirely bred and grazing across China and Mongolia. Despite marketing claims of 'gentle combing' to collect hairs from goats, in reality sharp metal-toothed combs rip through the fleeces of goats who are tied down and unable to move. Four goats must be combed for one sweater.

Goats are killed in the largely unregulated cashmere industry if they are born the wrong colour, if they are not growing 'high quality' hair, and when their hair growth slows, often several years less than half-way into their natural lifespan.

Rising demand for cashmeres has caused socio-economic struggle and environmental degradation for cashmere herders and the grasslands they live on. 65% of Mongolia's grasslands have been degraded by cashmere goat grazing and global warming – exacerbated by the rearing of these ruminant animals for production.

"Yes, I know my goats are harmful to our grassland and the more we have, the worse our land becomes. I get that. But this is how we earn our money. All I can do is watch my grasslands disappear."
– 90 year old herder, Lkhagvajav Bish



ALPACA WOOL

Marketed as a more ethical and sustainable alternative to sheep's wool – because alpacas are not mulesed and have somewhat softer hooved feet – the alpaca wool industry is in many ways similar to other wool production, and is not an ethical nor a truly sustainable alternative.

As with every other animal-derived material supply chain, alpacas in the wool industry are slaughtered when they are no longer profitable alive, as their wool ages.

To be shorn, alpacas are tied down, splayed out across tables. Alpacas in Peru, where most of their wool is exported from, have been recorded shrieking in terror and vomiting due to the distress and pain of the process.

Alpaca wool production is generally associated with high levels of eutrophication, as well as with significant greenhouse gas emissions caused by enteric fermentation, as the animals breathe and internally process their food.



SILK

While the sentience of insects is still debated, due to a lack of investment into relevant research, we know that the absence of a neocortex does not preclude organisms from experiencing affective states, that worms display pain responses, and that moths 'remember' being caterpillars.

In the production of a single kilogram of silk, about 5,500 individual silkworms are killed, steamed or boiled alive inside their cocoons, which are reeled into a single silk filament.

Even in 'ahimsa silk' supply chains, moths are selectively bred, so cannot fly or move properly if they are allowed to complete

metamorphosis before silk is reeled. In these supposedly cruelty-free supply chains moths have been found kept in semi-frozen conditions and crushed or sent to bins when they hatch.

The silk industry is notoriously untransparent, and rife with instances of forced and bonded labour as well as child labour. People working in sericulture are at risk of health issues from contact with burning hot boiling water and pesticides used to grow mulberry leaves to feed silkworms. These leaves are grown across large amounts of land with 187kg of leaves required for just 1kg of silk.



HELP CREATE A TOTAL ETHICS FASHION FUTURE



MYLO™ innovation by Bolt Threads,
render designed for SLAY © SLAY



KOBA® faux fur by Ecopel made with Sorona® technology

> BUY LESS, BUY BETTER

In the midst of a climate crisis, while it's absolutely true that we need to choose the most sustainable materials available to us when shopping, there's something even more critical: how often we shop. Each second, equal to a garbage truck full of clothing is sent to landfill.

The fashion industry must turn to degrowth, producing less clothes, and making them better. Making them to last, and to be able to exist in a more circular fashion industry. But we, too, must change, opting out of the fast pace of the industry.

> CHOOSE TOTAL ETHICS MATERIALS AND GARMENTS

When we do shop for new clothing, we need to check-in not only about whether or not we should buy the dress, the bag or the jacket at all, but about what these are made of, how they were made, and by who.

Total ethics materials and garments are made with the planet and all those who live on it in mind; humans and animals alike. If we have the privilege of buying clothes because we want, rather than need them (to stay clothed, safe and warm), seeking out more totally ethical, fairly made and genuinely lower-impact fashion is the very least we can do.

> SUPPORT A FUR FREE EUROPE

As SLAY focuses on the issue of fur, alongside leather and wool, we urge every European Citizen, and every person with any kind of tie to or influence across Europe to join us in pushing for a Fur Free Europe.

Until early 2023, a European Citizen's Initiative (ECI) is collecting signatures, calling on the European Union to ban all fur farms, and the sale of all farmed fur products. When 1 million European citizens sign on, the European Commission is obliged to respond and take action.

> EDUCATE YOUR COMMUNITY

The impact of SLAY, of our educational resources and work is only as significant as you make it. Each person reading this has a community of people around them – both professional and personal, who could likely learn more SLAY too.

Please invite your community to watch SLAY, to learn about total ethics fashion, to consider the individuals behind our clothes, and to continue amplifying these messages.

To invite Rebecca for speaking engagements and screenings, please email contact@slay.film

> SUPPORT OUR WORK

If you appreciate the work we do, and the need to push harder for a total ethics fashion system, please consider supporting our work.

You can donate towards further screenings and education around SLAY, as well as to the extended work of Collective Fashion Justice. To learn more about how your money may be spent, please head to the Collective Fashion Justice website to read more or contact the organisation.

WHAT KIND OF REFERENCES SUPPORT THE CLAIMS MADE IN SLAY?

SLAY makes use of data from:

- Intergovernmental and government bodies
- Primary data from the fur, leather and wool industries
- Peer-reviewed and published academic studies
- Research and data from trusted NGOs, built upon the above sources

All of our references are listed on our website slay.film

DO YOU THINK PROTECTING ANIMALS IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN PROTECTING PEOPLE AND THE PLANET?

SLAY endorses Collective Fashion Justice's concept of a 'total ethics fashion system': one which values the life and wellbeing of all animals, humans and non-humans, as well as the planet, before profit. The wellbeing of all three are interconnected and cannot be separated.

WON'T MOVING AWAY FROM THE USE OF FUR, LEATHER AND WOOL HARM FARMERS AND HERDERS, INCLUDING SOME INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES?

A move away from inefficient, unsustainable and unethical animal-derived material production can and should benefit all of us, if we work to ensure a just transition – one which respects cultural customs, the fate of our planet and all those living on it.

The fashion industry needs to slow down, produce less and use more efficient materials, allowing for more Indigenous land to be returned and protected. Total ethics alternatives to less sustainable and cruel animal-derived materials are one important part of this shift.

In many cases, Indigenous people are used as pawns by industries harming them. Almost all fur is from factory farms and white-led trapping (in many cases, of Indigenous species), the leather industry is responsible for the degradation and destruction of vast amounts of Indigenous land, and the wool industry is one largely built on colonialism, with sheep grazing land once abundant with indigenous plant and animal life.

ENCOURAGING PEOPLE TO AVOID ANIMAL MATERIALS IS PROMOTING PLASTIC AND HARMFUL VIRGIN SYNTHETIC MATERIALS, WHY ARE YOU DOING THAT?

We believe the future of fashion must be free from both animal-derived materials and virgin synthetics. Arguing that we must choose between either animal-derived or synthetic materials is to argue a false dichotomy: plastic-free, non-animal materials exist.

While it's true that common alternatives to animal-derived materials are synthetic, we advocate the fashion industry's adoption and investment into total ethics alternatives which value animals, people and the planet alike. The reasons for avoiding fossil-fuel derived synthetics can be applied to animal-derived materials, too: while fossil fuels and synthetics perpetuate the climate crisis and contribute to the destruction of ecosystems, so too do fur, leather and wool to a great extent, in addition to causing immense suffering to animals.

WHY DON'T YOU TALK ABOUT GARMENT WORKERS, OR THE SCALE OF THE FASHION INDUSTRY, OR OTHER IMPORTANT ISSUES?

SLAY focuses on animal skin supply chains and covers the plight of tannery workers in India and in Italy. Our stance supports degrowth in fashion, as well as calls for all garment workers to be paid a living wage in workplaces that are safe and respectful. While we support organisations working on these issues – and Collective Fashion Justice, which has contributed to this film, speaks to these issues too, SLAY exists to put a spotlight on fashion's use of animals. Fashion's animal supply chains and the harms they cause are so often ignored, even in ethical and sustainable fashion spaces. We hope to change that.

WHAT ABOUT 'CLIMATE BENEFICIAL' WOOL, 'REGENERATIVE' LEATHER?

As noted in the Shear Destruction report from Collective Fashion Justice and the Center for Biological Diversity, relying on animal agriculture to sequester carbon in the soil fails to live up to its promise as a climate solution. 'There is no evidence that carbon sequestration can be successful across diverse geographic ranges at current industry scale, or that it can fully offset the emissions created by the animals and the production of animal-based products', and that simply choosing plant-based agricultural systems is more climate beneficial.

Even if sheep and cattle could contribute to the storing of carbon in soil, after a few decades the land will reach soil-carbon equilibrium. At this point, no more carbon will be sequestered using these methods, and only the methane emissions from ruminant animals will remain. A more effective and long-term strategy for carbon sequestration would be rewilding, something that could take place during a just transition away from land inefficient wool and leather, benefiting biodiversity.

WHAT ABOUT CERTIFICATIONS FOR RESPONSIBLE SOURCING OF ANIMAL MATERIALS?

The Responsible Wool Standard and other similar certification schemes do not ensure sheep are protected from tail docking and castration without pain relief, and allow sheep to be slaughtered if they are not profitable. Such standards do not effectively address emissions and biodiversity loss.

The Leather Working Group certification is considered the leading standard in the industry. LWG only covers tanneries – completely ignoring issues of deforestation, forced labour and animal cruelty on farms, as well as pollution and exploitation in slaughterhouses. The current standard does not conduct adequate social auditing for tannery workers. Of course, cattle are also still slaughtered for profit under the certification.

While Furmark and Welfur certifications misleadingly claim to assure high welfare on fur factory farms, no standards exist which ensure fur-bearing animals have their welfare needs met during their lives, and all of these animals are unjustly and needlessly killed for the sake of fashion.

THE HIGG MATERIAL SUSTAINABILITY INDEX IS CONTROVERSIAL, WHY DO YOU REFERENCE IT?

SLAY includes the Higg MSI as one of well over 200 references supporting and exploring claims made in the film. The film could exclude this one particular reference, and still have numerous sources of support for the data and facts put forward.

However, we have chosen to include the Higg MSI, because while there are controversies surrounding it, it is currently the largest source of industry-provided data available. This is significant, and cannot be ignored.

While we recognise the importance of considering the full life-cycle of materials, it is important to understand material production impacts, too. Please see a more in-depth response on our website slay.film

FOR MORE, VISIT [SLAY.FILM](http://slay.film) OR SCAN THE REFERENCES QR CODES

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REFERENCES



References



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Holding Foggy, a rescued orphaned lamb © SLAY



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DEFEND THE DEFENSELESS

A FILM BY REBECCA CAPPELLI CINEMATOGRAPHY ABHI ANCHLIYA PRODUCER KEEGAN KUHN
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS SEBASTIANO COSSIA CASTIGLIONI & JANE PATTERSON,
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